

TENNYSON'S
POEMS

HOUSE-
HOLD
EDITION



OF
THE
POETS

DONATION BY
DR. AND MRS. ELMER BELT

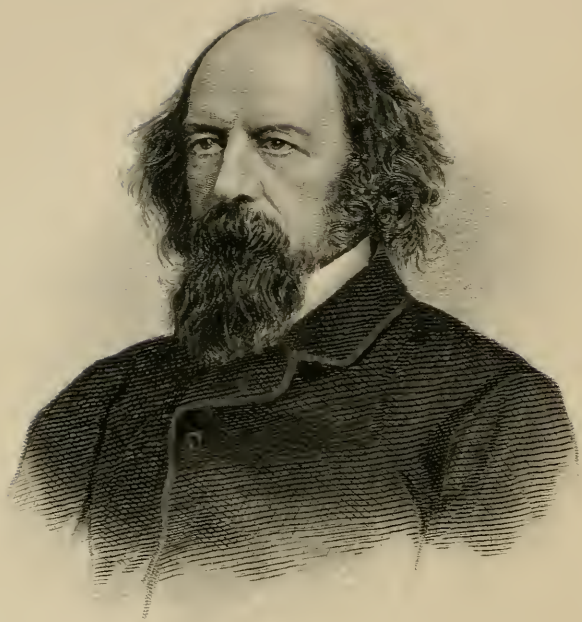


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THE
POETICAL WORKS
OF
ALFRED TENNYSON

Household Edition

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS



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P O E M S .

(PUBLISHED 1830.)

TO THE QUEEN.

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

Victoria, — since your Royal grace
To one of less desert allows
This laurel greener from the brows
Of him that utter'd 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 sun-lit almond-blossoms 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 us long,

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

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

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

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

MARCH, 1851.

CLARIBEL

A MELODY.

I.

WHERE Claribel low-lieth
The breezes pause and die,
Letting the rose-leaves fall :
But the solemn oak-tree sigheth,
Thick-leaved, ambrosial,
With an ancient melody
Of an inward agony,
Where Claribel low-lieth.

II.

At eve the beetle boometh
Athwart the thicket lone ;
At noon the wild bee hummeth
About the moss'd headstone :
At midnight the moon cometh,
And looketh down alone.
Her song the lintwhite swelleth,
The clear-voiced mavis dwelleth,
The callow throstle lispeth,
The slumbrous wave outwelleth,
The babbling rannel crispeth,
The hollow grot replieth
Where Claribel low-lieth.

LILIAN.

I.

AIRY, fairy Lilian,
Flitting, 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.

II.

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 wimple
Glancing with black-beaded eyes,
Till the lightning laughers dimple
The baby-roses in her cheeks;
Then away she flies.

III.

Prythee weep, May Lilian !
Gayety 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.

IV.

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

ISABEL.

I.

EYES not down-dropt nor over bright,
but fed
With the clear-pointed flame of chas-
tity,
Clear, without heat, undying, tended by
Pure vestal thoughts in the transluc-
cent fane
Other 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 lowli-
head.

II.

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' un-
descried,
Winning its way with extreme gen-
tleness

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

III.

The mellow'd 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 leaning and upbearing parasite,
Clothing the stem, which else had
fallen quite,

With cluster'd flower-bells and ambro-
sial orbs

Of rich fruit-bunches leaning on each
other —

Shadow forth thee : — the world hath
not another

(Tho' all her fairest forms are types of
thee,

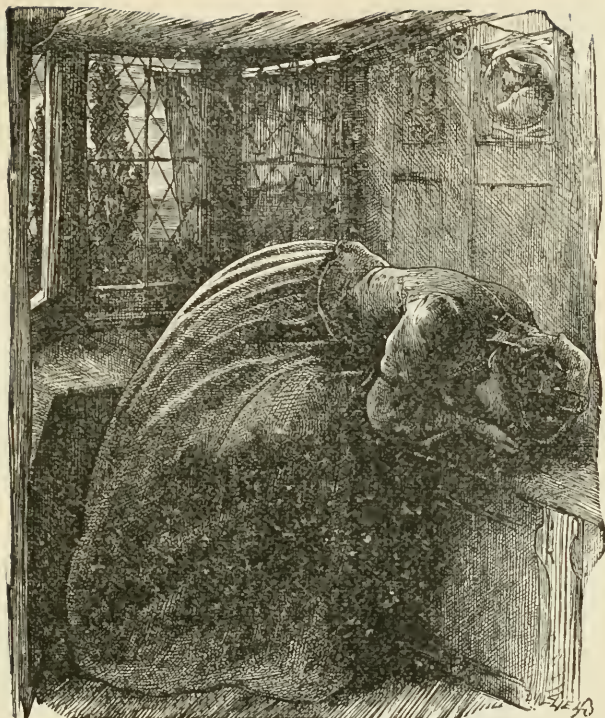
And thou of God in thy great charity)
Of such a finish'd chasten'd purity.

MARIANA.

"Mariana in the moated grange."
Measure for Measure.

WITH blackest moss the flower-plots
Were thickly crusted, one and all :
The rusted nails fell from the knots
That held the pear to the gable-wall.
The broken sheds 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 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.



“ Her tears fell with the dews at even ;
Her tears fell ere the dews were dried.”

After the flitting of the bats,
When thickest dark did trance the sky,
She drew her casement-curtain by,
And glanced athwart the glooming flats.
She only said, “ The night is dreary,
He cometh not,” she said ;
She said, “ I am aweary, aweary,
I would that I were dead ! ”

Upon the middle of the night,
Waking she heard the night-fowl crow :
The cock sung out an hour ere light :
From the dark fen the oxen's low
Came to her : without hope of change,
In sleep she seem'd to walk forlorn,
Till cold winds woke the gray-eyed
morn
About the lonely moated grange.

She only said, “ The day is dreary,
He cometh not,” she said ;
She said, “ I am aweary, aweary,
I would that I were dead ! ”

About a stone-cast from the wall
A 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 aweary, aweary,
I would that I were dead ! ”

And ever when the moon was low,
 And the shrill winds were up and away,
 In the white curtain, to and fro,
 She saw the gusty 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 weary, weary,
 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 mouldering wainscot
 shriek'd,
 Or from the crevice peer'd about.
 Old faces glimmer'd 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 weary, weary,
 I would that I were dead !"

The sparrow's chirrup on the roof,
 The slow clock ticking, and the sound
 Which to the wooing wind aloof
 The poplar made, did all confound
 Her sense ; but most she loathed 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 weary, weary,
 O God, that I were dead !"

TO ———.

I.

CLEAR-HEADED friend, whose joyful
 scorn,
 Edged with sharp laughter, cuts atwain
 The knots that tangle human creeds,
 The wounding cords that bind and
 strain
 The heart until it bleeds,
 Ray-fringed eyelids of the morn
 Roof not a glance so keen as thine :
 If aught of prophecy be mine,
 Thou wilt not live in vain.

II.

Low-cowering shall the Sophist sit ;
 Falsehood shall bare her plaited brow .
 Fair-fronted Truth shall droop not now
 With shrilling shafts of subtle wit.
 Nor martyr-flames, nor trenchant swords
 Can do away that ancient lie ;
 A gentler death shall Falsehood die,
 Shot thro' and thro' with cunning words.

III.

Weak Truth a-leaning on her crutch,
 Wan, wasted Truth in her utmost need
 Thy kingly intellect shall feed,
 Until she be an athlete bold,
 And weary with a finger's touch
 Those writhed limbs of lightningspeed ;
 Like that strange angel which of old,
 Until the breaking of the light,
 Wrestled with wandering Israel,
 Past Yabbok brook the livelong night,
 And heaven's mazed signs stood still
 In the dim tract of Penuel.

MADELINE.

I.

THOU art not steep'd in golden languors,
 No tranced summer calm is thine,
 Ever varying Madeline.
 Thro' light and shadow thou dost range,
 Sudden glances, sweet and strange,
 Delicious spites and darling angers,
 And airy forms of flitting change.

II.

Smiling, frowning, evermore,
 Thou art perfect in love-lore.
 Revelings deep and clear are thine
 Of wealthy smiles : but who may know
 Whether smile or frown be fleeter ?
 Whether smile or frown be sweeter,
 Who may know ?
 Frowns perfect-sweet along the brow
 Light-glooming over eyes divine,
 Like little clouds sun-fringed, are thine,
 Ever varying Madeline.
 Thy smile and frown are not aloof
 From one another,
 Each to each is dearest brother ;
 Hues of the silken sheeny wool
 Momently shot into each other.
 All the mystery is thine ;
 Smiling, frowning, evermore,
 Thou art perfect in love-lore,
 Ever varying Madeline.



“By Bagdat's shrines of fretted gold.” See page 9.

III.

A subtle, sudden flame,
 By veering passion fann'd,
 About thee breaks and dances ;
 When I would kiss thy hand,
 The flush of anger'd shame
 O'erflows thy calmer glances,
 And o'er black brows drops down
 A sudden-curved frown :
 But when I turn away,
 Thou, willing me to stay,
 Wooest not, nor vainly wranglest ;
 But, looking fixedly the while,
 All my bounding heart entanglest
 In a golden-netted smile ;
 Then in madness and in bliss,
 If my lips should dare to kiss
 Thy taper fingers amorously,
 Again thou blushest angrily ;
 And o'er black brows drops down
 A sudden-curved frown.

SONG. — THE OWL.

I.

WHEN cats run 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 belfry sits.

II.

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

SECOND SONG.

TO THE SAME.

I.

THY tuwhits are lull'd, I wot,
 Thy tuwhoos of yesternight,
 Which upon the dark afloat,
 So took echo with delight,
 So took echo with delight,
 That her voice untuneful grown,
 Wears all day a fainter tone.

II.

I would mock thy chant anew ;
 But I cannot mimic it ;
 Not a whit of thy tuwhoo,
 Thee to woo to thy tuwhit,
 Thee to woo to thy tuwhit,
 With a lengthen'd loud halloo,
 Tuwhoo, tuwhit, tuwhit, tuwhoo-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-flowing tide of time ;
 And many a sheeny summer-morn,
 Adown the Tigris I was borne,
 By Bagdat's shrines of fretted gold,
 High-walled gardens green and old ;
 True Mussulman was I and sworn,
 For it was in the golden prime
 Of good Haroun Alraschid.

Anight my shallop, 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' lamp-light dim,
 And broider'd sofas on each side :
 In sooth it was a goodly time,
 For it was in the golden prime
 Of good Haroun Alraschid.

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

A motion from the river won
 Ridged the smooth level, bearing on
 My shallop thro' the star-strown calm,
 Until another night in night
 I enter'd, from the clearer light,



"Adown the Tigris I was borne,
By Bagdat's shrines of fretted gold."

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 Alraschid.

Still onward ; and the clear canal
Is rounded to as clear a lake.
From the green rivage many a fall
Of diamond rilllets musical,
Thro' little crystal arches low
Down from the central fountain's flow
Fall'n silver-chiming, seem'd to shake
The sparkling flints beneath the prow.

A goodly place, a goodly time,
For it was in the golden prime
Of good Haroun Alraschid.

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 marge

From fluted vase, and brazen urn
In order, eastern flowers large,
Some dropping low their crimson bells
Half-closed, and others studded wide
With disks and tiars, fed the time
With odor in the golden prime
Of good Haroun Alraschid.

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

Black the garden-bowers and grots
Slumber'd : the solemn palms were range'd
Above, unwoo'd of summer wind :
A sudden splendor from behind

Flush'd all the leaves with rich gold-green,
 And, flowing rapidly between
 Their interspaces, counterchanged
 The level lake with diamond-plots
 Of dark and bright. A lovely time,
 For it was in the golden prime
 Of good Haroun Alraschid.

Dark-blue the deep sphere overhead,
 Distinct with vivid stars inlaid,
 Grew darker from that under-flame :
 So, leaping lightly from the boat,
 With silver anchor left afloat,
 In marvel 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 pleasance, 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 unawares
 From the long alley's latticed shade
 Emerged, I came upon the great
 Pavilion of the Caliphat.
 Right to the carven cedarn 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 look'd to shame
 The hollow-vaulted dark, and stream'd
 Upon the mooned domes aloof
 In inmost Bagdat, till there seem'd
 Hundreds of crescents on the roof
 Of night new-risen, that marvellous
 time
 To celebrate the golden prime
 Of good Haroun Alraschid.

Then stole I up, and trancedly
 Gazed on the Persian girl alone,
 Serene with argent-lidded eyes
 Amorous, and lashes like to rays
 Of darkness, and a brow of pearl
 Tressed with redolent ebony,
 In many a dark delicious curl,
 Flowing beneath her rose-hued 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, underpropt a rich
 Throne of the massive ore, from which
 Down-droop'd, in many a floating fold,
 Engarlanded and diaper'd
 With inwrought flowers, a cloth of gold
 Thereon, his deep eye laughter-stirr'd
 With merriment of kingly pride,
 Sole star of all that place and time,
 I saw him — in his golden prime,
 THE GOOD HAROUN ALRASCHID !

ODE TO MEMORY.

I.

THOU who stealest fire,
 From the fountains of the past,
 To glorify the present ; O, haste,
 Visit my low desire !
 Strengthen me, enlighten me !
 I faint in this obscurity,
 Thou dewy dawn of memory.

II.

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

III.

Whilome thou camest with the morning
mist,
And with the evening cloud,
Showering thy gleaned wealth into my
open breast
(Those peerless flowers which in the rudest
wind

Never grow sere,
When rooted in the garden of the mind,
Because they are the earliest of the
year).

Nor was the night thy shroud.
In sweet dreams softer than unbroken
rest

Thou leddest by the hand thine infant
Hope.

The eddying of her garments caught from
thee

The light of thy great presence ; and the
cope

Of the half-attain'd futurity,
Tho' deep not fathomless,
Was cloven with the million stars which
tremble

O'er the deep mind of dauntless infancy.
Small thought was there of life's distress ;
For sure she deem'd no mist of earth could
dull

Those spirit-thrilling eyes so keen and
beautiful :

Sure she was nigher to heaven's spheres,
Listening the lordly music flowing from
The illimitable years.

O strengthen me, enlighten me !
I faint in this obscurity,
Thou dewy dawn of memory.

IV.

Come forth, I charge thee, arise,
Thou of the many tongues, the myriad
eyes !

Thou comest not with shows of flaunting
vines

Unto mine inner eye,
Divinest Memory !

Thou wert not nursed by the waterfall
Which ever sounds and shines

A pillar of white light upon the wall
Of purple cliffs, aloof descried :

Come from the woods that belt the gray
hill-side, -

The seven elms, the poplars four
That stand beside my father's door,
And chiefly from the brook that loves
To purl o'er matted cress and ribbed sand,

Or dimple in the dark of rushy coves,
Drawing into his narrow earthen urn,
In every elbow and turn,
The filter'd tribute of the rough woodland.

O, hither lead thy feet !
Pour round mine ears the livelong beat
Of the thick-fleeced sheep from wattled
folds,

Upon the ridged wolds,
When the first matin-song hath waken'd
loud

Over the dark dewy earth forlorn,
What time the amber morn
Forth gushes from beneath a low-hung
cloud.

v.

Large dowries doth the raptur'd 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 sway.
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. Artist-like,
Ever retiring 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,
Overblown with murmurs harsh,
Or even a lowly cottage whence we see
Stretch'd wide and wild the waste enor-
mous marsh,

Where from the frequent bridge,
Like emblems of infinity,
The trenched waters run from sky to
sky ;

Or a garden bower'd close
With plaited alleys of the trailing rose,

Long alleys falling down to twilight
grotts,

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,
Were 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.

SONG.

I.

A SPIRIT haunts the year's last hours
Dwelling amid these yellowing bowers :
To himself he talks ;
For at eventide, listening earnestly,
At his work you may hear him sob and
sigh
In the walks ;
Earthward he boweth the heavy
stalks
Of the mouldering flowers :
Heavily hangs the broad sunflower
Over its grave i' the earth so chillily ;
Heavily hangs the hollyhock,
Heavily hangs the tiger-lily.

II.

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 chillily ;
Heavily hangs the hollyhock,
Heavily hangs the tiger-lily.

ADELINE.

I.

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 ?

II.

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

III.

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 stillest evenings
With what voice the violet wooes
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 ?

IV.

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

v.

Lovest thou the doleful wind
 When thou gazest at the skies ?
 Doth the low-tongued Orient
 Wander from the side of the morn,
 Dripping with Sabæan spice
 On thy pillow, lowly bent
 With melodious airs lovelorn,
 Breathing Light against thy face,
 While his locks a-drooping 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,
 Life in dead stones, or spirit in air ;
 Then looking as 't were 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 canvass'd human mysteries,
 And trod on silk, as if the winds
 Blew his own praises in his eyes,
 And stood aloof from other minds
 In impotence of fancied power.

With lips depress'd as he were meek,
 Himself unto himself he sold :
 Upon himself himself did feed :
 Quiet, dispassionate, and cold,
 And other than his form of creed,
 With chisell'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,
 Filling with light

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

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

And bravely furnish'd all abroad to fling
 The winged shafts of truth,
 To throng with stately blooms the breath-
 ing spring
 Of Hope and Youth.

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

Thus truth was multiplied on truth, the
 world
 Like one great garden show'd,

And thro' the wreaths of floating dark
upcurl'd,
Rare sunrise flow'd.

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

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

THE POET'S MIND.

I.

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.

II.

Dark-brow'd sophist, come not anear ;
All the place is holy ground ;
Hollow smile and frozen sneer
Come not here.
Holy water will I pour
Into every spicy flower
Of the laurel-shrubs that hedge it around.
The flowers would faint at your cruel cheer.

In your eye there is death,
There is frost in your breath
Which would blight the plants.
Where you stand you cannot hear
From the groves within
The wild-bird's din.

In the heart of the garden the merry
bird chants,

It would fall to the ground if you came in.
In the middle leaps a fountain
Like sheet lightning,
Ever brightening

With a low melodious thunder ;
All day and all night it is ever drawn
From the brain of the purple mountain
Which stands in the distance yonder :
It springs on a level of bowery lawn,
And the mountain draws it from Heaven
above,

And it sings a song of undying love ;
And yet, tho' its voice be so clear and full,
You never would hear it ; your ears are
so dull ;

So keep where you are : you are foul with
sin ;

It would shrink to the earth if you came
in.

THE SEA-FAIRIES.

Slow sail'd the weary mariners and saw,
Betwixt the green brink and the run-
ning foam,
Sweet faces, rounded arms, and bosoms
prest
To little harps of gold ; and while they
mused,
Whispering to each other half in fear,
Shrill music reach'd them on the middle
sea.

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

Whither away from the high green field,
and the happy blossoming shore ?
Day and night to the billow 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 wails ;
 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 bight and
 bay,
 And the rainbow forms and flies on the
 land
 Over the islands free ;
 And the rainbow lives in the curve of
 the sand ;
 Hither, come hither and see ;
 And the rainbow hangs on the poising
 wave,
 And sweet is the color of cove and cave,
 And sweet shall your welcome be :
 O hither, come hither, and be our lords,
 For merry brides are we :
 We will kiss sweet kisses, and speak
 sweet words :
 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.

I.

LIFE and Thought have gone away
 Side by side,
 Leaving door and windows wide :
 Careless tenants they !

II.

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



“Life and Thought have gone away
 Side by side.”

III.

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

IV.

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.

V.

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.

I.

THE plain was grassy, wild and bare,
Wide, wild, and open to the air,
Which had built up everywhere
An under-roof 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.

II.

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

III.

The wild swan's death-hymn took the soul
Of that waste place with joy
Hidden in sorrow : at first to the ear
The warble was low, and full and clear ;
And floating about the under-sky,

Prevailing in weakness, the coronach stole
Sometimes afar, and sometimes anear ;
But anon her awful jubilant voice,
With a music strange and manifold,
Flow'd forth on a carol free and bold :
As when a mighty people rejoice
With shawms, and with cymbals, and
harps of gold,
And the tumult of their acclaim is roll'd
Thro' the open gates of the city afar,
To the shepherd who watcheth the evening
star.
And the creeping mosses and clambering
weeds,
And the willow-branches hoar and dank,
And the wavy swell of the sougning reeds,
And the wave-worn horns of the echoing
bank,
And the silvery marish-flowers that throng
The desolate creeks and pools among,
Were flooded over with eddying song.

A DIRGE.

I.

Now is done thy long day's work ;
Fold thy palms across thy breast,
Fold thine arms, turn to thy rest.
Let them rave.
Shadows of the silver birk
Sweep the green that folds thy grave.
Let them rave.

II.

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

III.

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

IV.

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

Rain makes music in the tree
O'er the green that folds thy grave.
Let them rave.

V.

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.

VI.

The gold-eyed kingcups fine ;
The frail bluebell peereth over
Rare broidry of the purple clover.

Let them rave.

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

VII.

Wild words wander here and there :
God's great gift of speech abused
Makes thy memory confused :

But let them rave.

The balm-ericket carols clear
In the green that folds thy grave.
Let them rave.

LOVE AND DEATH.

WHAT time the mighty moon was gather-
ing light

Love paced the thymy plots of Paradise,
And all about him roll'd his lustrous eyes ;
When, turning round a cassia, 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 eminent creates the shade of death ;
The shadow passeth when the tree shall
fall,

But I shall reign for ever 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 dun 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,
Atween me and the castle wall,
Oriana.

The bitter arrow went aside,
Oriana :

The false, false arrow went aside,
Oriana :

The damned arrow glanced aside,
And pierced thy heart, my love, my bride,

Oriana !
Thy heart, my life, my love, my bride,
Oriana !

Oh ! narrow, narrow was the space,
Oriana.

Loud, loud rung out the bugle's brays,
Oriana.

Oh ! deathful stabs were dealt apace,
The battle deepen'd in its place,
Oriana ;
But I was down upon my face,
Oriana.

They should have stabb'd me where I lay,
Oriana !
How could I rise and come away,
Oriana ?
How could I look upon the day ?
They should have stabb'd me where I lay,
Oriana —
They should have trod me into clay,
Oriana.

O breaking heart that will not break,
Oriana !
O pale, pale face so sweet and meek,
Oriana !
Thou smilest, but thou dost not speak,
And then the tears run down my cheek.
Oriana :
What watest thou ? whom dost thou seek,
Oriana ?

I cry aloud : none hear my cries,
Oriana.
Thou comest atween me and the skies,
Oriana.
I feel the tears of blood arise
Up from my heart unto my eyes,
Oriana.
Within thy heart my arrow lies,
Oriana.

O cursed hand ! O cursed blow !
Oriana !
O happy thou that liest low,
Oriana !
All night the silence seems to flow
Beside me in my utter woe,
Oriana.
A weary, weary way I go,
Oriana.

When Norland winds pipe down the sea,
Oriana,
I walk, I dare not think of thee,
Oriana.
Thou liest beneath the greenwood tree,
I dare not die and come to thee,
Oriana.
I hear the roaring of the sea,
Oriana.

CIRCUMSTANCE.

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

THE MERMAN.

I.

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

II.

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.

III.

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.
 We would call aloud in the dreamy dells,
 Call to each other and whoop and cry
 All night, merrily, merrily ;
 They would pelt me with starry spangles
 and shells,
 Laughing and clapping their hands be-
 tween,
 All night, merrily, merrily :
 But I would throw to them back in
 mine
 Turkis and agate and almondine :
 Then leaping out upon them unseen
 I would kiss them often under the sea,
 And kiss them again till they kiss'd me
 Laughingly, laughingly.
 O, what a happy life were mine
 Under the hollow-hung ocean green !
 Soft are the moss-beds under the sea ;
 We would live merrily, merrily.

THE MERMAID.

I.

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

II.

I would be a mermaid fair ;
 I would sing to myself the whole of the
 day ;
 With a comb of pearl I would comb my
 hair ;
 And still as I comb'd I would sing and
 say,
 "Who is it loves me? who loves not
 me?"
 I would comb my hair till my ringlets
 would fall
 Low adown, low adown,
 From under my starry sea-bud crown
 Low adown and around,
 And I should look like a fountain of
 gold
 Springing alone
 With a shrill inner sound,
 Over the throne
 In the midst of the hall ;

Till that great sea-snake under the sea
 From his coiled sleeps in the central deeps
 Would slowly trail himself sevenfold
 Round the hall where I sate, 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.

III.

But at night I would wander away, away,
 I would fling on each side my low-
 flowing locks,
 And lightly vault from the throne and
 play
 With the mermen in and out of the
 rocks ;
 We would run to and fro, and hide and
 seek,
 On the broad sea-wolds in the crimson
 shells,
 Whose silvery spikes are nighest the sea.
 But if any came near I would call, and
 shriek,
 And adown the steep 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 sue me, and woo me, and
 flatter me,
 In the purple twilights under the sea ;
 But the king of them all would carry me,
 Woo me, and win me, and marry me,
 In the branching jaspers under the sea ;
 Then all the dry pied things that be
 In the hueless 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 lean out from the hollow sphere
 of the sea,
 All looking down for the love of me.

SONNET TO J. M. K.

My hope and heart is with thee — thou
 wilt be
 A latter Luther, and a soldier-priest
 To scare church-harpies from the master's
 feast ;

<p>Our dusted velvets have much need of thee ; Thou art no sabbath-drawler of old saws, Distill'd from some worm - canker'd homily ; But spurr'd at heart with fiercest energy To embattail and to wall about thy cause With iron-worded proof, hating to hark</p>	<p>The humming of the drowsy pulpit-drone Half God's good sabbath, while the worn-out clerk Brow-beats his desk below. Thou from a throne Mounted in heaven wilt shoot into the dark Arrows of lightnings. I will stand and mark.</p>
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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 1833.]

THE LADY OF SHALOTT.

PART I.

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

Willows whiten, aspens quiver,
 Little breezes dusk and shiver
 Thro' the wave that runs for ever
 By the island in the river
 Flowing down to Camelot.
 Four gray walls, and four gray towers,
 Overlook a space of flowers,
 And the silent isle imbowers
 The Lady of Shalott.

By the margin, willow-veil'd,
 Slide the heavy barges trail'd
 By slow horses ; and unhail'd
 The shallop flitteth 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 ?

Only reapers, reaping early
 In among the bearded barley,

Hear a song that echoes cheerly
 From the river winding clearly,
 Down to tower'd Camelot :
 And by the moon the reaper weary,
 Piling sheaves in uplands airy,
 Listening, whispers "'T is the fairy
 Lady of Shalott."

PART II.

THERE she weaves by night and day
 A magic web with colors gay.
 She has heard a whisper say,
 A curse is on her if she stay
 To look down to Camelot.
 She knows not what the curse may be,
 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 for ever kneel'd
 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-jewell'd shone the saddle-leather,
 The helmet and the helmet-feather
 Burned like one burning flame together,
 As he rode down to Camelot.

As often thro' the purple night,
 Below the starry clusters bright,
 Some bearded meteor, trailing light,
 Moves over still Shalott.

His broad clear brow in sunlight glow'd ;
 On burnish'd hooves his war-horse trode ;
 From underneath his helmet flow'd
 His coal-black curls as on he rode,
 As he rode down to Camelot.

From the bank and from the river
 He flash'd into the crystal mirror,
 " Tirra lirra," by the river
 Sang Sir Lancelot.

She left the web, she left the loom,
 She made three paces thro' the room,

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

PART IV.

IN the stormy east-wind straining,
 The pale yellow woods were waning,
 The broad stream in his banks complain-
 ing,
 Heavily the low sky raining
 Over tower'd Camelot ;
 Down she came and found a boat
 Beneath a willow left afloat,
 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.

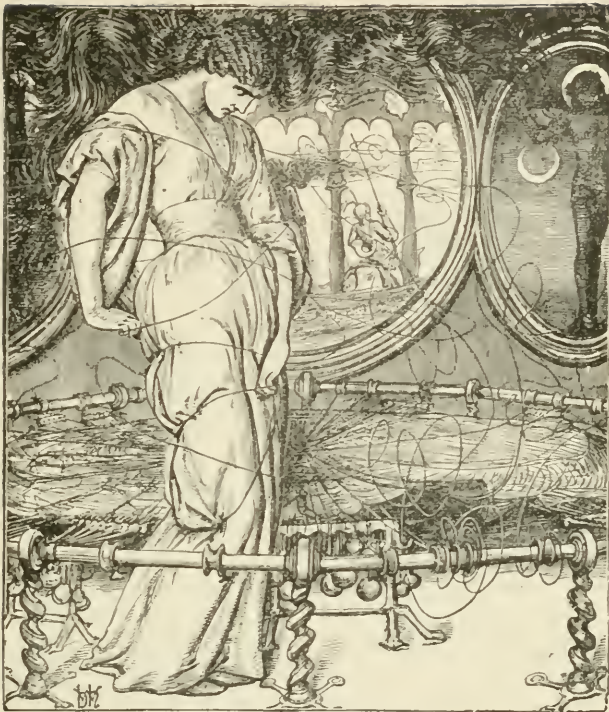
And at the closing of the day
 She loosed the chain, and down she lay ;
 The broad stream bore her far away,
 The Lady of Shalott.

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 willowy hills and fields among,
 They heard her singing her last song,
 The Lady of Shalott.

Heard a carol, mournful, holy,
 Chanted loudly, chanted lowly,
 Till her blood was frozen slowly,
 And her eyes were darken'd wholly,
 Turn'd to tower'd Camelot ;

For ere she reach'd upon the tide
 The first house by the water-side,
 Singing in her song she died,
 The Lady of Shalott.

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



“‘The curse is come upon me,’ cried
The Lady of Shalott.”

Knight and burgher, lord and dame,
And round the prow they read her name,
The Lady of Shalott.

Who is this? and what is here?
And in the lighted palace near
Died the sound of royal cheer;
And they cross'd themselves for fear,
All the knights at Camelot:
But Lancelot mused 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 sadder grew,
From brow and bosom slowly down
Thro' rosy taper fingers drew
Her streaming curls of deepest brown
To left and right, and made appear,
Still-lighted in a secret shrine,
Her melancholy eyes divine.
The home of woe without a tear.

And "Ave Mary," was her moan,
 "Madonna, sad is night and
 morn";
 And "Ah," shesang, "to be all alone,
 To live forgotten, and love for-
 lorn."

Till all the crimson changed, and past
 Into deep orange o'er the sea,
 Low on her knees herself she cast,
 Before Our Lady murmur'd she;
 Complaining, "Mother, give me grace
 To help me of my weary load."
 And on the liquid mirror glow'd
 The clear perfection of her face.

"Is this the form," she made her
 moan,
 "That won his praises night and
 morn?"

And "Ah," she said, "but I wake
 alone,
 I sleep forgotten, I wake forlorn."

Nor bird would sing, nor lamb would bleat,
 Nor any cloud would cross the vault,
 But day increased from heat to heat,
 On stony drought and steaming salt;
 Till now at noon she slept again,
 And seem'd knee-deep in mountain
 grass,

And heard her native breezes pass,
 And runlets babbling down the glen.
 She breathed in sleep a lower moan,
 And murmuring, as at night and
 morn,
 She thought, "My spirit is here
 alone,
 Walks forgotten, and is forlorn."

Dreaming, she knew it was a dream:
 She felt he was and was not there.
 She woke: the babble of the stream
 Fell, and, without, the steady glare
 Shrank one sick willow sere and small.
 The river-bed was dusty-white;
 And all the furnace of the light
 Struck up against the 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 loveliest upon earth."
 An image seem'd to pass the door,

To look at her with slight, and say,
 "But now thy beauty flows away,
 So be alone for evermore."
 "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 night to
 morn,
 And day and night I am left alone
 To live forgotten, and love for-
 lorn."

At eve a dry cicala sung,
 There came a sound as of the sea;
 Backward the lattice-blind she flung,
 And lean'd upon the balcony.
 There all in spaces rosy-bright
 Large Hesper glitter'd on her tears,
 And deepening thro' the silent 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 for-
 lorn."

ELEÑORE.

I.

THY 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,
 Moulded thy baby thought.
 Far off from human neighborhood,
 Thou wert born, on a summer morn,
 A mile beneath the cedar-wood.
 Thy bounteous forehead was not fann'd

With breezes from our oaken glades,
 But thou wert nursed in some delicious
 land
 Of lavish lights, and floating shades :
 And flattering thy childish thought
 The oriental fairy brought,
 At the moment of thy birth,
 From old well-heads of haunted rills,
 And the hearts of purple hills,
 And shadow'd coves on a sunny shore,
 The choicest wealth of all the earth,
 Jewel or shell, or starry ore,
 To deck thy cradle, Eleänore.

II.

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 gar-
 dens cull'd —
 A glorious child, dreaming alone,
 In silk-soft folds, upon yielding down,
 With the hum of swarming bees
 Into dreamful slumber will'd.

III.

Who may minister to thee ?
 Summer herself should minister
 To thee, with fruitage 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 shadowy shore,
 Crimsons over an inland mere,
 Eleänore !

IV.

How may full-sail'd verse express,
 How may measured words adore
 The full-flowing harmony
 Of thy swan-like stateliness,
 Eleänore ?
 The luxuriant symmetry
 Of thy floating gracefulness,
 Eleänore ?
 Every turn and glance of thine,
 Every lineament divine,
 Eleänore,

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 ever. Motions flow
 To one another, even as tho'
 They were modulated so

To an unheard melody,
 Which lives about thee, and a sweep
 Of richest pauses, evermore
 Drawn from each other mellow-deep ;
 Who may express thee, Eleänore ?

V.

I stand before thee, Eleänore ;
 I see thy beauty gradually unfold,
 Daily and hourly, more and more.
 I muse, as in a trance, the while
 Slowly, as from a cloud of gold,
 Comes out thy deep ambrosial smile.
 I muse, as in a trance, when'er
 The languors 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 for evermore,
 Serene, imperial Eleänore !

VI.

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, overpower'd quite,
 I cannot veil, or droop my sight,
 But am as nothing in its light :
 As tho' a star, in inmost 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 Eleänore.

VII.

As thunder-clouds that, hung on high,
 Roof'd the world with doubt and fear,
 Floating thro' an evening atmosphere,
 Grow golden all about the sky ;

In thee all passion becomes passionless,
 Touch'd by thy spirit's mellowness,
 Losing 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 motions of the outer sea :
 And the self-same influence
 Controlleth all the soul and sense
 Of Passion gazing upon thee.
 His bow-string slacken'd, languid Love,
 Leaning his cheek upon his hand,
 Droops both his wings, regarding thee,
 And so would languish evermore,
 Serene, imperial Eleänore.

VIII.

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 silken cushions half-reclined ;
 I watch thy grace ; and in its place
 My heart a charmed slumber keeps,
 While I muse upon thy face ;
 And a languid fire creeps
 Thro' my veins to all my frame,
 Dissolvingly and slowly : soon
 From thy rose-red lips my name
 Floweth ; and then, as in a swoon,
 With dinning 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, Eleänore.

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 drily 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 silvercup—
 I see his gray eyes twinkle yet
 At his own jest — gray eyes lit up
 With summer lightnings of a soul
 So full of summer warmth, so glad,
 So healthy, sound, and clear and whole,
 His memory scarce can make me sad.

Yet fill my glass : give me one kiss :
 My own sweet Alice, we must die.
 There's somewhat in this world amiss
 Shall be unriddled by and by.
 There's somewhat flows to us 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 renew me from my birth
 I'd almost live my life again.
 So sweet it seems with thee to walk,
 And once again to woo thee mine —
 It seems in after-dinner talk
 Across the walnuts and the wine —

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

And oft I heard the tender dove
 In firry woodlands making moan ;
 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 mosses in the stream.

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

But, Alice, what an hour was that,
 When after roving in the woods
 ('T was 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,
 Beat time to nothing in my head
 From some odd corner of the brain.
 It haunted me, the morning long,
 With weary sameness in the rhymes,
 The phantom of a silent song,
 That went and came a thousand times.

Then leapt a 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 beauteous form,
 A glowing arm, a gleaming neck,
 As when a sunbeam wavers warm
 Within the dark and dimpled beck.

For you remember, you had set,
 That morning, on the casement-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
 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 floor,
 The dark round of the dripping wheel,
 The very air about the door
 Made misty with the floating meal.

And oft in ramblings on the wold,
 When April nights began to blow,
 And April's crescent glimmer'd cold,
 I saw the village lights below ;

I knew your taper far away,
 And full at heart of trembling hope,
 From off the wold I came, and lay
 Upon the freshly-flower'd slope.

The deep brook groan'd beneath the mill ;
 And " by that lamp," I thought, " she
 sits ! "

The white chalk-quarry from the hill
 Gleam'd 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 love her for your sake ;
 Go fetch your Alice here," she said :
 Her eyelid quiver'd as she spake.

And down I went to fetch my bride :
 But, Alice, you were ill at ease ;
 This dress and that by turns you tried,
 Too fearful that you should not please.
 I loved you better for your fears,
 I knew you could not look but well ;
 And dews, that would have fall'n in tears,
 I kiss'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 your 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 jewel
That trembles at her ear :
For hid in ringlets day and night,
I'd touch her neck so warm and white.

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

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

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

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

Love that hath us in the net,
Can he 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 en-
twine ;

My other dearer life in life,
Look thro' my very soul with thine !
Untouch'd with any shade of year,
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 waver 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 wolds ;
For look, the sunset, south and north,
Winds all the vale in rosy folds,
And fires your narrow casement glass,
Touching the sullen pool below :
On the chalk-hill the bearded grass
Is dry and dewless. Let us go.

FATIMA.

O LOVE, Love, Love ! O withering might !
O sun, that from thy noonday height
Shudderest 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 lernsh'd them on my breast, my mouth :
I look'd athwart the burning drouth
Of that long desert to the south.

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

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

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

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

ÆNONE.

THERE lies a vale in Ida, lovelier
Than all the valleys of Ionian hills.
The swimming vapor slopes athwart the
glen,
Puts forth an arm, and creeps from pine
to pine,
And loiters, slowly drawn. On either hand

The lawns and meadow-ledges midway
down
Hang rich in flowers, and far below them
roars
The long brook falling thro' the clov'n
ravine
In cataract after cataract to the sea.
Behind the valley topmost Gargarus
Stands up and takes the morning : but
in front
The gorges, opening wide apart, reveal
Troas and Ilion's column'd citadel,
The crown of Troas.

Hither came at noon
Mournful Ænone, 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 mountain-
shade
Sloped downward to her seat from the
upper cliff.

“O mother Ida, many-fountain'd Ida,
Dear mother Ida, harken 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 cicala sleeps.
The purple flowers droop : the golden bee
Is lily-eradled : I alone awake.
My eyes are full of tears, my heart of love,
My heart is breaking, and my eyes are dim,
And I am all aware of my life.

“O mother Ida, many-fountain'd Ida,
Dear mother Ida, harken 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 shape : 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, harken ere I die.
I waited underneath the dawning hills,
Aloft the mountain lawn was dewy-dark,
And dewy-dark aloft the mountain pine :

Beautiful Paris, evil-hearted Paris,
Leading a jet-black goat white-horn'd,
white-hooved,
Came up from reedy Simois all alone.

“O mother Ida, harken ere I die.
Far-off the torrent call'd me from the
cleft :

Far up the solitary morning smote
The streaks of virgin snow. With down-
dropt eyes

I sat alone : white-breasted like a star
Fronting the dawn he moved ; a leopard
skin

Droop'd from his shoulder, but his sunny
hair

Cluster'd about his temples like a God's :
And his cheek brighten'd as the foam-
bow brightens

When the wind blows the foam, and all
my heart

Went forth to embrace him coming ere
he came.

“Dear mother Ida, harken ere I die.
Hesmiled, and opening out his milk-white
palm

Disclosed a fruit of pure Hesperian gold,
That smelt ambrosially, and while I look'd
And listen'd, the full-flowing river of
speech

Came down upon my heart.

“My own CEnone,
Beautiful-brow'd CEnone, my own soul,
Behold this fruit, whose gleaming rind
ingrav'n

“For the most fair,” would seem to award
it thine,

As lovelier than whatever Oread haunt
The knolls of Ida, loveliest in all grace
Of movement, and the charm of married
brows.'

“Dear mother Ida, harken ere I die.
He prest the blossom of his lips to mine,
And added 'This was cast upon the board,
When all the full-faced presence of the
Gods

Ranged in the halls of Peleus ; whereupon
Rose feud, with question unto whom
't were due :

But light-foot Iris brought it yester-eve,
Delivering, that to me, by common voice,
Elected umpire, Herè comes to-day,
Pallas and Aphrodite, claiming each
This meed of fairest. Thou, within the
cave

Behind yon whispering tuft of oldest pine,
Mayst well behold them unbeheld, un-
heard
Hear all, and see thy Paris judge of Gods.'

“Dear mother Ida, harken ere I die.
It was the deep midnight : one silvery
cloud

Had lost his way between the piney sides
Of this long glen. Then to the bower
they came,

Naked they came to that smooth-swarded
bower,

And at their feet the crocus brake like fire,
Violet, amaraeus, and asphodel,

Lotos 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 bunch and berry and flower thro'
and thro'.

“O mother Ida, harken ere I die.
On the tree-tops a crested peacock lit,
And o'er him flow'd a golden cloud, and
lean'd

Upon him, slowly dropping fragrant dew.
Then first I heard the voice of her, to
whom

Coming thro' Heaven, like a light that
grows

Larger and clearer, with one mind the
Gods

Rise up for reverence. She to Paris made
Proffer of royal power, ample rule
Unquestion'd, overflowing revenue

Wherewith to embellish state, 'from
many a vale

And river-sunder'd champaign clothed
with corn,

Or labor'd mines undrainable of ore.
Honor,' she said, 'and homage, tax and
toll,

From many an inland town and haven
large,

Mast-throng'd beneath her shadowing
citadel

In glassy bays among her tallest towers.'

“O mother Ida, harken 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 throned of wisdom -- from all neigh-
bor crowns

Alliance and allegiance, till thy hand

Fail from the sceptre-staff. Such boon
from me,

From me, Heaven's Queen, Paris, to
thee king-born,

A shepherd all thy life but yet king-born,
Should come most welcome, seeing men,
in power,

Only, are likest gods, who have attain'd
Rest in a happy place and quiet seats
Above the thunder, with undying bliss
In knowledge of their own supremacy.'

"Dear mother Ida, harken ere I die.
She ceased, and Paris held the costly fruit
Out at arm's-length, so much the thought
of power

Flatter'd his spirit ; but Pallas where she
stood
Somewhat apart, her clear and bared limbs
O'erthwarted with the brazen-headed
spear

Upon her pearly shoulder leaning cold,
The while, above, her full and earnest eye
Over hersnow-cold breast and angry cheek
Kept watch, waiting decision, made reply.

"Self-reverence, self-knowledge, self-
control,
These three alone lead life to sovereign
power.

Yet not for power, (power of herself
Would come uncall'd for) but to live by
law,

Acting the law we live by without fear ;
And, because right is right, to follow right
Were wisdom in the scorn of conse-
quence.'

"Dear mother Ida, harken ere I die.
Again she said : 'I woo thee not with gifts.
Sequel of guerdon could not alter me
To fairer. Judge thou me by what I am,
So shalt thou find me fairest.

Yet, indeed,

If gazing on divinity disrobed
Thy mortal eyes are frail to judge of fair,
Unbiass'd by self-profit, O, 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 Paris,
Give it to Pallas !' but he heard me not,
Or hearing would not hear me, woe is me !

"O mother Ida, many-fountain'd Ida
Dear mother Ida, harken ere I die.
Idalian Aphrodite beautiful,
Fresh as the foam, new-bathed in Paphiar
wells,

With rosy slender fingers backward drew
From her warm brows and bosom her
deep hair

Ambrosial, golden round her lucid throat
And shoulder : from the violets her light
foot

Shone rosy-white, and o'er her rounded
form

Between the shadows of the vine-bunches
Floated the glowing sunlights, as she
moved.

"Dear mother Ida, harken ere I die.
She with a subtle smile in her mild eyes,
The herald of her triumph, drawing nigh
Half-whisper'd in his ear, 'I promise thee
The fairest and most loving wife in Greece.'
She spoke and laugh'd : I shut my sight
for fear :

But when I look'd, Paris had raised his
arm,

And I beheld great Herè's angry eyes,
As she withdrew into the golden cloud,
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 Ida, harken ere I die.
Fairest — why fairest wife ? am I not fair ?
My love hath told me so a thousand times.
Methinks I must be fair, for yesterday,
When I past by, a wild and wanton pard,
Eyed like the evening star, with playful
tail

Crouch'd fawning in the weed. Most
loving is she ?

Ah me, my mountain shepherd, that my
arms

Were wound about thee, and my hot lips
prest

Close, close to thine in that quick-falling
dew

Of fruitful kisses, thick as Autumn rains
Flash in the pools of whirling Simois.

“O mother, hear me yet before I die.
They came, they cut away my tallest pines,
My dark tall pines, that plumed the
craggy ledge

High over the blue gorge, and all between
The snowy peak and snow-white cataract
Foster'd the callow eaglet—from beneath
Whose thick mysterious boughs in the
dark morn

The panther's roar came muffled, while I
sat

Low in the valley. Never, never more
Shall lone Enone see the morning mist
Sweep thro' them; never see them over-
laid

With narrow moon-lit slips of silver cloud,
Between the loud stream and the trembling
stars.

“O mother, hear me yet before I die.
I wish that somewhere in the ruin'd folds,
Among the fragments tumbled from the
glens,

Or the dry thickets, I could meet with her,
The Abominable, that uninvited came
Into the fair Peleïan 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 weighest heavy on the heart within,
Weigh heavy on my eyelids: let me die.

“O mother, hear me yet before I die.
I will not die alone, for fiery thoughts

Do shape themselves within me, more
and more,

Whereof I catch the issue, as I hear
Dead sounds at night come from the in-
most hills,

Like footsteps upon wool. I dimly see
My far-off doubtful purpose, as a mother
Conjectures of the features of her child
Ere it is born: her child!—a shudder
comes

Across me: never child be born of me,
Unblest, to vex me with his father's eyes!

“O mother, hear me yet before I die.
Hear me, O earth. I will not die alone,
Lest their shrill happy laughter come to me
Walking the cold and starless road of
Death

Uncomforted, leaving my ancient love
With the Greek woman. I will rise and go
Down into Troy, and ere the stars come
forth

Talk with the wild Cassandra, for she says
A fire dances before her, and a sound
Rings ever in her ears of armed men.

What this may be I know not, but I know
That, wheresoe'er I am by night and day,
All earth and air seem only burning fire.

THE SISTERS.

WE were two daughters of one race:

She was the fairest in the face:

The wind is blowing in turret and tree

They were together, and she fell;

Therefore revenge became me well.

O the Earl was fair to see!

She died: she went to burning flame:

She mix'd her ancient blood with shame.

The wind is howling in turret and tree.

Whole weeks and months, and early and
late,

To win his love I lay in wait:

O the Earl was fair to see!

I made a feast; I bade him come;

I won his love, I brought him home.

The wind is roaring in turret and tree.

And after supper, on a bed,

Upon my lap he 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 turret and tree.

I hated him with the hate of hell,
But I loved his beauty passing well.
O the Earl was fair to see !

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

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

TO ———

WITH THE FOLLOWING POEM.

I SEND you here a sort of allegory,
(For you will understand it) of a soul,
A sinful soul possess'd of many gifts,
A spacious garden full of flowering weeds,
A glorious Devil, large in heart and brain,
That did love Beauty only, (Beauty seen
In all varieties of 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 doat 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 thresh-
old 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 bur-
nish'd brass
I chose. The ranged ramparts bright
From level meadow-bases of deep grass
Suddenly scaled the light.

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

And "while the world runs round and
round," I said,
"Reign thou apart, a quiet king,
Still as, while Saturn whirls, his stedfast
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 wide."

* * * *
* * * *

Four courts I made, East, West and
South and North,
In each a squared lawn, wherefrom
The golden gorge of dragonsspouted 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, tossing up
A cloud of incense of all odor steam'd
From out a golden cup.

So that she thought, "And who shall
gaze upon

My palace with unblinded eyes,
While this great bow will waver in the sun,
And that sweet incense rise?"

For that sweet incense rose and never
fail'd,

And, while day sank or mounted
higher

The light aerial gallery, golden-rail'd,
Burnt like a fringe of fire.

Likewise the deep-set windows, stain'd
and traced,

Would seem slow-flaming crimson fires
From shadow'd grotts of arches interlaced,
And tipt with frost-like spires.

* * * *

* * * *

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

Full of great rooms and small the palace
stood,

All various, each a perfect whole
From living Nature, fit for every mood
And change of my still soul.

For some were hung with arras green and
blue,

Showing a gaudy summer-morn,
Where with puff'd cheek the belted
hunter blew
His wreathed bugle-horn.

One seem'd all dark and red — a tract of
sand,

And some one pacing there alone,
Who paced for ever 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 sultry
toil.

In front they bound the sheaves. Be
hind

Were realms of upland, prodigal in oil,
And hoary to the wind.

And one, a foreground black with stones
and slags,

Beyond, a line of heights, and higher
All barr'd with long white cloud the
scornful crags,
And highest, snow and fire.

And one, an English home — gray twi-
light 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 sardoniyx
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 look'd at her.

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

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

Or hollowing one hand against his ear,
To list a foot-fall, 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 sail'd
A summer fann'd with spice.

Or sweet Europa's mantle blew unclasp'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,
Mov'd of themselves, with silversound ;
And with choice paintings of wise men I
hung
The royal dais round.

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

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

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

Below was all mosaic choicely plann'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,
Toil'd onward, prick'd with goads and
stings ;

Here play'd, a tiger, rolling to and fro
The heads and crowns of kings ;

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

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

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

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

Thro' which the lights, rose, amber,
emerald, blue,
Flush'd in her temples and her eyes,
And from her lips, as morn from Mem-
non, 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,
'T is 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 sate my various eyes !
O shapes and hues that please me well !
O silent faces of the Great and Wise,
My Gods, with whom I dwell !

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

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

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

“ I take possession of man's mind and
deed.
I care not what the sects may brawl.
I sit as God holding no form of creed,
But contemplating all.”

* * * *

* * * *

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 throve 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 fail and perish utterly,
God, before whom ever lie bare
The abysmal deeps of Personality,
Plagued her with sore despair.

When she would think, where'er she
turn'd her sight
The airy hand confusion wrought,

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 ! 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 phantasms weeping tears
of blood,
And horrible nightmares,

And hollow shades enclosing hearts of
flame,
And, with dim fretted foreheads all,
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, mouldering with the dull earth's
mouldering 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 unrelieved by dismal tears,
And all alone in crime :

Shut up as in a crumbling tomb, girt 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
Moan 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 howl'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 VERE DE VERE.

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

Lady Clara Vere de Vere,
I know you proud to bear your name,
Your pride is yet no mate for mine,
Too proud to care from whence I came.
Nor would I break for your sweet sake
A heart that doats on truer charms.

A simple maiden in her flower
Is worth a hundred coats-of-arms.

Lady Clara Vere de Vere,
Some 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.

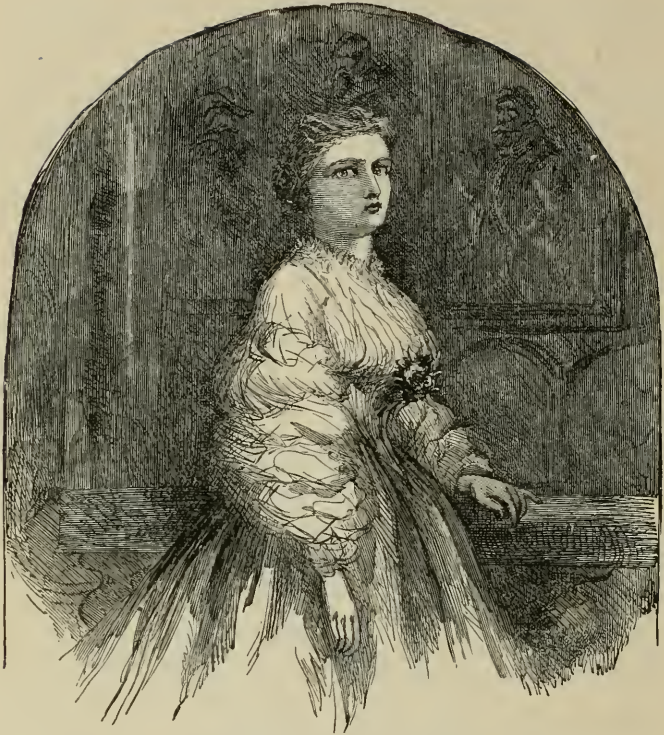
Lady Clara Vere de Vere,
You put strange memories in my head.
Not thrice your branching limes have
blown
Since I beheld young Laurence dead.
O, your sweet eyes, your low replies :
A great enchantress you may be ;
But there was that across his throat
Which you had hardly cared to see.

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 yon blue heavens above us bent
The gardener Adam and his wife
Smile at the claims of long descent.
Howe'er it be, it seems to me,
'T is only noble to be good.
Kind hearts are more than coronets,
And simple faith than Norman blood.

I know you, Clara Vere de Vere,
You pine among your halls and towers :
The languid light of your proud eyes
Is wearied of the rolling hours.
In glowing health, with boundless wealth,
But sickening of a vague disease,
You know so ill to deal with time,
You needs must play such pranks as
these.



"The daughter of a hundred Earls,
You are not one to be desired."

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;
To-morrow 'ill 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.



" 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 "

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 wha' 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 the
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
wov'n its wavy bowers,
And by the meadow-trenches blow the
faint sweet cuckoo-flowers ;
And the wild marsh-marigold shines like
fire in swamps and hollows gray,
And I'm to be Queen o' the May, mother,
I'm to be Queen o' the May.

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

All the valley, mother, '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.

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 i' 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 copse,
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.

Upon the chancel-casement, and upon
that grave of mine,
In the early early morning the summer
sun 'ill shine,
Before the red cock crows from the farm
upon the hill,
When you are warm-asleep, mother, and
all the world is still.

When the flowers come again, mother,
beneath the waning light
You'll never see me more in the long
gray fields at night ;
When from the dry dark wold the sum-
mer airs blow cool
On the oat-grass and the sword-grass,
and the bulrush 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 ;
Tho' you'll not see me, mother, I shall
look upon your face ;
Tho' I cannot speak a word, I shall
harken 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 for evermore,
And you see me carried out from the
threshold of the door ;
Don't let Effie come to see me till my
grave be growing green :
She'll be a better child to you than
ever I have been.

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

Good-night, sweet mother : call me be-
fore 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 THOUGHT 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 morn-
ing 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.

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 resign'd,
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 a 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 ;
 He shines upon a hundred fields, and all
 of them I know.
 And there I move no longer now, and
 there his light may shine —
 Wild flowers in the valley for other hands
 than mine.

O sweet and strange it seems to me, that
 ere this day is done
 The voice, that now is speaking, may be
 beyond the sun —
 For ever and for ever with those just
 souls and true —
 And what is life, that we should moan ?
 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 mounting wave will roll us shore
 ward soon."
 In the afternoon they came unto a land,
 In which it seemed always afternoon.
 All round the coast the languid air did
 swoon,
 Breathing like one that hath a weary
 dream.
 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 veils of thinnest lawn, did
 go ;
 And some thro' wavering lights and
 shadows broke,
 Rolling a slumbrous sheet of foam below.
 They saw the gleaming river seaward
 flow
 From the inner land : far off, three
 mountain-tops,
 Three silent pinnacles of aged snow,
 Stood sunset-flush'd : and, dew'd with
 showery drops,
 Up-clomb the shadowy pine above the
 woven copse.

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



“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.”

Branches they bore of that enchanted
stem,
Laden with flower and fruit, whereof they
gave

To each, but whoso did receive of them,
And taste, to him the gushing of the wave
Far far away did seem to mourn and rave
On alien shores ; and if his fellow spake,
His voice was thin, as voices from the
grave ;

And deep-asleep he seem'd, yet all awake,
And music in his ears his beating heart
did make.

They sat them down upon the yellow sand,
Between the sun and moon upon the shore ;
And sweet it was to dream of Father-land ;
Of child, and wife, and slave ; but ever-
more

Most weary seem'd the sea, weary the oar,
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.

I.

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 gentlier on the spirit lies,
Than tir'd eyelids upon tir'd eyes ;
Music that brings sweet sleep down from
the blissful skies.

Here are cool mosses deep,
And thro' the moss the ivies creep,
And in the stream the long-leaved flowers
weep,
And from the craggy ledge the poppy
hangs in sleep.

II.

Why are we weigh'd upon with heaviness,
And utterly consumed with sharp distress,
While all things else have rest from
weariness ?

All things have rest : why should we
toil alone,
We only toil, who are the first of things.

And make perpetual moan,
 Still from one sorrow to another thrown :
 Nor ever fold our wings,
 And cease from wanderings,
 Nor steep our brows in slumber's holy
 balm ;
 Nor harken what the inner spirit sings,
 "There is no joy but calm !"
 Why should we only toil, the roof and
 crown of things ?

III.

Lo ! in the middle of the wood
 The folded leaf is woo'd from out the bud
 With winds 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 ! sweeten'd with the summer light,
 The full-juiced apple, waxing over-
 mellow,
 Drops in a silent autumn night.
 All its allotted length of days,
 The flower ripens in its place,
 Ripens and fades, and falls, and hath no
 toil,
 Fast-rooted in the fruitful soil.

IV.

Hateful is the dark-blue sky,
 Vaulted o'er the dark-blue 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
 In ever climbing up the climbing wave ?
 All things have rest, and ripen toward
 the grave
 In silence ; ripen, fall and cease :
 Give us long rest or death, dark death,
 or dreamful ease.

V.

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 crisping ripples on the beach,
 And tender curving lines of creamy spray ;
 To lend our hearts and spirits wholly
 To the influence of mild-minded melan-
 choly ;
 To muse and brood and live again in
 memory,
 With those old faces of our infancy
 Heap'd over with a mound of grass,
 Two handfuls of white dust, shut in an
 urn of brass !

VI.

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 :
 'T is hard to settle order once again.
 There is confusion worse than death,
 Trouble on trouble, pain on pain,
 Long labor unto aged breath,
 Sore task to hearts worn out by many
 wars
 And eyes grown 'dim with gazing on the
 pilot-stars.

VII.

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 wov'n acanthus-wreath
divine !

Only to hear and see the far-off sparkling
brine,

Only to hear were sweet, stretch'd out
beneath the pine.

VIII.

The Lotos blooms below the barren peak
The Lotos blows by every winding creek :
All day the wind breathes low with
mellower tone :

Thro' every hollow cave and alley lone
Round and round the spicy downs the
yellow Lotus-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 monsterspouted 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 mankind.

For they lie beside their nectar, and the
bolts are hur'd

Far below them in the valleys, and the
clouds are lightly curl'd

Round their golden houses, girdled with
the gleaming world :

Where they smile in secret, looking over
wasted lands,

Blight and famine, plague and earth-
quake, 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 doleful song

Steaming 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
enduring toil,

Storing yearly little dues of wheat, and
wine and oil ;

Till they perish and they suffer — some,
't is whisper'd — 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 oar ;

O rest ye, brother mariners, we will not
wander more.

A DREAM OF FAIR WOMEN.

I READ, before my eyelids dropt 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

Prelude those melodious bursts,
that fill

The spacious times of great Elizabeth
With sounds that echo still.

And, for a while, the knowledge of his art
Held me above the subject, as strong
gales

Hold swollen clouds from raining, tho'
my heart,

Brimful of those wild tales,

Charged both mine eyes with tears. In
every land

I saw, wherever light illumineth,
Beauty and anguish walking hand in hand
The downward slope to death.

Those far-renowned brides of ancient song
Peopled the hollow dark, like burn-
ing stars,

And I heard sounds of insult, shame, and
wrong,

And trumpets blown for wars ;

And clattering flints batter'd with clang-
ing hoofs :

And I saw crowds in column'd sanc-
tuaries ;

And forms that pass'd at windows and
on roofs

Of marble palaces ;

Corpses across the threshold ; heroes tall
Dislodging pinnacle and parapet



"O rest ye, brother mariners, we will not wander more."

Upon the tortoise creeping to the wall ;
Lances in ambush set ;

And high shrine-doors burst thro' with
heated blasts
That run before the fluttering tongues
of fire ;

White surf wind-scatter'd over sails and
masts,
And ever climbing higher :

Squadrons and squares of men in brazen
plates,
Scaffolds, still sheets of water, divers
woes,

Ranges of glimmering vaults with iron
grates,
And hushed seraglios.

So shape chased shape as swift as, when
to land
Bluster the winds and tides the self-
same way,
Crisp foam-flakes scud along the level
sand,
Torn 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 flushes all the cheek.

And once my arm was lifted to hew down
A cavalier from 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-lapsing
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 wander'd far
In an old wood : fresh-wash'd in
coolest dew
The maiden splendors of the morning star
Shook in the stedfast blue.

Enormous elm-tree-boles did stoop and lean
Upon the dusky brushwood under-
neath
Their broad curved branches, fledg'd
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 sepulchre
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' lush 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,
Pour'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
Thrill'd thro' mine ears in that un-
blissful clime,
" Pass freely thro' : the wood is all thine
own,
Until the end of time."

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

Her loveliness with shame and with sur-
prise
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
died,"
I answer'd free ; and turning I appeal'd
To one that stood beside.

But she, with sick and scornful looks
averse,
To her full height her stately stature
draws ;

" My youth," she said, " was blasied
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
wolfish 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.”

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

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

I turning saw, throned on a flowery rise,
One sitting on a crimson scarf un-
roll'd ;
A queen, with swarthy cheeks and bold
black eyes,
Brow-bound with burning gold.

She, flashing forth a haughty smile,
began :
“I govern'd men by change, and so
I sway'd
All moods. 'T is long since I have seen
a man.
Once, like the moon, I made

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

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

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

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

“And the wild kiss, when fresh from
war's alarms,
My Hercules, my Roman Antony,
My mailed Bacchus leapt 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 !”

(With that she tore her robe apart, and
half
The polish'd argent of her breast to
sight
Laid bare. Thereto she pointed with a
laugh,
Showing the aspick's bite.)

“I died a Queen. The Roman soldier
found
Me lying dead, my crown about my
brows,
A name for ever ! — lying robed and
crown'd,
Worthy a Roman spouse.”

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

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

Still with their fires Love tipt his keenest
darts ;
As once they drew into two burning
rings
All beams of Love, melting the mighty
hearts
Of captains 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 gloom with
 beams divine :
 All night the splinter'd crags that walk
 the dell
 With spires of silver shine.”

As one that museth where broad sunshine
 laves
 The lawn by 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 Gileadite,
 A maiden pure ; as when she went
 along
 From Mizpeh's tower'd gate with wel-
 come light,
 With timbrel and with song.

My words leapt 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 darken'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 ills.

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

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

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

<p>She lock'd her lips : she left me where I stood : "Glory to God," she sang, and past afar, Thridding the sombre boskage of the wood, Toward the morning-star.</p> <p>Losing her carol I stood pensively, As one that from a casement leans his head, When midnight bells cease ringing sud- denly, And the old year is dead.</p> <p>"Alas ! alas !" a low voice, full of care, Murmur'd beside me : "Turn and look on me : I am that Rosamond, whom men call fair, If what I was I be.</p> <p>"Would I had been some maiden coarse and poor ! O me, that I should ever see the light ! Those dragon eyes of anger'd Eleanor Do hunt me, day and night."</p> <p>She ceased in tears, fallen from hope and trust : To whom the Egyptian : "O, you tamey died ! You should have clung to Fulvia's waist, and thrust The dagger thro' her side."</p> <p>With that sharp sound the white dawn's creeping beams, Stol'n to my brain, dissolved the mystery Of folded sleep. The captain of my dreams Ruled in the eastern sky.</p> <p>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 ;</p> <p>Or her, who knew that Love can vanquish Death, Who kneeling, with one arm about her king,</p>	<p>Drew forth the poison with her balmy breath, Sweet as new buds in Spring.</p> <p>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</p> <p>Each little sound and sight. With what dull pain Compass'd, how eagerly I sought to strike Into that wondrous track of dreams again ! But no two dreams are like.</p> <p>As when a soul laments, which hath been blest, Desiring what is mingled with past years, In yearnings that can never be exprest By signs or groans or tears ;</p> <p>Because all words, tho' cull'd with choicest art, Failing to give the bitter of the sweet, Wither beneath the palate, and the heart Faints, faded by its heat.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">MARGARET.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">I.</p> <p>O SWEET pale Margaret, O rare pale Margaret, What lit your eyes with tearful power, Like moonlight on a falling shower ? Who lent you, love, your mortal dower Of pensive thought and aspect pale, Your melancholy sweet and frail As perfume of the cuckoo-flower ? From the westward-winding flood, From the evening-lighted wood, From all things outward you have won</p> <p>A tearful grace, as tho' you stood Between the rainbow and the sun. The very smile before you speak, That dimples your transparent cheek, Encircles all the heart, and feedeth The senses with a still delight Of dainty sorrow without sound, Like the tender amber round, Which the moon about her spreadeth, Moving thro' a fleecy night.</p>
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II.

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

III.

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

IV.

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 aërially blue,
 But ever trembling thro' the dew
 Of dainty-woful sympathies.

V.

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 limes are tall and shady,
 And faint, rainy lights are seen,
 Moving in the leavy beech.
 Rise from the feast of sorrow, lady,
 Where all day long you sit between
 Joy and woe, and whisper each.
 Or only look across the lawn,
 Look out below your bower-eaves,
 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 thee
 round,

I keep smooth plats of fruitful ground,
 Where thou may'st warble, eat and dwell.

The espaliers and the standards all
 Are thine ; the range of lawn and park :
 The unnetted 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 cold dagger of thy bill
 To fret the summer jenneting.

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 hawkker hawks his wares.

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

THE DEATH OF THE OLD YEAR.

FULL knee-deep lies the winter snow,
 And the winter winds are wearily sighing :
 Toll ye the church-bell sad and slow,
 And tread softly and speak low,
 For the old year lies a-dying.

Old year, you must not die ;
 You came to us so readily,
 You lived with us so steadily,
 Old year, you shall not die.

He lieth still : he doth not move :
 He will not see the dawn of day.
 He hath no other life above.
 He gave me a friend, and a true true-love,
 And the New-year will take 'em away.

Old year, you must not go ;
 So long as you have been with us,
 Such joy as you have seen with us,
 Old year, you shall not go.

He froth'd his bumpers to the brim ;
 A jollier year we shall not see.
 But tho' his eyes are waxing dim,
 And tho' his foes speak ill of him,
 He was a friend to me.

Old year, you shall not die ;
 We did so laugh and cry with you,
 I've half a mind to die with you,
 Old year, if you must die.

He was full of joke and jest,
 But all his merry quips are o'er.
 To see him die, across the waste
 His son and heir doth ride post-haste,
 But he'll be dead before.

Every one for his own.
 The night is starry and cold, my
 friend,
 And the New-year blithe and bold,
 my friend,
 Comes up to take his own.

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 :
 'T is nearly twelve o'clock.

Shake hands, before you die.
 Old year, we'll dearly rue for you :
 What is it we can do for you ?
 Speak out before you die.

His face is growing sharp and thin.
 Alack ! our friend is gone.
 Close up his eyes : tie up his chin :
 Step from the corpse, and let him in
 That standeth there alone,

And waiteth at the door.
 There's a new foot on the floor, my
 friend,
 And a new face at the door, my friend,
 A new face at the door.

TO J. S.

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

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

'T is strange that those we lean on most,
 Those in whose laps our limbs are
 nursed,
 Fall into shadow, soonest lost :
 Those we love first are taken first.

God gives us love. Something to love
 He lends us ; but, when love is grown
 To ripeness, that on which it throve
 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 — not speak to me
 Once more. Two years his chair is
 seen
 Empty before us. That was he
 Without whose life I had not been.

Your loss is rarer ; for this star
 Rose with you thro' a little arc
 Of heaven, nor having wander'd far
 Shot on the sudden into dark.

I knew your brother : his mute dust
 I honor and his living worth :
 A man more pure and bold and just
 Was never born into the earth.

I have not look'd upon you nigh,
 Since that dear soul hath fall'n asleep.
 Great Nature is more wise than I :
 I will not tell you not to weep.

And tho' mine own eyes 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. 'T were 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.

You ask me, why, tho' ill at ease,
Within this region I subsist,
Whose spirits falter in the mist,
And languish for the purple seas ?

It is the land that freemen till,
That sober-suited Freedom chose,
The land, where girt with friends or
foes

A man may speak the thing he will ;

A land of settled government,
A land of just and old renown,
Where Freedom broadens slowly
down
From precedent to precedent :

Where faction seldom gathers head,
But by degrees to fulness wrought,
The strength of some diffusive
thought

Hath time and space to work and spread.

Should banded unions persecute
Opinion, and induce a time
When single thought is civil crime,
And individual freedom mute ;

The 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 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,
Self-gather'd in her prophet-mind,
But fragments of her mighty voice
Came rolling on the wind.

Then stopt 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 isle-altar gazing down,
Who, God-like, grasps 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 !

LOVETHOU thyland, with love far-brought
 From out the storied Past, and used
 Within the Present, but transfused
 Thro' future time by power of thought.

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

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 girt 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 toil for title, place, or touch
 Of pension, neither count on praise :
 It grows to guerdon after-days :
 Nor deal in watch-words overmuch :

Not clinging to some ancient saw ;
 Not master'd by some modern term ;
 Not swift nor 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-develop'd strength awaits
 Completion in a painful school ;
 Phantoms of other forms of rule,
 New Majesties of mighty States —

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

To-morrow yet would reap to-day,
 As we bear blossoms of the dead ;
 Earn well the thrifty months, nor wed
 Raw Haste, half-sister to Delay.

THE GOOSE.

I KNEW an old wife lean and poor,
 Her rags 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 — 't was no great matter.
 The goose let fall a golden egg
 With cackle and with clatter.

She dropt the goose, and caught the pelf.
 And ran to tell her neighbors ;
 And bless'd herself, and curs'd herself,
 And rested from her labors.

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

So sitting, served by man and maid,
 She felt her heart grow prouder :

But ah ! the more the white goose laid
 It clack'd and cackled louder.

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

"A quinsy choke thy curs'd 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 yawl'd the cat ;
 Ran Gaffer, stumbled Gammer.
 The goose flew this way and flew that,
 And fill'd the house with clamor.

As head and heels upon the floor
 They flounder'd 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 scorning ;
 "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 clear'd the larder :

And while on all sides breaking loose
 Her household fled the danger,
 Quoth she, "The Devil take the goose,
 And God forget the stranger !"

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
kiss'd
Beneath the sacred bush and pastaway —
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 Christ-
mas 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 bump'd the ice into three several stars,
Fell in a doze ; and half-awake I heard
The parson taking wide and wider sweeps,
Now harping on the church-commission-
ers,
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 was-
sail-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 't was nothing — that
a truth
Looks freshest in the fashion of the day :
God knows : he has a mint of reasons : ask.
It pleased *me* well enough." "Nay, nay,"
said Hall,
"Why take the style of those heroic times?
For nature brings not back the Mastodon,
Nor we those times ; and why should any
man
Remodel models ? these twelve books of
mine
Were faint Homeric echoes, nothing-
worth,
Mere chaff and draff, much better burnt."
"But I,"
Said Francis, "pick'd the eleventh from
this hearth,
And have it : keep a thing, its use will
come.
I heard it as a sugar-plum for Holmes."
He laugh'd, and I, though sleepy, like a
horse
That hears the corn-bin open, prick'd my
ears ;
For I remember'd Everard's college fame
When we were Freshmen : then at my
request
He brought it ; and the poet little urg'd,
But with some prelude of disparagement,
Read, mouth'ing out his hollow oes and aes,
Deep-chested music, and to this result.

MORTE D'ARTHUR.

So all day long the noise of battle roll'd
Among the mountains by the winter sea ;
Until King Arthur's table, man by man,
Had fall'n in Lyonness about their Lord,
King Arthur : then, because his wound
was deep,
The bold Sir Bedivere uplifted him,
Sir Bedivere, the last of all his knights,
And bore him to a chapel nigh the field,
A broken 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 knights
Whereof this world holds record. Such
a sleep
They sleep — the men I loved. I think
that we

Shall nevermore, 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, —
Tho' Merlin sware that I should come
again

To rule once more — but let what will
be, be,

I am so deeply smitten thro' the helm
That without help I cannot last till morn.
Thou therefore take my brand Excalibur,
Which was my pride : for thou remem-
berest how

In those old days, one summer noon, an
arm

Rose up from out the bosom of the lake,
Clothed in white samite, mystic, wonder-
ful,

Holding the sword, — and how I row'd
across

And took it, and have worn it, like a
king :

And, wheresoever I am sung or told
In aftertime, this also shall be known :
But now delay not : take Excalibur,
And fling him far into the middle mere :
Watch what thou seest, and lightly bring
me word."

To him replied the bold Sir Bedivere :
"It is not meet, Sir King, to leave thee
thus,

Aidless, alone, and smitten thro' the helm.
A little thing may harm a wounded man.
Yet I thy hest will all perform at full,
Watch what I see, and lightly bring thee
word."

So saying, from the ruin'd shrine he
stept

And in the moon athwart the place of
tombs,

Where lay the mighty bones of ancient
men,

Old knights, and over them the sea-wind
sang

Shrill, chill, with flakes of foam. He,
stepping down

By zig-zag paths, and juts of pointed rock,
Came on the shining levels of the lake.

There drew he forth the brand Excali-
bur,

And o'er him, drawing it, the winter moon,
Brightening the skirts of a long cloud,
ran forth

And sparkled keen with frost against the
hilt :

For all the haft twinkled with diamond
sparks,

Myriads of topaz-lights, and jacinth-work
Of subtlest jewellery. He gazed so long
That both his eyes were dazzled, as he
stood,

This way and that dividing the swift mind,
In act to throw : but at the last it seem'd
Better to leave Excalibur conceal'd

'There in the many-knotted waterflags,
That whistled still and dry about the
marge.

So strode he back slow to the wounded
King.

Then spake King Arthur to Sir Bedi-
vere :

"Hast thou perform'd my mission which
I gave ?

What is it thou hast seen ? or what hast
heard ?"

And answer made the bold Sir Bedivere :
"I heard the ripple washing in the reeds,
And the wild water lapping on the crag."

To whom replied King Arthur, faint
and pale :

"Thou hast betray'd thy nature and thy
name,

Not rendering true-answer, as beseem'd
Thy féalty, nor like a noble knight :

For surer sign had follow'd, either hand,
Or voice, or else a motion of the mere.

This is a shameful thing for men to lie.
Yet now, I charge thee, quickly go again

As thou art lief and dear, and do the
thing

I bade thee, watch, and lightly bring me
word."

Then went Sir Bedivere thesecond time
Across the ridge, and paced beside the
mere,

Counting the dewy pebbles, fix'd in
thought ;

But when he saw the wonder of the hilt,
How curiously and strangely chased, he
smote

His palms together, and he cried aloud.

"And if indeed I cast the brand away,
Surely a precious thing, one worthy note,



D. MACLISE, P.A.

THOMPSON.

"An arm

Rose up from out the bosom of the lake
Clothed in white samite."

Should thus be lost for ever 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 dis-
obey,
Seeing obedience is the base of rule.
Were it well to obey them, if a king demand
An act unprofitable, against himself?

The King is sick, and knows not what
he does.
What record, or what relic of my lord
Should be to after time, but empty breath
And rumors of a doubt? but were this
kept,
Stored in some treasure-house of mighty
kings,
Some one might show it at a joust 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 af-
tertime

To all the people, winning reverence.

But now much honor and much fame
were lost."

So spake he, clouded with his own con-
ceit,

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 widow'd of the power in his eye

That bow'd the will. I see thee what
thou art,

For thou, the latest-left of all my knights,
In whom should meet the offices of all,

Thou wouldst betray me for the precious
hilt ;

Either from lust of gold, or like a girl
Valuing the giddy pleasure of the eyes.

Yet, for a man may fail in duty twice,
And the third time may prosper, get thee
hence :

But, if thou spare to fling Excalibur,
I will arise and slay thee with my hands."

Then quickly rose Sir Bedivere, and ran,
And, leaping down the ridges lightly,

plunged
Among the bulrush-beds, and clutch'd
the sword,

And strongly wheel'd and threw it. The
great brand

Made lightnings in the splendor of the
moon,

And flashing round and round, and whirl'd
in an arch,

Shot like a streamer of the northern morn,
Seen where the moving isles of winter
shock

By night, with noises of the northern sea.
So flash'd and fell the brand Excalibur :

But ere he dipt the surface, rose an arm
Clothed in white samite, mystic, wonder-
ful,

And caught him by the hilt, and brand-
ish'd him

Three times, and drew him under in the
mere.

And lightly went the other to the King.
Then spoke King Arthur, drawing
thicker breath :

"Now see I by thine eyes that this is done.
Speak out : what is it thou hast heard,
or seen?"

And answer made the bold Sir Bedi-
vere :

"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 as yonder hilt.

Then with both hands I flung him, wheel-
ing him ;

But when I look'd again, behold an arm,
Clothed in white samite, mystic, wonder-
ful,

That caught him by the hilt, and brand-
ish'd him

Three times, and drew him under in the
mere."

And answer made King Arthur, breath-
ing hard :

"My end draws nigh ; 't is time that I
were gone.

Make broad thy shoulders to receive my
weight,

And bear me to the margin ; yet I fear
My wound hath taken cold, and I shall
die."

So saying, from the pavement he half
rose,

Slowly, with pain, reclining on his arm,
And looking wistfully with wide blue eyes
As in a picture. Him Sir Bedivere
Remorsefully regarded thro' his tears,
And would have spoken, but he found
not words,

Then took with care, and kneeling on one
knee,

O'er both his shoulders drew the languid
hands,

And 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 human on the frozen hills.
 He heard the deep behind him, and a
 cry
 Before. His own thought drove him like
 a goad.
 Dry clash'd his harness in the icy caves
 And barren chasms, and all to left and
 right
 The bare black cliff clang'd round him,
 as he based
 His feet on juts of slippery crag that rang
 Sharp-smitten with the dint of armed
 heels —
 And on a sudden, lo ! the level lake,
 And the long glories of the winter moon.
 Then saw they how there 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 dense with stately
 forms
 Black-stoled, black-hooded, like a dream
 — by these
 Three Queens with crowns of gold — and
 from them rose
 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 murmur'd 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 onset ; and the light and lustrous
 curls —
 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 Bedi-
 vere,
 " 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 dis-
 solved
 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 fulfils himself in many ways,
 Lest one good custom should corrupt the
 world.
 Comfort thyself : what comfort is in me ?
 I have lived my life, and that which I
 have done
 May He within himself make pure ! but
 thou,
 If thou shouldst never see my face again.



"All the decks were dense with stately forms,
Black-stoled, black-hooded, like a dream — by these
Three Queens with crowns of gold."

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 Avilion ;
 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,
 Ruffles her pure cold plume, and takes the flood
 With swarthy webs. Long stood Sir Bedivere
 Revolving many memories, till the hull
 Look'd one black dot against the verge of dawn,
 And on the mere the wailing died away.

Here ended Hall, and our last light,
 that long
 Had wink'd and threaten'd darkness,
 flared and fell :
 At which the Parson, sent to sleep with sound,
 And waked with silence, grunied
 " Good ! " but we
 Sat rapt : it was the tone with which he read —
 Perhaps some modern touches here and there
 Redeem'd it from the charge of nothingness —
 Or else we loved the man, and prized his work ;
 I know not : but we sitting, as I said,
 The cock crew loud ; as at that time of year
 The lusty bird takes every hour for dawn :
 Then Francis, muttering, like a man ill-used,
 " There now — that's nothing ! " drew a little back,
 And drove his heel into the smoulder'd log,
 That sent a blast of sparkles up the flue :
 And so to bed ; where yet in sleep I seem'd
 To sail with Arthur under looming shores,
 Point after point ; till on to dawn, when dreams

Begin to feel the truth and stir of day,
 To me, methought, who waited with a crowd,
 There came a bark that, 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 hills behind
 Repeated — " Come again, and thrice as fair " ;
 And, further inland, voices echoed —
 " Come
 With all good things, and war shall be no more."
 At this a hundred bells began to peal,
 That with the sound I 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 ; I and he,
 Brothers in Art ; a friendship so complete
 Portion'd in halves between us, that we grew
 The fable of the city where we dwelt.
 My Eustace might have sat for Hercules ;
 So muscular he spread, so broad of breast.
 He, by some law that holds in love, and draws
 The greater to the lesser, long desired
 A certain miracle of symmetry,
 A miniature of loveliness, all grace
 Summ'd up and closed in little ; — Juliet,
 she
 Solight of foot, so light of spirit, — O, 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 embassies 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.)

“T is not your work, but Love’s. Love,
unperceived,

A more ideal Artist he than all,
Came, drew your pencil from you, made
those eyes

Darker than darkest pansies, and that
hair

More black than ashbuds 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 master-
piece.”

And up we rose, and on the spur we
went.

Not wholly in the busy world, nor
quite

Beyond it, blooms 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 languid 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-udder’d
kine,

And all about the large lime feathers low,
The lime a summer home of murmurous
wings.

In that still place she, hoarded in her-
self,

Grew, seldom seen : not less among us
lived

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
mouth,

So gross to express delight, in praise of
her

Grew oratory. Such a lord is Love,
And Beauty such a mistress of the world.

And if I said that Fancy, led by Love,
Would play with flying forms and images,

Yet this is also true, that, long before
I look’d upon her, when I heard her name
My heart was like a prophet to my heart,
And told me I should love. A crowd of
hopes,

That sought to sow themselves like
winged seeds,

Born out of everything I heard and saw,
Flutter’d about my senses and my soul ;
And vague desires, like fitful blasts of
balm

To one that travels quickly, made the air
Of Life delicious, and all kinds of
thought,

That verged 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
For ever 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 old Mays had thrice the life
of these,)

Rings in mine ears. The steer forgot to
graze,

And, where the hedge-row cuts the path-
way, stood,

Leaning his horns into the neighbor field,
And lowing to his fellows. From the
woods

Came voices of the well-contented doves.
The lark could scarce get out his notes

for joy,
But shook his song together as he near’d

His happy home, the ground. To left
and right,

The cuckoo told his name to all the hills ;
The mellow ouzel fluted in the elm ;

The redeap whistled ; and the nightingale
Sang loud, as tho’ he were the bird of day.

And Eustace turn’d, and smiling said
to me,

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

Like poets, from the vanity of song ?
Or have they any sense of why they sing ?
And would they praise the heavens for
what they have ?"

And I made answer, "Were there noth-
ing 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-worn pathway courted
us

To one green wicket in a privet hedge ;
This, yielding, gave into a grassy walk
Thro' crowded lilac - ambush trimly
pruned ;

And one warm gust, full-fed with per-
fume, blew

Beyond us, as we enter'd in the cool.
The garden stretches southward. In the
midst

A cedar spread his dark-green layers of
shade.

The garden-glasses shone, and momently
The twinkling laurel scatter'd silver
lights.

"Eustace," I said, "this wonder keeps
the house."

He nodded, but a moment afterwards
He cried, "Look ! look !" Before he
ceased I turn'd,

And, ere a star can wink, beheld her there.
For up the porch there grew an Eastern
rose,

That, flowering high, the last night's gale
had caught,

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 gloss, and, wavering
Lovingly lower, trembled on her waist —

Ah, happy shade — and still went waver-
ing down,

But, ere it touch'd a foot, that might have
danced

The greensward into greener circles, dipt,
And mix'd with shadows of the common
ground !

But the full day dwelt on her brows, and
sunn'd

Her violet eyes, and all her Hebe bloom,
And doubled his own warmth against her
lips,

And on the bounteous wave of such a
breast

As never pencil drew. Half light, half
shade,

She stood, a sight to make an old man
young.

So rapt, we near'd the house ; but she,
a Rose

In roses, mingled with her fragrant toil,
Nor heard us come, nor from her ten-
dance turn'd

Into the world without ; till close at hand,
And almost ere I knew mine own intent,
This murmur broke the stillness of that
air

Which brooded round about her :

One rose, but one, by those fair fingers
cull'd,

Were worth a hundred kisses press'd on
lips

Less exquisite than thine."

She look'd : but all
Suffused with blushes — neither self-
possess'd

Nor startled, but betwixt this mood and
that,

Divided in a graceful quiet — paused,
And dropt the branch she held, and turn-
ing, wound

Her looser hair in braid, and stir'd her
lips

For some sweet answer, tho' no answer
came,

Nor yet refused the rose, but granted it,
And moved away, and left me, statue-
like,

In act to render thanks.

I, that whole day,
Saw her no more, altho' I linger'd there

Till every daisy slept, and Love's white
star

Beam'd thro' the thicken'd cedar in the
dusk.

So home we went, and all the livelong
way

With solemn gibe did Eustace banter me.

"Now," said he, "will you climb the
 top of Art.
 You cannot fail but work in hues to dim
 The Titianic Flora. Will you match
 My Juliet? you, not you, — the Master,
 Love,
 A more ideal Artist he than all."
 So home I went, but could not sleep
 for joy,
 Reading her perfect features in the gloom,
 Kissing the rose she gave me o'er and
 o'er,
 And shaping faithful record of the glance
 That graced the giving — such a noise of
 life
 Swarm'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 the
 dark.
 And all that night I heard the watchman
 peal
 The sliding season: all that night I heard
 The heavy clocks knolling the drowsy
 hours.
 The drowsy hours, dispensers of all good,
 O'er the mute city stole with folded wings,
 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
 squall 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
 Danced 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 Eustace, 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 as air beneath me, till I 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 us both; and over many a range
 Of waning line the gray cathedral towers,
 Across a hazy 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 subject most at heart, more near and
 near,
 Like doves about a dovecote, 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 took to hear,
 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 fulfill'd itself,
 Merged in completion? Would you learn
 at full
 How passion rose thro' circumstantial
 grades
 Beyond all grades develop'd? and indeed
 I had not stayed so long to tell you all.
 But while I mused came Memory with
 sad eyes,

Holding the folded annals of my youth ;
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 chambers of the heart,
Let in the day." Here, then, my words
have end.

Yet might I tell of meetings, of fare-
wells —

Of that which came between, more sweet
than each,

In whispers, like the whispers of the leaves
That tremble round a nightingale — in
sighs

Which perfect Joy, perplex'd for utter-
ance,

Stole from her sister Sorrow. Might I
not tell

Of difference, reconciliation, pledges
given,

And vows, where there was never need
of vows,

And kisses, where the heart on one wild
leap —

Hung tranced from all pulsation, as above
The heavens between their fairy fleeces
pale

Sow'd all their mystic gulfs with fleeting
stars ;

Or while the balmy glooming, crescent-
lit,

Spread the light haze along the river-
shores,

And in the hollows ; or as once we met
Unheedful, tho' beneath a whispering rain
Night slid down one long stream of sigh-
ing 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 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, Loy ! you dare to answer
thus !

But in my time a father's word was law,
And so it shall be now for me. Look to it ;

Consider, William : take a month to
think,

And let me have an answer to my wish ;
Or, by the Lord that made me, you shall
pack,

And never more darken my doors again."
But William answer'd madly ; bit his
lips,

And broke away. 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 woo'd and wed

A laborer's daughter, Mary Morrison.

Then, when the bells were ringing,
Allan call'd

His niece and said : " My girl, I love you well ;

But if you speak with him that was my son,
Or change a word with her he calls his wife,

My home is none of yours. My will is law."

And Dora promised, being meek. She thought,

" It cannot be : my uncle's mind will change !"

And days went on, and there was born a boy

To William ; 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.

But Dora stored what little she could save,

And sent it them by stealth, nor did they know

Who sent it ; till at last a fever seized
On William, and in harvest time he died.

Then Dora went to Mary. Mary sat
And look'd with tears upon her boy, and thought

Hard things of Dora. Dora came and said :

" I have obey'd my uncle until now,
And I have sinn'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 unsown, where many poppies grew.

Far off the farmer came into the field
And spied her not ; for none of all his men
Dare tell him Dora waited with the child ;

And Dora would have risen and gone to him,

But her heart fail'd her ; and the reapers reap'd,

And the sun fell, and all the land was dark.

But when 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 about, and tied it round his hat

To make him pleasing in her uncle's eye.
Then when the farmer pass'd into the field

He spied her, and he left his men at work,
And came and said : " Where were you yesterday ?

Whose child is 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 widow-
hood.

And Dora said, "My uncle took the boy ;
But, Mary, let me live and work with you :
He says that he will never see me more."
Then answer'd Mary, "This shall never
be,

That thou shouldst take my trouble on
thyself :

And, now I think, he shall not have the
boy,

For he will teach him hardness, and to
slight

His mother ; therefore thou and I will go,
And I will have my boy, and bring him
home ;

And I will beg of him to take thee back :
But if he will not take thee back again,
Then thou and I will live within one
house,

And work for William's child, until he
grows

Of age to help us."

So the women kiss'd

Each other, and set out, and reach'd the
farm.

The door was off the latch : they peep'd,
and saw

The boy set up betwixt his grandsire's
knees,

Who thrust him in the hollows of his arm,
And clapt him on the hands and on the
checks,

Like one that loved him : and the lad
stretch'd out

And babbled for the golden seal, that
hung

From Allan's watch, and sparkled by the
fire.

Then they came in : but when the boy
beheld

His mother, he cried out to come to her :
And Allan set him down, and Mary said :

"O Father !—if you let me call you
so—

I never came a-begging for myself,
Or William, or this child ; but now I
come

For Dora : take her back ; she loves you
well.

O Sir, when William died, he died at
peace

With all men ; for I ask'd him, and he
said,

He could not ever rue his marrying me—
I had been a patient wife : but, Sir, he
said

That he was wrong to cross his father
thus :

'God bless him !' he said, 'and may he
never know

The troubles I have gone thro' !' Then
he turn'd

His face and pass'd—unhappy that I
am !

But now, Sir, let me have my boy, for
you

Will make him hard, and he will learn
to slight

His 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
sobs :—

"I have been to blame—to blame.
I have kill'd my son.

I have kill'd him—but I loved him—
my dear son.

May God forgive me !—I have been to
blame.

Kiss me, my children."

Then they clung about

The old man's neck, and kiss'd him many
times.

And all the man was broken with re-
morse ;

And all his love came back a hundred-
fold ;

And for three hours he sobb'd o'er
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 Bull, the Fleece are cramm'd, and
not a room

For love or money. Let us picnic there
At Audley Court."

I spoke, while Audley feast
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 shoulder'd thro'
the swarm,



"I have been to blame — to blame. I have kill'd my son,
I have kill'd him — but I loved him — my dear son."

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 aftermath we
reach'd

The griffin-guarded gates, and pass'd thro'
all

The pillar'd 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 hound,

Brought out a dusky loaf that smelt of
home,

And, half-cut-down, a pasty costly-made,

Where quail and pigeon, lark and leveret
lay,

Like fossils of the rock, with golden yolks
Imbedded and injellied ; last, with these,
A flask of cider from his father's vats,
Prime, which I knew ; and so we sat
and eat

And talk'd old matters over ; who was dead,
Who married, who was like to be, and how
The races went, and who would rent the
hall :

Then touch'd upon the game, how scarce
it was

This season ; glancing thence, discuss'd
the farm,

The fourfield system, and the price of
grain ;

And struck upon the corn-laws, where
we split,

And came again together on the king
With heated faces ; tili he laugh'd aloud ;

And, while the blackbird on the pippin
hung
To hear him, clapt his hand in mine and
sang —

“Oh ! who would fight and march and
countermarch,

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.

“Oh ! who would cast and balance at
a desk,

Perch'd like a crow upon a three-legg'd
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 traced it in the sands ;
The sea wastes all : but let me live my
life.

“Oh ! who would love ? I woo'd a
woman once,

But she was sharper than an eastern wind,
And all my heart turn'd from her, as a thorn
Turns from the sea ; but let me live my life.”

He sang his song, and I replied with
mine :

I found it in a volume, all of songs,
Knock'd down to me, when old Sir Rob-
ert'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 ;
Emilia, fairer than all else but thou,
For thou art fairer than all else that is.

“Sleep, breathing health and peace
upon her breast :

Sleep, breathing love and trust against
her lip :

I go to-night : I come to-morrow morn.

“I go, but I return : I would I were
The pilot of the darkness and the dream.
Sleep, Ellen Aubrey, love, and dream
of me.”

So sang we each to either, Francis Hale,
The farmer's son, who lived across the bay,
My friend ; and I, that having where-
withal,

And in the fallow leisure of my life
A rolling stone of here and everywhere,
Did what I would ; but ere the night we
rose

And saunter'd home beneath a moon,
that, just

In crescent, dimly rain'd about the leaf
Twilights of airy silver, till we reach'd
The limit of the hills ; and as we sank
From rock to rock upon the glooming
quay,

The town was hush'd beneath us : lower
down

The bay was oily calm ; the harbor-buoy
Sole star of phosphorescence in the calm,
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 meadows look
Above the river, and, but a month ago,
The whole hillside was redder than a fox.
Is yon plantation where this byway joins
The turnpike ?

James. Yes.

John. And when does this come by ?

James. The mail ? At one o'clock.

John. What is it now ?

James. A quarter to.

John. Whose house is that I see ?
No, not the County Member's with the
vane :

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 veil'd the world with jaundice, hid
his face

From all men, and commercing 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 '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 Mon-
day, was it ? —

There by the humpback'd willow ; half
stands up
And bristles ; half has fall'n and made a
bridge ;
And there he caught the younker tick-
ling trout —
Caught in *flagrante* — what 's the Latin
word ? —

Delicto : but his house, for so they say,
Was haunted with a jolly ghost, that shook
The curtains, whined in lobbies, tapt at
doors,

And rummaged like a rat : no servant
stay'd :

The farmer vext packs up his beds and
chairs,

And all his household stuff ; and with
his boy

Betwixt his knees, his wife upon the tilt,
Sets out, and meets a friend who hails
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
Lessening in perfect cadence, and a skin
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 sou'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 the
cup of gall.

I once was near him, when his bailiff
brought

A Chartist 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
thumbs

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 I my-
self,

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 flayflint 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 dragg'd her to the colleg
tower

From her warm bed, and up the corkscrew
stair

With hand and rope we haled the groan-
ing 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 Niobe of swine,
And so return'd unfarrow'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 ails 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 ere he grows
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 quaint a four-in-hand
As you shall see — three pyebalds and a
roan.

EDWIN MORRIS; OR, THE LAKE.

O ME, my pleasant rambles by the lake,
My sweet, wild, fresh three quarters of a
year,

My one Oasis in the dust and drouth
Of city life ! I was a sketcher then :
See here, my doing : curves of mountain,
bridge,

Boat, island, ruins of a castle, built
When men knew how to build, upon a
rock,

With turrets lichen-gilded like a rock :
And here, new-comers in an ancient hold,
New-comers from the Mersey, million-
naires,

Here lived the Hills — a Tudor-chimneyed
bulk
Of mellow brickwork on an isle of bowers.

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

But Edwin Morris, he that knew the
names,
Long learned names of agaric, moss and
fern,

Who forged a thousand theories of the
rocks,

Who taught me how to skate, to row, to
swim,

Who read me rhymes elaborately good,
His own — I call'd him Crichton, for he
seem'd

All-perfect, 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 sennights more, my love
for her.

My love for Nature and my love for her,
Of different ages, like twin-sisters grew,
Twin-sisters differently beautiful.

To some full music rose and sank the sun,
And some full music seem'd to move and
change

With all the varied changes of the dark,
And either twilight and the day between ;
For daily hope fulfill'd, to rise again
Revolving toward fulfilment, made it
sweet

To walk, to sit, to sleep, to wake, to
breathe.”

Or this or something like to this he
spoke.

Then said the fat-faced curate, Edward
Bull,

“I take it, God made the woman for
the man,

And for the good and increase of the world.
A pretty face is well, and this is well,
To have a 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 :
Tho' if, in dancing after Letty Hill,



"O me, my pleasant rambles by the lake." See page 72.

I do not hear the bells upon my cap,
I scarce have other music : yet say on.
What should one give to light on such a
dream ?”

I ask'd him half-sardonically.

“Give?
Give all thou art,” he answer'd, and a light
Of laughter dimpled in his swarthy cheek ;
“I would have hid her needle in my heart,
To save her little finger from a scratch
No deeper than the skin : my ears could

hear
Her lightest breaths : her least remark
was worth

The experience of the wise. I went and
came ;

Her voice fled always thro' the summer
land ;

I spoke her name alone. Thrice-happy
days !

The flower of each, those moments when
we met,

The crown of all, we met to part no more.”

Were not his words delicious, I a beast
To take them as I did ? but something
jarr'd ;

Whether he spoke too largely ; that there
seem'd

A touch of something false, some self-
conceit,

Or over-smoothness : howsoe'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,
Sneeze out a full God-bless-you 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
Looks out of place : 't 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 meadowy
holms

And alders, garden-isles ; and now we left
The clerk behind us, I and he, and ran
By ripply shallows of the lispng lake,
Delighted with the freshness and the
sound.

But, when the bracken rusted on their
crags,

My suit had wither'd, nipt to death by him
That was a God, and is a lawyer's clerk,
The rentroll Cupid of our rainy isles.

'Tis true, we met ; one hour I had, no more :
She sent a note, the seal an *Elle vous suit*,
The close “Your Letty, only yours” ; and
this

Thrice underscored. The friendly mist
of morn

Clung to the lake. I boated over, ran
My craft aground, and heard with beating
heart

The Sweet-Gale rustle round the shelving
keel ;

And out I stept, and up I crept : she moved,
Like Proserpine in Enna, gathering
flowers :

Then low and sweet I whistled thrice ;
and she,

She turn'd, we closed, we kiss'd, swore
faith, I breathed

In some new planet : a silent cousin stole
Upon us and departed : “Leave,” she cried,
“O leave me !” “Never, dearest, never :
here

I brave the worst” : and while we stood
like fools

Embracing, all at once a score of pugs
And poodles yell'd within, and out they
came

Trustees and Aunts and Uncles. “What,
with him !

Go” (shrill'd the cotton-spinning chorus ;
“him !”

I choked. Again they shriek'd the bur-
den — “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 messuages in York,
And slight Sir Robert with his watery
smile

And educated whisker. But for me,
They set an ancient creditor to work :
It seems I broke a close with force and
arms :

There came a mystic token from the king
To greet the sheriff, needless courtesy !
I read, and fled by night, and flying
turn'd :

Her taper glimmer'd in the lake below :
I turn'd once more, close-buttoned to the
storm ;

So left the place, left Edwin, nor have seen
Him since, nor heard of her, nor cared to
hear.

Nor cared to hear? perhaps: yet long
ago

I have pardon'd little Letty ; not indeed,
It may be, for her own dear sake but this,
She seems a part of those fresh days to me ;
For in the dust and drouth of London life
She moves among my visions of the lake,
While the prime swallow dips his wing,
or then

While the gold-lily blows, and overhead
The light cloud smoulders on the summer
crag.

ST. SIMEON STYLITES.

ALTHO' I be the basest of mankind,
From scalp to sole one slough and crust
of sin,

Unfit for earth, unfit for heaven, scarce
meet

Fortroops of devils, mad with blasphemy,
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 hungers and in thirsts, fevers and cold,
In coughs, aches, stiches, ulcerous throes
and cramps,

A sign betwixt the meadow and the cloud,
Patient on this tall pillar I have borne
Rain, wind, frost, heat, hail, damp, and
sleet, and snow ;

And I had hoped that ere this period closed
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,
were still

Less burden, 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 dropt
away,

Would chatter with the cold, and all my
beard

Was tagg'd with icy fringes in the moon,
I drown'd the whoopings of the owl with
sound

Of pious hymns and psalms, and some-
times saw

An angel stand and watch me, as I sang.
Now am I feeble grown ; my end draws
nigh ;

I hope my end draws nigh : half deaf I am,
So that I scarce can hear the people hum
About the column's base, and almost
blind,

And scarce can recognize the fields I know ;
And both my thighs are rotted with the
dew ;

Yet cease I not to clamor and to cry,
While my stiff spine can hold my weary
head,

Till all my limbs drop piecemeal from the
stone,

Have mercy, mercy : take away my sin.

O Jesus, if thou wilt not save my soul,
Who may be saved? who is it may be
saved ?

Who may be made a saint, if I fail here ?
Show me the man hath suffer'd more
than I.

For did not all thy martyrs 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)
More slowly-painful to subdue this home.
Of sin, my flesh, which I despise and hate,
I had not stinted practice, O my God.

For not alone this pillar-punishment,
Not this alone I bore : but while I lived
In the white convent down the valley
here,

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,
Until the ulcer, eating thro' my skin,
Betray'd my secret penance, so that all
My brethren marvell'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 branding thunder, and
sometimes

Sucking the damps for drink, and eating
not,

Except the spare chance-gift of those
that came

To touch my body and be heal'd, and live :
And they say then that I work'd miracles,
Whereof my fame is loud amongst man-
kind,

Cured lameness, palsies, cancers. Thou,
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 one
that rose

Twenty by measure ; last of all, I grew
Twice ten long weary 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 yon 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 prate
Of penances I cannot have gone thro',
Perplexing me with lies ; and oft I fall,
Maybe for months, in such blind lethar-
gies,

That Heaven, and Earth, and Time are
choked.

But yet

Bethink thee, Lord, while thou and all
the saints

Enjoy themselves in heaven, and men on
earth

House in the shade of comfortable roofs,
Sit with their wives by fires, eat whole-
some food,

And wear warm clothes, and even beasts
have stalls,

I, 'tween the spring and downfall of the
light,

Bow down one thousand and two hun-
dred times,

To Christ, the Virgin Mother, and the
Saints ;

Or in the night, after a little sleep,
I wake : the chill stars sparkle ; I am wet
With drenching dews, or stiff with crack-
ling frost.

I wear an undress'd goatskin on my back ;
A grazing iron collar grinds my neck ;
And in my weak, lean arms I lift the
cross,

And strive and wrestle with thee till I
die :

O mercy, mercy ! wash away my sin.

O Lord, thou knowest what a man I
am ;

A sinful man, conceived and born in sin :
'T is 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 calendar'd for saints.
 Good people, you do ill to kneel to me.
 What is it I can have done to merit this ?
 I am a sinner viler than you all.
 It may be I have wrought some miracles,
 And cured some halt and maim'd ; but
 what of that ?
 It may be, no one, even among the saints,
 May match his pains with mine ; but
 what of that ?
 Yet do not rise ; for you may look on me,
 And in your looking you may kneel to
 God.
 Speak ! is there any of you halt or
 maim'd ?
 I think you know I have some power with
 Heaven
 From my long penance : let him speak
 his wish.
 Yes, I can heal him. Power goes forth
 from me.
 They say that they are heal'd. Ah,
 hark ! they shout
 " St. Simeon 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 ;
 Yea, crown'd a saint. They shout, " Be-
 hold a saint !"
 And lower voices saint me from above.
 Courage, St. Simeon ! This dull chrysalis
 Cracks into shining wings, and hope ere
 death
 Spreads more and more and more, that
 God hath now
 Sponged and made blank of crimeful
 record all
 My mortal archives.
 O my sons, my sons,
 I, Simeon of the pillar, by surname
 Stylites, among men ; I, Simeon,
 The waterer on the column till the end ;
 I, Simeon, whose brain the sunshine
 bakes ;
 I, whose bald brows in silent hours be-
 come
 Unnaturally hoar with rime, do now
 From my high nest of penance here pro-
 claim
 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
 sleeve ;
 'Abaddon and Asmodeus caught at me.
 I smote them with the cross ; they swarm'd
 again.
 In bed like monstrous apes they crush'd
 my chest :
 They flapp'd my light out as I read : I saw
 Their faces grow between me and my
 book ;
 With eolt-like whinny and with hoggish
 whine
 They burst my prayer. Yet this way
 was left,
 And by this way I 'scaped them. Mortify
 Your flesh, like me, with scourges and
 with thorns ;
 Smite, shrink not, spare not. If it may
 be, fast
 Whole Lents, and pray. I hardly, with
 slow steps,
 With slow, faint steps, and much ex-
 ceeding pain,
 Have scrambled past those pits of fire,
 that still
 Sing in mine ears. But yield not me the
 praise :
 God only thro' his bounty hath thought
 fit,
 Among the powers and princes of this
 world,
 To make me an example to mankind,
 Which few can reach to. Yet I do not
 say
 But that a time may come — yea, even
 now,
 Now, now, his footsteps smite the thresh-
 old stairs
 Of life — I say, that time is at the doors
 When you may worship me without re-
 proach ;
 For I will leave my relies in your land,
 And you may carve a shrine about my dust,
 And burn a fragrant lamp before my bones,
 When I am gather'd to the glorious saints.
 While I spake then, a sting of shrewdest
 pain
 Ran shrivelling thro' me, and a cloudlike
 change,
 In passing, with a grosser film made thick
 These heavy, horny eyes. The end ! the
 end !
 Surely the end ! What 's here ? a shape,
 a shade,
 A flash of light. Is that the angel there
 That holds a crown ? Come, blessed
 brother, come.

I know thy glittering face. I waited long ;
My brows are ready. What ! deny it now ?
Nay, draw, draw, draw nigh. So I clutch
it. Christ !

'T is gone : 't is here again ; the crown !
the crown !

So now 't is fitted on and grows to me,
And from it melt the dew's of Paradise,
Sweet ! sweet ! spikenard, 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,

Among you there, and let him presently
Approach, and lean a ladder on the shaft,
And climbing up into my airy home,
Deliver me the blessed sacrament ;
For by the warning of the Holy Ghost,
I prophesy that I shall die to-night,
A quarter before twelve.

But thou, O Lord,
Aid all this foolish people ; let them take
Example, pattern : lead them to thy light.

THE TALKING OAK.

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

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

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

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

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

Tho' what he whisper'd, under Heaven
None else could understand ;

I found him garrulously given,
A babbler in the land.

But since I heard him make reply
Is many a weary hour ;
'T were well to question him, and try
If yet he keeps the power.

Hail, hidden to the knees in fern,
Broad Oak of Summer-chace,
Whose topmost branches can discern
The roofs of Samner-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-chace :

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

“ Ere yet, in scorn of Peter's-pence,
And number'd bead, and shrift,
Bluff 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-minded offset rose
To chase the deer at five ;

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

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

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

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

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

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

"From when she gamboll'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 slightly, musically made,
So light upon the grass :

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

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

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

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

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

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

"But, as for her, she stay'd at home
And on the roof she went,

And down the way you used to come,
She look'd with discontent.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



"She glanced across the plain;
But not a creature was in sight:
She kiss'd me once again."

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

O flourish high, with leafy towers,
And overlook the lea,
Pursue 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.

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

"Her eyelids dropp'd their silken eaves.
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 fife
And lull'd them in my own.

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

"A third would glimmer on her neck
To make the necklace shine ;
Another slid, a sunny 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."

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

LOVE AND DUTY.

OF love that never found his earthly close,
What sequel ? Streaming eyes and break-
ing hearts ?

Or all the same as if he had not been ?
Not so. Shall Error in the round of
time

Still father Truth ? O shall the braggart
shout

For some blind glimpse of freedom work
itself

Thro' madness, hated by the wise, to law
System and empire ? Sin itself be found
The cloudy porch oft opening on the Sun ?
And only he, this wonder, dead, become
Mere highway dust ? or year by year alone
Sit brooding in the ruins of a life,
Nightmare of youth, the spectre of him-
self ?

If this were thus, if this, indeed, were
all,

Better the narrow brain, the stony heart,
The staring eye glazed o'er with sapless
days,

The long mechanic pacings to and fro,
The set gray life, and apathetic end.
But am I not the nobler thro' thy love ?
O three times less unworthy ! likewise thou
Art more thro' Love, and greater than thy
years.

The Sun will run his orbit, and the Moon
Her circle. Wait, and Love himself will
bring

The drooping flower of knowledge changed
to fruit

Of wisdom. Wait : my faith is large in
Time,
And that which shapes it to some perfect
end.

Will some one say, Then why not ill for
good ?

Why took ye not your pastime ? To that
man

My work shall answer, since I knew the
right

And did it ; for a man is not as God,
But then most Godlike being most a man.
— So let me think 't is well for thee and
me —

Ill-fated that I am, what lot is mine
Whose foresight preaches peace, my heart
so slow

To feel it ! For how hard it seem'd to me,
When eyes, love-languid thro' half-tears,
would dwell

One earnest, earnest moment upon mine,
Then not to dare to see ! when thy low
voice,

Faltering, would break its syllables, to
keep

My own full-tuned, — hold passion in a
leash,

And not leap forth and fall about thy neck,
And on thy bosom, (deep-desired relief !)
Rain out the heavy mist of tears, that
weigh'd

Upon my brain, my senses and my soul !
For Love himself took part against
himself

To warn us off, and Duty loved of Love —
O this world's curse, — beloved but hated
— came

Like Death betwixt thy dear embrace and
mine,

And crying, " Who is this ? behold thy
bride,"

She push'd me from thee.

If the sense is hard
To alien ears, I did not speak to these —
No, not to thee, but to thyself in me :
Hard is my doom and thine : thou know-
est 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 night

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 flow but once a life.

The trance gave way
 To those caresses, when a hundred times
 In that last kiss, which never was the last,
 Farewell, like endless welcome, lived and
 died.

Then follow'd counsel, comfort, and the
 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 that
 hung
 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 — closing like an individual life —
 In one blind cry of passion and of pain,
 Like bitter accusation ev'n to death,
 Caught up the whole of love and utter'd it,
 And bade adieu for ever.

Live — yet live —
 Shall sharpest pathos blight us, knowing
 all

Life needs for life is possible to will —
 Live happy ; tend thy flowers ; be tended
 by

My blessing ! Should my Shadow cross
 thy thoughts

Too sadly for their peace, remand it thou
 For calmer hours to Memory's darkest
 hold,

If not to be forgotten — not at once —
 Not all forgotten. Should it cross thy
 dreams,

O might it come like one that looks con-
 tent,

With quiet eyes unfaithful to the truth,
 And point thee forward to a distant light,
 Or seem to lift a burden from thy heart
 And leave thee freër, till thou wake re-
 fresh'd,

Then when the first low matin-chirp hath
 grown

Full quire, and morning driv'n her 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 halt
 way up

The counter side ; and that same song of
 his

He told me ; for I banter'd him, and swore
 They said he lived shut up within himself,
 A tongue-tied Poet in the feverous days,
 That, setting the *how much* before the *how*,
 Cry, like the daughters of the horseleech,

“ 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
 caught —

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 yes-
 termorn.

“ We sleep and wake and sleep, but 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 them-
 selves

Move onward, leading up the golden year.

“ Ah, tho' the times, when some new
 thought can bud,

Are but as poets' seasons when they flower,
 Yet seas, that daily gain upon the shore,
 Have ebb and flow conditioning their
 march,

And slow and sure comes up the golden year.

“When wealth no more shall rest in 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? wrens be wrens?

If all the world were falcons, what of that?
The wonder of the eagle were the less,
But he not less the eagle. Happy days
Roll onward, leading up the golden year.

“Fly, happy happy sails and bear the Press;

Fly happy with the mission of the Cross;
Knit land to land, and blowing havenward
With silks, and fruits, and spices, clear
of toll,

Enrich the markets of the golden year.

“But we grow old. Ah! when shall all men’s good

Be each man’s rule, and universal Peace
Lie like a shaft of light across the land,
And like a lane of beams athwart the sea,
Thro’ all the circle of the golden year?”

Thus far he flow’d, and ended; where-upon

“Ah, folly!” in mimic cadence answer’d James —

“Ah, folly! for it lies so far away,
Not in our time, nor in our children’s time,
’T is like the second world to us that live;
’T were all as one to fix our hopes on
Heaven

As on this vision of the golden year.”

With that he struck his staff against the rocks

And broke it, — James, — you know him,
— old, but full

Of force and cholera, and firm upon his feet,
And like an oaken stock in winter woods,
O’erflourish’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 plunge

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 round the hills from bluff to bluff.

ULYSSES.

It little profits that an idle king,
By this still hearth, among these barren
crag,

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, govern-
ments,

Myself not least, but honor’d of them all;
And drunk delight of battle with my peers,
Far on the ringing plains of windy Troy.
I am a part of all that I have met;
Yet all experience is an arch wherethro’
Gleams that untravell’d world, whose
margin fades

For ever and for ever 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 bringer of new things; and vile it were
For some three suns to store and hoard
myself,

And this gray spirit yearning in desire
To follow knowledge like a sinking star,
Beyond the utmost bound of human
thought.

This is my son, mine own Telemachus,
 To whom I leave the sceptre and the isle—
 Well-loved of me, discerning to fulfil
 This labor, by slow prudence to make mild
 A rugged people, and thro' soft degrees
 Subdue them to the useful and the good.
 Most blameless is he, centred in the sphere
 Of common duties, decent not to fail
 In offices of tenderness, and pay
 Meet adoration to my household gods,
 When I am gone. He works his work,
 I mine.

There lies the port: the vessel puffs
 her sail:
 There gloom the dark broad seas. My
 mariners,
 Souls that have toil'd, and wrought, and
 thought with me—
 That ever with a frolic welcome took

The thunder and the sunshine, and op-
 posed
 Free hearts, free foreheads — you and I
 are old;
 Old age hath yet his honor and his toil;
 Death closes all: but something ere the
 end,
 Some work of noble note, may yet be done,
 Not unbecoming men that strove with
 Gods.
 The lights begin to twinkle from the rocks:
 The long day wanes: the slow moon
 climbs: the deep
 Moans round with many voices. Come,
 my friends,
 'T is not too late to seek a newer world.
 Push off, and sitting well in order smite
 The sounding furrows; for my purpose
 holds



“ There lies the port: the vessel puffs her sail:
 There gloom the dark broad seas.”

To sail beyond the sunset, and the baths
Of all the western stars, until I die.
It may be that the gulfs 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.

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 curlews call,
Dreary gleams about the moorland flying
over Locksley Hall ;

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



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

<p>Many a night from yonder ivied casement, ere I went to rest, Did I look on great Orion sloping slowly to the West.</p> <p>Many a night I saw the Pleiads, rising thro' the mellow shade, Glitter like a swarm of fire-flies tangled in a silver braid.</p> <p>Here about the beach I wander'd, nour- ishing a youth sublime With the fairy tales of science, and the long result of Time ;</p> <p>When the centuries behind me like a fruitful land reposed ; When I clung to all the present for the promise that it closed :</p> <p>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. —</p> <p>In the Spring a fuller crimson comes upon the robin's breast ; In the Spring the wanton lapwing gets himself another crest ;</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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."</p> <p>On her pallid cheek and forehead came a color and a light, As I have seen the rosy red flushing in the northern night.</p> <p>And she turn'd — her bosom shaken with a sudden storm of sighs — All the spirit deeply dawning in the dark of hazel eyes —</p> <p>Saying, " I have hid my feelings, fearing they should do me wrong " ; Saying, " Dost thou love me, cousin ?" weeping, " I have loved thee long."</p>	<p>Love took up the glass of Time, and turn'd it in his glowing hands ; Every moment, lightly shaken, ran itself in golden sands.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>Many a morning on the moorland did we hear the copses ring, And her whisper throug'd my pulses with the fulness of the Spring.</p> <p>Many an evening by the waters did we watch the stately ships, And our spirits rush'd together at the touching of the lips.</p> <p>O my cousin, shallow-hearted ! O my Amy, mine no more ! O the dreary, dreary moorland ! O the barren, barren shore !</p> <p>Falsèr than all fancy fathoms, falsèr than all songs have sung, Puppet to a father's threat, and servile to a shrewish tongue !</p> <p>Is it well to wish thee happy ? — having known me — to decline On a range of lower feelings and a nar- rower heart than mine !</p> <p>Yet it shall be : thou shalt lower to his level day by day, What is fine within thee growing coarse to sympathize with clay.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>He will hold thee, when his passion shall have spent its novel force, Something better than his dog, a little dearer than his horse.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>It may be my lord is weary, that his braid is overwrought : Soothe him with thy finer fancies, touch him with thy lighter thought.</p>
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"Many an evening by the waters did we watch the stately ships,
And our spirits rush'd together at the touching of the lips."

<p>He will answer to the purpose, easy things to understand — Better thou wert dead before me, tho' I slew thee with my hand !</p> <p>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.</p> <p>Cursed be the social wants that sin against the strength of youth ! Cursed be the social lies that warp us from the living truth !</p> <p>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 !</p>	<p>Well — 't is well that I should bluster ! — Hadst thou less unworthy proved — Would to God — for I had loved thee more than ever wife was loved.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>Never, tho' my mortal summers to such length of years should come As the many-winter'd crow that leads the clanging rookery home.</p> <p>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 ?</p>
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<p>I remember one that perish'd : sweetly did she speak and move : Such a one do I remember, whom to look at was to love.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>Comfort ? comfort scorn'd of devils ! this is truth the poet sings, That a sorrow's crown of sorrow is re- membering happier things.</p> <p>Drug thy memories, lest thou learn it, lest thy heart be put to proof, In the dead unhappy night, and when the rain is on the roof.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>Then a hand shall pass before thee, point- ing to his drunken sleep, To thy widow'd marriage-pillows, to the tears that thou wilt weep.</p> <p>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 ;</p> <p>And an eye shall vex thee, looking an- cient kindness on thy pain. Turn thee, turn thee on thy pillow : get thee to thy rest again.</p> <p>Nay, but Nature brings thee solace ; for a tender voice will cry. 'T is a purer life than thine ; a lip to drain thy trouble dry.</p> <p>Baby lips will laugh me down : my latest rival brings thee rest. Baby fingers, waxen touches, press me from the mother's breast.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>O, I see thee old and formal, fitted to thy petty part, With a little hoard of maxims preaching down a daughter's heart.</p>	<p>"They were dangerous guides the feelings — she herself was not exempt — Truly, she herself had suffer'd" — Perish in thy self-contempt !</p> <p>Overlive it — lower yet — be happy ! wherefore should I care ? I myself must mix with action, lest I wither by despair.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>Every gate is throng'd with suitors, all the markets overflow. I have but an angry fancy : what is that which I should do ?</p> <p>I had been content to perish, falling on the foeman's ground, When the ranks are roll'd in vapor, and the winds are laid with sound.</p> <p>But the jingling of the guinea helps the hurt that Honor feels, And the nations do but murmur, snarl- ing at each other's heels.</p> <p>Can I but relive in sadness ? I will turn that earlier page. Hide me from my deep emotion, O thou wondrous Mother-Age !</p> <p>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 ;</p> <p>Yearning for the large excitement that the coming years would yield, Eager-hearted as a boy when first he leaves his father's field,</p> <p>And at night along the dusky highway near and nearer drawn, Sees in heaven the light of London flar- ing like a dreary dawn ;</p> <p>And his spirit leaps within him to be gone before him then, Underneath the light he looks at, in among the throngs of men ;</p> <p>Men, my brothers, men the workers, ever reaping something new : That which they have done but earnest of the things that they shall do :</p>
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“Baby lips will laugh me down : my latest rival brings thee rest.
Baby fingers, waxen touches, press me from the mother's breast.”

For I dipt 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, argo-
sies of magic sails,
Pilots of the purple twilight, dropping
down with costly bales ;

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

Far along the world-wide whisper of the
south-wind rushing warm,
With the standards of the peoples plung-
ing thro' the thunder-storm ;

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

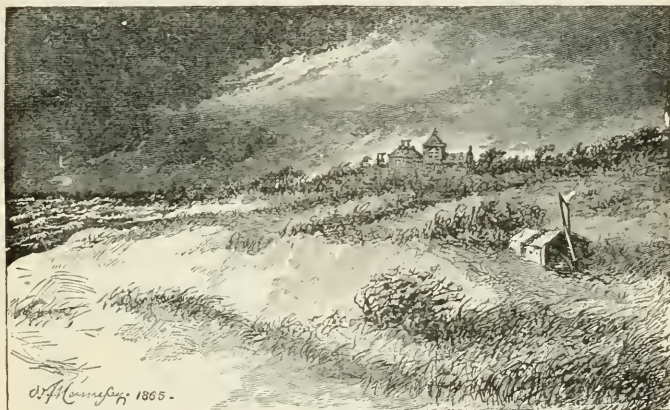
There the common sense of most shall
hold a fretful realm in awe,
And the kindly earth shall slumber, lapt
in universal law.

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

Eye, to which all order festers, all things
here are out of joint :
Science moves, but slowly slowly, creep-
ing 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.	Larger constellations burning, mellow moons and happy skies, Breadths of tropic shade and palms in cluster, knots of Paradise.
Yet I doubt not thro' the ages one in- creasing purpose runs, And the thoughts of men are widen'd with the process of the suns.	Never comes the trader, never floats an European flag, Slides the bird o'er lustrous woodland, swings the trailer from the crag ;
What is that to him that reaps not harvest of his youthful joys, Tho' the deep heart of existence beat for ever like a boy's ?	Droops the heavy-blossom'd bower, hangs the heavy-fruited tree — Summer isles of Eden lying in dark-purple spheres of sea.
Knowledge comes, but wisdom lingers, and I linger on the shore, And the individual withers, and the world is more and more.	There methinks would be enjoyment more than in this march of mind, In the steamship, in the railway, in the thoughts that shake mankind.
Knowledge comes, but wisdom lingers, and he bears a laden breast, Full of sad experience, moving toward the stillness of his rest.	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.
Hark, my merry comrades call me, sound- ing on the bugle-horn, They to whom my foolish passion were a target for their scorn :	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 ;
Shall it not be scorn to me to harp on such a moulder'd string ? I am shamed thro' all my nature to have loved so slight a thing.	Whistle back the parrot's call, and leap the rainbows of the brooks, Not with blinded eyesight poring over miserable books —
Weakness to be wroth with weakness ! wo- man's pleasure, woman's pain — Nature made them blinder motions bounded in a shallower brain :	Fool, again the dream, the fancy ! but I <i>know</i> my words are wild, But I count the gray barbarian lower than the Christian child.
Woman is the lesser man, and all thy passions, match'd with mine, Are as moonlight unto sunlight, and as water unto wine —	I, to herd with narrow foreheads, vacant of our glorious gains, Like a beast with lower pleasures, like a beast with lower pains !
Here at least, where nature sickens, noth- ing. Ah, for some retreat Deep in yonder shining Orient, where my life began to beat ;	Mated with a squalid savage — what to me were sun or clime ? I the heir of all the ages, in the foremost files of time —
Where in wild Mahratta-battle fell my father evil-starr'd ;— I was left a trampled orphan, and a self- ish uncle's ward.	I that rather held it better men should perish one by one, Than that earth should stand at gaze like Joshua's moon in Ajalon !
Or to burst all links of habit — there to wander far away, On from island unto island at the gate- ways of the day.	Not in vain the distance beacons. For- ward, forward let us range. Let the great world spin for ever down the ringing grooves of change.

<p>Thro' the shadow of the globe we sweep into the younger day : Better fifty years of Europe than a cycle of Cathay.</p> <p>Mother-Age (for mine I knew not) help me as when life begun : Rift the hills, and roll the waters, flash the lightnings, weigh the Sun —</p> <p>O, I see the crescent promise of my spirit hath not set. Ancient founts of inspiration well thro' all my fancy yet.</p>	<p>Howsoever these things be, a long fare- well to Locksley Hall ! Now for me the woods may wither, now for me the roof-tree fall.</p> <p>Comes a vapor from the margin, black- ening over heath andholt, Cramming all the blast before it, in its breast a thunderbolt.</p> <p>Let it fall on Locksley Hall, with rain or hail, or fire or snow ; For the mighty wind arises, roaring sea- ward, and I go.</p>
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“ Comes a vapor from the margin, blackening over heath andholt,
Cramming all the blast before it in its breast a thunderbolt.”

GODIVA.

*I waited for the train at Coventry ;
I hung with grooms and porters on the
bridge,
To watch the three tall spires ; and there
I shaped*

The city's ancient legend into this : —

Not only we, the latest seed of Time,
New men, that in the flying of a wheel
Crydown the past, not only we, that prate
Of rights and wrongs, have loved the
people well,
And loathed to see them overtax'd ; but
she

Did more, and underwent, and overcame,
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, replying, 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!" — "Alas!"
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, "Ride 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 of trum-
pet, 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 win-
dow barr'd.

Then fled she to her inmost bower,
and there
Unclasp'd the wedded eagles of her belt,
The grim Earl's gift; but ever at a breath
She linger'd, looking like a summer moon
Half-dipt in cloud: anon she shook her
head,

And shower'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 found her pal-
frey 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 upon the
spout

Had cunning eyes to see: the barking cur
Made 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 cnurl, compact of thankless
earth,

The fatal byword of all years to come,
Boring a little augur-hole in fear,
Peep'd — but his eyes, before they had
their will,

Were shrivell'd into darkness in his head,
And dropt before him. So the Powers,
who wait

On noble deeds, cancell'd a sense misused;
And she, that knew not, pass'd: and all
at once,

With twelve great shocks of sound, the
shameless noon

Was clash'd and hammer'd from a hun-
dred towers,

One after one: but even then she gain'd
Her bower; whence reissuing, robed and
crown'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."

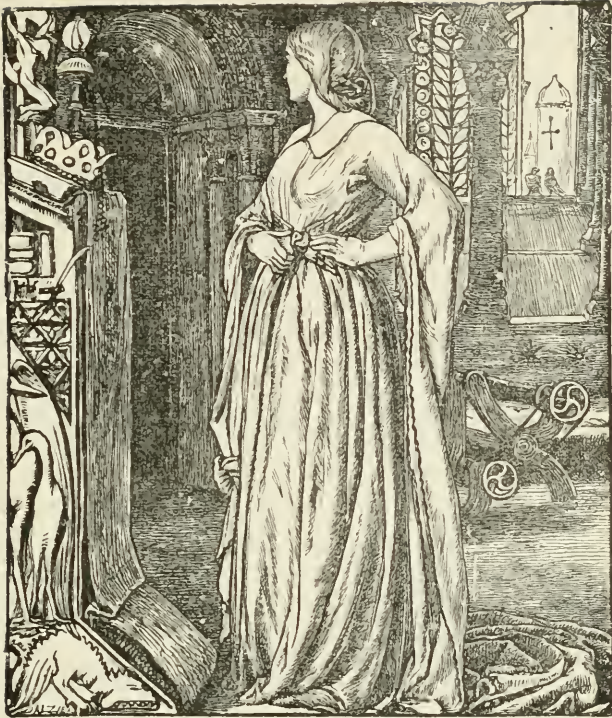
To which the voice did urge reply;
"To-day I saw the dragon-fly
Come from the wells where he did lie.

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

"He dried his wings: like gauze they
grew:

Thro' crofts 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.



" Then fled she to her inmost bower, and there
Unclasp'd the wedded eagles of her belt."

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

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

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

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

It spake, moreover, in my mind :
" Tho' thou wert 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 scoffingly ;
" Good soul ! suppose I grant it thee,
Who 'll weep for thy deficiency ?

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

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

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

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

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

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

I wept, "Tho' I should die, I know
That all about the thorn will blow
In tufts of rosy-tinted snow ;

"And men, thro' novelspheres 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 hoar with early rime.

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

"Not less the bee would range her cells,
The furzy prickle fire the dells,
The foxglove cluster dappled bells."

I said that "all the years invent ;
Each month is various to present
The world with some development.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

"Go, vexed Spirit, sleep in trust ;
The right ear, that is fill'd with dust,
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 sung the joyful Pæan clear,
And, sitting, burnish'd without fear
The brand, the buckler, and the spear —

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

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

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

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

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

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

“In some good cause, not in mine own,
To perish, wept for, honor’d, known,
And like a warrior overthrown ;

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

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

“Yea !” said the voice, “thy dream was
good,
While thou abodest in the 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 pall.
There is one remedy for all.

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

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

“That men with knowledge merely
play’d,
I told thee — hardly nigher 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,
Wrapt in dense cloud from base to cope

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

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

“If straight thy track, or if oblique,
Thou know’st not. Shadows thou dost
strike,
Embracing cloud, Ixion-like ;

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

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

“O dull, one-sided voice,” said I,
“Wilt thou make everything a lie,
To 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 forebore, 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 fix'd,
The elements were kindlier mix'd."

I said, "I toil 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,
Unmanacled from bonds of sense,
Be fix'd and froz'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 ;
Wilt thou find passion, pain or pride ?

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

"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 daisy slept.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

"He knows a baseness in his blood
At such strangewar with something good,
He may not do the thing he would.

"Heaven opens inward, chasms yawn,
Vast images in glimmering dawn,
Half shown, are broken and withdrawn.

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

"But thou canst answer not again.
With 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 wert thou when thy father play'd
In his free field, and pastime made,
A merry boy in sun and shade ?

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

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

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

"A life of nothings, nothing worth,
From that first nothing ere his birth
To that last nothing under earth !"

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

"For memory dealing but with time,
And he with matter, should 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, "hast miss'd thy
mark,
Who sought'st to wreck my mortal ark,
By making all the horizon dark.

"Why not set forth, if I should do
This rashness, that which might 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 soften'd airs that blowing steal,
When meres begin to uncongeal,
The sweet church bells began to peal.

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

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

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

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

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

I blest 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 overtakes
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 sullen 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 showers :
You scarce could see the grass for flowers.

I wonder'd, while I paced along :
The woods were fill'd so full with song,
There seem'd no room for sense of wrong.

So variously seem'd all things wrought,
I marvell'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-eyelids lay.
As by the lattice you reclined,
I went thro' many wayward moods
To see you dreaming — and, behind,
A summer crisp 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.

I.

THE varying year with blade and sheaf
 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,
 Faint murmurs from the meadows come,
 Like hints and echoes of the world
 To spirits folded in the womb.

II.

Soft lustre bathes the range of urns
 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-hearth the festal fires,
 The peacock in his laurel bower,
 The parrot in his gilded wires.

III.

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

IV.

Here sits the Butler with a flask
 Between his knees, half-drain'd ; 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.

V.

Till all the hundred summers pass,
 The beams, that thro' the Oriel shine,
 Make prisms in every carven glass,
 And beaker 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.

VI.

All round a hedge upshoots, and shows
 At distance like a little wood ;
 Thorns, ivies, woolbine, mistletoes,
 And grapes with bunches red as blood ;
 All creeping plants, a wall of green
 Close-matted, burr and brake and brier,
 And glimpsing over these, just seen,
 High up, the topmost palace-spire.

VII.

When will the hundred summers die,
 And thought and time be born again,
 And newer knowledge, drawing nigh,
 Bring truth that sways 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.

I.

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 tranee'd form
 Forth streaming from a braid of pearl :
 The slumbrous light is rich and warm,
 And moves not on the rounded curl.

II.

The silk star-broider'd coverlid
 Unto her limbs itself doth mould
 Languidly ever ; and, amid
 Her full black ringlets downward roll'd,
 Glows forth each softly-shadow'd arm
 With bracelets of the diamond bright :
 Her constant beauty doth inform
 Stillness with love, and day with light.

III.

She sleeps : her breathings are not heard
 In palaece 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.

I.

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.

II.

The bodies and the bones of those
 That strove in other days to pass,
 Are wither'd in the thorny close,
 Or scatter'd 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 fail : the one succeeds."

III.

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.

IV.

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.

I.

A TOUCH, a kiss ! the charm was snapt.
 There rose a noise of striking clocks,
 And feet that ran, and doors that clapt,
 And barking dogs, and crowing cocks ;
 A fuller light illumined all,
 A breeze thro' all the garden swept,
 A sudden hubbub shook the hall,
 And sixty feet the fountain leapt.

II.

The hedge broke in, the banner blew,
 The butler drank, the steward scrawl'd,

The fire shot up, the martin flew,
 The parrot scream'd, the peacock
 squall'd,
 The maid and page renew'd their strife,
 The palace bang'd, and buzz'd and
 clackt,
 And all the long-pent stream of life
 Dash'd downward in a cataract.

III.

And last with these the king awoke,
 And in his chair himself uprear'd,
 And yawn'd, and rubb'd 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,
 'T was but an after-dinner's nap.

IV.

" Pardy," return'd the king, " but still
 My joints are somewhat 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.

I.

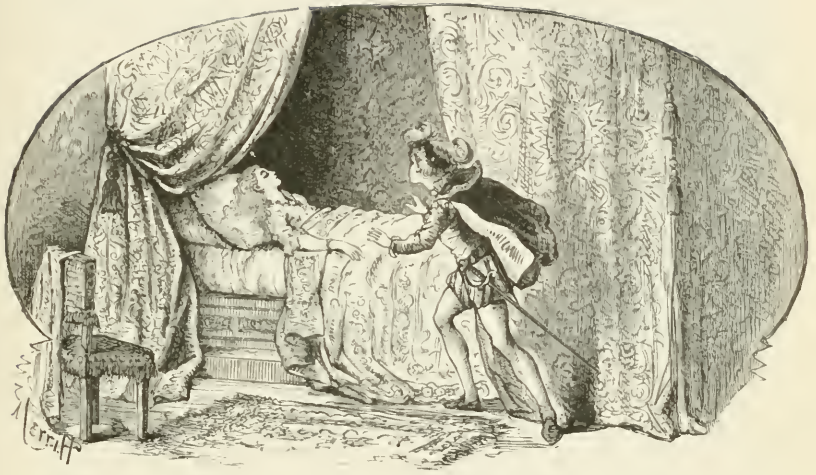
AND on her lover's arm she leant,
 And round her waist she felt it fold,
 And far across the hills they went
 In that new world which is the old :
 Across the hills, and far away
 Beyond their utmost purple rim,
 And deep into the dying day
 The happy princess follow'd him.

II.

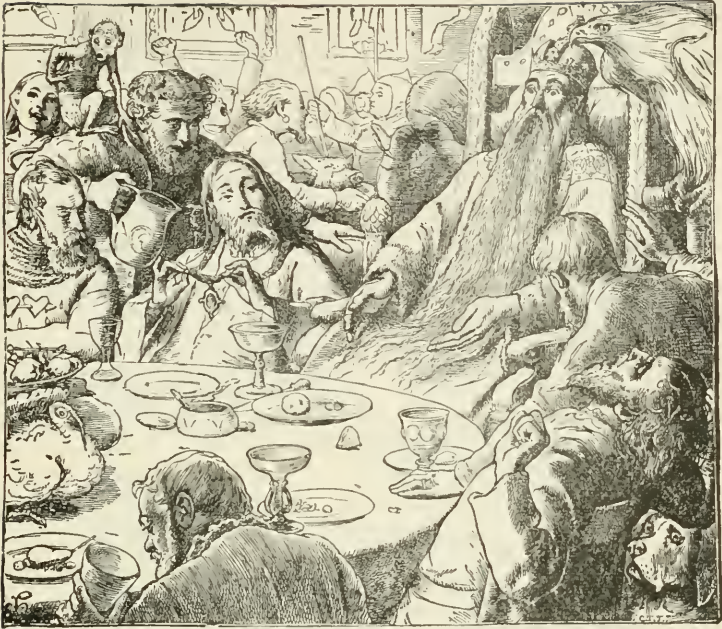
" I 'd sleep another hundred years,
 O love, for such another kiss " ;
 " O wake for ever, love," she hears,
 " O love, 't was such as this and this."
 And o'er them many a sliding star,
 And many a merry wind was borne,
 And, stream'd thro' many a golden bar
 The twilight melted into morn.

III.

" O eyes long laid in happy sleep !"
 " O happy sleep, that lightly fled !"



“He stoops -- to kiss her — on his knee.” See page 100.



"How say you? we have slept, my lords.
My beard has grown into my lap."

"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.

IV.

"A hundred summers! can it be?
And whither goest thou, tell me where?"
"O seek my father's court with me,
For there are greater wonders there."
And o'er the hills, and far away
Beyond their utmost purple rim,
Beyond the night, across the day,
Thro' all the world she follow'd him.

MORAL.

I.

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?

II.

But any man that walks the mead,
In bud or blade, or bloom, may find,
According as his humors lead,
A meaning suited to his mind.
And liberal applications lie
In Art like Nature, dearest friend;
So 't were to cramp its use, if I
Should hook it to some useful end.

L'ENVOI.

I.

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 silence from the paths of men ;
 And every hundred years to rise
 And learn the world, and sleep again ;
 To sleep thro' terms of mighty wars,
 And wake on science grown to more,
 On secrets of the brain, the stars,
 As wild as aught of fairy lore ;
 And all that else the years will show,
 The Poet-forms of stronger hours,
 The vast Republics that may grow,
 The Federations and the Powers ;
 Titanic forces taking birth
 In divers seasons, divers climes ;
 For we are Ancients of the earth,
 And in the morning of the times.

II.

So sleeping, so aroused from sleep
 Thro' sunny decads new and strange,
 Or gay quinquenniads would we reap
 The flower and quintessence of change.

III.

Ah, yet would I — and would I might !
 So much your eyes my fancy take —
 Be still the first to leap to light
 That I might kiss those eyes awake !
 For, am I right, or am I wrong,
 To choose your own you did not care ;
 You 'd have *my* moral from the song,
 And I will take my pleasure there :
 And, am I right or am I wrong,
 My fancy, ranging thro' and thro',
 To search a meaning for the song,
 Perforce will still revert to you ;
 Nor finds a closer truth than this
 All-graceful head, so richly curl'd,
 And evermore a costly kiss
 The prelude to some brighter world.

IV.

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 unwise,
 To shape the song for your delight
 Like long-tail'd birds of Paradise,
 That float thro' Heaven, and cannot
 light ?
 Or old-world trains, upheld at court
 By Cupid-boys of blooming hue —
 But take it — earnest wed with sport,
 And either sacred unto you.

AMPHION.

My father left a park to me,
 But it is wild and barren,
 A garden too with scarce a tree,
 And waster than a warren :
 Yet say the neighbors when they call,
 It is not bad but good land,
 And in it is the germ of all
 That grows within the woodland.

O had I lived when song was great
 In days of old Amphion,
 And ta'en my fiddle to the gate,
 Nor cared for seed or scion !
 And had I lived when song was great,
 And legs of trees were limber,
 And ta'en my fiddle to the gate,
 And fiddled in the timber !

'T is said he had a tuneful tongue,
 Such happy intonation,
 Wherever he sat down and sung
 He left a small plantation ;
 Wherever in a lonely grove
 He set up his forlorn pipes,
 The gouty oak began to move,
 And flounder into hornpipes.

The mountain stirr'd its bushy crown,
 And, as tradition teaches,
 Young ashes pirouetted down
 Coquetting with young beeches ;

And briony-vine and ivy-wreath
Ran forward to his rhyming,
And from the valleys underneath
Came little copses climbing.

The linden broke her ranks and rent
The woodbine wreaths that bind her,
And down the middle buzz! she went
With all her bees behind her:
The poplars, in long order due,
With cypress promenaded,
The shock-head willows two and two
By rivers galloped.

Came wet-shot alder from the wave,
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 rosin, plump'd the pine
From many a cloudy hollow.

And was n't it a sight to see,
When, ere his song was ended,
Like some great landslip, tree by tree,
The country-side descended;
And shepherds from the mountain-caves
Look'd down, half-pleas'd, 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 flexile then,
You mov'd her at your pleasure.
Twang out, my fiddle! shake the twigs!
And make her dance attendance;
Blow, flute, and stir the stiff-set sprigs,
And scirrhous roots and tendons.

'T is vain! in such a brassy age
I could not move a thistle;
The very sparrows in the hedge
Scarce 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 oxen gapping.

But what is that I hear? a sound
Like sleepy counsel pleading;
O Lord! — 't is in my neighbor's ground,
The modern Muses reading.
They read Botanic Treatises,
And Works on Gardening thro' there,

And Methods of transplanting trees,
To look as if they grew there.

The wither'd Misses! how they prose
O'er books of travell'd seamen,
And show you slips of all that grows
From England to Van Diemen.
They read in arbors clipt and cut,
And alleys, faded places,
By squares of tropic summer shut
And warm'd in crystal cases.

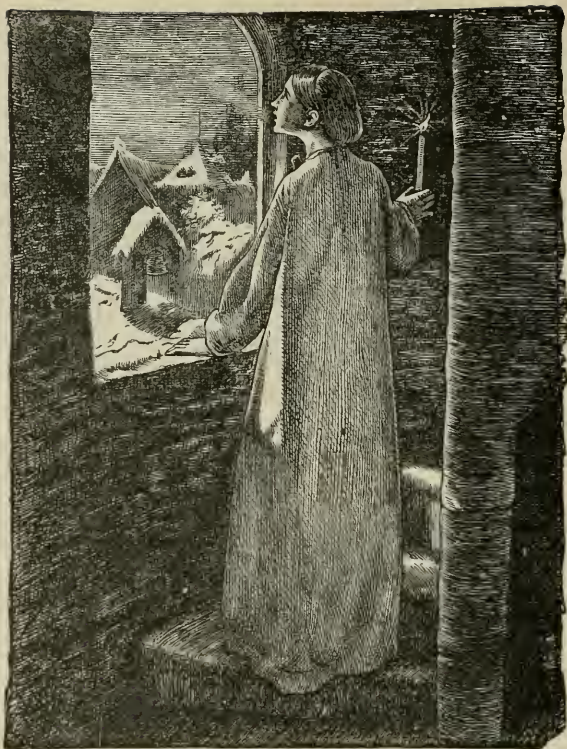
But these, tho' fed with careful dirt,
Are neither green nor sappy;
Half-conscious of the garden-squirt,
The spindlings look unhappy.
Better to me the meanest weed
That blows upon its mountain,
The vilest herb that runs to seed
Beside its native fountain.

And I must work thro' 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 blossom.

ST. AGNES' EVE.

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 soil'd 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 you starlight keen,
Draw me, thy bride, a glittering star,
In raiment white and clean.



" My breath to heaven like vapor goes :
May my soul follow soon ! "

He lifts me to the golden doors ;
The flashes come and go ;
All heaven bursts her starry floors,
And strews her lights below,
And deepens on and up ! the gates
Roll back, and far within
For me the Heavenly Bridegroom waits,
To make me pure of sin.
The sabbaths of Eternity,
One sabbath deep and wide —
A light upon the shining sea —
The Bridegroom with his bride !

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 elanging 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 till 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 bounteous aspects on me beam,
 Me mightier transports move and thrill ;
 So keep I fair thro' faith and prayer
 A virgin heart in work and will.

When down the stormy crescent goes,
 A light before me swims,
 Between dark stems the forest glows,
 I hear a noise of hymns :
 Then by some secret shrine I ride ;
 I hear a voice, but none are there ;
 The stalls are void, the doors are wide,
 The tapers burning fair.
 Fair gleams the snowy altar-cloth,
 The silver vessels sparkle clean,
 The shrill bell rings, the censer swings,
 And solemn chants resound between.

Sometimes on lonely mountain-meres
 I find a magic bark ;
 I leap on board : no helmsman steers :
 I float till all is dark.
 A gentle sound, an awful light !
 Three angels bear the holy Grail :
 With folded feet, in stoles of white,
 On sleeping wings they sail.
 Ah, blessed vision ! blood of God !
 My spirit beats her mortal bars,
 As down dark tides the glory slides,
 And star-like mingles with the stars.

When on my goodly charger borne
 Thro' dreaming towns I go,
 The cock crows ere the Christmas morn,
 The streets are dumb with snow.
 The tempest crackles on the leads,
 And, ringing, springs from brand and
 mail ;
 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 fens and windy fields.

A maiden knight — to me is given
 Such hope, I know not fear ;
 I yearn to breathe the airs of heaven
 That often meet me here.
 I muse on joy that will not cease,
 Pure spaces clothed in living beams,
 Pure lilies of eternal peace,
 Whose odors haunt my dreams ;
 And, stricken by an angel's hand,
 This mortal armor that I wear,

This weight and size, this heart and
 eyes,
 Are touch'd, are turn'd to finest air.

The clouds are broken in the sky,
 And thro' the mountain-walls
 A rolling organ-harmony
 Swells up, and shakes and falls.
 Then move the trees, the copes 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.

EDWARD GRAY.

SWEET Emma Moreland of yonder town
 Met me walking on yonder way,
 "And have you lost your heart ?" she
 said ;
 "And are you married yet, Edwar
 Gray ?"

Sweet Emma Moreland spoke to me :
 Bitterly weeping I turn'd away :
 "Sweet Emma Moreland, love no more
 Can touch the heart of Edward Gray.

"Ellen Adair she loved me well,
 Against her father's and mother's will :
 To-day I sat for an hour and wept,
 By Ellen's grave, on the windy hill.

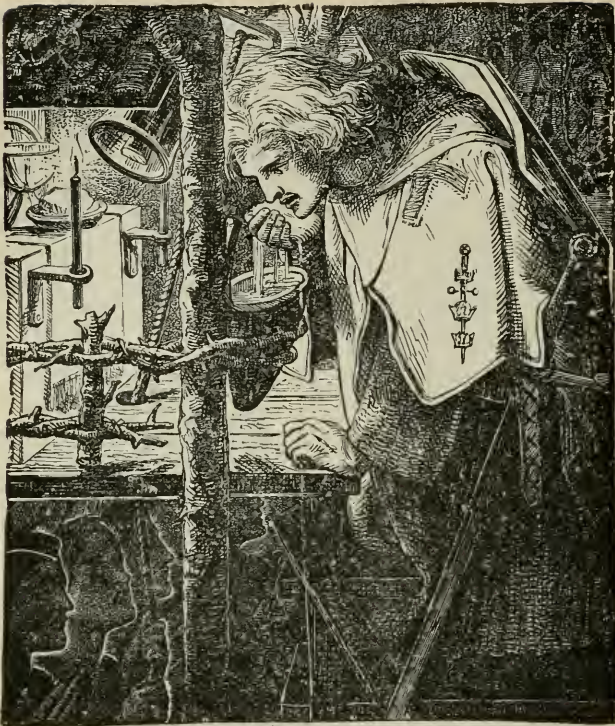
"Shy she was, and I thought her cold ;
 Thought her proud, and fled over the
 sea ;

Fill'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 me 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 !



"All-arm'd I ride, whate'er betide,
Until I find the holy Grail."

"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 !"

WILL WATERPROOF'S LYRICAL MONOLOGUE.

MADE AT THE COCK.

O PLUMP head-waiter at The Cock,
To which I most resort,
How goes the time? 'T is five o'clock.
Go fetch a pint of port :

But let it not be such as that
You set before chance-comers,
But such whose father-grape grew fat
On Lusitanian summers.

No vain libation to the Muse,
But may she still be kind,
And whisper lovely words, and use
Her influence on the mind,
To make me write my random rhymes,
Ere they be half-forgotten ;
Nor add and alter, many times,
Till all be ripe and rotten.

I pledge her, and she comes and dips
Her laurel in the wine,
And lays it thrice upon my lips,
These favor'd lips of mine ;
Until the charm have power to make
New lifeblood warm the bosom,

And barren commonplaces break
In full and kindly blossom.

I pledge her silent at the board ;
Her gradual fingers steal
And touch upon the master-chord
Of all I felt and feel.
Old wishes, ghosts of broken plans,
And phantom hopes assemble ;
And that child's heart within the man's
Begins to move and tremble.

Thro' many an hour of summer suns,
By many pleasant ways,
Against its fountain upward runs
The current of my days :
I kiss the lips I once have kiss'd ;
The gas-light wavers dimmer ;
And softly, thro' a vinous mist,
My college friendships glimmer.

I grow in worth, and wit, and sense,
Unboding critic-pen,
Or that eternal want of pence,
Which vexes public men,
Who hold their hands to all, and cry
For that which all deny them —
Who sweep the crossings, wet or dry,
And all the world go by them.

Ah yet, tho' all the world forsake,
Tho' fortune clip my wings,
I will not eramp 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 tho' the port surpasses praise,
My nerves have dealt with stiffer.
Is there some magic in the place ?
Or do my peptics suffer ?

For since I came to live and learn,
No pint of white or red
Had ever half the power to turn
This wheel within my head,
Which bears a season'd brain about,
Unsubject to confusion,
Tho' soak'd and saturate, out and out,
Thro' every convolution.

For I am of a numerous house,
With many kinsmen gay,
Where long and largely we carouse
As who shall 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 nukept,
Had relish fiery-new,
Or, elbow-deep in sawdust, slept,
As old as Waterloo ;
Or stow'd (when classic Canning died)
In musty bins and chambers,
Had cast upon its crusty side
The gloom of ten Decembers.

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 dally ;
I think he came like Ganymede,
From some delightful valley.

The Cock was of a larger egg
Than modern poultry drop,
Stept forward on a firmer leg,
And cramm'd a plumper crop ;

Upon an ampler dunghill trod,
 Crow'd lustier late and early,
 Sipt 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 :
 Hestoop'd and clutch'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 acclains,
 A sign to many a staring shire,
 Came crowing over Thames.
 Right down by smoky Paul's they bore,
 Till, where the street grows straiter,
 One fix'd for ever 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 !
 'T is but a steward of the can,
 One shade more plump than common ;
 As just and mere a serving-man
 As any, born of woman.

I ranged too high : what draws me down
 Into the common day ?
 Is it the weight of that half-crown,
 Which I shall have to pay ?
 For, something 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 fulness of my life
 I leave 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 ean,
 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, 't is gone,
 'T is gone, and let it go.
 'T is gone : a thousand such have slipt
 Away from my embraces,
 And fall'n into the dusty crypt
 Of darken'd forms and faces.

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

Hours, when the Poet's words and looks
 Had yet their native glow :
 Nor 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 for ever 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 maudlin-moral.

Head-waiter of the chop-house here,
 To which I most resort,
 I too must part : I hold thee dear
 For this good pint of port.
 For this, thou shalt from all things suck
 Marrow of mirth and laughter ;
 And, wheresoe'er thou move, good luck
 Shall fling her old shoe after.

But thou wilt never move from hence,
 The sphere thy fate allots :
 Thy latter days increased with pence
 Go down among the pots :
 Thou battenest by the greasy gleam
 In haunts of hungry sinners,
 Old boxes, larded with the steam
 Of thirty thousand dinners.

We fret, *we* fume, would shift our skins,
 Would quarrel with our lot ;
Thy care is, under polish'd tins,
 To serve the hot-and-hot ;
 To come and go, and come again,
 Returning like the pewit,
 And watch'd by silent gentlemen,
 That trifle with the cruet.

Live long, ere from thy topmost head
 The thick-set hazel dies ;
 Long, ere the hateful crow shall tread
 The corners of thine eyes :
 Live long, nor feel in head or chest
 Our changeful 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 gritted floor,
 And, laying down an unctuous lease
 Of life, shalt earn no more ;
 No carved cross-bones, the types of Death,
 Shall show thee 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 bones."
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 unrecording 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 orgies 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 : 't is but just
 The many-headed beast should know."

Ah shameless ! for he did but sing
 A song that pleased us from its worta ;
 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 more sweet to be
 The little life of bank and brier,
 The bird that pipes his lone desire
 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 !

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 Akrokeramian 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-limb'd Gods at random
 thrown
 By fountain-urns ; — and Naiads oar'd

A glimmering shoulder under gloom
 Of cavern pillars ; on the swell
 The silver lily heaved and fell ;
 And many a slope was rich in bloom

From him that on the mountain lea
 By dancing rivulets fed his flocks,
 To him who sat upon the rocks,
 And fluted to the morning sea.

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?"



"Lord Ronald brought a lily-white doe
To give his cousin, Lady Clare."

"As God 's 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,
"Tho' I should die to-night."

"Yet give one kiss to your mother dear !
Alas, my child, I sinn'd 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 follow'd her all the way.

Down stopt 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 fail :
She look'd into Lord Ronald's eyes,
And told him all her nurse's tale.

He laugh'd a laugh of merry scorn :
He turn'd and kiss'd her where she
stood :

"If you are not the heiress born,
And I," said he, "the next in blood—

"If you are not the heiress born,
And I," said he, "the lawful heir,
We two will wed to-morrow morn,
And you shall still be Lady Clare."

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 lov'st me well."

She replies, in accents fainter,
"There is none I love like thee."

He is but a landscape-painter,
And a village maiden she.

He to lips, that fondly falter,
Presses his without reproof :
Leads her to the village altar,
And they leave her father's roof.

"I can make no marriage present :
Little can I give my wife.

Love will make our cottage pleasant,
And I love thee more than life."

They by parks and lodges going
See the lordly castles stand :
Summer woods, about them blowing,
Made a murmur in the land.

From deep thought himself he rouses,
Says to her that loves him well,
"Let us see these handsome houses
Where the wealthy nobles dwell."

So she goes by him attended,
 Hears him lovingly converse,
 Sees whatever fair and splendid
 Lay betwixt his home and hers ;
 Parks with oak and chestnut shady,
 Parks and order'd gardens great,
 Ancient homes of lord and lady,
 Built for pleasure and for state.
 All he shows her makes him dearer :
 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 footstep firmer,
 Leading on from hall to hall.
 And, while now she wonders blindly,
 Nor the meaning can divine,
 Proudly turns he round and kindly,
 " All of this is mine and thine."
 Here he lives in state and bounty,
 Lord of Burleigh, fair and free,
 Not a lord in all the county
 Is so great a lord as he.
 All at once the color 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 clasp'd her like a lover,
 And he cheer'd her soul with love.
 So she strove against her weakness,
 Tho' at times her spirit 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 weigh'd upon her,
 And perplex'd her, night and morn,
 With the burden of an honor
 Unto which she was not born.

Faint she grew, and ever fainter,
 And she murmur'd, " O, that he
 Were once more that landscape-painter,
 Which did win my heart from me !"
 So she droop'd and droop'd before him,
 Fading slowly from his side :
 Three fair children first she bore him,
 Then before her time she died.
 Weeping, weeping late and early,
 Walking up and pacing down,
 Deeply mourn'd the Lord of Burleigh,
 Burleigh-house by Stamford-town.
 And he came to look upon her,
 And he look'd at her and said,
 " Bring the dress and put it on her,
 That she wore when she was wed."
 Then her people, softly treading,
 Bore to earth her body, drest
 In the dress that she was wed in,
 That her spirit might have rest.

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 sun-lit fall of rain.
 In crystal vapor everywhere
 Blue isles of heaven laugh'd between,
 And far, in forest-deeps unseen,
 The topmost elmtree gather'd green
 From draughts of balmy air.

Sometimes the linnet piped his song :
 Sometimes the throstle whistled strong ;
 Sometimes the sparrow, wheel'd along,
 Hush'd all the groves from fear of wrong :
 By grassy capes 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.
 She seem'd a part of joyous Spring :
 A gown of grass-green silk she wore,
 Buckled with golden clasps before ;
 A light-green tuft of plumes she bore
 Closed in a golden ring.

Now on some twisted ivy-net,
 Now by some tinkling rivulet,

In mosses mixt with violet
 Her cream-white mule his pastern set :
 And fleeter now she skimm'd the plains
 Than she whose elfin prancer springs
 By night to eery warblings,
 When all the glimmering moorland rings
 With jingling bridle-reins.

As she fled fast thro' sun and shade,
 The happy winds upon her play'd,
 Blowing the ringlet from the braid :
 She look'd so lovely, as she sway'd
 The rein with dainty finger-tips,
 A man had given all other bliss,
 And all his worldly worth for this,
 To waste his whole heart in one kiss
 Upon her perfect lips.

A FAREWELL.

Flow down, cold rivulet, to the sea,
 Thy tribute wave deliver :
 No more by thee my steps shall be,
 For ever and for ever.

Flow, softly flow, by lawn and lea,
 A rivulet then a river :
 No where by thee my steps shall be,
 For ever and for ever.

But here will sigh thine alder tree,
 And here thine aspen shiver ;
 And here by thee will hum the bee,
 For ever and for ever.

A thousand suns will stream on thee,
 A thousand moons will quiver ;
 But not by thee my steps shall be,
 For ever and for ever.

THE BEGGAR MAID.

HER arms across her breast she laid ;
 She was more fair than words can say :
 Bare-footed came the beggar maid
 Before the king Cophetua.
 In robe and crown the king stepped 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 lovesome mien.

So sweet a face, such angel grace,
 In all that land had never been :
 Cophetua sware a royal oath :
 "This beggar maid shall be my queen !"

THE VISION OF SIN.

I.

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 gourds, and skins of wine,
 and piles of grapes.

II.

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.
 Wov'n in circles : they that heard it
 sigh'd,
 Panted hand in hand with faces pale,
 Swung themselves, and in low tones re-
 plied ;
 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 fail,
 Storm'd in orbs of song, a growing gale ;
 Till thronging in and in, to where they
 waited,
 As 't were a hundred-throated nightin-
 gale,
 The strong tempestuous treble throbb'd
 and palpitated ;
 Ran into its giddiest whirl of sound,
 Caught the sparkles, and in circles,
 Purple gauzes, golden hazes, liquid mazes,
 Flung the torrent rainbow round :
 Then they started from their places,
 Moved with violence, changed in hue,
 Caught each other with wild grimaces,



"In robe and crown the king stepped down,
To meet and greet her on her way."

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, kill'd with some luxurious agony,
The nerve-dissolving melody
Flutter'd headlong from the sky.

III.

And then I look'd up toward a mountain-
tract,
That girt the region with high cliff and
lawn :
I saw that every morning, far withdrawn
Beyond the darkness and the cataract,
God made himself an awful rose of dawn,

Unheeded : and detaching, fold by fold,
From those still heights, and, slowly
drawing near,
A vapor heavy, hueless, formless, cold,
Came floating on for many a month and
year,
Unheeded : and I thought I would have
spoken,
And warn'd 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 ·

IV.

“ Wrinkled ostler, grim and thin !
Here is custom come your way ;
Take my brute, and lead him in,
Stuff his ribs with mouldy hay.

“ Bitter barmaid, 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 hour,
Let us hob-and-nob with Death.

“ I am old, but let me drink ;
Bring me spices, bring me wine ;
I remember, when I think,
That my youth was half divine.

“ Wine is good for shrivell'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 :
Callest 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-flies.

“ Name and fame ! to fly sublime
Thro' the courts, the camps, the schools,
Is to be the ball of Time,
Banded by the hands of fools

“ Friendship ! — to be two in one —
Let the canting liar pack !

Well I know, when I am gone,
How she mouths behind my back

“ Virtue ! — to be good and just —
Every heart, when sifted well,
Is a clot of warmer dust,
Mix'd with cunning sparks of hell.

“ Oh ! we two as well can look
Whited thought and cleanly life
As the priest, above his book
Leering at his neighbor's wife.

“ Fill the cup, and fill the can :
Have a rouse before the morn :
Every moment dies a man,
Every moment one is born.

“ Drink, and let the parties rave :
They are fill'd with idle spleen ;
Rising, falling, like a wave,
For they know not what they mean.

“ He that roars for liberty
Faster 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 applausive breath,
Freedom, gayly doth she tread ;
In her right a civic wreath,
In her left a human head.

“ No, I love not what is new ;
She is of an ancient house :
And I think we know the hue
Of that cap upon her brows.

“ Let her go ! her thirst she slakes
Where the bloody conduit runs :
Then her sweetest meal she makes
On the first-born of her sons.

“ Drink to lofty hopes that cool —
Visions of a perfect State :
Drink we, last, the public fool,
Frantic love and frantic hate.

“ Chant me now some wicked stave,
Till thy drooping courage rise,
And the glow-worm of the grave
Glimmer in thy rheumy eyes.

“Fear not thou to loose thy tongue ;
Set thy hary fancies free ;
What is loathsome to the young
Savors well to thee and me.

“Change, reverting to the years,
When thy nerves could understand
What there is in loving tears,
And the warmth of hand in hand.

“Tell me tales of thy first love —
April hopes, the fools of chance ;
Till the graves begin to move,
And the dead begin to dance.

“Fill the can, and fill the cup :
All the windy ways of men
Are but dust that rises up,
And is lightly laid again.

“Trooping from their mouldy dens
The chap-fallen circle spreads :
Welcome, fellow-citizens,
Hollow hearts and empty heads !

“You are bones, and what of that ?
Every face, however full,
Padded round with flesh and fat,
Is but modell'd on a skull.

“Death is king, and Vivat Rex !
Tread a measure on the stones,
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 —
Neither modell'd, glazed, or framed :
Buss me, thou rough sketch of man,
Far too naked to be shamed !

“Drink to Fortune, drink to Chance,
While we keep a little breath !
Drink to heavy Ignorance !
Hob-and-nob with brother Death !

“Thou art mazed, the night is long,
And the longer night is near :
What ! I am not all as wrong
As a bitter jest is dear.

“Youthful hopes, by scores, to all,
When the locks are crisp and curl'd ;
Unto me my maudlin gall
And my mockeries of the world.

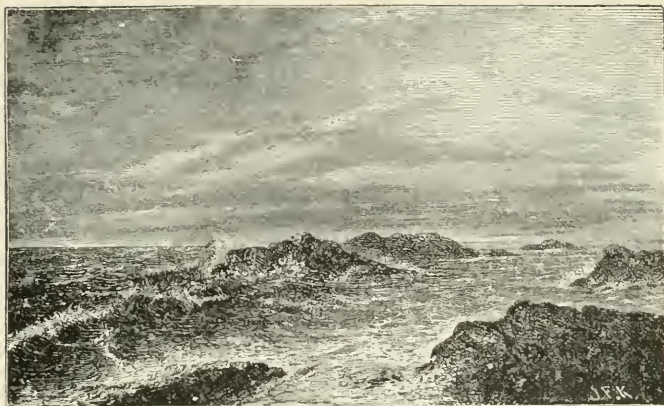
“Fill the cup, and fill the can !
Mingle madness, mingle scorn !
Dregs of life, and lees of man :
Yet we will not die forlorn.”

v.

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 shards and scurf of salt, and scum of gross,
Old plash of rains, and refuse patch'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 glimmering limit far withdrawn
God made Himself an awful rose of dawn.

COME not, when I am dead,
To drop thy foolish tears upon my grave,
To trample round my fallen head,
And vex the unhappy dust thou
wouldst not save.
There let the wind sweep and the plover
cry ;
But thou, go by.

Child, if it were thine error or thy crime
I care no longer, being all unblest :



"Break, break, break,
On thy cold gray stones, O Sea!"

Wed whom thou wilt, but I am sick of
Time,
And I desire to rest.
Pass on, weak heart, and leave me where
I lie :
Go by, go by.

THE EAGLE.

FRAGMENT.

HE clasps the crag with hooked hands ;
Close to the sun in lonely lands,
Ring'd with the azure world, he stands.

The wrinkled sea beneath him crawls ;
He watches from his mountain walls,
And like a thunderbolt he falls.

MOVE eastward, happy earth, and leave
Yon 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, smoothly 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 !

And the stately ships go on
To their haven under the hill ;
But O for the touch of a vanish'd hand,
And the sound of a voice that is still !

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

THE 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 him down in a lonely place,
And chanted a melody loud and sweet,

That made the wild-swan pause in her
cloud,
And the lark drop down at his feet.

The swallow stopt as he hunted the bee,
The snake slipt under a spray,
The wild hawk stood with the down on
his beak,

And stared, with his foot on the prey,
And the nightingale thought, "I have
sung many songs,

But never a one so gay,
For he sings of what the world will be
When the years have died away."

My life is full of weary days,
But good things have not kept aloof,
Nor wandered into other ways :
I have not lack'd thy mild reproof,
Nor golden largess of thy praise.

And now shake hands across the brink
Of that deep grave to which I go :
Shake hands once more : I cannot sink
So far — far down, but I shall know
Thy voice, and answer from below.

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
Seem'd the Captain's mood.
Secret wrath like smother'd fuel
Burnt in each man's blood.
Yet he hoped to purchase glory,
Hoped to make the name
Of his vessel great in story,
Wheresoe'er he came.
So they past by capes and islands,
Many a harbor-mouth,
Sailing under palmy highlands
Far within the South.

On a day when they were going
O'er the lone expanse,
In the north, her canvas flowing,
Rose a ship of France.
Then the Captain's color heighten'd,
Joyful came his speech :
But a cloudy gladness lighten'd
In the eyes of each.
"Chase," he said : the ship flew forward,
And the wind did blow ;
Stately, lightly, went she Norward,
Till she near'd the foe.
Then they look'd at him they hated,
Had what they desired :
Mute with folded arms they waited —
Not a gun was fired.
But they heard the focman's thunder
Roaring out their doom ;
All the air was torn in sunder,
Crashing went the boom,
Spars weresplinter'd,decks wereshatter'd,
Bullets fell like rain ;
Over mast and deck were scatter'd
Blood and brains of men.
Spars weresplinter'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 defiance
Sold him unto shame.
Shame and wrath his heart confounded,
Pale he turn'd and red,
Till himself was deadly wounded
Falling on the dead.
Dismal error ! fearful slaughter !
Years have wander'd by,
Side by side beneath the water
Crew and Captain lie ;
There the sunlit ocean tosses
O'er them mouldering,
And the lonely seabird crosses
With one waft of the wing.

THREE SONNETS TO A COQUETTE.

I.

CARESS'D or chidden by the dainty hand,
And singing airy trifles this or that,
Light Hope at Beauty's call would perch
and stand,

And run thro' every change of sharp
and flat ;
And Fancy came and at her pillow sat,
When sleep had bound her in his rosy
band,
And chased away the still-recurring
gnat,
And woke her with a lay from fairy land.
But now they live with Beauty less and
less,
For Hope is other Hope and wanders far,
Nor cares to lisp 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.

II.

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 accomplish-
ment :
Yet in the waltzing-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 rob 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 coquette, she can-
not love,
And if you kiss'd her feet a thousand years,
She still would take the praise, and
care no more.

III.

Wan 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 : more cause to weep
have I :
My tears, no tears of love, are flowing fast,
No tears of love, but tears that Love
can die.

I pledge her not in any cheerful cup,
Nor care to sit beside her where she
sits —
Ah pity — hint it not in human tones,
But breathe it into earth and close it up
With secret death for ever, in the pits
Which some green Christmas crams
with weary bones.

SONG.

LADY, let the rolling drums
Beat to battle where thy warrior stands :
Now thy face across his fancy comes,
And gives the battle to his hands.

Lady, let the trumpets blow,
Clasp thy little babes about thy knee :
Now their warrior father meets the foe,
And strikes him dead for thine and thee.

SONG.

HOME 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.”

ON A MOURNER.

I.

NATURE, so far as in her lies,
Imitates God, and turns her face
To every land beneath the skies,
Counts nothing that she meets with
base,
But lives and loves in every place ;

II.

Fills out the homely quickset-screens,
And makes the purple lilac ripe,
Steps from her airy hill, and greens
The swamp, where hums the dropping
snipe,
With moss and braided marish-pipe ;

III.

And on thy heart a finger lays,
Saying, “ Beat quicker, for the time
Is pleasant, and the woods and ways

Are pleasant, and the beech and lime
Put forth and feel a gladder clime."

IV.

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.

V.

And when the zoning eve has died
Where yon 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.

VI.

And when no mortal motion jars
The blackness round the tumbing
sod,
Thro' silence and the trembling stars
Comes Faith from tracts no feet have
trod,
And Virtue, like a household god

VII.

Promising empire ; such as those
That once at dead of night did greet
Troy's wandering prince, so that he rose
With sacrifice, while all the fleet
Had rest by stony hills of Crete.

MISCELLANEOUS.

(PUBLISHED IN 1869.)

NORTHERN FARMER.

NEW STYLE.

I.

Dosn't thou 'ear my 'erse's legs, as they canters awaäy?

Proputty, proputty, proputty — that 's what I 'ears 'em saäy.

Proputty, proputty, proputty — Sam, thou 's an ass for thy paäins:

Theer 's moor sense i' one o' 'is legs nor in all thy braäins.

II.

Woä — theer 's a craw to pluck wi' tha, Sam: yon 's parson's 'ouse —

Dosn't thou know that a man mun be eäther a man or a mouse?

Time to think on it then; for thou'll be twenty to weeäk.*

Proputty, proputty — woä then woä — let ma 'ear mysén speäk.

III.

Me an' thy muther, Sammy, 'as beän a-talkin' o' thee;

Thou 's been talkin' to muther, an' she beän a tellin' it me.

Thou 'll not marry for munny — thou 's sweet upo' parson's lass —

Noä — thou 'll marry for luvv — an' we boäth on us thinks tha an ass.

IV.

Seeä'd her to-daäy goä by — Sääint's-daäy — they was ringin' the bells.

She 's a beauty thou thinks — an' soä is scoors o' gells,

Them as 'as munny an' all — wot 's a beauty? — the flower as blows.

But proputty, proputty stieks, an' proputty, proputty graws.

V.

Do'ant be stunt: † taäke time: I knows what maäkes tha sa maä.

Warn't I craäzed fur the lasses mysén when I wur a lad?

But I know'd a Quaäker feller as often 'as tow'd ma this:

“Doänt thou marry for munny, but goä wheer munny is!”

VI.

An' I went wheer munny war: an' thy mother coom to 'and,

Wi' lots o' munny laaid by, an' a nicetish bit o' land.

Maäybe she warn't a beauty: — I niver giv it a thowt —

But warn't she as good to cuddle an' kiss as a lass as 'ant nowt?

VII.

Parson's lass 'ant nowt, an' she weänt 'a nowt when 'e's deäd,

Mun be a guvness, lad, or summut, and addle* her bread:

Why? fur 'e's nobbut a curate, an' weänt niver git naw 'igher;

An' 'e maäde the bed as 'e ligs on afoor 'e coom'd to the shire.

VIII.

And thin 'e coom'd to the parish wi' lots o' 'Varsity debt,

Stook to his taäil they did, an' 'e 'ant got shut on 'em yet.

An' 'e ligs on 'is back i' the grip, wi' noän to lend 'im a shove,

Woorse nor a far-welter'd † yowe: fur, Sammy, 'e married fur luvv.

IX.

Luvv? what 's luvv? thou can luvv thy lass an' 'er munny too,

Maakin' 'em goä together as they've good right to do.

Could'n I luvv thy muther by cause o' 'er munny laaid by?

Naäy — fur I luvv'd 'er a vast sight moor fur it: reäson why.

* Earn.

† Or fow-welter'd, — said of a sheep lying on its back in the furrow.

• This week.

† Obstinate.

X.

Ay an' thy muther says thou wants to
marry the lass,
Cooms of a gentleman burn : an' we boäth
on us thinks tha an ass.
Woä then, propuppy, wiltha? — an ass as
near as mays nowt — *
Woä then, wiltha? dangtha! — the bees
is as fell as owt. †

XI.

Break me a bit o' the esh for his 'eäd,
lad, out o' the fence!
Gentleman burn! what's gentleman
burn? is it shillins an' pence!
Propuppy, propuppy's ivrything 'ere, an',
Sammy, I'm blest
If it is n't the säame oop yonder, fur
them as 'as it's the best.

XII.

Tis'n them as 'as munny as breäks into
'ouses an' steäls,
Them as 'as coäts to their backs an' taäkes
their regular meäls.
Noä, but it's them as niver knaws wheer
a meäl's to be 'ad.
Taäke my word for it, Sammy, the poor
in a loomp is bad.

XIII.

Them or thir feythers, tha sees, mun a
beän a laäzy lot,
Fur work mun 'a gone to the gittin'
whiniver munny was got.
Feyther 'ad ammost nowt; leästäwaays
'is munny was 'id.
But 'e tued an' moil'd 'issén deäd, an'
'e died a good un 'e did.

XIV.

Look thou theer wheer Wrigglesby beck
comes out by the 'ill!
Feyther 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 leäve
the land to thee.

XV.

Thim's my noätions, Sammy, wheerby
I means to stick;
But if thou marries a bad un, I'll leäve
the land to Diek. —

* Makes nothing.

† The flies are as fierce as anything.

Coom oop, propuppy, propuppy — that's
what I 'ears 'im säay —
Propuppy, propuppy, propuppy — canter
an' canter awäay.

THE VICTIM.

I.

A PLAGUE upon the people fell,
A famine after laid them low,
Then thorpe and byre arose in fire,
For on them brake the sudden foe;
So thick they died the people cried
"The Gods are moved against the land."
The Priest in horror 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."

II.

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 scathed 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."

III.

The Priest went out by heath and hill;
The King was hunting in the wild;
They found the mother sitting still;
She cast her arms about the child.
The child was only eight summers old,
His beauty still with his years increased,
His face was ruddy, his hair was gold,
He seem'd a victim due to the priest
The Priest beheld him,
And cried with joy,
"The Gods have answer'd:
We give them the boy."

IV.

The King return'd from out the wild,
He bore but little game in hand;

The mother said "They have taken the
child

To spill his blood and heal the land :
The land is sick, the people diseased,
And blight and famine on all the lea :
The holy Gods, they must be appeased,
So I pray you tell the truth to me.

They have taken our son,
They will have his life.
Is *he* your dearest?
Or I, the wife?"

V.

The King bent low, with hand on brow,
He stay'd his arms upon his knee :
"O wife, what use to answer now?
For now the Priest has judged for me."
The King was shaken with holy fear :
"The Gods," he said, "would have
chosen well ;

Yet both are near, and both are dear,
And which the dearest I cannot tell!"
But the Priest was happy,
His victim won :
"We have his dearest,
His only son!"

VI.

The rites prepared, the victim bared,
The knife uprising toward the blow,
To the altar-stone she sprang alone,
"Me, not my darling, no!"
He caught her away with a sudden cry ;
Suddenly from him brake his wife,
And shrieking "I am his dearest, I —
I am his dearest!" rush'd on the knife.
And the Priest was happy,
"O, Father Odin,
We give you a life,
Which was his nearest?
Who was his dearest?
The Gods have answer'd ;
We give them the wife!"

WAGES.

GLORY of warrior, glory of orator, glory
of song,
Paid with a voice flying by to be lost
on an endless sea —
Glory of Virtue, to fight, to struggle, to
right the wrong —
Nay, but she aim'd not at glory, no
lover of glory she :
Give her the glory of going on, and still
to be.

The wages of sin is death : if the wages
of Virtue 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 di-
vision 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
fulfillest thy doom,
Making Him broken gleams, and a stifled
splendor and gloom.

Speak to Him thou for He hears, and
Spirit with Spirit can meet —
Closer is He than breathing, and nearer
than hands and feet.

God is law, say the wise ; O Soul, and
let us rejoice,
For if He thunder by law the thunder is
yet His voice.

Law is God, say some : no God at all,
says the fool ;
For all we have power to see is a straight
staff bent in a pool ;

And the ear of man cannot hear, and the
eye of man cannot see ;
But if we could see and hear, this Vision —
were it not He ?

FLOWER in the crannied wall,
 I pluck you out of the crannies ; —
 Hold you here, root and all, in my hand,
 Little flower — but if I could understand
 What you are, root and all, and all in all,
 I should know what God and man is.

LUCRETIUS.

LUCILIA, wedded to Lucretius, found
 Her master cold ; for when the morning
 flush
 Of passion and the first embrace had died
 Between them, tho' he loved her none the
 less,
 Yet often when the woman heard his foot
 Return from pacings in the field, and
 ran
 To greet him with a kiss, the master took
 Small notice, or austerely, for — his mind
 Half buried in some weightier argument,
 Or fancy-borne perhaps upon the rise
 And long roll of the Hexameter — he past
 To turn and ponder those three hundred
 scrolls
 Left by the Teacher whom he held divine.
 She brook'd it not ; but wrathful, pet-
 nulant,
 Dreaming some rival, sought and found
 a witch
 Who brew'd the philtre which had power,
 they said,
 To lead an errant pascion 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 loathed 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
 Rushing ; and once the flash of a thunder-
 bolt —
 Methought I never saw so fierce a fork —

Struck out the streaming mountain-side,
 and show'd
 A riotous confluence of watercourses
 Blanching and billowing in a hollow of
 it,
 Where all but yester-eve was dusty-dry.

“ Storm, and what dreams, ye holy
 Gods, what dreams !
 For thrice I waken'd after dreams. Per-
 chance
 We do but recollect the dreams that
 come
 Just ere the waking : terrible ! for it
 seem'd
 A void was made in Nature ; all her
 bonds
 Crack'd ; and I saw the flaring atom-
 streams
 And torrents of her myriad universe,
 Ruining along the illimitable inane,
 Fly on to clash together again, and
 make
 Another and another frame of things
 For ever : that was mine, my dream, I
 knew it —
 Of and belonging to me, as the dog
 With inward yelp and restless forefoot
 plies
 His function of the woodland : but the
 next !
 I thought that all the blood by Sylla shed
 Came driving rainlike down again on
 earth,
 And where it dash'd the reddening
 meadow, sprang
 No dragon warriors from Cadmean teeth,
 For these I thought my dream would
 show to me,
 But girls, Hetairai, curious in their art,
 Hired animalisms, vile as those that
 made
 The mulberry-faced Dictator's orgies
 worse
 Than aught they fable of the quiet
 Gods.
 And hands they mixt, and yell'd and
 round me drove
 In narrowing circles till I yell'd again
 Half-suffocated, and sprang up, and
 saw —
 Was it the first beam of my latest day ?

“ Then, then, from utter gloom stood
 out the breasts,
 The breasts of Helen, and hoveringly a
 sword

Now over and now under, now direct,
Pointed itself to pierce, but sank down
shamed
At all that beauty ; and as I stared, a
fire,
The fire that left a roofless Ilion,
Shot out of them, and scorch'd me that
I woke.

“ Is this thy vengeance, holy Venus,
thine,
Because I would not one of thine own
doves,
Not ev'n a rose, were offer'd to thee ?
thine,
Forgetful how my rich procœmion makes
Thy glory fly along the Italian field,
In lays that will outlast thy Deity ?

“ Deity ? nay, thy worshippers. My
tongue
Trips, or I speak profanely. Which of
these
Angers thee most, or angers thee at all ?
Not if thou be'st of those who, far aloof
From envy, hate and pity, and spite
and scorn,
Live the great life which all our greatest
fain
Would follow, centred in eternal calm.

“ Nay, if thou canst, O Goddess, like
ourselves
Touch, and be touch'd, then would I cry
to thee
To kiss thy Mavors, roll thy tender
arms
Round him, and keep him from the lust
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 neat-herds were
abroad ;
Nor her that o'er her wounded hunter
wept
Her Deity false in human-amorous tears ;
Nor whom her beardless apple-arbiter
Decided fairest. Rather, O ye Gods,
Poet-like, as the great Sicilian called
Calliope to grace his golden verse —
Ay, and this Kypris also — did I take

That popular name of thine to shadow
forth
The all-generating powers and genial
heat
Of Nature, when she strikes thro' the
thick blood
Of cattle, and light is large, and lambs
are glad
Nosing the mother's udder, and the bird
Makes his heart voice amid the blaze of
flowers :
Which things appear the work of mighty
Gods.

“ The Gods ! and if I go *my* work is
left
Unfinish'd — *if* I go. The Gods, who
haunt
The lucid 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 sound of human sorrow mounts to
mar
Their sacred everlasting calm ! and such,
Not all so fine, nor so divine a calm,
Not such, nor all unlike it, man may gain
Letting his own life go. The Gods, the
Gods !

If all be atoms, how then should the Gods
Being atomic not be dissoluble,
Not follow the great law ? My master
held
That Gods there are, for all men so be-
lieve.
I prest my footsteps into his, and meant
Surely to lead my Memmius in a train
Of flowery clauses onward to the proof
That Gods there are, and deathless.
Meant ? I meant ?

I have forgotten what I meant : my
mind
Stumbles, and all my faculties are lamed.

“ Look where another of our Gods, the
Sun,
Apollo, Delius, or of older use
All-seeing Hyperion — what you will —
Has mounted yonder ; since he never
sware,
Except his wrath were wreak'd on
wretched man,
That he would only shine among the
dead
Hereafter ; tales ! for never yet on earth

Could dead flesh creep, or bits of roast-
 ing 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 lifts
 His golden feet on those empurpled
 stairs
 That climb into the windy halls of
 heaven :
 And here he glances on an eye new-born,
 And gets for greeting but a wail of pain ;
 And here he stays upon a freezing orb
 That fain would gaze upon him to the
 last ;
 And here upon a yellow eyelid fall'n
 And closed by those who mourn a friend
 in vain,
 Not thankful that his troubles are no
 more.
 And me, 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 palsy, death-in-
 life,
 And wretched age—and worst disease
 of all,
 These prodigies of myriad nakednesses,
 And twisted shapes of lust, unspeakable,
 Abominable, strangers at my hearth
 Not welcome, harpies miring every dish,
 The phantom husks of something foully
 done,
 And fleeting thro' the boundless uni-
 verse,
 And blasting the long quiet of my breast
 With animal heat and dire insanity ?

“How should the mind, except it
 loved them, clasp
 These idols to herself? or do they fly
 Now thinner, and now thicker, like the
 flakes

In a fall of snow, and so press in, per-
 force
 Of multitude, as crowds that in an hour
 Of civic tumult jam the doors, and bear
 The keepers down, and throng, their
 rags and they,
 The basest, far into that council-hall
 Where sit the best and stateliest of the
 land !

“Can I not 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
 Picus and Faunus, rustic Gods? a tale
 To laugh at—more to laugh at in my-
 self—
 For look! what is it? there? yon arbutus
 Totters; a noiseless riot underneath
 Strikes through the wood, sets all the
 tops quivering—
 The mountain quickens into Nymph and
 Faun ;
 And here an Oread—how the sun delights
 To glance and shift about her slippery
 sides,
 And rosy knees and supple roundedness,
 And budded bosom-peaks—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-brute
 For lust or lusty blood or provender :
 I hate, abhor, spit, sicken at him ; and she
 Loathes him as well ; such a precipitate
 heel,
 Fledged as it were with Mercury's ankle-
 wing,
 Whirls her to me : but will she fling her-
 self,
 Shameless upon me? Catch her, goat-
 foot : nay.

Hide, hide them, million-myrtled wilder-
ness,
And cavern-shadowing laurels, hide ! do
I wish —
What ? — that the bush were leafless ?
or to whelm
All of them in one massacre ? O ye Gods,
I know you careless, yet, behold, to you
From childly wont and ancient use I call—
I thought I lived securely as yourselves—
No lewdness, narrowing envy, monkey-
spite,
No madness of ambition, avarice, none :
No larger feast than under plane or pine
With neighbors laid along the grass, to
take
Only such cups as left us friendly-warm,
Affirming each his own philosophy —
Nothing to mar the sober majesties
Of settled, sweet, Epicurean life.
But now it seems some unseen monster
lays
His vast and filthy hands upon my will,
Wrenching it backward into his ; and
spoils
My bliss in being ; and it was not great ;
For 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,
Or of so little in our little life —
Poor little life that toddles half an hour
Crown'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 privi-
lege —
What beast has heart to do it ? And
what man,
What Roman would be dragg'd in tri-
umph thus ?
Not I ; not he, who bears one name with
her
Whose death-blow struck the dateless
doom of kings,
When, brooking not the Tarquin in her
veins,
She made her blood in sight of Collatine
And all his peers, flushing the guiltless air,
Spout from the maiden fountain in her
heart.
And from it sprang the Commonwealth,
which breaks
As I am breaking now !

“ And therefore now
Let her, that is the womb and tomb of all,
Great Nature, take, and forcing far apart
Those blind beginnings that have made
me man
Dash 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 per-
haps
Is not so far when momentary man
Shall seem no more a something to him-
self,
But he, his hopes and hates, his homes
and fanes,
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 for ever, — till that hour,
My golden work in which I told a truth
That stays the rolling Ixionian wheel,
And numbs the Fury's ringlet-snake,
and plucks
The mortal soul from out immortal hell,
Shall stand : ay, surely : then it fails at last
And perishes as I must ; for O Thou,
Passionless bride, divine Tranquillity,
Yeam'd 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 thou surely must be mine
Or soon or late, yet out of season, thus
I woo thee roughly, for thou carest 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,
Beat breast, tore hair, cried out upon her-
self
As having fail'd in duty to him, shriek'd
That she but meant to win him back, fell
on him,
Clasp'd, kiss'd him, wail'd : he answer'd,
“ Care not thou !
Thy duty ? What is duty ? Fare thee
well !”

IDYLLS OF THE KING.

"Flos Regum Arthurus."
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 Idylls.

And indeed He seems to me
Scarce other than my own ideal knight,
"Who revered 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 immin-
ent war,
The shadow of His loss drew like eclipse,
Darkening the world. We have lost
him : he is gone :
We know him now : all narrow jealousies
Are silent ; and we see him as he moved,
How modest, kindly, all-accomplish'd,
wise,
With what sublime repression of himself,
And in what limits, and how tenderly ;
Not swaying to this faction or 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 littlenesses,
In that fierce light which beats upon a
throne,
And blackens every blot : for where is he,
Who dares foreshadow for an only son
A lovelier life, a more unstain'd, than his ?
Or how should England dreaming of *his*
sons
Hope more for these than some inheritance
Of such a life, a heart, a mind as thine,
Thou noble Father of her Kings to be,
Laborious for her people and her poor —
Voice in the rich dawn of an ampler day —
Far-sighted summoner of War and Waste
To fruitful strifes 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 in-
deed,
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 leaves
The Crown a 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 !

THE COMING OF ARTHUR.

LEODOGRAN, the King of Cameliard,
Had one fair daughter, and none other
child ;
And she was fairest of all flesh on earth,
Guinevere, and in her his one delight.

For many a petty king ere Arthur came
Ruled in this isle, and ever waging war
Each upon other, wasted all the land ;
And still from time to time the heathen
host
Swarm'd overseas, and harried what was
left.
And so there grew great tracts of wilder-
ness,
Wherein the beast was ever more and
more,
But man was less and less, till Arthur
came.
For first Aurelius lived and fought and
died,
And after him King Uther fought and
died,
But either fail'd to make the kingdom one.
And after these King Arthur for a space,
And thro' the puissance of his Table
Round,
Drew all their petty principdoms under
him,
Their king and head, and made a realm,
and reign'd.

And thus the land of Cameliard 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 boar and
bear

Came night and day, and rooted in the
fields,
And wallow'd in the gardens of the king.
And ever and anon the wolf would steal
The children and devour, but now and
then,
Her own brood lost or dead, lent her fierce
teat
To human sucklings ; and the children,
housed
In her foul den, there at their meat would
growl,
And mock their foster-mother on four feet,
Till, straighten'd, they grew up to wolf-
like men,
Worse than the wolves. And King Leodo-
gran
Groan'd for the Roman legions here again,
And Cæsar's eagle : then his brother king,
Rience, assail'd him : last a heathen horde,
Reddening the sun with smoke and earth
with blood,
And on the spike that split the mother's
heart
Spitting the child, brake on him, till,
amazed,
He knew not whither he should turn for
aid.

But — for he heard of Arthur newly
crown'd,
Tho' not without an uproar made by those
Who cried, " He is not Uther's son " —
the king
Sent to him, saying, " Arise, and help
us thou !
For here between the man and beast we
die."

And Arthur yet had done no deed of
arms,
But heard the call, and came : and Guin-
evere
Stood by the castle walls to watch him
pass ;
But since he neither wore on helm or
shield
The golden symbol of his kinglihood,
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, tho' his face was bare.
But Arthur, looking downward as he past,
Felt the light of her eyes into his life
Smite on the sudden, yet rode on, and
pitch'd

His tents beside the forest. And he drave
The heathen, and he slew the beast, and
fell'd
The forest, and let in the sun, and made
Broad pathways for the hunter and the
knight ;
And so return'd.

For while he linger'd there,
A doubt that ever smoulder'd in the hearts
Of those great Lords and Barons of his
realm
Flash'd forth and into war : for most of
these
Made head against him, crying, " Who
is he
That he should rule us ? who hath proven
him,
King Uther's son ? for lo ! we look at him
And find nor face nor bearing, limbs nor
voice,
Are like to those of Uther whom we knew.
This is the son of Gorlois, not the king ;
This is the son of Anton, not the king."

And Arthur, passing thence to battle,
felt
Travail, and throes and agonies of the life,
Desiring to be join'd with Guinevere ;
And thinking as he rode, " Her father
said
That there between the man and beast
they die.
Shall I not lift her from this land of beasts
Up to my throne, and side by side with
me ?
What happiness to reign a lonely king,
Vext — O ye stars that shudder over me,
O earth that soundest hollow under me,
Vext with waste dreams ? for saving I be
join'd
To her that is the fairest under heaven,
I seem as nothing in the mighty world,
And cannot will my will, nor work my
work
Wholly, nor make myself in mine own
realm
Victor and lord. But were I join'd with
her,
Then might we live together as one life,
And reigning with one will in everything
Have power on this dark land to lighten it,
And power on this dead world to make it
live."

And Arthur from the field of battlesent
Ulfius, and Brastias, and Bedivere,

His new-made knights, to King Leodo-
gran,
Saying, " If I in aught have served thee
well,
Give me thy daughter Guinevere to wife."

Whom when he heard, Leodogran in
heart
Debating — " How should I that am a
king,
However much he help me at my need,
Give my one daughter saving to a king,
And a king's son " — lifted his voice, and
call'd
A hoary man, his chamberlain, to whom
He trusted all things, and of him required
His counsel : " Knowest thou aught of
Arthur's birth ?"

Then spake the hoary chamberlain and
said,
" Sir king, there be but two old men that
know :
And each is twice as old as I ; and one
Is Merlin, the wise man that ever served
King Uther thro' his magic art ; and one
Is Merlin's master (so they call him) Bleys,
Who taught him magic ; but the scholar
ran
Before the master, and so far, that Bleys
Laid magic by, and sat him down, and
wrote
All things and whatsoever Merlin did
In one great annal-book, where after-years
Will learn the secret of our Arthur's
birth."

To whom the King Leodogran replied,
" O friend, had I been holpen half as well
By this King Arthur as by thee to-day,
Then beast and man had had their share
of me :
But summon here before us yet once more
Ulfius, and Brastias, and Bedivere."

Then, when they came before him, the
king said,
" I have seen the cuckoo chased by lesser
fowl,
And reason in the chase : but wherefore
now
Do these your lords stir up the heat of
war,
Some calling Arthur born of Gorlois,
Others of Anton ? Tell me, ye yourselves,
Hold ye this Arthur for King Uther's
son ?"

And Ulfus and Brastias answer'd,
"Ay."

Then Bedivere, the first of all his knights
Knighted by Arthur at his crowning,
spake —

For bold in heart and act and word 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 are 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 care to learn —
Sir, for ye know that in King Uther's time
The prince and warrior Gorlois, he that
held

Tintagil castle by the Cornish sea,
Was wedded with a winsome wife, 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 overthrown was Gorlois and slain.

Then Uther in his wrath and heat besieged
Ygerne within Tintagil, where her men,
Seeing the mighty swarm about their
walls,

Left her and fled, and Uther enter'd in,
And there was none to call to but himself.
So, compass'd by the power of the king,
Enforc'd she was to wed him in her tears,
And with a shameful swiftness; afterward,
Not many moons, King Uther died him-
self,

Moaning and wailing for an heir to rule
After him, lest the realm should go to
wrack.

And that same night, the night of the
new year,

By reason of the bitterness and grief
That vext his mother, all before his time
Was Arthur born, and all as soon as born
Deliver'd at a secret postern gate

To Merlin, to be holden far apart
Until his hour should come ; because the
lords

Of that fierce day were as the lords of this,
Wild beasts, and surely would have torn
the child

Piecemeal among them, had they known;
for each

But sought to rule for his own self and
hand,

And many hated Uther for the sake
Of Gorlois. Wherefore Merlin took the
child,

And gave him to Sir Anton, an old knight
And ancient friend of Uther ; and his wife
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, when Merlin (for his hour had
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 king of ours ! a son of Gorlois he,
Or else the child of Anton, and no king,
Or else baseborn.' Yet Merlin thro' his
craft,

And while the people clamor'd for a king,
Had Arthur crown'd ; but after, the great
lords

Banded, and so brake out in open war."

Then while the king debated with him-
self

If Arthur were the child of shamefulness,
Or born the son of Gorlois, after death,
Or Uther's son, and born before his time,
Or whether there were truth in anything
Said by these three, there came to Came-
liard,

With Gawain and young Modred, her two
sons,

Lot's wife, the Queen of Orkney, Belli-
cent ;

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 enow 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
 Crown'd on the daïs, and his warriors
 cried,
 ' Be thou the king, and we will work thy
 will
 Who love thee.' Then the king in low
 deep tones,
 And simple words of great authority,
 Bound them by so strait vows to his own
 self,
 That when they rose, knighted from
 kneeling, some
 Were pale as at the passing of a ghost,
 Some flush'd, and others dazed, as one
 who wakes
 Half-blinded at the coming of a light.

"But when he spake and cheer'd 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 their faces, thro' the cross
 And those around it and the Crucified,
 Down from the casement over Arthur,
 smote
 Flame-color, vert and azure, in three rays,
 One falling upon each of three fair queens,
 Who stood in silence near his throne, the
 friends
 Of Arthur, gazing on him, tall, with bright
 Sweet faces, who will help him at his need.

"And there I saw mage Merlin, whose
 vast wit
 And hundred winters are but as the hands
 Of loyal vassals toiling for their liege.

"And near him stood the Lady of the
 Lake,
 Who knows a subtler magic than his
 own —
 Clothed in white samite, mystic, wonder-
 ful.

She gave the king his huge cross-hilted
 sword,

Whereby to drive the heathen out : a mist
 Of incense curl'd about her, and her face
 Wellnigh was hidden in the minster
 gloom ;

But there was heard among the holy
 hymns

A voice as of the waters, for she dwells
 Down in a deep, calm, whatsoever storms
 May shake the world, and when the sur-
 face 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 hilt,
 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 your-
 self,

'Cast me away !' And sad was Arthur's
 face

Taking it, but old Merlin counsell'd him,
 'Take thou and strike ! the time to cast
 away

Is yet far-off.' So this great brand the king
 Took, and by this will beat his foemen
 down."

Thereat Leodogran rejoiced, but
 thought

To sift his doubtings 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," ask'd
 the King.

She answer'd, "These be secret things,"
 and sign'd

To those two sons to pass and let them be.
 And Gawain went, and breaking into song
 Sprang out, and follow'd by his flying
 hair

Ran like a colt, and leapt at all he saw :
But Modred laid his ear beside the doors,
And there half heard ; the same that af-
terward
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,
‘O that ye had some brother, pretty one,
To guard thee on the rough ways of the
world.’”

“Ay,” said the King, “and hear ye
such a cry ?
But when did Arthur chance upon thee
first ?”

“O king !” she cried, “and I will tell
thee true :
He found me first when yet a little maid :
Beaten I had been for a little fault
Whereof I was not guilty ; and out I ran
And flung myself down on a bank of heath,
And hated 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 spake sweet words, and comforted
my heart,
And dried my tears, being a child with me.
And many a time he came, and evermore
As I grew greater grew with me ; and sad
At times he 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 when I enter’d told me that himself
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 still king, and passing forth to
breathe,
Then from the castle gateway by the chasm
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
Dropt to the cove, and watch’d the great
sea fall,
Wave after wave, each mightier than the
last,
Till last, a ninth one, gathering half the
deep
And full of voices, slowly rose and plunged
Roaring, and all the wave was in a flame :
And down the wave and in the flame was
borne
A naked babe, and rode to Merlin’s feet,
Who stooped and caught the babe, and
cried ‘The King !
Here is an heir for Uther !’ And the fringe
Of that great breaker, sweeping up the
strand,
Lash’d at the wizard as he spake the word,
And all at once all round him rose in fire,
So that the child and he were clothed in
fire.
And presently thereafter follow’d calm,
Free sky and stars : ‘And this same
child,’ he said,
‘Is he who reigns ; nor could I part in
peace
Till this were told.’ And saying this the
seer
Went thro’ the strait and dreadful pass
of death,
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 seas —
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 let it be.

Rain, sun, and rain ! and the free blossom
blows :

Sun, rain, and sun ! and where is he who
knows ?

From the great deep to the great deep he
goes.

“ So Merlin riddling anger'd me ; but
thou

Fear not to give this king thine only child,
Guinevere : so great bards of him will sing
Hereafter ; and dark sayings from of old
Ranging and ringing thro' the minds of
men,

And echo'd by old folk 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
Utterly smite the heathen underfoot,
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 drowsed, 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 hind fell, the herd
was driven,

Fire glimpsed ; 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 one who pointed toward the voice,
the rest

Slew on and burnt, crying, “ No king of
ours,

No son of Uther, and no king of ours ” ;
Till with a wink his dream was changed,
the haze

Descended, and the solid earth became
As nothing, and the king stood out in
heaven,

Crown'd. And Leodogran awoke, and sent
Ulfius, and Brastias, and Bedivere,
Back to the court of Arthur answering yea.

Then Arthur charged his warrior whom
he loved

And honor'd most, Sir Lancelot, to ride
forth

And bring the Queen ; — and watch'd
him from the gates :

And Lancelot past away among the
flowers,

(For then was latter April) and return'd
Among the flowers, in May, with Guine-
vere.

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 stain-
less white,

The fair beginners of a nobler time,
And glorying in their vows and him,

his knights
Stood round him, and rejoicing in his
joy.

And holy Dubric spread his hands and
spake,

“ 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 their
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 heathen from your Roman
wall,
No tribute will we pay " : so those great
lords
Drew back in wrath, and Arthur strove
with Rome.

And Arthur and his knighthood for a
space
Were all one will, and thro' that strength
the king
Drew in the petty principedoms under him,
Fought, and in twelve great battles
overcame
The heathen hordes, and made a realm
and reign'd.

GERAINT AND 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 married 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 crimsons and in purples and in gems.
And Enid, but to please her husband's
eye,
Who first had found and loved her in a
state
Of broken fortunes, daily fronted him
In some fresh splendor ; and the Queen
herself,
Grateful to Prince Geraint for service
done,
Loved her, and often with her own white
hands
Array'd and deck'd her, as the loveliest,
Next after her own self, in all the court.
And Enid loved the Queen, and with
true heart
Adored her, as the stateliest and the best
And loveliest of all women upon earth.
And seeing them so tender and so close,

Long in their common love rejoiced
Geraint.

But when a rumor rose about the Queen,
Touching her guilty love for Lancelot,
Tho' 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 for Guinevere,
Had suffer'd, or should suffer any taint
In nature : wherefore going to the king,
He made this pretext, that his principedom
lay

Close on the borders of a territory,
Wherein were bandit earls, and Caitiff
knights,

Assassins, and all fliers from the hand
Of Justice, and whatever loathes a law :
And therefore, till the king himself should
please

To cleanse this common sewer of all his
realm,

He craved a fair permission to depart,
And there defend his marches ; and the
king

Mused for a little on his plea, but, last,
Allowing it, the Prince and Enid rode,
And fifty knights rode with them, to
the shores

Of Severn, and they past to their own land ;
Where, thinking, that if ever yet was wife
True to her lord, mine shall be so to me,
He compass'd her with sweet observances
And worship, never leaving her, and grew
Forgetful of his promise to the king,
Forgetful of the falcon and the hunt,
Forgetful of the tilt and tournament,
Forgetful of his glory and his name,
Forgetful of his principedom and its cares.
And this forgetfulness was hateful to her.
And by and by the people, when they met
In twos and threes, or fuller companies,
Began to scoff and jeer and babble of him
As of a prince whose manhood was all gone,
And molten down in mere uxoriousness.
And this she gather'd from the people's
eyes :

This too the woman who attired her head,
To please her, dwelling on his boundless
love,

Told Enid, and they sadden'd her the
more :

And day by day she thought to tell
Geraint,

But could not out of bashful delicacy ;



Enid.

While he that watch'd her sadden, was
the more
Suspicious that her nature had a taint.

At last it chanced that on a summer
morn

(They sleeping each by either) the new sun
Beat thro' the blindless casement of the
room,

And heated the strong warrior in his
dreams ;

Who, moving, cast the coverlet aside,
And bared the knotted column of his
throat,

The massive square of his heroic breast,
And arms on which the standing muscle
sloped,

As slopes a wild brook o'er a little stone,
Running too vehemently to break upon it.

And Enid woke and sat beside the couch,
Admiring him, and thought within her-
self,

Was ever man so grandly made as he ?
Then, like a shadow, past the people's talk
And accusation of uxoriousness

Across her mind, and bowing over him,
Low to her own heart piteously she said :

“ O noble breast and all-puissant arms,
Am I the cause, I the poor cause that men
Reproach you, saying all your force is
gone ?

I *am* the cause because I dare not speak
And tell him what I think and what they
say.

And yet I hate that he should linger here ;
I cannot love my lord and not his name.

Far liefer had I gird his harness on him,
And ride with him to battle and stand by,
And watch his mighty hand striking
great blows

At caitiffs and at wrongers of the world.
Far better were I laid in the dark earth,
Not hearing any more his noble voice,
Not to be folded more in these dear arms,
And darken'd from the high light in his
eyes,

Than that my lord thro' me should suffer
shame.

Am I so bold, and could I so stand by,
And see my dear lord wounded in the strife,
Or maybe pierced to death before mine
eyes,

And yet not dare to tell him what I think,
And how men slur him, saying all his force

Is melted into mere effeminacy ?
O me, I fear that I am no true wife."

Half inwardly, half audibly she spoke,
And the strong passion in her made her weep

True tears upon his broad and naked breast,
And these awoke him, and by great mischance

He heard but fragments of her later words,
And that she fear'd she was not a true wife.
And then he thought, "In spite of all my care,

For all my pains, poor man, for all my pains,
She is not faithful to me, and I see her weeping
for some gay knight in Arthur's hall."

Then tho' he loved and revered her too much

To dream she could be guilty of foul act,
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 hurl'd his huge limbs out of bed,
And shook his drowsy squire awake and cried,

"My charger and her palfrey," then to her,
"I will ride forth into the wilderness ;
For tho' it seems my spurs are yet to win,
I have not fall'n so low as some would wish.
And you, put on your worst and meanest dress

And ride with me." And Enid ask'd,
amazed,

"If Enid errs, let Enid learn her fault."
But he, "I charge you, ask not but obey."
Then she bethought her of a faded silk,
A faded mantle and a faded veil,
And moving toward a cedarn cabinet,
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 he loved her in it,

And all her foolish fears about the dress,
And all his journey to her, as himself
Had told her, and their coming to the court.

For Arthur on the Whitsuntide before
Held court at old Caerleon upon Usk.
There on a day, he sitting high in hall,

Before him came a forester of Dean,
Wet from the woods, with notice of a hart
Taller than all his fellows, milky-white,
First seen that day : these things he told the king.

Then the good king gave order to let blow
His horns for hunting on the morrow morn.

And when the Queen petition'd for his leave

To see the hunt, allow'd it easily.
So with the morning all the court were gone.

But Guinevere lay late into the morn,
Lost in sweet dreams, and dreaming of her love

For Lancelot, and forgetful of the hunt ;
But rose at last, a single maiden with her,
Took horse, and forded Usk, and gain'd the wood ;

There, on a little knoll beside it, stay'd
Waiting to hear the hounds ; but heard instead

A sudden sound of hoofs, for Prince Geraint,

Late also, wearing neither hunting-dress
Nor weapon, save a golden-hilted brand,
Came quickly flashing thro' the shallow ford

Behind them, and so gallop'd up the knoll.
A purple scarf, at either end whereof
There swung an apple of the purest gold,
Sway'd round about him, as he gallop'd up
To join them, glancing like a dragon-fly
In summer suit and silks of holiday.

Low bow'd the tributary Prince, and she,
Sweetly and stately, 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 on this little knoll, if anywhere,
There is good chance that we shall hear the hounds :

Here often they break covert at our feet."

And while they listen'd for the distant hunt,

And chiefly for the baying of Cavall,
King Arthur's hound of deepest mouth,
there rode

Full slowly by a knight, lady, and dwarf ;

Whereof the dwarf lagg'd latest, and the knight

Had visor up, and show'd a youthful face,
Imperious, and of haughtiest lineaments.
And Guinevere, not mindful of his face
In the king's hall, desired his name, and sent

Her maiden to demand it of the dwarf ;
Who being vicious, old, and irritable,
And doubling all his master's vice of pride,
Made answer sharply that she should not know.

"Then will I ask it of himself," she said.
"Nay, by my faith, thou shalt not," cried the dwarf ;

"Thou art not worthy ev'n to speak of him" ;

And when she put her horse toward the knight,
Struck at her with his whip, and she return'd

Indignant to the Queen ; whereat Geraint
Exclaiming, "Surely I will learn the name,"

Made sharply to the dwarf, and ask'd it of him,

Who answer'd as before ; and when the Prince

Had put his horse in motion toward the knight,

Struck at him with his whip, and cut his cheek.

The Prince's blood spirted upon the scarf,
Dyeing it ; and his quick, instinctive hand
Caught at the hilt, as to abolish him :

But he, from his exceeding manfulness
And pure nobility of temperament,
Wroth 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 unarm'd, 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 ye light on all things that ye love,

And live to wed with her whom first ye love :

But ere ye wed with any, bring your bride,

And I, were she the daughter of a king,
Yea, tho' she were a beggar from the hedge,
Will clothe her for her bridals like the sun."

And Prince Geraint, now thinking that he heard

The noble hart at bay, now the far horn,
A little vext at losing of the hunt,

A little at the vile occasion, rode,
By ups and downs, thro' many a grassy glade

And valley, with fixt eye following the three.

At last they issued from the world of wood,
And climb'd upon a fair and even ridge,
And show'd themselves against the sky,
and sank.

And thither came Geraint, and underneath

Beheld the long street of a little town
In a long valley, on one side whereof,
White from the mason's hand, a fortress rose ;

And on one side a castle in decay,
Beyond a bridge that spann'd a dry ravine :
And out of town and valley came a noise
As of a broad brook o'er a shingly bed
Brawling, or like a clamor of the rooks
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 Geraint, "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 bustling whistle of the youth who scour'd

His master's armor ; and of such a one
He ask'd, "What means the tumult in the town ?"

Who told him, scouring still "The sparrow-hawk !"

Then riding close behind an ancient churl,
Who, smitten by the dusty sloping beam,
Went sweating underneath a sack of corn,
Ask'd yet once more what meant the hub-bub here ?



“Beheld the long street of a little town
In a long valley.”

Who answer'd gruffly, Ugh ! the spar-
row-hawk.”
Then riding further past an armorer's,
Who, with back turn'd, and bow'd above
his work,
Sat riveting a helmet on his knee,
He put the self-same query, but the man
Not turning round, nor looking at him,
said :
“Friend, he that labors for the sparrow-
hawk
Has little time for idle questioners.”
Whereat Geraint flash'd into sudden
spleen :
“A thousand pips 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 ye be not like the rest, hawk-
mad,
Where can I get me harborage for the
night ?
And arms, arms, arms to fight my enemy ?
Speak !”
At this the armorer turning all amazed
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 work.
Arms? truth! I know not : all are wanted
here.

Harborage? truth, good truth, I know
not, save,

It may be, at Earl Yniol's, o'er the bridge
Yonder." He spoke and fell to work again.

Then rode Geraint, a little spleenful
yet,
Across the bridge that spann'd the dry
ravine.

There musing sat the hoary-headed Earl,
(His dress a suit of fray'd magnificence,
Once fit for feasts of ceremony) and said :
"Whither, fair son?" to whom Geraint
replied,

"O friend, I seek a harborage for the
night."

Then Yniol, "Enter therefore and partake
The slender entertainment of a house
Once rich, now poor, but ever open-
door'd."

"Thanks, venerable friend," replied Ge-
raint ;

"So that ye 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 than yours
is mine

To curse this hedgerow thief, the sparrow-
hawk :

But in, go in ; for save yourself desire it,
We will not touch upon him ev'n in jest."

Then rode Geraint into the castle court,
His charger trampling many a prickly star
Of sprouted thistle on the broken stones.
He look'd and saw that all was ruinous.
Here stood a shatter'd archway plumed
with fern ;

And here had fall'n a great part of a tower,
Whole, like a crag that tumbles from the
cliff,

And like a crag was gay with wilding
flowers :

And high above a piece of turret stair,
Worn by the feet that now were silent,
wound

Bare to the sun, and monstrous ivy-stems
Claspt the gray walls with hairy-fibred
arms,

And suck'd the joining of the stones, and
look'd

A knot, beneath, of snakes, aloft, a grove.

And while he waited in the castle court,
The voice of Enid, Yniol's daughter, rang
Clear thro' the open casement of the Hall,
Singing ; and as the sweet voice of a
bird,

Heard by the lander in a lonely isle,
Moves him to think what kind of bird
it is

That sings so delicately clear, and make
Conjecture of the plumage and the form ;
So the sweet voice of Enid moved Geraint ;
And made him like a man abroad at morn
When first the liquid note beloved of
men

Comes flying over many a windy wave
To Britain, and in April suddenly
Breaks from a coppice gemm'd with green
and red,

And he suspends his converse with a
friend,

Or it may be the labor of his hands,
To think or say, "there is the nightin-
gale" ;

So fared it with Geraint, who thought and
said,

"Here, by God's grace, is the one voice
for me."

It chanced the song that Enid sang was
one

Of Fortune and her wheel, and Enid sang :

"Turn, Fortune, turn thy wheel and
lower the proud ;
Turn thy wild wheel thro' sunshine, storm,
and cloud ;

Thy wheel and thee we neither love nor
hate.

"Turn, Fortune, turn thy wheel with
smile or frown ;
With that wild wheel we go not up or down ;
Our hoard is little, but our hearts are
great.

"Smile and we smile, the lords of
many lands ;
Frown and we smile, the lords of our own
hands ;

For man is man and master of his fate.

“Turn, turn thy wheel above the
staring crowd ;
Thy wheel and thou are shadows in the
cloud ;
Thy wheel and thee we neither love nor
hate.”

“Hark, by the bird’s song you may
learn the nest”
Said Yniol ; “Enter quickly.” Enter-
ing then,
Right o’er a mount of newly-fallen stones,
The dusky-rafter’d many-cobweb’d Hall,
He found an ancient dame in dim bro-
cade ;
And near her, like a blossom vermeil-
white,

That lightly breaks a faded flower-sheath,
Moved the fair Enid, all in faded silk,
Her daughter. In a moment thought
Geraint,

“Here by God’s rood is the one maid for
me.”

But none spake word except the hoary
Earl :

“Enid, the good knight’s horse stands in
the court ;

Take him to stall, and give him corn,
and then

Go to the town and buy us flesh and
wine ;

And we will make us merry as we may.
Our hoard is little, but our hearts are
great.”



“In a moment thought Geraint,
‘Here by God’s rood is the one maid for me.’”

He spake : the Prince, as Enid past
 him, fain
 To follow, strode a stride, but Yniol caught
 His purple scarf, and held, and said
 "Forbear!
 Rest ! the good house, tho' ruin'd, O my
 Son,
 Endures not that her guest should serve
 himself."
 And reverencing the custom of the house
 Geraint, from utter courtesy, forbore.

So Enid took his charger to the stall ;
 And after went her way across the bridge,
 And reach'd the town, and while the
 Prince and Earl
 Yet spoke together, came again with one,
 A youth, that following with a costrel bore
 The means of goodly welcome, flesh and
 wine.

And Enid brought sweet cakes to make
 them cheer,
 And in her veil enfolded, manchet bread.
 And then, because their hall must also
 serve
 For kitchen, boil'd the flesh, and spread
 the board,
 And stood behind, and waited on the three.
 And seeing her so sweet and serviceable,
 Geraint had longing in him evermore
 To stoop and kiss the tender little thumb,
 That erst the trencher as she laid it down :
 But after all had eaten, then Geraint,
 For now the wine made summer in his
 veins,
 Let his eye rove in following, or rest
 On Enid at her lowly handmaid-work,
 Now here, now there, about the dusky hall ;
 Then suddenly address the hoary Earl :

"Fair Host and Earl, I pray your courtesy ;
 This sparrow-hawk, what is he, tell me
 of him.
 His name ? but no, good faith, I will not
 have it :
 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 maiden to demand the name,
 His dwarf, a vicious under-shapen thing,
 Struck at her with his whip, and she re-
 turn'd

Indignant to the Queen ; and then I swore
 That I would track this caitiff 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 bourg
 For the great wave that echoes round the
 world ;
 They would not hear me speak : but if
 ye know
 Where I can light on arms, or if yourself
 Should have them, tell me, seeing I have
 sworn
 That I will break his pride and learn his
 name,
 Avenging this great insult done the
 Queen."

Then cried Earl Yniol. "Art thou he
 indeed,
 Geraint, a name far-sounded among men
 For noble deeds ? and truly I, when first
 I saw you moving by me on the bridge,
 Felt you were somewhat, yea and by
 your state
 And presence might have guess'd 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 Limours,
 A creature wholly given to brawls and
 wine,
 Drunk even when he woo'd ; and he
 dead
 I know not, but he past to the wild land.
 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 — he,
 When I that knew him fierce and turbu-
 lent
 Refused her to him, then his pride awoke ;
 And since the proud man often is the
 mean,
 He sow'd 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 the men who served

About my person, the more easily
Because my means were somewhat broken into

Thro' open dooks and hospitality ;
Raised my own town against me in the night

Before my Enid's birthday, sack'd my house ;

From mine own earldom foully ousted me ;
Built that new fort to overawe my friends,
For truly there are those who love me yet ;
And keeps me in this ruinous castle here,
Where doubtless he would put me soon to death,

But that his pride too much despises me :
And I myself sometimes despise myself ;
For I have let men be, and have their way ;
Am 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 the sparrow-hawk, this nephew,
fight,
In next day's tourney I may break his pride."

And Yniol answer'd "Arms, indeed,
but old

And rusty, old and rusty, Prince Geraint,
Are mine, and therefore at your asking,
yours.

But in this tournament can no man tilt,
Except the lady he loves best be there.
Two forks are fixt into the meadow ground,
And over these is laid a silver wand,
And over that is placed the sparrow-hawk,
The prize of beauty for the fairest there.
And this, what knight soever be in field
Lays claim to for the lady at his side,
And tilts with my good nephew thereupon,
Who being apt at arms and big of bone
Has ever won it for the lady with him,
And toppling over all antagonism
Has earn'd himself the name of sparrow-hawk.

But you, that have no lady, cannot fight."

To whom Geraint with eyes all bright
replied,

Leaning a little toward him, "Your
leave !

Let me lay lance in rest, O noble host,
For this dear child, because I never saw,
Tho' having seen all beauties of our time,
Nor can see elsewhere, anything so fair.
And if I fall 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 hearing her own name had slept
away)

But that old dame, to whom full tenderly
And fondling all her hand in his he said,
"Mother, a maiden is a tender thing,
And best by her that bore her understood.
Go thou to rest, but ere thou go to rest
Tell her, and prove her heart toward the
Prince."

So spake the kindly-hearted Earl, and
she

With frequent smile and nod departing
found,

Half disarray'd as to her rest, the girl ;
Whom first she kiss'd on either cheek,
and then

On either shining shoulder laid a hand,
And kept her off and gazed upon her face,
And told her all their converse in the
hall,

Proving her heart : but never light and
shade

Coursed one another more on open ground
Beneath a troubled heaven, than red and
pale

Across the face of Enid hearing her ;
While slowly falling as a scale that falls,
When weight is added only grain by grain,
Sank her sweet head upon her gentle
breast ;

Nor did she lift an eye nor speak a word,
Rapt in the fear and in the wonder of it ;
So moving without answer to her rest
She found no rest, and ever fail'd to draw
The quiet night into her blood, but lay
Contemplating her own unworthiness ;
And when the pale and bloodless east
began

To quicken to the sun, arose, and raised

Her mother too, and hand in hand they
 moved
 Down to the meadow where the jousts
 were held,
 And waited there for Yniol and Geraint.

And thither came the twain, and when
 Geraint

Beheld her first in field, awaiting him,
 He felt, were she the prize of bodily force,
 Himself beyond the rest pushing could
 move

The chair of Idris. Yniol's rusted 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
 Flow'd in, and settling circled all the
 lists.

And there they fixt the forks into the
 ground,

And over these they placed a silver wand
 And over that a golden sparrow-hawk.

Then Yniol's nephew, after trumpet
 blown,

Spake to the lady with him and pro-
 claim'd,

"Advance and take as fairest of the fair,
 For I these two years past have vow'd it
 for thee,

The prize of beauty." Loudly spake the
 Prince,

"Forbear: there is a worthier," and the
 knight

With some surprise and thrice as much
 disdain

Turn'd, and beheld the four, and all his
 face

Glow'd like the heart of a great fire at
 Yule,

So burnt he was with passion, crying out,
 "Do battle for it then," no more; and
 thrice

They clash'd together, and thrice they
 brake their spears.

Then each, dishorsed and drawing, lash'd
 at each

So often and with such blows, that all
 the crowd

Wonder'd, and now and then from dis-
 tant 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 bit
 the bone,

And fell'd him, and set foot upon his
 breast,

And said, "Thy name?" To whom the
 fallen man

Made answer, groaning, "Edyrn, son of
 Nudd!

Ashamed am I that I should tell it thee.
 My pride is broken: men have seen my
 fall."

"Then, Edyrn, 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,

Crave pardon for that insult done the
 Queen,

And shalt abide her judgment on it; next,
 Thou shalt give back their earldom to thy
 kin.

These two things shalt thou do, or thou
 shalt die."

And Edyrn 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, and came
 to loathe

His crime of traitor, slowly drew himself
 Bright from his old dark life, and fell at
 last

In the great battle fighting for the king.

But when the third day from the hunt-
 ing-morn

Made a low splendor in the world, and
 wings

Moved in her ivy, Enid, for she lay
 With her fair head in the dim-yellow
 light,

Among the dancing shadows of the birds,



“And fell'd him, and set foot on his breast.” See page 144

Woke and bethought her of her promise
given

No later than last eve to Prince Geraint—
So bent he seem'd on going the third day,
He would not leave her, till her promise
given—

To ride with him this morning to the court,
And there be made known to the stately
Queen,

And there be wedded with all ceremony.
At this she cast her eyes upon her dress,
And thought it never yet had look'd so
mean.

For as a leaf in mid-November is
To what it was in mid-October, seem'd
The dress that now she look'd on to the
dress

She look'd on ere the coming of Geraint.
And still she look'd, and still the terror
grew

Of that strange bright and dreadful thing,
a court,

All staring at her in her faded silk :
And softly to her own sweet heart she said :

“This noble prince who won our earl-
dom back,

So splendid in his acts and his attire,
Sweet heaven, how much I shall discredit
him !

Would he could tarry with us here awhile !
But being so beholden to the Prince,
't were but little grace in any of us,
Bent as he seem'd on going this third day,
To seek a second favor at his hands.

Yet if he could but tarry a day or two,
Myself would work eye dim, and finger
lame,

Far liefer than so much discredit him.”

And Enid fell in longing for a dress
All branch'd and flower'd with gold, a
costly gift

Of her good mother, given her on the night
Before her birthday, three sad years ago,
That night of fire, when Edyrn sack'd
their house,

And scatter'd all they had to all the winds :
For while the mother show'd it, and the
two

Were turning and admiring it, the work
To both appear'd so costly, rose a cry
That Edyrn's men were on them, and
they fled

With little save the jewels they had on,
Which being sold and sold had bought
them bread :

And Edyrn's men had caught them in
their flight,

And placed them in this ruin ; and she
wish'd

The Prince had found her in her ancient
home ;

Then let her fancy flit across the past,
And roam the goodly places that she knew ;
And last bethought her how she used to
watch,

Near that old home, a pool of golden carp ;
And one was patch'd and blur'd and
lustreless

Among his burnish'd 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 burnish'd sisters of the pool ;

But this was in the garden of a king ;
And tho' she lay dark in the pool, she knew

That all was bright ; that all about were
birds

Of 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 lords and ladies of the high court
went

In silver tissue talking things of state ;
And children of the king in cloth of gold

Glanced at the doors or gambol'd down
the walks ;

And while she thought “they will not
see me,” came

A stately queen whose name was Guine-
vere,

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 gar-
deners now

To pick the faded creature from the pool,
And cast it on the mixen that it die.”

And therewithal one came and seized 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 ye know
it."

And Enid look'd, but all confused at
first,
Could scarce divide it from her foolish
dream :

Then suddenly she knew it and rejoiced,
And answer'd, "Yea, I know it; your
good gift,

So sadly lost on that unhappy night ;
Your own good gift!" "Yea, surely,"
said the dame,

"And gladly given again this happy morn.
For when the jousts were ended yesterday,
Went Yniol thro' the town, and every-
where

He found the sack and plunder of our house
All scatter'd thro' the houses of the
town ;

And gave command that all which once
was ours,

Should now be ours again : and yester-eve,
While you were talking sweetly with your
Prince

Came one with this and laid it in my hand,
For love or fear, or seeking favor of us,
Because we have our earldom back again.
And yester-eve I would not tell you of it,
But kept it for a sweet surprise at morn.
Yea, truly is it not a sweet surprise ?

For I myself unwillingly have worn
My faded suit, as you, my child, have yours,
And howsoever patient, Yniol his.

Ah, dear, he took me from a goodly house,
With store of rich apparel, sumptuous fare,
And page, and maid, and squire, and
seneschal,

And pastime both of hawk and hound,
and all

That appertains to noble maintenance.

Yea, and he brought me to a goodly house ;
But since our fortune slipt from sun to
shade,

And all thro' that young traitor, cruel
need

Constram'd us, but a better time has come ;
So clothe yourself in this, that better fits
Our mended fortunes and a Prince's bride :
For tho' ye won the prize of fairest fair,
And tho' I heard him call you fairest fair,
Let never maiden think, however fair,
She is not fairer in new clothes than old.
And should some great court-lady say,
the Princee

Hath pick'd a ragged-robin from the hedge,

And like a madman brought her to the
court,

Then were ye 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 into golden cloud, the maiden rose,
And left her maiden couch, and robed
herself,

Help'd by the mother's careful hand and
eye,

Without a mirror, in the gorgeous gown ;
Who, after, turn'd her daughter round,
and said,

She never yet had seen her half so fair ;
And call'd her like that maiden in the
tale,

Whom Gwydion made by glamour out
of flowers,

And sweeter than the bride of Cassivelaun,
Flur, for whose love the Roman Cæsar
first

Invaded Britain, "but we beat him back,
As this great prince invaded us, and we,
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,
Clothed 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 beseem
His princess, or indeed the stately queen,
He answer'd ; "Earl, entreat 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 flaws 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, in all obedience,
Her mother silent too, nor helping her,
Laid from her limbs the costly-broider'd
gift,

And robed them in her ancient suit again,
And so descended. Never man rejoiced
More than Geraint to greet her thus at-
tired ;

And glancing all at once as keenly at her,
As careful robins eye the delver's toil,
Made her cheek burn and either eyelid
fall,

But rested with her sweet face satisfied ;
Then seeing cloud upon the mother's brow,
Her by both hands he caught, and sweet-
ly said.

"O my new mother, be not wroth or
grieved

At your new son, for my petition to her.
When late I left Caerleon, our great Queen,
In words whose echo lasts, they were so
sweet,

Made promise, that whatever bride I
brought,
Herself would clothe her like the sun in
Heaven.

Thereafter, when I reach'd this ruin'd
hold,

Beholding one so bright in dark estate,
I vow'd that could I gain her, our kind
Queen,

No hand but hers, should make your
Enid 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 Enid find
A nobler friend ? Another thought I had ;
I came among you here so suddenly,
That tho' her gentle presence at the lists
Might well have served for proof that I
was loved,

I doubted whether filial tenderness,
Or easy nature, did not let itself
Be moulded by your wishes for her weal ;
Or whether some false sense in her own
self

Of my contrasting brightness, overbore
Her fancy dwelling in this dusky hall ;
And such a sense might make her long
for court

And all its dangerous glories : and I
thought,

That could I 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 splendor dear to women, new to her,
And therefore dearer ; or if not so new,
Yet therefore tenfold dearer by the power
Of intermitted custom ; then I felt

That I could rest, a rock in ebbs and flows,
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

Beside your own warm hearth, with, on
her knees,

Who knows ? another gift of the high God,
Which, maybe, shall have learn'd to lisp
you thanks."

He spoke : the mother smiled, but
half in tears,

Then brought a mantle down and wrapt
her in it,

And claspt and kiss'd her, and they rode
away.

Now thrice that morning Guinevere
had climb'd

The giant tower, from whose high crest,
they say,

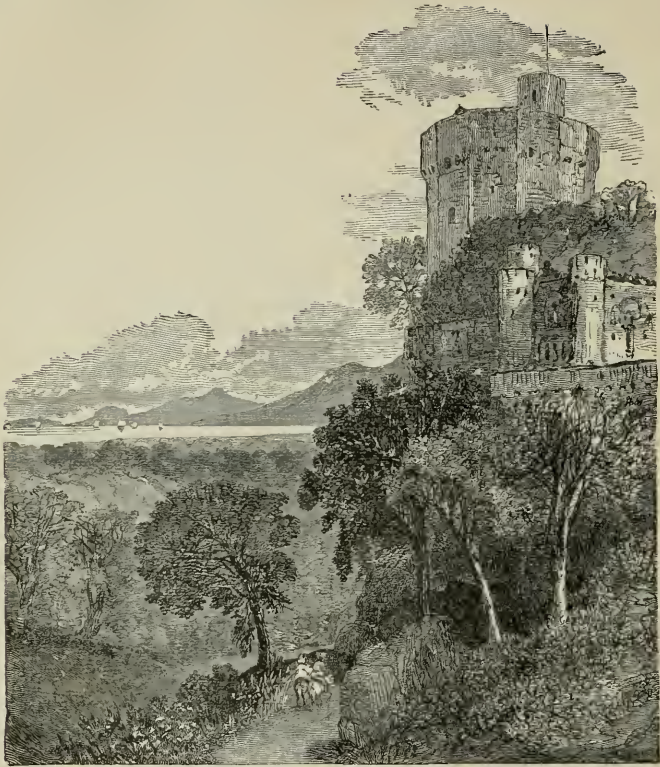
Men saw the goodly hills of Somerset,
And white sails flying on the yellow sea ;
But not to goodly hill or yellow sea
Look'd the fair Queen, but up the vale

of Usk,

By the flat meadow, till she saw them
come ;

And then descending met them at the
gates,

Embraced her with all welcome as a friend,
And did her honor as the Prince's bride,
And clothed her for her bridals like the
sun ;



“ The giant tower, from whose high crest, they say,
Men saw the goodly hills of Somerset,
And white sails flying on the yellow sea.”

And all that week was old Caerleon gay,
For by the hands of Dubric, the high
saint,
They twain were wedded with all cere-
mony.

And this was on the last year's Whit-
suntide.
But Enid ever kept the faded silk,
Remembering how first he came on her,
Drest in that dress, and how he loved
her in it,
And all her foolish fears about the dress,
And all his journey toward her, as himself
Had told her, and their coming to the
court.

And now this morning when he said
to her,
“ Put on your worst and 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, thro' the feeble twilight of this
world
Groping, how many, until we pass and
reach
That other, where we see as we are seen !

So fared it with Geraint, who issuing forth
 That morning, when they both had got to horse,
 Perhaps because he loved her passionately,
 And felt that tempest brooding round his heart,
 Which, if he spoke at all, would break perforce
 Upon a head so dear in thunder, said :
 "Not at my side. I charge you ride before,
 Ever a good way on before ; and this I charge you, on your duty as a wife,
 Whatever happens, not to speak to me,
 No, not a word !" and Enid was aghast ;
 And forth they rode, but scarce three paces on,
 When crying out " Effeminate as I am,
 I will not fight my way with gilded arms,
 All shall be iron " ; he loosed a mighty purse,
 Hung at his belt, and hurl'd it toward the squire.
 So the last sight that Enid had of home
 Was all the marble threshold flashing, strown
 With gold and scatter'd coinage, and the squire
 Chafing his shoulder : then he cried again,
 " To the wilds ! " and Enid leading down the tracks
 Thro' which he bade her lead him on, they past
 The marches, and by bandit-haunted holds,
 Gray swamps and pools, waste places of the hern
 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 look'd so pale,
 That each had suffer'd some exceeding 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 beautifully and keep her true " —
 And there he broke the sentence in his heart
 Abruptly, as a man upon his tongue

May break it, when his passion masters him.
 And she was ever praying the sweet heavens
 To save her dear lord whole from any wound.
 And ever in her mind she cast about
 For that unnoticed failing 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 wavering brake an ambuscade.
 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 Enid was aware of three tall knights
 On horseback, wholly arm'd, behind a rock
 In shadow, waiting for them, caitiffs 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 slay him and will have his horse
 And armor, and his damsel shall be ours."

Then Enid ponder'd in her heart, and said ;
 " I will go back a little to my lord,
 And I will tell him all their caitiff talk ;
 For, be he wroth even to slaying me,
 Far liever 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 timidly firm, 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."

He made a wrathful answer. "Did I wish
Your warning or your silence? one command
I 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 midmost charging, Prince
Geraint
Drove the long spear a cubit thro' his
breast
And out beyond; and then against his
brace
Of comrades, each of whom had broken
on him
A lance that splinter'd like an icicle,
Swung from his brand a windy buffet out
Once, twice, to right, to left, and stunn'd
the twain
Orslew them, and dismounting like a man
That skins the wild beast after slaying
him,
Stript from the three dead wolves of
woman born
The three gay suits of armor which they
wore,
And let the bodies lie, but bound the
suits
Of armor on their horses, each on each,
And tied the bridle-reins of all the three
Together, and said to her, "Drive them on
Before you"; and she drove them thro'
the waste.

He follow'd nearer: ruth began to work
Against his anger in him, while he watch'd
The being he loved best in all the world,
With difficulty in mild obedience
Driving them on: he fain had spoken to
her,
And loosed in words of sudden fire the
wrath
And smoulder'd wrong that burnt him
all within;
But evermore it seem'd an easier thing
At once without remorse to strike her
dead,
Than to cry "Halt," and to her own
bright face
Accuse her of the least immodesty:

And thus tongue-tied, it made him wroth
the more
That she *could* speak whom his own ear
had heard
Call herself false: and suffering thus he
made
Minutes an age: but in scarce longer time
Than at Caerleon the full-tided Usk,
Before he turn to fall seaward again,
Pauses, did Enid, keeping watch, behold
In the first shallow shade of a deep wood,
Before a gloom of stubborn-shafted oaks,
Three other 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."
"Nay" said the second, "yonder comes
a knight."
The third, "A craven; how he hangs his
head."
The giant answer'd merrily, "Yea, but
one?
Wait here, and when he passes fall upon
him."

And Enid ponder'd in her heart and
said,
"I will abide the coming of my lord,
And I will tell him all their villany.
My lord is weary with the fight before,
And they will fall upon him unawares.
I needs must disobey him for his good;
How should I dare obey him to his harm?
Needs must I speak, and tho' he kill me
for it,
I save a life dearer to me than mine."

And she abode his coming, and said to
him
With timid firmness, "Have I leave to
speak?"
He said, "Ye take it, speaking," and
she spoke.

"There lurk three villains yonder in
the wood,
And each of them is wholly arm'd, and
one
Is larger-limb'd than you are, and they
say
That they will fall upon you while you
pass."

To which he flung a wrathful answer
back :
"And if there were an hundred in the
wood,
And every man were larger-limb'd than I,
And all at once should sally 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's,

A little in 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's windy walls
to the beach,

And there lie still, and yet the sapling
grew :

Solay the man transfixt. His craven pair
Of comrades, making slower 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 huger 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, overtaken, died 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 bound them on their horses, each on
each,

And tied the bridle-reins of all the three
Together, and said to her, "Drive them on
Before you," and she drove them thro'
the wood.

He follow'd nearer still : the pain she had
To keep them in the wild ways of the wood,
Twosets of three laden with jingling arms,
Together, served a little to disedge
The sharpness of that pain about her heart :
And they themselves, like creatures
gently born

But into bad hands fall'n, and now so long
By bandits groom'd, prick'd their light
ears, and felt

Her low firm voice and tender govern-
ment.

So thro' the green gloom of the wood they
past,

And issuing under open heavens beheld
A little town with towers, upon a rock,
And close beneath, a meadow gemlike
chased

In the brown wild, and mowers mowing
in it :

And down a rocky pathway from the place
There came a fair-hair'd youth, that in
his hand

Bare victual for the mowers : and Geraint
Had ruth again on Enid looking pale ;
Then, moving downward to the meadow
ground,

He, when the fair-hair'd youth came by
him, said,

"Friend, let her eat ; the damsel is so
faint."

"Yea, willingly," replied the youth ;
"and you,

My lord, eat also, tho' the fare is coarse,
And only meet for mowers" ; then set
down

His basket, and dismounting on the sward
They let the horses graze, and ate them-
selves.

And Enid took a little delicately,
Less having stomach for it than desire
To close with her lord's pleasure ; but
Geraint

Ate all the mowers' victual unawares,
And when he found all empty, was amazed ;
And "Boy," said he, "I have eaten all,
but take

A horse and arms for guerdon ; choose
the best."

He, reddening in extremity of delight,
"My lord, you overpay me fifty-fold."
"Ye will be all the wealthier," cried the
Prince.

"I take it as free gift, then," said the boy,
"Not guerdon ; for myself can easily,
While your good damsel rests, return,
and fetch
Fresh victual for these mowers of our
Earl ;

For these are his, and all the field is his,
And I myself am his ; and I will tell him
How great a man you are : he loves to know
When men of mark are in his territory :
And he will have you to his palace here,
And serve you costlier than with mowers'
fare."

Then said Geraint, "I wish no better
fare :

I never ate with angrier appetite
Than when I left your mowers dinnerless,
And into no Earl's palace will I go.
I know, God knows, too much of palaces !
And if he want me, let him come to me.
But hire us some fair chamber for the
night,
And stalling for the horses, and return
With victual for these men, and let us
know."

"Yea, my kind lord," said the glad
youth, and went,
Held his head high, and thought him-
self a knight,
And up the rocky pathway disappear'd,
Leading 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 droopt : his own
false doom,
That shadow of mistrust should never cross
Betwixt them, came upon him, and he
sigh'd ;
Then with another humorous ruth re-
mark'd

The lusty mowers laboring dinnerless,
And watch'd the sun blaze on the turn-
ing scythe,
And after nodded sleepily in the heat.
But she, remembering her old ruin'd hall,

And all the windy clamor of the daws
About her hollow turret, pluck'd the grass
There growing longest by the meadow's
edge,

And into many a listless annulet,
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 ye will,
Call for the woman of the house," to
which

She answer'd, "Thanks, my lord" ; the
two remain'd

Apart by all the chamber's width, and
mute

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 dissolutely pale,
Her suitor 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 stealthily,
In the mid-warmth of welcome and
graspt 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 sumptu-
ously

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

Drank till he jested with all ease, and told
Free tales, and took the word and play'd
upon it,

And made it of two colors ; for his talk,
When wine and free companions kindled
him,

Was wont to glance and sparkle like a gem
Of fifty facets ; thus he moved the Prince
To laughter and his comrades to 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 fail,

Croft and came near, lifted adoring eyes,
Bow'd at her side and utter'd whisper-
ingly :

“ Enid, the pilot star of my lone life,
Enid my early and my only love,
Enid the loss of whom has turn'd me
wild —

What chance is this ? how is it 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 so do not keep it back :
Make me a little happier : let me know it :
Owe you me nothing for a life half-lost ?
Yea, yea, the whole dear debt of all you
are.

And, Enid, you and he, I see it with joy —
You sit apart, you do not speak to him,
You come with no attendance, page or
maid,

To serve you — does he love you as of old ?
For, call it lovers' quarrels, yet I know
Tho' 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 — pall'd —

For I know men : nor will ye win him
back,

For the man's love once gone never returns.
But here is one who loves you as of old ;
With more exceeding passion than of old :
Good, speak the word : my followers
ring him round :

He sits 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 malice is no deeper than a moat,
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 make use of all the power I have.
O pardon me ! the madness of that hour,
When first I parted from you, moves me
yet. ”

At this the tender sound of his own
voice

And sweet self-pity, or the fancy of it,
Made his eye moist ; but Enid fear'd his
eyes,

Moist as they were, wine-heated from
the feast ;

And answer'd with such craft as women
use,

Guilty 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 bran-
dish'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 perforce 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
pleas'd

To find him yet unwounded after fight,
And hear him breathing low and equally.
Anon she rose, and stepping lightly,
heap'd

The pieces of his armor in one place,
All to be there against a sudden need ;
Then dozed awhile herself, but overtoil'd
By that day's grief and travel, evermore
Seem'd catching at a rootless thorn, and
then

Went slipping down horrible precipices,
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, summon-
ing her ;

Which was the red cock shouting to the
light,

As the gray dawn stole o'er the dewy
world,

And glimmer'd on his armor in the room.
And once again she rose to look at it,
But touch'd it 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 ;

Nor 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 him
she wept

In Devon?" he but gave a wrathful
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 walls
Beat, till she woke the sleepers, and re-
turn'd :

Then tending her rough lord, tho' all un-
ask'd,

In silence, did him service as a squire ;
Till issuing arm'd he found the host and
cried,

"Thy reckoning, friend?" and ere he
learnt it, "Take

Five horses and their armors"; and the
host,

Suddenly honest, answer'd in amaze,
"My lord, I scarce have spent the worth
of one!"

"Ye 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 ye may hear, or see,
Or fancy (tho' I count it of small use
To charge you) that ye 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 ye are wedded to a man,
Not quite mismated with a yawning
clown,

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 turn'd and look'd as
keenly at her

As careful robins eye the delver's toil ;
And that within her, which a wanton
fool,

Or hasty judger would have call'd her
guilt,

Made her cheek burn and either eyelid fall.
And Geraint look'd and was not satisfied.

Then forward by a way which, beaten
broad,

Led from the territory of false Limours
To the waste earldom of another earl,
Doorn, whom his shaking vassals call'd
the Bull,

Went Enid with her sullen follower on.
Once she look'd back, and when she saw
him ride

More near by many a rood than yester-
morn,

It wellnigh made her cheerful ; till Ge-
raint

Waving an angry hand as who should say
"Ye watch me," sadden'd all her heart
again.

But while the sun yet beat a dewy blade,
The sound of many a heavily-galloping
hoof

Smote on her ear, and turning round she
saw

Dust, and the points of lances 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 linger up, and pointed to the dust.

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,
Borne 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,
Dash'd on Geraint, who closed with him,
and bore

Down by the length of lance and arm
beyond

The crupper, and so left him stunn'd or
dead,

And overthrew the next that follow'd him,
And blindly rush'd on all the rout behind.

But at the flash and motion of the man
They vanish'd panie-stricken, like a shoal
Of darting fish, that on a summer morn

Adown the crystal dykes at Camelot
Come slipping o'er their shadows on the
sand,

But if a man who stands upon the brink
But lift a shining hand against the sun,
There is not left the twinkle of a fin
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 friendships only made in wine.

Then like a stormy sunlight smiled
Geraint,
Who saw the chargers of the two that fell

Start from their fallen lords, and wildly
fly,

Mixt with the fliers. "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, nor nor beg :
And so what say ye, shall we strip him
there

Your lover ? 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
Doorm,

I too would still be honest." Thus he
said :

And sadly gazing on her bridle-reins,
And answering not one word, she led the
way.

But as a man to whom a dreadful loss
Falls in a far land and he knows it not,
But coming back he learns it, and the loss
So pains him that he sickens nigh to
death ;

So fared it with Geraint, who being prick'd
In combat with the follower of Limours,
Bled underneath his armor secretly,
And so rode on, nor told his gentle wife
What ail'd him, hardly knowing it him-
self,

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 her true hand falter, nor blue eye
Moisten, till she had lighted on his
wound,

And tearing off her veil of faded silk
Had bared her forehead to the blistering
sun,

And swathed the hurt that drain'd her
dear lord's life.

Then after all was done that hand could do,
She rested, and her desolation came
Upon her, and she wept beside the way.

And many past, but none regarded her,
For in that realm of lawless turbulence,
A woman weeping for her murder'd mate
Was cared as much for as a summer
shower :

One took him for a victim of Earl Doorm,
Nordared 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 veiless eyes.
Another, flying from the wrath of Doorm
Before an ever-fancied arrow, made
The long way smoke beneath him in his
fear ;

At which her palfrey whinnying lifted
heel,

And scour'd into the coppices 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 lances up ;
But ere he came, like one that hails a ship,
Cried out with a big voice, " What, is he
dead ? "

" No, no, not dead ! " she 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 wail ye for him thus ? ye seem a
child.

And be he dead, I count you for a fool ;
Your wailing will not quicken him : dead
or not,

Ye 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 :

An 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 ad-
vanced,
Each growling like a dog, when his good
bone

Seems to be pluck'd at by the village boys
Who love to vex him eating, and he fears
To lose his bone, and lays his foot upon it,
Gnawing and growling : so the ruffians
growl'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 growling as be-
fore,

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 feign'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 doff'd his helm : and then there
 flutter'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's haft hard against
 the board,
 And call'd for flesh and wine to feed his
 spears.
 And men brought in whole hogs and
 quarter beeves,
 And all the hall was dim with steam of
 flesh :
 And none spake 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 p ale.
 God's curse, it makes me mad to see you
 weep.
 Eat ! Look yourself. Good luck had
 your good man,
 For were I dead who is it would weep for me ?
 Sweet lady, never since I first drew breath,
 Have I beheld a lily like yourself.
 And so there lived some color in your
 cheek,
 There is not one among my gentlewomen
 Were fit to wear your slipper for a glove.
 But listen to me, and by 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 spoke : 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, hiss'd each at other's
 ear
 What shall not be recorded — 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 answer'd in low voice, her meek head
 yet
 Drooping, " I pray you of your courtesy,
 He being as he is, to let me be."

She spake so low he hardly heard her
 speak,
 But like a mighty patron, satisfied
 With what himself had done so graciously,
 Assumed that she had thanked him, add-
 ing, " yea,
 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 sickly nothing ; suddenly seized on
 her,
 And bare her by main violence to the
 board,
 And thrust the dish before her, crying,
 " Eat."

" No, no," said Enid, vext, " I will
 not eat,
 Till yonder 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 turn'd all red and paced his hall,
Now gnaw'd his under, now his upper lip,
And coming up close to her, said at last;
“Girl, for I see ye scorn my courtesies,
Take warning: yonder man is surely dead;
And I compel all creatures to my will.
Not eat nor drink? And wherefore wail
for one,
Who put your beauty to this flout and scorn

By dressing it in rags? Amazed am I,
Beholding how ye butt against my wish,
That I forbear you thus: cross me no more.
At least put off to please me this poor gown,
This silken rag, this beggar-woman's weed:

I love that beauty should go beautifully:
For see ye 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 sward 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 un-
vengeed,
And now their hour has come; and Enid
said:

“In this poor gown my dear lord found
me first,
And loved me serving in my father's hall:
In this poor gown I rode with him to
court,

And there the Queen array'd me like the
sun:

In this poor gown he bade me clothe my-
self,

When now we rode upon this fatal quest
Of honor, where no honor can be gain'd:
And this poor gown I will not cast aside
Until himself arise a living man,
And bid me cast it. I have griefs enough;
Pray you be gentle, pray you let me be:
I never loved, can never love but him:
Yea, God, I pray you of your gentleness,
He being as he is, to let me be.”

Then strode the brute Earl up and down
his hall,
And took his 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 than ungentle with you;
Take my salute,” unknighly 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,
As of a wild thing taken in the trap,
Which sees the trapper coming thro' the
wood.

This heard Geraint, and grasping at his
sword,
(It lay beside him in the hollow shield,)
Made but a single bound, and with a sweep
of it
Shore thro' the swarthy 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, I have used you worse than
that dead man;
Done you more wrong: we both have un-
dergone
That trouble which has left me thrice
your own:



"The russet-bearded head roll'd on the floor.
So died Earl Doorn by him he counted dead."

Henceforward I will rather die than doubt.
And here I lay this penance on myself,
Not, tho' mine own ears heard you yester-morn —
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 on the heart :
She only prayed him, "Fly, they will
return
And slay you : fly, your charger is without,
My palfrey lost." "Then, Enid, shall
you ride
Behind me." "Yea," said Enid, "let
us go."
And moving out they found the stately
horse,
Who now no more a vassal to the thief,
But free to stretch his limbs in lawful fight,
Neigh'd with all gladness as they came,
and stoop'd
With a low whinny toward the pair : and she
kiss'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 kiss'd her climbing, and she cast
her arms
About him, and at once they rode away.

And never yet, since high in Paradise
O'er the four rivers the first roses blew,
Came purer pleasure unto mortal kind
Than lived thro' her, who in that perilous
hour
Put hand to hand beneath her husband's
heart,
And felt him hers again : she did not weep,
But o'er her meek eyes came a happy mist
Like that which kept the heart of Eden
green
Before the useful trouble of the rain :
Yet not so misty were her meek blue eyes
As not to see before them on the path,
Right in the gateway of the bandit hold,
A knight of Arthur's court, who laid his
lance
In rest, and made as if to fall upon him.
Then, fearing for his hurt and loss of blood,
She, with her mind all full of what had
chanced,
Shriek'd to the stranger, "Slay not a
dead man !"

“The voice of Enid,” said the knight ;
but she,
Beholding it was Edyrn, son of Nudd,
Was moved so much the more, and shriek’d
again,

“O cousin, slay not him who gave you
life.”

And Edyrn moving frankly forward spake :
“My lord Geraint, I greet you with all
love ;

I took you for a bandit knight of Doorn ;
And fear not, Enid, I should fall upon him,
Who love you, Prince, with something
of the love

Wherewith we love the Heaven that
chastens us.

For once, when I was up so high in pride
That I was halfway 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 my-
self

Was half a bandit in my lawless hour,
I come the mouthpiece of our King to
Doorn

(The King is close behind me) bidding him
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 wan Prince ; “and lo the
powers of Dooorn

Are scatter’d,” and he pointed to the field,
Where, huddled here and there on mound
and knoll,

Were men and women staring and aghast,
While some yet fled ; and then he plain-
lier told

How the huge Earl lay slain within his
hall.

But when the knight besought him,
“Follow me,

Prince, to the camp, and in the King’s
own ear

Speak what has chanced ; ye 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 acted question ask’d :

Till Edyrn crying, “If ye will not go
To Arthur, then will Arthur come to you,”
“Enough,” he said, “I follow,” and they
went.

But Enid in their going had two fears,
One from the bandit scatter’d in the field,
And one from Edyrn. Every now and
then,

When Edyrn 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 Yniol and yourself, I schemed and
wrought

Until I overturn’d him ; then set up
(With one main purpose ever at my heart)
My haughty jousts, and took a paramour :

Did her mock-honor as the fairest fair,
And, toppling over all antagonism,
So wax’d in pride, that I believed myself

Unconquerable, for I was wellnigh mad :
And, but for my main purpose in these
jousts,

I should have slain your father, seized
yourself.

I lived in hope that sometime you would
come

To these my lists with him whom best
you loved ;

And there, poor cousin, with your meek
blue eyes,

The truest eyes that ever answer’d heaven,
Behold me overturn and trample on him.

Then, had you cried, or knelt, or pray’d
to me,

I should not less have kill’d 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 penance 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 scornful pity or pure 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 wolf's indeed :
 And oft I talk'd with Dubric, the high
 saint,
 Who, with mild heat of holy oratory,
 Subdued me somewhat to that gentleness,
 Which, when it weds with manhood,
 makes a man.

And you were often there about the Queen,
 But saw me not, or mark'd 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 greet them, and beholding
 her

Tho' 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, lifted her from
 horse,

And kiss'd her with all pureness, brother-
 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 ye pray'd me
 for my leave
 To move to your own land, and there
 defend
 Your marches, I was prick'd 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,

Not used mine own : but now behold
 me come

To cleanse this common sewer of all my
 realm,

With Edyrn and with others : have ye
 look'd

At Edyrn ? have ye 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 repents :
 And this wise world of ours is mainly
 right.

Full seldom *does* a man repent, or use
 Both grace and will to pick the vicious
 quitch

Of blood and custom wholly out of him,
 And make all clean, and plant himself
 afresh.

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 proved him every 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 some knight of mine, risking his
 life,

My subject with my subjects under him,
 Should make an onslaught single on a
 realm

Of robbers, tho' he slew them one by one,
 And were himself nigh wounded to the
 death."

So spake the King ; low bow'd the
 Prince, and felt

His work was neither great nor won-
 derful,

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,
 Fill'd all the genial courses of his blood
 With deeper and with ever deeper love,
 As the south-west that blowing Bala
 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 each of all whom 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 officer
 Or guilty, which for bribe had wink'd at wrong,
 And in their chairs set up a stronger race
 With hearts and hands, and sent a thousand men
 To till the wastes, and moving everywhere
 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 day.
 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.
 Thence after tarrying for a space they rode,
 And fifty knights rode with them to the shores
 Of Severn, and they past to their own land.
 And there he kept the justice of the King
 So vigorously yet mildly, that all hearts
 Applauded, and the spiteful whisper died :
 And being ever foremost in the chase,
 And victor at the tilt and tournament,
 They call'd him the great Prince and man of men.
 But 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.

MERLIN AND VIVIEN.

A STORM was coming, but the winds were still,
 And in the wild woods of Broceliande,
 Before an oak, so hollow huge and old
 It look'd a tower of ruin'd masonwork,
 At Merlin's feet the wily Vivien lay.

The wily Vivien stole from Arthur's court :
 She hated all the knights, and heard in thought
 Their lavish comment when her name was named.
 For once, when Arthur walking all alone,
 Vext at a rumor rife about the Queen,
 Had met her, Vivien, being greeted fair,
 Would fain have wrought upon his cloudy mood
 With reverent eyes mock-loyal, shaken voice,
 And flutter'd adoration, and at last
 With dark sweet hints of some who prized him more
 Than who should prize him most ; at which the King
 Had gazed upon her blankly and gone by :
 But one had watch'd, and had not 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 call'd him Wizard ; whom at first
 She play'd about with slight and sprightly talk,
 And vivid smiles, and faintly-venom'd points
 Of slander, glancing here and grazing there ;
 And yielding to his kindlier moods, the Seer
 Would watch her at her petulance, and play,
 Ev'n when they seem'd unlovable, and laugh

As those that watch a kitten ; thus he
 grew
 Tolerant of what he half disdain'd, and
 she,
 Perceiving that she was but half disdain'd,
 Began to break her sports with graver fits,
 Turn red or pale, would often when they
 met
 Sigh fully, or all-silent gaze upon him
 With such a fixt devotion, that the old
 man,
 Tho' doubtful, felt the flattery, and at
 times
 Would flatter his own wish in age for love,
 And half believe her true : for thus at
 times
 He waver'd ; but that other clung to him,
 Fixt in her will, and so the seasons went.
 Then fell upon him a great melancholy ;
 And leaving Arthur's court he gain'd the
 beach ;
 There found a little boat, and stept into
 it ;
 And Vivien follow'd, but he mark'd her
 not.
 She took the helm and he the 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,
 Ev'n to the wild woods of Broceliande.
 For Merlin once had told her of a charm,
 The which if any wrought on any one
 With woven paces and with waving arms,
 The man so wrought on ever seem'd to lie
 Closed in the four walls of a hollow tower,
 From which was no escape for evermore ;
 And none could find that man for ever-
 more,
 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 in love.
 A twist of gold was round her hair ; a robe
 Of samite without price, that more express

Than hid her, clung about her lissome
 limbs,
 In color like the satin-shining palm
 On shallows in the windy gleams of March :
 And while she kiss'd them, crying,
 " Trample me,
 Dear feet, that I have follow'd thro' the
 world,
 And I will pay you worship ; tread me
 down
 And I will kiss you for it " ; he was mute :
 So dark a forethought roll'd about his
 brain,
 As on a dull day in an Ocean cave
 The blind wave feeling round his long
 sea-hall
 In silence : wherefore, when she lifted up
 A face of sad appeal, and spake and said,
 " O Merlin, do ye love me ? " and again,
 " O Merlin, do ye love me ? " and once
 more,
 " Great Master, do ye love me ? " he was
 mute.
 And lissome Vivien, holding by his heel,
 Withed toward him, slid up his knee
 and sat,
 Behind his ankle twined her hollow feet
 Together, curv'd an arm about his neck,
 Clung like a snake ; and letting her left
 hand
 Droop from his mighty shoulder, as a leaf,
 Made with her right a comb of pearl to
 part
 The lists of such a beard as youth gone 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-god 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 kiss " ; then adding all at
 once,
 " And lo, I clothe myself with wisdom, "
 drew
 The vast and shaggy mantle of his beard
 Across her neck and bosom to her knee,
 And call'd herself a gilded summer fly
 Caught in a great old tyrant spider's web,
 Who meant to eat her up in that wild wood
 Without one word. So Vivien call'd
 herself,
 But rather seem'd a lovely baleful star
 Veil'd in gray vapor ; till he sadly smiled :



“Drew

The vast and shaggy mantle of his beard
Across her neck and bosom to her knee.”

<p>“To what request for what strange boon,” he said, “Are these your pretty tricks and fool- eries, O Vivien, the preamble? yet my thanks, For these have broken up my melan- choly.”</p> <p>And Vivien answer'd smiling saucily, “What, O my Master, have ye found your voice? I bid the stranger welcome. Thanks at last! But yesterday you never open'd lip, Except indeed to drink: no cup had we: In mine own lady palms I cull'd the spring</p>	<p>That gather'd trickling dropwise from the cleft, And made a pretty cup of both my hands And offer'd you it kneeling: then ye drank And knew no more, nor gave me one poor word; O no more thanks than might a goat have given With no more sign of reverence than a beard. And when we halted at that other well, And I was faint to swooning, and ye lay Foot-gilt with all the blossom-dust of those</p>
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Deep meadows we had traversed, did you know
That Vivien bathed your feet before her own?
And yet no thanks : and all thro' this wild wood
And all this morning when I fondled you :
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 curl'd white of the coming wave
Glass'd in the slippery sand before it breaks ?
Ev'n such a wave, but not so pleasurable,
Dark in the glass of some presageful 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 unask'd ;
And when I look'd, and saw you following still,
My mind involved yourself the nearest thing
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 you thrice,
Once for wrong done you by confusion, next
For thanks it seems till now neglected, last
For these your dainty gambols : wherefore ask ;
And take this boon so strange and not so strange."

And Vivien answer'd smiling mournfully ;
"O not so strange as my long asking it,
Nor yet so strange as you yourself are strange,

Nor half so strange as that dark mood of yours.
I ever fear'd ye were not wholly mine :
And see, yourself have own'd ye did me wrong.
The people call you prophet : let it be :
But not of those that can expound themselves.
Take Vivien for expounder : she will call
That three-days-long presageful gloom of yours
No presage, but the same mistrustful mood
That makes you seem less noble than yourself,
Whenever I have ask'd this very boon,
Now ask'd again : for see you not, dear love,
That such a mood as that, which lately gloom'd
Your fancy when you saw me following you,
Must make me fear still more you are not mine,
Must make me yearn still more to prove you mine,
And make me wish still more to learn this charm
Of woven paces and of waving hands,
As proof of trust. O Merlin, teach it me.
The charm so taught will charm us both to rest.
For, grant me some slight power upon your 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 denyingly !
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 for ever : but think or not,
By Heaven that hears I tell you the clean truth,
As clean as blood of babes, as white as milk :
O Merlin, may this earth, if ever I,
If these unwitty wandering wits of mine,
Ev'n in the jumbled rubbish of a dream,
Have 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-reiterated wish,
The great proof of your love : because I
think,
However wise, ye hardly know me yet."

And Merlin loosed his hand from hers
and said,

"I never was less wise, however wise,
Too curious Vivien, tho' you talk of trust,
Than when I told you first of such a charm.
Yea, if ye talk of trust I tell you this,
Too much I trusted, when I told you that,
And stir'd this vice in you which ruin'd
man
Thro' woman the first hour ; for howsoe'er
In children a great curiousness be well,
Who have to learn themselves and all the
world,
In you, that are no child, for still I find
Your face is practised, when I spell the
lines,
I call it, — well, I will not call it vice :
But since you name yourself the summer
fly,
I well could wish a cobweb for the gnat,
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 ?
Yea, by God's rood, I trusted you too
much."

And Vivien, like the tenderest-hearted
maid

That ever bided tryst at village stile,
Made answer, either eyelid wet with tears.
"Nay, master, be not wrathful with your
maid ;
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 unfaith can ne'er be equal
powers :
Unfaith in aught is want of faith in all.

'It is the little rift within the lute,
That by and by will make the music mute,
And ever widening slowly silence all.

'The little rift within the lover's lute
Or little pitted speck in garner'd fruit,
That rotting inward slowly moulders 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 ye 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 the plain behind a
shower :
And yet he answer'd half indignantly.

"Far other was the song that once I
heard
By this huge oak, sung nearly where we
sit :

For here we met, some ten or twelve of us,
To chase a creature that was current then
In these wild woods, the hart with golden
horns.

It was the time when first the question rose
About the founding of a Table Round,
That was to be, for love of God and men
And noble deeds, the flower of all the
world.

And each incited each to noble deeds.
And while we waited, one, the youngest
of us,

We could not keep him silent, out he
flash'd,
And into such a song, such fire for fame,
Such trumpet-blowings in it, coming down
To such a stern and iron-clashing close,
That when he stopt we long'd to hurl
together,

And should have done it ; but the beau-
teous beast
Scared by the noise upstarted 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 a 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 pins and nails,
 and cry,
 ‘ Laugh, little well,’ but touch it with a
 sword,
 It buzzes wildly round the point ; and
 there
 We lost him : such a noble song was that.
 But, Vivien, when you sang me that sweet
 rhyme,
 I felt as tho’ you knew this cursed charm,
 Were proving it on me, and that I lay
 And felt them slowly ebbing, name and
 fame.”

And Vivien answer’d smiling mourn-
 fully ;
 “ O mine have ebb’d away for evermore,
 And all thro’ following you to this wild
 wood,
 Because I saw you sad, to comfort you.
 Lo now, what hearts have men ! they
 never mount
 As high as woman in her selfless mood.
 And touching fame, howe’er ye scorn
 my song,
 Take one verse more — the lady speaks
 it — this :

‘ My name, once mine, now thine, is
 closelier mine,
 For fame, could fame be mine, that fame
 were thine,
 And shame, could shame be thine, that
 shame were mine.
 So trust me not at all or all in all.’

“ Says she not well ? and there is more
 — this rhyme
 Is like the fair pearl-necklace of the Queen,
 That burst in dancing, and the pearls were
 spilt ;
 Some lost, some stolen, some as relics kept.
 But nevermore the same two sister pearls
 Ran down the silken thread to kiss each
 other
 On her white neck — so is it with this
 rhyme :
 It lives dispersedly in many hands,
 And every minstrel sings it differently ;
 Yet is there one true line, the pearl of
 pearls ;
 ‘ Mandreams of Fame while woman wakes
 to love.’
 True : Love, tho’ Love were of the gross-
 est, 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
 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 lock’d his hand in hers and
 said,
 “ I once was looking for a magic weed,
 And found a fair young squire who sat
 alone,
 Had carved himself a knightly shield of
 wood,
 And then was painting on it fancied arms,
 Azure, an Eagle rising or, the Sun
 In dexter chief ; the scroll ‘ I follow fame.’
 And speaking not, but leaning over him,
 I took his brush and blotted out the bird,
 And made a Gardener putting in a graft,
 With this for motto, ‘ Rather use than
 fame.’
 You should have seen him blush ; but
 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
 himself,
 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 ampler means to serve mankind,
 Should have small rest or pleasure in her-
 self,
 But work as vassal to the larger love,
 That dwarfs the petty love of one to one.
 Use gave me Fame at first, and Fame
 again
 Increasing gave me use. Lo, there my
 boon !
 What other ? for men sought to prove
 me vile,
 Because I wish’d to give them greater
 minds :
 And then did Envy call me Devil’s son :
 The sick weak beast seeking to help her-
 self

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.

Right well know I that Fame is half-disfame,

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 charm 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 pupilage

Have turn'd to tyrants when they came to power)

I rather dread the loss of use than fame ; If you — and not so much from wicked-

ness,

As some wild turn of anger, or a mood Of overstrain'd affection, it may be,

To keep me all to your own self, or else A sudden spurt of 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, hide it, hide it ; I shall find it out ; And being found take heed of Vivien.

A woman and not trusted, doubtless I Might feel some sudden turn of anger born

Of your misfaith ; and your fine epithet Is accurate too, for this full love of mine

Without the full heart back may merit well

Your term of overstrain'd. So used as I, My daily wonder is, I love at all.

And as to woman's jealousy, O why not ?

O to what 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 Ye cage a buxom 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 many a love in loving youth was mine,

I needed then no charm to keep them mine

But youth and love ; and that full heart of yours

Whereof you prattle, may now assure you mine ;

Soliveuncharm'd. For those who wrought it first,

The wrist is parted from the hand that waved,

The feet unmortised from their ankle-bones

Who paced it, ages back : but will ye hear

The legend as in guerdon for your rhyme ?

"There lived a king in the most Eastern East,

Less old than I, yet older, for my blood Hath earnest in it of far springs to be.

A tawny pirate anchor'd in his port, Whose bark had plunder'd twenty name-

less isles ;

And passing one, at the high peep 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-slain ; A maid so smooth, so white, so wonderful,

They said 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-

nurtur'd eyes Waged such unwilling tho' successful war

On all the youth, they sicken'd ; coun- cils thinn'd,

And armies waned, for magnet-like she drew

The rustiest iron of old fighters' hearts ;

And beasts themselves would worship ;
 camels knelt
 Unbidden, and the brutes of mountain
 back
 That carry kings in castles, bow'd black
 knees
 Of homage, ringing with their serpent
 hands,
 To make her smile, her golden ankle-
 bells.
 What wonder, being jealous, that he sent
 His horns of proclamation out thro' all
 The hundred under-kingdoms that he
 sway'd
 To find a wizard who 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 keep the list low and pretenders back,
 Or like a king, not to be trilled 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 bleach'd on
 the walls :
 And many weeks a troop of carrion crows
 Hung like a cloud above the gateway
 towers."

And Vivien breaking in upon him, said :
 " I sit and gather honey ; yet, methinks,
 Your tongue has tript a little : ask your-
 self.

The lady never made *unwilling* war
 With those fine eyes : she had her pleas-
 ure in it,
 And made her good man jealous with
 good cause.
 And lived there neither dame nor dam-
 sel then
 Wroth at a lover's loss ? were all as tame,
 I mean, as noble, as their Queen was fair ?
 Not one to flirt a venom at her eyes,
 Or pinch a murderous dust into her drink,
 Or make her paler with a poison'd rose ?

Well, those were not our days : but did
 they find
 A wizard ? Tell me, was he like to thee ?"

She ceased, and made her lithe arm
 round his neck
 Tighten, and then drew back, and let
 her eyes
 Speak for her, glowing on him, like a
 bride's
 On her new lord, her own, the first of men.

He answer'd laughing, " Nay, not like
 to me.
 At last they found — his foragers for
 charms —

A little glassy-headed hairless man,
 Who lived alone in a great wild on grass ;
 Read but one book, and ever reading grew
 So grated down and filed away with
 thought,

So lean his eyes were monstrous ; while
 the skin
 Clung but to crate and basket, ribs and
 spine.

And since he kept his mind on one sole
 aim,
 Nor ever touch'd fierce wine, nor tasted
 flesh,

Nor own'd a sensual wish, to him the wall
 That sunders 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



"She ceased, and made her lithe arm round his neck
Tighten, and then drew back, and let her eyes
Speak for her."

Made proffer of the league of golden mines,
The province with a hundred miles of
coast,
The palace and the princess, that old man
Went back to his old wild, and lived on
grass,
And vanish'd, and his book came down
to me."

And Vivien answer'd smiling saucily ;
"You have the book : the charm is
written in it :
Good : take my counsel : let me know
it at once :
For keep it like a puzzle chest in chest,
With each chest lock'd and padlock'd
thirty-fold,
And whelm all this beneath as vast a
mound
As after furious battle turfs the slain
On some wild down above the windy deep,
I yet should strike upon a sudden means
To dig, pick, open, find and read the charm :
Then, if I tried it, whō 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 answer'd
her.

"You read the book, my pretty Vivien !
O ay, it is but twenty pages long,
But every page having an ample marge,
And every marge enclosing in the midst
A square of text that looks a little blot,
The text no larger than the limbs of fleas ;
And every square of text an awful charm,
Writ in a language that has long gone by.
So long, that mountains have arisen since
With cities on their flanks — you read
the book !
And every margin scribbled, crost, and
cramm'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 harm of any one,
And never could undo it : ask no more :
Fortho' you should not prove it upon me,
But keep that oath you swore, you might,
perchance,
Assay it on some one of the Table Round,
And all because you dream they babble
of you."

And Vivien, frowning in true anger,
said :

"What dare the full-fed liars say of me ?
They ride abroad redressing human
wrongs !

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.

"Ye breathe but accusation vast and
vague,
Spleen-born, I think, and proofless. If
ye know,
Set up the charge ye know, to stand or
fall !"

And Vivien answer'd frowning wrath-
fully.

"O ay, what say ye to Sir Valence, him
Whose kinsman left him watcher o'er his
wife

And two fair babes, and went to distant
lands ;

Was one year gone, and on returning found
Not two but three : there lay the reck-
ling, one

But one hour old ! What said the happy
sire ?

A seven months' babe had been a true
gift.

Those twelve sweet moons confused his
fatherhood."

Then answer'd Merlin "Nay, I know
the tale.

Sir Valence wedded with an outland
dame :

Some cause had kept him sunder'd from
his wife :

One child they had : it lived with her :
she died :

His kinsman travelling on his own affair
Was charged by Valence to bring home
the child.

He brought, not found it therefore : take
the truth."

"O ay," said Vivien, "overtrue a tale.
What say ye then to sweet Sir Sagamore
That ardent man ? 'to pluck the flower
in season' ;

So says the song, 'I 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 lothly plume fall'n from the
wing

Of that foul bird of rapine whose whole prey
Is man's good name : he never wroug'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 orna-
ment

That wreathen 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, nor 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 in-
to 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 Percivale

And of the horrid foulness that he wrought,
The saintly youth, the spotless lamb of Christ,
Or some black wether of St. Satan's fold.
What, in the precincts of the chapel-yard,
Among the knightly brasses of the graves,
And by the cold Hic Jacets of the dead !”

And Merlin answer'd careless of her charge,
“ A sober man is Percivale and pure ;
But once in life was fluster'd with new wine,
Then paced for coolness in the chapel-yard ;
Where one of Satan's shepherdesses caught
And meant to stamp him with her master's mark ;
And that he sinn'd, is not believable ;
For, look upon his face !— but if he sinn'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 chanted 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 fixt her fancy on him : let him be.
But have you no one word of loyal praise
For Arthur, blameless King and stainless man ?

She answer'd with a low and chuckling laugh ;
“ Him ? is he man at all, who knows and winks ?
Sees what his fair bride is and does, and winks ?

By which the good king means to blind himself,
And blinds himself and all the Table Round
To all the foulness that they work. Myself
Could call him (were it not for womanhood)
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 fain
Have all men true and leal, all women pure ;
How, in the mouths of base interpreters,
From over-fineness not intelligible
To things with every sense as false and foul
As the poach'd filth that floods the middle street,
Is thy white blamelessness accounted blame !”

But Vivien deeming Merlin overborne
By instance, recommenced, 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 Lancelot brave, nor Galahad clean.

Her words had issue other than she will'd.
He dragg'd his eyebrow bushes down,
and made
A snowy penthouse for his hollow eyes,
And mutter'd in himself, “ tell *her* the charm !
So, if she had it, would she rail on me
To snare 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 fail'd,
She is so bitter : for fine plots may fail,
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 prone to it, and impute themselves,
Wanting the mental range ; or low desire
Not to feel lowest makes them level all ;
Yea, they would pare the mountain to
the plain,

To leave an equal baseness ; 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,

Inflate themselves with some insane deli-
ght,

And judge all nature from her feet of clay,
Without the will to lift their eyes, and 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 whis-
pers part,

Half-suffocated in the hoary fell
And many-winter'd fleece of throat and
chin.

But Vivien, gathering somewhat of his
mood,

And hearing "harlot" mutter'd twice or
thrice,

Leapt from her session on his lap, and stood
Still as a viper frozen ; loathsome sight,
How from the rosy lips of life and love,
Flash'd the bare-grinning skeleton of
death !

White was her cheek ; sharp breaths of
anger puff'd

Her fairy nostril out ; her hand half-
clench'd

Went faltering sideways downward to her
belt,

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 crueller than was ever told in tale,
Or sung in song ! O vainly lavish'd love !
O cruel, there was nothing wild or strange,
Or seeming shameful, for what shame in
love,

So love be true, and not as yours 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 mused a little, and then clapt her
hands

Together with a wailing shriek, and said :
"Stabb'd through the heart's affections
to the heart !

Seethed like the kid in its own mother's
milk !

Kill'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, I, that flattering my true passion, saw
The knights, the court, the king, dark
in your light,

Who love 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 hence-
forth

The course of life that seem'd so flowery
to me

With you for guide and master, only you,
Becomes the sea-cliff pathway broken
short,

And ending in a ruin — nothing left,
But into some low cave to crawl, and there,
If the wolf spare me, weep my life away,
Kill'd with inutterable unkindliness."

She panted, she turn'd away, she hung
her head,

The snake of gold slid from her hair, the
braid

Slipt and uncoil'd itself, she wept afresh,
And the dark wood grew darker toward
the storm

In silence, while his anger slowly died
Within him, till he let his wisdom go



“Leapt from her session on his lap, and stood
Stiff as a viper frozen.”

For ease of heart, and half believed her true :

Call'd her to shelter in the hollow oak,
“Come from the storm” and having no reply,

Gazed at the heaving shoulder, and the face

Hand-hidden, as for utmost grief or shame ;

Then thrice essay'd, by tenderest-touching terms

To sleek her ruffled peace of mind, in vain.

At last she let herself be conquer'd by him,

And as the cageling newly flown returns,
The seeming-injured simple-hearted thing

Came to her old perch back, and settled there.

There while she sat, half-falling from his knees,

Half-nestled at his heart, and since he saw
The slow tear creep from her closed eyelid yet,

About her, more in kindness than in love,
The gentle wizard cast a shielding arm.

But she dislink'd herself at once and rose,
Her arms upon her breast across, and stood

A virtuous gentlewoman deeply wrong'd,
Upright and flush'd before him : then she said :

“There must be now no passages of love
Betwixt us twain henceforward evermore,
Since, if I be what I am grossly call'd,

What should be granted which your own
 gross heart
 Would reckon worth the taking? I will go.
 In truth, but one thing now — better have
 died
 Thrice than have ask'd it once — could
 make me stay —
 That proof of trust — so often asked in
 vain!
 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
 Mere matter of the fancy, now has 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 be 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,
 Furrowing a giant oak, and javelining
 With darted spikes and splinters of the
 wood
 The dark earth round. He raised his eyes
 and saw
 The tree that shone white-listed thro' the
 gloom.
 But Vivien, fearing heaven had heard her
 oath,
 And dazzled by the livid-flickering fork,
 And deafen'd with the stammering cracks
 and claps
 That follow'd, flying back and crying out,
 "O Merlin, tho' you do not love me, save,
 Yet save me!" clung to him and hugg'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 hugg'd
 him close.
 The pale blood of the wizard at her touch
 Took gayer colors, like an opal warm'd.
 She blamed herself for telling hearsay
 tales:

She shook from fear, and for her fault she
 wept
 Of petulancy; she call'd him lord and
 liege,
 Her seer, her bard, her silver star of eve,
 Her God, her Merlin, the one passionate
 love
 Of her whole life; and ever overhead
 Bellow'd the tempest, and the rotter
 branch
 Snapt in the rushing of the river rain
 Above them; and in change of glare and
 gloom
 Her eyes and neck glittering went and
 came;
 Till now the storm, its burst of passion
 spent,
 Moaning and calling out of other lands,
 Had left the ravaged woodland yet once
 more
 To peace; and what should not have
 been had been,
 For Merlin, overtalk'd and overworn,
 Had yielded, told her all the charm, and
 slept.

Then, in one moment, she put forth
 the charm
 Of woven paces and of waving hands,
 And in the hollow oak he lay as dead,
 And lost to life and use and name and
 fame.

Then crying "I have made his glory
 mine,"
 And shrieking out "O fool!" the harlot
 leapt
 Adown the forest, and the thicket closed
 Behind her, and the forest echo'd "fool."

LANCELOT AND ELAINE.

ELAINE the fair, Elaine the lovable,
 Elaine, the lily maid of Astolat,
 High in her chamber up a tower to the
 east
 Guarded the sacred shield of Lancelot;
 Which first she placed where morning's
 earliest ray
 Might strike it, and awake her with the
 gleam;
 Then fearing rust or soiled fashion'd for it
 A case of silk, and braided thereupon
 All the devices blazon'd on the shield
 In their own tinct, and added, of her wit.
 A border fantasy of branch and flower,

And yellow-throated nestling in the nest,
 Nor rested thus content, but day by
 day
 Leaving her household and good father
 climb'd
 That eastern tower, and entering barr'd
 her door,
 Stript off the case, and read the naked
 shield,
 Now guess'd a hidden meaning in his
 arms,
 Now made a pretty history to herself
 Of every dint a sword had beaten in it,
 And every scratch a lance had made upon
 it,
 Conjecturing when and where : this cut
 is fresh ;
 That ten years back ; this dealt him at
 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
 Broke 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 long before they crown'd
 him king,
 Roving the trackless realms of Lyon-
 nesse,
 Had found a glen, gray boulder and black
 tarn.
 A horror lived about the tarn, and clave
 Like its own mists 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 bones
 were bleach'd,
 And lichen'd into 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 misty moonshine, unawares
 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 scaur he plunged,
 and caught,
 And set it on his head, and in his heart
 Heard murmurs " lo, thou likewise shalt
 be king."

Thereafter, when a king, he had the
 gems
 Pluck'd from the crown, and show'd them
 to his knights,
 Saying " these jewels, whereupon I
 chanced
 Divinely, are the kingdom's not the
 king's —
 For public use : henceforward let there be,
 Once every year, a joust for one of these :
 For so by nine years' proof we needs must
 learn
 Which is our mightiest, and ourselves
 shall grow
 In use of arms and manhood, till we drive
 The Heathen, who, some say, shall rule
 the land
 Hereafter, which God hinder." Thus he
 spoke :
 And eight years past, eight jousts had
 been, and still
 Had Lancelot won the diamond of the
 year,
 With purpose to present them to the
 Queen,
 When all were won ; but meaning all at
 once
 To snare her royal fancy with a boon
 Worth half her realm, had never spoken
 word.

Now for the central diamond and the
 last
 And largest, Arthur, holding then his court
 Hard on the river nigh the place which
 now
 Is this world's hugest, let proclaim a joust

At Camelot, and when the time drew nigh
Spake (for she had been sick) to Guine-
vere

“Are you so sick, my Queen, you cannot
move

To these fair jousts?” “Yea, lord,” she
said, “ye know it.”

“Then will ye miss,” he answer’d,
“the great deeds

Of Lancelot, and his prowess in the lists,
A sight ye love to look on.” And the
Queen

Lifted her eyes, and they dwelt languidly
On Lancelot, where he stood beside the
King.

He thinking that he read her meaning
there,

“Stay with me, I am sick ; my love is
more

Than many diamonds,” yielded, and a
heart,

Love-loyal to the least wish of the Queen
(However much he yearn’d to make com-
plete

The tale of diamonds for his destined boon)
Urged him to speak against the truth,
and say,

“Sir King, mine ancient wound is hard-
ly 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 ye not to these fair jousts ? the
knights

Are half of them our enemies, and the
crowd

Will murmur, lo the shameless ones, who
take

Their pastime now the trustful king is
gone !”

Then Lancelot vext at having lied in vain :
“Are ye so wise ? ye were not once so
wise,

My Queen, that summer, when ye loved
me first.

Then of the crowd ye took no more ac-
count

Than of the myriad cricket of the mead,
When its own voice clings to each blade
of grass,

And every voice is nothing. As to knights,
Them surely can I silence with all ease.

But now my loyal worship is allow’d
Of all men : many a bard, without offence,
Has link’d our names together in his lay,
Lancelot, the flower of bravery, Guine-
vere,

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
yourself,

Now weary of my service and devoir,
Henceforth be truer to your faultless lord ?”

She broke into a little scornful laugh.

“Arthur, my lord, Arthur, the faultless
King,

That passionate perfection, my good
lord —

But who can gaze upon the Sun in heaven ?
He never spake word of reproach to me,
He never had a glimpse of mine untruth,
He cares not for me : only here to-day
There gleam’d a vague suspicion in his
eyes :

Some meddling rogue has tamper’d with
him — else

Rapt in this fancy of his Table Round,
And swearing men to vows impossible,
To make them like himself : but, friend,
to me

He is all fault who hath no fault at all :
For who loves me must have a touch of
earth ;

The low sun makes the color : I am yours,
Not Arthur’s, as ye know, save by the
bond.

And therefore hear my words : go to the
jousts :

The tiny-trumpeting gnat can break our
dream

When sweetest ; and the vermin 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, I
Before a king who honors his own word,
As if it were his God’s ?”

“Yea,” 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 it said
 That men go down before your spear at
 a touch
 But knowing you are Lancelot ; your
 great name,
 This conquers : hide it therefore ; go un-
 known :
 Win ! by this kiss you will : and our
 true king
 Will then allow your pretext, O my knight,
 As all for glory ; for to speak him true,
 Ye know right well, how meek soe'er
 he 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
 rarer foot,

And there among the solitary downs,
 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 hill, the
 towers.

Thither he made and wound the gateway
 horn.

Then came an old, dumb, myriad-wrinkled man,

Who let him into lodging and disarm'd.
 And Lancelot marvell'd at the wordless
 man ;

And issuing found the Lord of Astolat
 With two strong sons, Sir Torre and Sir
 Lavaine,

Moving to meet him in the castle court ;
 And close behind them stept the lily maid
 Elaine, his daughter : mother of the house
 There was not : some light jest among
 them rose

With laughter dying down as the great
 knight

Approach'd them : then the Lord of
 Astolat.



" Then came an old, dumb, myriad-wrinkled man,
 Who let him into lodging and disarm'd."

“Whence comest thou, my guest, and
by what name
Livest between the lips? for by thy state
And presence I might guess thee chief 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 un-
known.”

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 joust as one unknown
At Camelot for the diamond, ask me not,
Hereafter you shall know me — and the
shield —
I pray you lend me one, if such you have,
Blank, or at least with some device not
mine.”

Then said the Lord of Astolat, “Here
is Torre’s:
Hurt in his first tilt was my son, Sir
Torre.
And so, God wot, his shield is blank
enough.
His ye can have.” Then added plain
Sir Torre,
“Yea since I cannot use it, ye may
have it.”
Here laugh’d the father saying “Fie, Sir
Churl,
Is that an answer for a noble knight?
Allow him: but Lavaine, my younger here,
He is so full of lustihood, he will ride,
Joust for it, and win, and bring it in an
hour
And set it in this damsel’s golden hair,
To make her thrice as wilful as before.”

“Nay, father, nay good father, shame
me not
Before this noble knight” said young
Lavaine
“For nothing. Surely I but play’d on
Torre:
He seem’d so sullen, vext he could not go:
A jest, no more: for, knight, the maiden
dream,
That some one put this diamond in her
hand,
And that it was too slippery to be held,

And slipt and fell into some pool or
stream,
The castle-well, belike; and then I said
That if I went and if I fought and won it
(But all was jest and joke among ourselves)
Then must she keep it safelier. All was
jest.
But father give me leave, an if he will,
To ride to Camelot with this noble knight;
Win shall I not, but do my best to win:
Young as I am, yet would I do my best.”

“So ye will grace me,” answer’d
Lancelot,
Smiling a moment, “with your fellowship
O’er these waste downs whereon I lost
myself,
Then were I glad of you as guide and
friend;
And you shall win this diamond — as I
hear,
It is a fair large diamond, — if ye may,
And yield it to this maiden, if ye will.”
“A fair large diamond,” added plain
Sir Torre,
“Such be for Queens and not for simple
maids.”
Then she, who held her eyes upon the
ground,
Elaine, and heard her name so tost about,
Flush’d slightly at the slight disparage-
ment
Before the stranger knight, who, looking
at her,
Full courtly, yet not falsely, thus return’d.
“If what is fair be but for what is fair,
And only Queens are to be counted 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: the lily maid
Elaine,
Won by the mellow voice before she look’d,
Lifted her eyes, and read his lineaments.
The great and guilty love he bare the
Queen,
In battle with the love he bare his lord,
Had 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



"Lifted her eyes, and read his lineaments,"

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 she lifted up her 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 :
 But Lancelot, when they glanced at
 Guinevere,
 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 maim'd ;
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 Lerd, doubtless,”
Lavaïne said, rapt
By all the sweet and sudden passion of
youth
Toward greatness in its elder, “ you have
fought.
O tell us — for we live apart — you know
Of Arthur's glorious wars.” And Lan-
celot spoke
And answer'd him at full, as having been
With Arthur in the fight which all day long
Rang by the white mouth of the violent
Glem ;
And in the four wild battles by the shore
Of Douglas ; that on Bassa ; then the war
That thunder'd in and out the gloomy
skirts
Of Celidon the forest ; and again
By castle Gurnion where the glorious King
Had on his cuirass worn our Lady's Head,
Carved of one emerald, center'd in a sun
Of silver rays, that lighten'd as he
breathed ;
And at Caerleon had he help'd his lord,
When the strong neighings of the wild
white Horse
Set every gilded parapet shuddering ;
And up in Agued Cathregonion too,
And down the waste sand-shores of Trath
Troit,
Where many a heathen fell ; “ and on
the mount
Of Badon I myself beheld the King
Charge at the head of all his Table Round,
And all his legions crying Christ and him,
And break them ; and I saw him, after,
stand
High on a heap of slain, from spur 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,
However mild he seems at home, nor cares
For triumph in our mimic wars, the
jousts —

For if his own knight cast him down, he
laughs
Saying, his knights are better men than
he —

Yet in this heathen war the fire of God
Fills him : I never saw his like : there lives
No greater leader.”

While he utter'd this,
Low to her own heart said the lily maid
“ Save your great self, fair lord ” ; and
when he fell

From talk of war to traits of pleasantry —
Being mirthful he but in a stately kind —
She still took note that when the living
smile

Died from his lips, across him came a cloud
Of melancholy severe, from which again,
Whenever in her hovering to and fro
The lily maid had striven to make him
cheer,

There brake a sudden-beaming tender-
ness

Of manners and of nature : and she thought
That all was nature, all, perchance, for her.
And all night long his face before her lived,
As when a painter, poring on a face,
Divinely thro' all 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 fullest ; so the face before her lived,
Dark-splendid, speaking in the silence,
full

Of noble things, and held her from her
sleep.

Till rathe she rose, half-cheated in the
thought

She needs must bid farewell to sweet
Lavaïne.

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 Lavaïne

Past inward, as she came from out the
tower.

There to his proud horse Lancelot turn'd,
and smooth'd

The glossy shoulder, humming to himself.
Half-jealous of the flattering hand, she
drew

Nearer and stood. He look'd, and more
amazed

Than if seven men had set upon him, saw
The maiden standing in the dewy light.
He had not dream'd 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 flash'd on her a wild desire,
 That he should wear her favor at the tilt.
 She braved a riotous heart in asking for it.
 "Fair lord, whose name I know not —
 noble it is,
 I well believe, the noblest — will you wear
 My favor at this tourney?" "Nay,"
 said he,
 "Fair lady, since I never yet have worn
 Favor of any lady in the lists.
 Such is my wont, as those, who know me,
 know."
 "Yea, so," she answer'd; "then in wear-
 ing mine
 Needs must be lesser likelihood, noble
 lord,
 That those who know should know you."
 And he turn'd
 Her counsel up and down within his mind,
 And found it true, and answer'd, "true,
 my child.
 Well, I will wear it: fetch it out to me:
 What is it?" and she told him "a red
 sleeve
 Broider'd with pearls," and brought it:
 then he bound
 Her token on his helmet, with a smile
 Saying, "I never yet have done so much
 For any maiden living," and the blood
 Sprang to her face and fill'd her with de-
 light;
 But left her all the paler, when Lavaine
 Returning brought the yet-unblazon'd
 shield,
 His brother's; which he gave to Lancelot,
 Who parted with his own to fair Elaine;
 "Do me this grace, my child, to have my
 shield
 In keeping till I come." "A grace to
 me,"
 She answer'd, "twice to-day. I am your
 Squire."
 Whereat Lavaine said, laughing, "Lily
 maid,
 For fear our people call you lily maid
 In earnest, let me bring your color back;
 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 blown about the serious
 face
 Yet rosy-kindled with her brother's kiss —
 Paused in the gateway, standing by the
 shield
 In silence, while she watch'd their arms
 far-off
 Sparkle, until they dipt 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 bushless
 downs,
 To where Sir Lancelot knew there lived
 a knight
 Not far from Camelot, now for forty years
 A hermit, who had pray'd, labor'd 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 cells and chambers: all were fair
 and dry;
 The green light from the meadows under-
 neath
 Struck up and lived along the milky
 roofs;
 And in the meadows tremulous aspen-
 trees
 And poplars made a noise of falling
 showers.
 And thither wending there that night
 they bode.

But when the next day broke from un-
 derground,
 And shot red fire and shadows thro' the
 cave,
 They rose, heard mass, broke fast, and
 rode away:
 Then Lancelot saying, "hear, but hold
 my name
 Hidden, you ride with Lancelot of the
 Lake,"
 Abash'd Lavaine, whose instant rever-
 ence,
 Dearer to true young hearts than their
 own praise,
 But left him leave to stammer, "is it
 indeed?"
 And after muttering "the great Lancelot"
 At last he got his breath and answer'd
 "One,



"Then to her tower she climb'd, and took the shield,
There kept it, and so lived in fantasy."

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 Lavaine, 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 fall'n 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
clung,
And down his robe the dragon writhed
in gold,
And from the carven-work behind him
crept
Two dragons gilded, sloping down to make
Arms for his chair, while all the rest of
them
Thro' knots and loops and folds innumera-
ble
Fled ever thro' the woodwork, till they
found
The new design wherein they lost them-
selves,
Yet with all ease, so tender was the work :

And, in the costly canopy o'er him set,
Blazed the last diamond of the nameless
king.

Then Lancelot answer'd young Lavaine
and said,

“Me you call great : mine is the firmer
seat,

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 Lavaine gaped
upon him

As on a thing miraculous, and anon
The trumpets blew ; and then did either
side,

They that assail'd, and they that held
the lists,

Set lance in rest, strike spur, suddenly
move,

Meet in the midst, and there so furiously
Shock, that a man far-off might well per-
ceive,

If any man that day were left afield,
The hard earth shake, and a low thunder
of arms.

And Lancelot bode a little, till he saw
Which were the weaker ; then he hurld
into it

Against the stronger : little need to speak
Of Lancelot in his glory : King, duke, earl,
Count, baron — whom he smote, he over-
threw.

But in the field were Lancelot's kith
and kin,

Ranged with the Table Round that held
the lists,

Strong men, and wrathful that a stranger
knight

Should do and almost overdo the deeds
Of Lancelot ; and one said to the other

“Lo !
What is he ? I do not mean the force
alone,

The grace and versatility of the man —
Is it not Lancelot !” “When has Lance-
lot worn

Favor of any lady in the lists ?
Not such his wont, as we, that know him,
know.”

“How then ? who then ?” a fury seized
on them,

A fiery family passion for the name
Of Lancelot, and a glory one with theirs.

They couch'd their spears and prick'd
their steeds and thus,

Their plumes driv'n backward by the
wind they made

In moving, all together down upon him
Bare, as a wild wave in the wide North-sea,
Green-glimmering toward the summit,
bears, with all

Its stormy crests that smoke against the
skies,

Down on a bark, and overbears the bark,
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 Lavaine did well and worship-
fully ;

He bore a knight of old repute to the
earth,

And brought his horse to Lancelot where
he lay.

He up the side, sweating with agony, got,
But thought to do while he might yet
endure,

And being lustily holpen by the rest,
His party, — tho' it seem'd half-miracle
To those he fought with — drave his kith
and kin,

And all the Table Round that held the
lists,

Back to the barrier ; then the heralds
blew

Proclaiming his the prize, who wore the
sleeve

Of scarlet, and the pearls ; and all the
knights,

His party, cried “Advance, and take
your prize

The diamond” ; but he answer'd, “dia-
mond me

No diamonds ! for God's love, a little air !
Prize me no prizes, for my prize is death !
Hence will I and I charge you, follow me
not.”

He spoke, and vanish'd suddenly from
the field

With young Lavaine into the poplar grove.
There from his charger down he slid, and

sat,
Gasping to Sir Lavaine, “draw the lance-
head” :



"And down he sank for the pure pain." See page 185.

"Ah my sweet lord Sir Lancelot," said
 Lavaine,
 "I dread me, if I draw it, ye will die."
 But he "I die already with it: draw —
 Draw," — and Lavaine drew, and that
 other gave
 A marvellous great shriek and ghastly
 groan,
 And half his blood burst forth, and down
 he sank
 For the pure pain, and wholly swoon'd
 away.
 Then came the hermit out and bare him in,
 There stanch'd his wound; and there, in
 daily doubt
 Whether to live or die, for many a week
 Hid from the wide world's rumor by the
 grove
 Of poplars with their noise of falling
 showers,
 And ever-tremulous aspen-trees, he lay.

 But on that day when Lancelot fled
 the lists,
 His party, knights of utmost North and
 West,
 Lords of waste marches, kings of desolate
 isles,
 Came round their great Pendragon, say-
 ing to him
 "Lo, Sire, our knight 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 —
 Yea, twenty times I thought him Lance-
 lot —
 He must not pass uncared for. Wherefore
 rise,
 O Gawain, and ride forth and find the
 knight.
 Wounded and wearied needs must he be
 near.
 I charge you that you get at once to horse.
 And, knights and kings, there breathes
 not one of you
 Will deem this prize of ours is rashly
 given:
 His prowess was too wondrous. We will
 do him
 No customary honor: since the knight
 Came not to us, of us to claim the prize,

Ourselves will send it after. Rise and
 take
 This diamond, and deliver it, and return,
 And bring us where 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 mid night and flourish of his May,
 Gawain, surnamed The Courteous, fair
 and strong,
 And after Lancelot, Tristram, and Geraint
 And Lamorack, a good knight, but there-
 withal
 Sir Modred's brother, of a crafty house,
 Nor often loyal to his word, and now
 Wroth 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.

So all 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'n away to die?" So fear'd the
 King,
 And, after two days' tarriance there, re-
 turn'd.
 Then when he saw the Queen, embracing
 ask'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 ye parted
 from us,
 Than Lancelot told me of a common talk
 That men went down before his spear at
 a touch,

But knowing he was Lancelot ; his great
name
Conquer'd ; and therefore would he hide
his name
From all men, ev'n the king, and to this end
Had made the pretext of a hindering
wound,
That he might joust unknown of all, and
learn
If his old prowess were in aught 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 :
" Far lovelier in our Lancelot had it been,
In lieu of idly dallying with the truth,
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 fear 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 that he went sore wounded from the
field :
Yet good news too : for goodly hopes are
mine
That Lancelot is no more a lonely heart.
He wore, against his wont, upon his helm
A sleeve of scarlet, broidered with great
pearls,
Some gentle maiden's gift."

" Yea, lord," she said,
" Your hopes are mine," and saying that
she choked,
And sharply turn'd about to hide her face,
Past to her chamber, and there flung
herself
Down on the great King's couch, and
writhed upon it,
And clench'd her fingers till they bit the
palm,
And shriek'd out " traitor " to the un-
hearing 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
maid
Glanced at, and cried " What news from
Camelot, lord ?
What of the knight with the red sleeve ?"
" He won."
" I knew it," she said. " But parted
from the jousts
Hurt in the side," whereat she caught
her breath ;
Thro' her own side she felt the sharp lance
go ;
Thereon she smote her hand : wellnigh
she swoon'd :
And, while he gazed wonderingly at her,
came
The lord of Astolat out, to whom the
Prince
Reported who he was, and on what quest
Sent, that he bore the prize and could not
find
The victor, but had ridden wildly round
To seek him, and was wearied of the search.
To whom the lord of Astolat " Bide with
us,
And ride no longer wildly, noble Prince !
Here was the knight, and here he left a
shield ;
This will he send or come for : further-
more
Our son is with him ; we shall hear anon,
Needs must we hear." To this the cour-
teous Prince
Accorded with his wonted courtesy,
Courtesy with a touch of traitor in it,
And stay'd ; and cast his eyes on fair
Elaine :
Where could he find face daintier ?
then her shape
From forehead down to foot perfect —
again
From foot to forehead exquisitely turn'd :
" 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 her, graces of the court, and songs,

Sighs, 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 surer than our falcon yesterday,
Who lost the hern we slipt him at, and went

To all the winds?" "Nay, by mine
head," said he,

"I lose it, as we lose the lark in heaven,
O damsel, in the light of your blue eyes:
But an ye 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,

Ramp in the field, he smote his thigh,
and mock'd;

"Right was the King! our Lancelot!
that true man!"

"And right was I," she answer'd mer-
rily, "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 I, when often they have talk'd of
love,

Wish'd it had been my mother, for they
talk'd,

Meseem'd, 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."

"Yea, by God's death," said he, "ye
love him well,

But would not, knew ye 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 golden minute's grace: he wore your
sleeve:

Would he break faith with one I may not
name?

Must our true man change like a leaf at
last?

Nay—like enough: why then, far be it
from me

To cross our mighty Lancelot in his loves!
And, damsel, for I deem you know full well

Where your great knight is hidden, let
me leave

My quest with you; the diamond also:
here!

For if you love, it will be sweet to give it;
And if he love, it will be sweet to have it

From your own hand; and whether he
love or not,

A diamond is a diamond. Fare you well
A thousand times!—a thousand times

farewell!

Yet, if he love, and his love hold, we two
May meet at court hereafter: there, I

think,
So you will learn the courtesies of the
court,

We two shall know each other."

Then he gave,
And slightly kiss'd the hand to which he

gave,
The diamond, and all 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 "Sire, my liege, so much I
learnt;

But fail'd to find him tho' I rode all round
The region: but I lighted on the maid,

Whose sleeve he wore; she loves him;
and to her,

Deeming our courtesy is the truest law,
I gave the diamond: she will render it;

For by mine head she knows his hiding-
place."

The seldom-frowning King frown'd,
and replied,

"Too courteous truly! ye shall go no
more

On quest of mine, seeing that ye forget
Obedience is the courtesy due to kings."

He spake and parted. Wroth but all
 in awe,
 For twenty strokes of the blood, without
 a word,
 Linger'd that other, staring after him ;
 Then shook his hair, strode off, and
 buzz'd abroad
 About the maid of Astolat, and her love.
 All ears were prick'd at once, all tongues
 were loosed :
 "The maid of Astolat loves Sir Lancelot,
 Sir Lancelot loves the maid of Astolat."
 Some read the King's face, some the
 Queen's, and all
 Had marvel what the maid might be, but
 most
 Predoom'd 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,
 Marr'd her friend's point with pale tran-
 quillity.
 So ran the tale like fire about the court,
 Fire in dry stubble a nine days' wonder
 flared :
 Till ev'n the knights at banquet twice or
 thrice
 Forgot to drink to Lancelot and the
 Queen,
 And pledging Lancelot and the lily maid
 Smiled at each other, while the Queen
 who sat
 With lips severely placid felt the knot
 Climb in her throat, and with her feet
 unsean
 Crush'd the wild passion out against the
 floor
 Beneath the banquet, where the meats
 became
 As wormwood, and she hated all who
 pledged.

But far away the maid in Astolat,
 Her guiltless rival, she that ever kept
 The one-day-seen Sir Lancelot in her
 heart,
 Crept to her father, while he mused alone,
 Sat 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, "surely." "Where-
 fore, let me hence,"
 She answer'd, "and find out our dear
 Lavaine."
 "Ye will not lose your wits for dear
 Lavaine :
 Bide," answer'd he : "we needs must
 hear anon
 Of him, and of that other." "Ay," she
 said,
 "And of that other, for I needs must hence
 And find that other, wheresoe'er he be,
 And with mine own hand give his diamond
 to him,
 Lest 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
 Gaunt as it were the skeleton of himself;
 Death-pale, for lack of gentle maiden's said.
 The gentler-born the maiden, the more
 bound,
 My father, to be sweet and serviceable
 To noble knights in sickness, as ye know,
 When these have worn their tokens : let
 me hence
 I pray you." Then her father nodding
 said,
 "Ay, ay, the diamond : wit you well, my
 child,
 Right fain were I to learn this knight
 were whole,
 Being our greatest : yea, and you must
 give it—
 And sure I think this fruit is hung too high
 For any mouth to gape for save a Queen's—
 Nay, I mean nothing : so then, get you
 gone,
 Being so very wilful you must go."

Lightly, hersuit allow'd, she slept 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 so very wilful you must die."
 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 bushless
 downs
 To Camelot, and before the city-gates
 Came on her brother with a happy face

Making a roan horse caper and curvet
 For pleasure all about a field of flowers :
 Whom when she saw, "Lavaïne," she
 cried, "Lavaïne,
 How fares my lord Sir Lancelot?" He
 amazed,
 "Torre and Elaine ! why here ? Sir Lan-
 celot !
 How know ye my lord's name is Lancelot ?"
 But when the maid had told him all her
 tale,
 Then turn'd Sir Torre, and being in his
 moods
 Left them, and under the strange-statued
 gate,
 Where Arthur's wars were render'd mys-
 tically,
 Past up the still rich city to his kin,
 His own far blood, which dwelt at Came-
 lot ;
 And her, Lavaïne across the poplar grove
 Led to the caves : there first she saw the
 casque
 Of Lancelot on the wall : her scarlet sleeve,
 Tho' carved and cut, and half the pearls
 away,
 Stream'd from it still ; and in her heart
 she laugh'd,
 Because he had not loosed it from his helm,
 But meant once more perchance to tour-
 ney in it.
 And when they gain'd the cell in which
 he slept,
 His battle-writhen arms and mighty
 hands
 Lay naked on the wolfskin, and a dream
 Of dragging down his enemy made them
 move.
 Then she that saw him lying unsleek,
 unshorn,
 Gaunt as it were the skeleton of himself,
 Uttered 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 blank from sleep, she started to him,
 saying
 "Your prize the diamond sent you by
 the King" :
 His eyes glisten'd : she fancied "is it for
 me ?"
 And when the maid had told him all the
 tale
 Of King and Prince, the diamond sent,
 the quest
 Assign'd to her not worthy of it, she knelt
 Full lowly by the corners of his bed,

And laid the diamond in his open hand.
 Her face was near, and as we kiss the child
 That does the task assign'd, he kiss'd her
 face.
 At once she slipt like water to the floor.
 "Alas," he said, "your ride has wearied
 you.
 Rest must you have." "No rest for
 me," she said ;
 "Nay, for near you, fair lord, I am at rest."
 What might she mean by that ? his large
 black eyes,
 Yet larger thro' his leanness, dwelt upon
 her,
 Till all her heart's sad secret blazed itself
 In the heart's colors on her simple face ;
 And Lancelot look'd and was perplex't in
 mind,
 And being weak in body said no more ;
 But did not love the color ; woman's love,
 Save one, he not regarded, and so
 turn'd
 Sighing, and feign'd a sleep until he slept.

Then rose Elaine and glided thro' the
 fields,
 And past beneath the wildly-sculptured
 gates
 Far up the dim rich city to her kin ;
 There bode the night : but woke with
 dawn, and 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
 Gliding, and every day she tended him,
 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
 Uncourteous, even he : but the meek maid
 Sweetly forebore 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 kindlier unto man, but her deep love
 Upbore her ; till the hermit, skill'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 held her tenderly,



"She knelt
Full lowly by the corners of his bed."

And loved her with all love except the love
Of man and 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 for the sick man ; but now
The shackles of an old love straiten'd
 him,
His honor rooted in dishonor stood,
And faith unfaithful kept him falsely true.

Yet the great knight in his mid-sick-
 ness made
Full many a holy 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 ghostly
 grace
Beam'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 knew not, and the sorrow dimm'd
 her sight,
And drove her ere her time across the fields
Far into the rich city, where alone
She murmur'd "vain in vain : it can-
 not be.
He will not love me : how then ? must
 I die."
Then as a little helpless innocent bird,
That has but one plain passage of few notes,
Will sing the simple passage o'er and o'er
For all an April morning, till the ear
Wearies to hear it, so the simple maid
Went half the night repeating, "must
 I die ?"
And now to right she turn'd, and now
 to left.

And found no ease in turning or in rest ;
 And "him or death" she mutter'd,
 "death or him,"
 Again and like a burthen, "him or death."

But when Sir Lancelot's deadly hurt
 was whole,
 To Astolat 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 I be loved, these are my festal robes,
 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
 To speak the wish most dear to your
 true heart ;
 Such service have ye 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 ;

"Going? 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 : let
 me die."

"Ah, sister," answer'd Lancelot, "what
 is this?"

And innocently extending her white arms,
 "Your love," she said, "your love — to
 be your wife."

And Lancelot answer'd, "Had I chos'n
 to wed,



"Then suddenly and passionately she spoke."

I had been wedded earlier, sweet Elaine :
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 : yea I know it of mine
own self :

And you yourself will smile at your own
self

Hereafter, when you yield your flower
of life

To one more fitly yours, not thrice your
age :

And then will I, for true you are and
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 : further-
more,

Ev'n to the death, as tho' ye 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, then
replied ;

"Of all this will I nothing" ; and so fell,
And thus they bore her swooning to her
tower.

Then spake, to whom thro' those black
walls of yew

Their talk had pierced, her father. "Ay,
a flash,

I fear me, that will strike my blossom dead
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 I can I
will" ;

And there that day remain'd, and toward
even

Sent for his shield : full meekly rose the
maid,

Stript off the case, and gave the naked
shield ;

Then, when she heard his horse upon
the stones,

Unclasping flung the casement back, and
look'd

Down on his helm, from which her sleeve
had gone.

And Lancelot knew the little clinking
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 they left her to herself again,
Death, like a friend's voice from a distant
field

Approaching thro' the darkness, call'd ;
the owls

Wailing had power upon her, and she mixt
Her fancies with the fallow-rifted glooms
Of evening, and the moanings of the wind.

And in those days she made a little song,
And call'd her song "The Song of Love
and Death,"

And sang it : sweetly could she make
and sing.

"Sweet is true love tho' given in vain,
in vain ;
And sweet is death who puts an end to pain :
I know not which is sweeter, no, not I.

"Love, art thou sweet? then bitter
death must be :
Love, thou art bitter; sweet is death to me.
O Love, if death be sweeter, let me die.

"Sweet love, that seems not made to
fade away,
Sweet death, that seems to make us love-
less clay,
I know not which is sweeter, no, not I.

"I fain would follow love, if that could
be ;
I needs must follow death, who calls for
me ;
Call and I follow, I follow ! let me die."

High with the last line sealed 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 shrilling "Let
me die !"

As when we dwell upon a word we
know
Repeating, till the word we know so well
Becomes a wonder and we know not why,
So dwelt the father on her face and thought
"Is this Elaine?" till back the maiden
fell,
Then gave a languid hand to each, and lay,
Speaking a still good-morrow with her
eyes.
At last she said "Sweet brothers, yester-
night
I seem'd a curious little maid again,
As happy as when we dwelt among the
woods,
And when ye used to take me with the
flood
Up the great river in the boatman's boat.
Only ye would not pass beyond the cape
That has the poplar on it : there ye fixt

Your limit, oft returning with the tide.
And yet I cried because ye would not pass
Beyond it, and far up the shining flood
Until we found the palace of the king.
And yet ye 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 wisd. re
main'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 pity me,
And all the gentle court will welcome me,
And after my long voyage I shall rest !"

"Peace," said her father, "O my child,
ye seem
Light-headed, for what force is yours to go,
So far, being sick? and wherefore would
ye look
On this proud fellow again, who scorns us
all?"

Then the rough Torre began to heave
and move,
And bluster into stormy sobs 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 he hath done the
house."

To which the gentle sister made reply,
"Fret not yourself, dear brother, nor be
wroth,
Seeing it is no more Sir Lancelot's fault
Not to love me, than it is mine to love
Him of all men who seems to me the
highest."

“Highest?” the Father answer’d,
 echoing “highest?”
 (He meant to break the passion in her)
 “nay,
 Daughter, I know not what you call the
 highest ;
 But this I know, for all the people know it,
 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 all unhappy, having loved God’s best
 And greatest, tho’ my love had no return :
 Yet, seeing ye desire your child to live,
 Thanks, but ye work against your own
 desire ;

For if I could believe the things ye say
 I should but die the sooner ; wherefore
 cease,

Sweet father, and bid call the ghostly man
 Hither, and let me shrive me clean, and
 die.”

So when the ghostly man had come
 and gone,

She with a face, bright as for sin forgiven,
 Besought Lavaine to write as she devised
 A letter, word for word ; and when he
 ask’d

“Is it for Lancelot, 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 — “ye never yet
 Denied my fancies — this, however
 strange,

My latest : lay the letter in my hand
 A little ere I die, and close the hand
 Upon it ; I shall guard it even in death.
 And when the heat is gone from out my
 heart,

Then take the little bed on which I died

For Lancelot’s love, and deck it like the
 Queen’s

For richness, and me also like the Queen
 In all I have of rich, and lay me on it.
 And let there be prepared a chariot-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 owr
 self,

And none of you can speak for me so well.
 And therefore let our dumb old man alone
 Go with me, he can steer and row, and he
 Will guide me to that palace, to the
 doors.”

She ceased : her father promised ;
 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 dole in Astolat.

But when the next sun brake from
 underground,

Then, those two brethren slowly with
 bent brows

Accompanying, the sad chariot-bier
 Past like a shadow thro’ the field, that
 shone

Full-summer, to that stream whereon the
 barge,

Pall’d all its length in blackest samite,
 lay.

There sat the lifelong creature of the
 house,

Loyal, the dumb old servitor, on deck,
 Winking his eyes, and twisted all his face.

So those two brethren from the chariot
 took

And on the black decks laid her in her
 bed,

Set in her hand a lily, o’er her hung
 The silken case with braided blazonings,

And kiss’d her quiet brows, and saying
 to her

“Sister, farewell for ever,” and again
 “Farewell, sweet sister,” parted all in
 tears.

Then rose the dumb old servitor, and the
 dead

Steer’d by the dumb went upward with
 the flood —



“Then rose 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 stream-
ing down —
And all the coverlid 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, whereto the Queen
agreed
With such and so unmoved a majesty
She might have seem'd her statue, but
that he,
Low-drooping till he wellnigh kiss'd her
feet
For loyal awe, saw with a sidelong eye
The shadow of a piece of pointed lace,
In the Queen's shadow, vibrate on the
walls,
And parted, laughing in his courtly
heart,

All in an oriel on the summer side,
Vine-clad, of Arthur's palace toward the
stream,
They met, and Lancelot kneeling utter'd,
“Queen,
Lady, 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 armet for the roundest arm on earth,
Or necklace for a neck to which the swan's
ls tawnier 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 hear of rumors flying thro' your court.
Our bond, as not the bond of man and wife,
Should have in it an absoluter trust
To make up that defect : let rumors be :
When did not rumors fly ? these, as I trust
That you trust me in your own nobleness,
I may not well believe that you believe.”
While thus he spoke, half turn'd 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 pas-
sive hand

Received at once and laid aside the gems
There on a table near her, and replied.

“It may be, I am quicker of belief
Than you believe me, Lancelot of the Lake
Our bond is not the bond of man and wife
This good is in it, whatsoever of ill,
It can be broken easier. I for you
This many a year have done despite and
wrong

To one whom ever in my heart of hearts
I did acknowledge nobler. What are
these ?

Diamonds for me ! they had been 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. Only this
Grant me, I pray you : have your joys
apart.

I doubt not that however changed, you
keep

So much of what is graceful : and myself
Would shun to break those bounds of
courtesy

In which as Arthur's queen I move and
rule :

So cannot speak my mind. An end to this !
A strange one ! yet I take it with Amen.
So pray you, add my diamonds to her
pearls ;

Deck her with these ; tell her she shines
me down :

An armlet for an arm to which the Queen's
Is haggard, or a necklace for a neck
O as much fairer — 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,

Flung them, and down they flash'd, and
smote the stream.

Then from the smitten surface flash'd, as
it were,

Diamonds to meet them, and they past
away.

Then while Sir Lancelot leant, in half
disgust

At love, life, all things, on the window
ledge,

Close underneath his eyes, and right across

Where these had fallen, slowly past the
barge

Whereon the lily maid of Astolat
Lay smiling, like a star in blackest night.

But the wild Queen, who saw not, burst
away

To weep and wail in secret ; and the barge.
Onto 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 oarsman's hag-
gard face,

As hard and still as is the face that men
Shape to their fancy's 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 !

Yea, but how pale ! what are they ?
flesh and blood ?

Or come to take the King to fairy land ?
For some do hold our Arthur cannot die,
But that he passes into fairy land.”

While thus they babbled of the King,
the King

Came girt 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 bade the meek Sir Percivale
And pure Sir Galahad to uplift the maid ;
And reverently they bore her into hall.

Then came the fine Gawain and wonder'd
at her,

And Lancelot later came and mused at her,
And last the Queen herself and pitied her :
But Arthur spied the letter in her hand.
Stoopt, took, brake seal, and read it ;
this was all.

“Most noble lord, Sir Lancelot of the
Lake,

I, sometime call'd the maid of Astolat,
Come, for you left me taking no farewell,
Hither, to take my last farewell of you.
I loved you, and my love had no return,
And therefore my true love has been my
death.

And therefore to our lady Guinevere,

And to all other ladies, I make moan.
Pray for my soul, and yield me burial.
Pray for my soul thou too, Sir Lancelot,
As thou art a knight peerless."

Thus he read,

And ever in the reading, lords and dames
Wept, looking often from his face who read
To 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 women, whomsoever I have known.
Yet to be loved makes not to love again ;
Not at my years, however it hold in
youth.

I swear by truth and knighthood that I
gave

No cause, not willingly, for such a love :
To this I call my friends in testimony,
Her brethren, and her father, who himself
Besought me to be plain and blunt, and
use,

To break her passion, some 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)

"Ye 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
Was but the flash of youth, would dark-
en down

To rise hereafter in a stiller flame
Toward one more worthy of her — then
would I,

More specially were he, she wedded, poor,
Estate them with large land and territory
In mine own realm beyond the narrow
seas,

To keep them in all joyance : more than
this

I could not ; this she would not, and she
died."

He pausing, Arthur answer'd, "O my
knight,

It will be to thy worship, as my knight,
And mine, as head of all our Table Round,
To see that she be buried worshipfully."

So toward that shrine which then in all
the realm

Was richest, Arthur leading, slowly went
The marshall'd order of their Table Round,
And Lancelot sad beyond his wont, to see
The maiden buried, not as one unknown,
Nor meanly, but with gorgeous obsequies,
And mass, and rolling music, like a
Queen.

And when the knights had laid her
comely head

Low in the dust of half-forgotten kings,
Then Arthur spake among them, "Let
her tomb

Be costly, and her image thereupon.

And let the shield of 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
wrought

Thereafter ; but when now the lords and
dames

And people, from the high door stream-
ing, brake

Disorderly, as homeward each, the Queen,
Who mark'd Sir Lancelot where he
moved apart,

Drew near, and sigh'd in passing "Lance-
lot,

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
flung
One arm about his neck, and spake and
said

“Lancelot, my Lancelot, thou in
whom I have
Most love and most affianced, for I know
What thou hast been in battle by my side,
And many a time have watched thee at
the tilt
Strike down the lusty and long-practised
knight,
And let the younger and unskill'd go by
To win his honor and to make his name,
And loved thy courtesies and thee, a man
Made to be loved; but now I would
to God,
For the wild people say wild things of
thee,
Thou couldst have loved this maiden,
shaped, it seems,
By God for thee alone, and from her face,
If one may judge the living by the dead,
Delicately pure and marvellously fair,
Who might have brought thee, now a
lonely man
Wifeless and heirless, noble issue, sons
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 bind 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 fail'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 inrunning of a little brook
Sat by the river in a cove, and watch'd
The high reed wave, and lifted up his eyes

And saw the barge that brought her mov-
ing down,
Far-off, a blot upon the stream, and said
Low in himself “Ah simple heart and
sweet,
Ye 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 crescent fear for name and
fame
Speak, as it waxes, of a love that wanes?
Why did the King dwell on my name to
me?
Mine own name shames me, seeming a
reproach,
Lancelot, whom the Lady of the Lake
Stole from his mother—as the story
runs—
She chanted snatches of mysterious song
Heard on the winding waters, eve and
morn
She kiss'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: not with-
out
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 fling me deep in that forgotten mere,
Among the tumbled fragments of the
hills.”

So groan'd Sir Lancelot in remorseful
pain,
Not knowing he should die a holy man.

THE HOLY GRAIL.

From noiseful arms, and acts of prowess
done
In tournament or tilt, Sir Percivale,
Whom Arthur and his knighthood call'd
The Pure,
Had pass'd into the silent life of prayer,
Praise, fast, and 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 love that waken'd love within,
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 Perci-
vale:

“O brother, I have seen this yew-tree
smoke,
Spring after spring, for half a hundred
years:
For never have I known the world without,
Nor ever stray'd beyond the pale: but thee,
When first thou camest — such a courtesy
Spake thro' the limbs and in the voice —
I knew
For one of those who eat in Arthur's hall;
For good ye are and bad, and like to coins,
Some true, some light, but every one of you
Stamp'd with the image of the King; and
now
Tell me, what drove thee from the Table
Round,
My brother? was it earthly passion 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 sparkle
out
Among us in the jousts, while womer
watch
Who wins, who falls; and waste the
spiritual strength
Within us, better offer'd up to Heaven.”

To whom the monk: “The Holy
Grail! — I trust
We are green in Heaven's eyes; but here
too much
We moulder — as to things without I
mean —
Yet one of your own knights, a guest of
ours,
Told us of this in our refectory,
But spake with such a sadness and so low
We heard not half of what he said. What
is it?
The phantom of a cup that comes and
goes?”

“Nay, monk! what phantom?” an-
swer'd Percivale.
“The cup, the cup itself, from which our
Lord
Drank at the last sad 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,
Arimathæan 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 holy cup
Was caught away to Heaven, and disap-
pear'd.”

To whom the monk: “From our old
books I know
That Joseph came of old to Glastonbury,
And there the heathen Prince, Arviragus,
Gave him an isle of marsh whereon to
build;
And there he built with wattles from the
marsh
A little lonely church in days of yore,
For so they say, 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 Percivale, “a nun.

And one no further off in blood from me Than sister ; and if ever holy maid With knees of adoration wore the stone, A holy maid ; tho’ never maiden glow’d, But that was in her earlier maidenhood, With such a fervent flame of human love, Which being rudely blunted, glanced and shot

Only to holy things ; to prayer and praise She gave herself, to fast and alms. And yet,

Nun as she was, the scandal of the Court, Sin against Arthur and the Table Round, And the strange sound of an 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 wellnigh 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 shone, and the wind blew, thro’ her, and I thought

She might have risen and floated when I saw her.

“For on a day she sent to speak with me.

And when she came to speak, behold her eyes — Beyond my knowing of them, beautiful, Beyond all knowing of them, wonderful,

Beautiful in the light of holiness.

And ‘O my brother, Percivale,’ she said, ‘Sweet brother, I have seen the Holy Grail :

For, waked at dead of night, I heard a sound As of a silver horn from o’er the hills Blown, and I thought, “It is not Arthur’s use

To hunt by moonlight” ; and the slender sound

As from a distance beyond distance grew Coming upon me — O never harp nor horn,

Nor aught we blow with breath, or touch with hand,

Was like that music as it came ; and then Stream’d thro’ my cell a cold and silver beam,

And down the long beam stole the Holy Grail,

Rose-red with beatings in it, as if alive, Till all the white walls of my cell were dyed With rosy colors leaping on the wall ;

And then the music faded, and the Grail Pass’d, and the beam decay’d, and from the walls

The rosy quiverings died into the night. So now the Holy Thing is here again Among us, brother, fast thou too and pray,

And tell thy brother knights to fast and pray,

That so perchance the vision may be seen By thee and those, and all the world be heal’d.’

“Then leaving the pale nun, I spake of this

To all men ; and myself fasted and pray’d Always, and many among us many a week Fasted and pray’d even to the uttermost, Expectant of the wonder that would be.

“And one there was among us, ever moved

Among us in white armor, Galahad. ‘God make thee good as thou art beautiful,’

Said Arthur, when he dubb’d him knight ; and none,

In so young youth, was ever made a knight Till Galahad ; and this Galahad, when he heard

My sister’s vision, fill’d me with amaze ; His eyes became so like her own, they seem’d

Hers, and himself her brother more than I.

“Sister or brother none had he ; but
 some
 Call'd him a son of Lancelot, and some
 said
 Begotten by enchantment — chatters
 they,
 Like birds of passage piping up and down,
 That gape for flies — we know not whence
 they come ;
 For when was Lancelot wanderingly lewd ?

“ But she, the wan sweet maiden shore
 away
 Clean from her forehead all that wealth
 of hair
 Which made a silken mat-work for her
 feet ;
 And out of this she plaited broad and long
 A strong sword-belt, and wove with silver
 thread
 And crimson in the belt a strange device,
 A crimson grail within a silver beam ;
 And saw the bright boy-knight, and bound
 it on him,
 Saying, ‘ My knight, my love, my knight
 of heaven,
 O thou, my love, whose love is one with
 mine,
 I, maiden, round thee, maiden, bind my
 belt.
 Go forth, for thou shalt see what I have
 seen,
 And break thro’ all, till one will crown
 thee king
 Far in the spiritual city’ : and as she spake
 She sent the deathless passion in her eyes
 Thro’ him, and made him hers, and laid
 her mind
 On him, and he believed in her belief.

“Then came a year of miracle : O
 brother,
 In our great hall there stood a vacant chair,
 Fashion'd by Merlin ere he past away,
 And carven with strange figures ; and in
 and out
 The figures, like a serpent, ran a scroll
 Of letters in a tongue no man could read,
 And Merlin call'd it ‘The Siege perilous,’
 Perilous for good and ill ; ‘for there,’
 he said,
 ‘No man could sit but he should lose
 himself’ :
 And once by misadventure Merlin sat
 In his own chair, and so was lost ; but he,
 Galahad, when he heard of Merlin's doom,
 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
 Grail
 All over cover'd with a luminous cloud,
 And none might see who bare it, and if
 past.
 But every knight beheld his fellow's face
 As in a glory, and all the knights arose,
 And staring each at other like dumb men
 Stood, till I found a voice and sware a
 vow.

“I sware a vow before them all, that I,
 Because I had not seen the Grail, would
 ride
 A twelvemonth and a day in quest of it,
 Until I found and saw it, as the nun
 My sister saw it ; and Galahad sware the
 vow,
 And good Sir Bors, our Lancelot's cousin,
 sware,
 And Lancelot sware, and many among
 the knights,
 And Gawain sware, 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 Percivale,
 “the king,
 Was not in hall : for early that same day,
 Scaped thro’ a cavern from a bandit hold,
 An outraged maiden sprang into the hall
 Crying on help : for all her shining hair
 Was smear'd with earth, and either milky
 arm
 Red-rent with hooks of bramble, and all
 she wore
 Torn as a sail that leaves the rope is torn
 In tempest : so the king arose and went

To smoke the scandalous hive of those
wild bees

That made such honey in his realm.

Howbeit

Some little of this marvel he too saw,
Returning o'er the plain that then began

To darken under Camelot; whence the
king

Look'd up, calling aloud, 'Lo there! the
roofs

Of our great hall are rolled in thunder-
smoke!

Pray Heaven, they be not smitten by
the bolt.'

For dear to Arthur was that hall of ours,
Ashaving thereso oft with all his knights
Feasted, and as the stateliest under
heaven.

"O brother, had you known our mighty
hall,

Which Merlin built for Arthur long ago!

For all the sacred 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 beasts are slaying men,

And in the second men are slaying beasts,

And on the third are warriors, perfect men,

And on the fourth are men with growing
wings,

And over all one statue in the mould

Of Arthur, made by Merlin, with a crown,

And peak'd wings pointed to the Northern
Star.

And eastward fronts the statue, and the
crown

And both the wings are made of gold,
and flame

At sunrise till the people in far fields,
Wasted so often by the heathen hordes,

Behold it, crying, 'We have still a king.'

"And, brother, had you known our
hall within,

Broader and higher than any in all the
lands!

Where twelve great windows blazon
Arthur's wars,

And all the light that falls upon the board

Streams thro' the twelve great battles of
our King.

Nay, one there is, and at the eastern
end,

Wealthy with wandering lines of mount
and mere,

Where Arthur finds the brand, Excalibur.

And also one to the west, and counter
to it,

And blank: and who shall blazon it?
when and how?—

O there, perchance, when all our wars
are done,

The brand Excalibur will be cast away.

"So to this hall full quickly rode the
King,

In horrorlest the work by Merlin wrought,
Dreamlike, should on the sudden vanish,
wrapt

In unremorseful folds of rolling fire.

And in he rode, and up I glanced, and saw

The golden dragon sparkling over all:

And many of those who burnt the hold,
their arms

Hack'd, and their foreheads grimed with
smoke, and 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 more than
once,

When some brave deed seem'd to be done
in vain,

Darken; and 'Woe is me, my knights,'
he cried,

'Had I been here, ye had not sworn the
vow.'

Bold was mine answer, 'Had thyself
been here,

My King, thou wouldst have sworn.

'Yea, yea,' said he,
'Art thou so bold and hast not seen the
Grail?'

"Nay, Lord, I heard the sound, I
saw the light,

But since I did not see the Holy Thing,
I swear a vow to follow it till I saw.'

“Then when he asked us, knight by knight, if any Had seen it, all their answers were as one: ‘Nay, Lord, and therefore have we sworn our vows.’

“‘Lo now,’ said Arthur, ‘have ye seen a cloud? What go ye into the wilderness to see?’

“Then Galahad on the sudden, and in a voice 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 thou art is the vision, not for these. Thy holy nun and thou have seen a sign — Holier is none, my Percivale, than she — A sign to main this Order which I made. But you, that follow but the leader’s bell’ (Brother, the King was hard upon his knights)

‘Taliessin is our fullest throat 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, ‘but 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 blind will see.

Go, since your vows are sacred, being made:

Yet — for ye know the cries of all my realm

Pass thro’ this hall — how often, O my knights,

Your places being vacant at my side, This chance of noble deeds will come and go

Unchallenged, while you follow wandering fires

Lost in the quagmire? Many of you, yea most,

Return no more: ye think I show myself Too dark a prophet: come now, let us meet

The morrow morn once more in one full field

Of gracious pastime, that once more the King,

Before you leave him for this Quest, may count

The yet-unbroken strength of all his knights,

Rejoicing in that Order which he made.’

“So when the sun broke next from under ground,

All the great table of our Arthur closed And clash’d in such a tourney and so full, So many lances broken — never yet Had Camelot seen the like, since Arthur came.

And I myself and Galahad, for a strength Was in us from the vision, overthrew

So many knights that all the people cried, And almost burst the barriers in their heat,

Shouting ‘Sir Galahad and Sir Percivale!’

“But when the next day brake from 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,

So strange, and rich, and dim; for where the roofs

Totter’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 past; and men and boys astride On wyvern, lion, dragon, griffin, swan,

At all the corners, named useach 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 grief, and in the middle street the
 Queen,
 Whorode by Lancelot, wail'd and shriek'd
 aloud,
 'This madness has come on us for our
 sins.'
 And then we reach'd the weirdly-sculp-
 tured gate,
 Where Arthur's wars were render'd mys-
 tically,
 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 crisp-
 ing 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
 Spinning; and fair the house whereby
 she sat,
 And kind the woman's eyes and innocent,
 And all her bearing gracious; and she
 rose
 Opening her arms to meet me, as who
 should say,
 'Rest here'; but when I touched her,
 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 flash'd a yellow gleam across the
 world,
 And where it smote the ploughshare in the
 field,
 The ploughman left his ploughing, and
 fell down
 Before it; where it glitter'd on her pail,
 The milkmaid left her milking, and fell
 down
 Before it, and I knew not why, but thought
 'The sun is rising,' tho' the sun had risen.
 Then was I ware of one that on me moved
 In golden armor with a crown of gold
 About a casque all jewels; and his horse
 In golden armor jewell'd everywhere;
 And on the splendor came, flashing me
 blind;
 And seem'd to me the Lord of all the
 world,
 Being so huge. But when I thought he
 meant
 To crush me, moving on me, lo! he, too,
 Opened his arms to embrace me as he
 came,
 And up I went and touch'd him, and he,
 too,
 Fell into dust, and I was left alone
 And wearying in a land of sand and thorns.

"And I rode on and found a mighty
 hill,
 And on the top, a city wall'd: the spires
 Prick'd with incredible pinnacles into
 heaven.
 And by the gateway stirr'd a crowd; and
 these

Cried to me climbing, 'Welcome, Percivale!
 Thou mightiest and thou purest among
 men!'

And glad was I and clomb, but found at
 top
 No man, nor any voice. And thence I past
 Far thro' a ruinous city, and I saw
 That man had once dwelt there; but
 there I found
 Only one man of an exceeding age.
 'Where is that goodly company,' said I,
 'That so cried out upon me?' and he
 had
 Scarce any voice to answer, 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 dropt 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 sud-
 den light
 So that the angels were amazed, and she
 Follow'd him down, and like a flying star
 Led on the gray-hair'd wisdom of the east;
 But her thou 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 chapel door
 Laid lance, and enter'd, 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 smote itself into the bread, and went;
 And hither am I come; and never yet
 Hath what thy sister taught me first to see,
 This Holy Thing, fail'd from my side,
 nor come
 Cover'd, but moving with me night and
 day,
 Fainter 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' Pagan realms, and made
 them mine,
 And clash'd with Pagan hordes, and bore
 them down,
 And broke thro' all, and in the strength
 of this
 Come victor. But my time is hard at hand,
 And hence I go; and one will crown me
 king
 Far in the spiritual city; and come thou,
 too,
 For thou shalt see the vision when I go.'

"While thus he spake, his eye, dwell-
 ing on mine,
 Drew me, with power upon me, till I grew
 One with him, to believe as he believed.
 Then, when the day began to wane, we
 went.

"There rose a hill that none but man
 could climb,
 Scar'd with a hundred wintry water-
 courses—
 Storm at the top, and when we gain'd it,
 storm
 Round us and death; for every moment
 glanced
 His silver arms and gloom'd: so quick
 and thick
 The lightnings here and there to left
 and right
 Struck, till the dry old trunks about us,
 dead,
 Yea, rotten with a hundred years of death,
 Sprang into fire: and at the base we found
 On either hand, as far as eye could see,
 A great black swamp and of an evil smell,

Part black, part whiten'd with the bones
 of men,
 Not to be crost, save that some ancient king
 Had built a way, where, link'd 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 crost
 Sprang into fire and vanish'd, tho' I
 yearn'd
 To follow ; and thrice above him all the
 heavens
 Open'd and blazed with thunder such as
 seem'd
 Shoutings of all the sons of God : and first
 At once I saw 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 ran the boat
 If boat it were — I saw not whence it came.
 And when the heavens open'd and blazed
 again
 Roaring, I saw him like a silver star —
 And had he set the sail, or had the boat
 Become a living creature clad with wings ?
 And o'er his head the holy vessel hung
 Redder than any rose, a joy to me,
 For now I knew the veil had been with-
 drawn.
 Then in a moment when they blazed 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 —
 Strike from the sea ; and from the star
 there shot
 A rose-red sparkle 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 my feet recross'd the deathful
 ridge
 No memory in me lives ; but that I touch'd
 The chapel-doors at dawn I know ; and
 thence
 Taking my war-horse from the holy man,
 Glad that no phantom vex't me more,
 return'd
 To whence I came, the gate of Arthur's
 wars.

“ O brother,” ask'd Ambrosius, — “ for
 in sooth
 These ancient books — and they would
 win thee — teem,
 Only I find not there this Holy Grail,
 With miracles and marvels like to these.
 Not all unlike ; which oftentime I read,
 Who read but on my breviary with ease
 Till my head swims ; and then go fort^{ly}
 and pass
 Down to the little thorpe 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 every homely secret in their hearts,
 Delight myself with gossip and old wives,
 And ills and aches, and teethings, lyings-
 in,
 And mirthful sayings, children of the
 place,
 That have no meaning half a league away :
 Or lulling random squabbles when they
 rise,
 Chafferings and chatterings at the mar-
 ket-cross,
 Rejoice, small man, in this small world
 of mine,
 Yea, even in their hens 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 were as phantoms. O, my
 brother,
 Why wilt thou shame me to confess to thee
 How far I falter'd from my quest and vow !
 For after I had lain so many nights
 A bedmate of the snail 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 ;
 Thither I made, and there was I disarm'd
 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
 of old
 A slender page about her father's hall,

And she a slender maiden, all my heart
Went after her with longing: yet wetwain
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 under-
neath

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 thou our Lady, and rule over us,
And thou shalt be as Arthur in our land.'
Ome, my brother! but one night my vow
Burnt me within, so that I rose and fled,
But wail'd and wept, and hated mine
own self,

And ev'n the Holy Quest, and all but her;
Then after I was join'd with Galahad
Cared not for her, nor anything upon
earth."

Then said the monk, "Poor men, when
yule is cold,

Must be content to sit by little fires.
And this am I, so that ye care for me
Ever so little; yea, and blest be Heaven
That brought thee here to this poor house
of ours,

Where all the brethren are so hard, to
warm

My cold heart with a friend: but O the
pity

To find thine own first love once more —
to hold,

Hold her a wealthy bride within thine
arms,

Or all but hold, and then — cast her aside,
Foregoing all her sweetness, like a weed.
For we that want the warmth of double
life,

We that are plagued with dreams of
something sweet

Beyond all sweetness in a life so rich, —
Ah, blessed Lord, I speak too earthlywise,
Seeing I never stray'd beyond the cell,
But live like an old badger in his earth,
With earth about him everywhere, despite
All fast and penance. Saw ye none beside,
None of your knights?"

"Yea so," said Percivale:

"One night my pathway swerving east,
I saw

The pelican on the casque of our Sir Bors
All in the middle of the rising moon:
And toward him spurr'd and hail'd him,
and he me,

And each made joy of either; then he
ask'd,

'Where is he? hast 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 shouted, "Stay me
not!

I have been the sluggard, and I ride
apace,

For now there is a lion in the way."
So vanish'd.'

"Then Sir Bors had ridden on
Softly, and sorrowing for our Lancelot,
Because his former madness, once the talk
And scandal of our table, had return'd;
For Lancelot's kith and kin so worship
him

That ill to him is ill to them; to Bors
Beyond the rest: he well had been content
Not to have seen, so Lancelot might have
seen,

The Holy Cup of healing; and, indeed,
Being so clouded with his grief and love,
Small heart was his after the Holy Quest:
If God would send the vision, well: if not,
The Quest and he were in the hands of
heaven.

"And then, with small adventure met,
Sir Bors
Rode to the lonest tract of all the realm,

And found a people there among their
 crags,
 Our race and blood, a remnant that were
 left
 Paynim amid their circles, and the stones
 They pitch up straight to heaven : and
 their wise men
 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,
 Seized him, and bound and plunged him
 into a cell
 Of great piled stones ; and lying bounden
 there
 In darkness thro' innumerable hours
 He heard the hollow-ringing heavens
 sweep
 Over him, till by miracle — what else ? —
 Heavy as it was, a great stone slipt and fell,
 Such as no wind could move : and thro'
 the gap
 Glimmer'd the streaming scud : then
 came a night
 Still as the day was loud ; and thro' the gap
 The seven clear stars of Arthur's Table
 Round —
 For, brother, so one night, because they
 roll
 Thro' such a round in heaven, we named
 the stars,
 Rejoicing in ourselves and in our king —
 And these, like bright eyes of familiar
 friends,
 In on him shone, ' And then to me, to
 me,'
 Said good Sir Bors, ' beyond all hopes
 of mine,
 Who scarce had pray'd or ask'd it for
 myself —
 Across the seven clear stars — O grace to
 me —
 In color like the fingers of a hand
 Before a burning taper, the sweet Grail
 Glided and past, and close upon it peal'd

A sharp quick thunder.' 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 remem-
 ber now
 That pelican on the casque. Sir Bors it was
 Who spake so low and sadly at our board ;
 And mighty reverent at our grace was he :
 A square-set man and honest ; and his
 eyes,
 An out-door sign of all the warmth within,
 Smiled with his lips — a smile beneath
 a cloud,
 But heaven had meant it for a sunny one :
 Ay, ay, Sir Bors, who else ? But when
 ye reach'd
 The city, found ye all your knights re-
 turn'd,
 Or was there sooth in Arthur's prophecy,
 Tell me, and what said each, and what
 the King ?"

Then answer'd Percivale : " And that
 can I,
 Brother, and truly ; since the living words
 Of so great men as Lancelot and our King
 Pass not from door to door and out again,
 But sit within the house. O, when we
 reach'd
 The city, our horses stumbling as they
 trode
 On heaps of ruin, hornless unicorns,
 Crack'd basilisks, and splinter'd cock-
 atrices,
 And shatter'd talbots, which had left the
 stones
 Raw, that they fell from, brought us to
 the hall.

" And there sat Arthur on the dais-
 throne,
 And those that had gone out upon the
 Quest,
 Wasted and worn, and but a tittle of them,
 And those that had not, stood before the
 King.
 Who, when he saw me, rose, and bade
 me hail,
 Saying, ' A welfare in thine eye reproves
 Our fear of some 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 statue Merlin moulded for
us
Half-wrench'd a golden wing ; but now —
the quest,
This vision — hast thou seen the Holy
Cup,
That Joseph brought of old to Glaston-
bury ?'

“So when I told him all thyself hast
heard,
Ambrosius, and my fresh but fixt 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 saintly man,
Who made me sure the Quest was not for
me ;
For I was much awearied of the Quest :
But found a silk pavilion in a field,
And merry maidens in it ; and then this
gale
Tore my pavilion from the tenting-pin,
And blew my merry maidens all about
With all discomfort ; yea, 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
Athwart the throng to Lancelot, caught
his hand,
Held it, and there, half-hidden by him,
stood,
Until the King espied him, saying to him,
‘Hail, Bors ! if ever loyal man and true
Could see it, thou hast seen the Grail’ ;
and Bors,
‘Ask me not, for I may not speak of it,
I saw it’ : and the tears were in his eyes.

“Then there remain'd but Lancelot,
for the rest
Spake but of sundry perils in the storm ;
Perhaps, like him of Cana in Holy Writ,
Our Arthur kept his best until the last ;
‘Thou, too, my Lancelot,’ ask'd the King,
‘my friend,
Our mightiest, hath this Quest avail'd
for thee ?’

“‘Our mightiest !’ answer'd Lancelot,
with a groan ;
‘O King !’ — and when he paused, me-
thought I spied
A dying fire of madness in his eyes —
‘O King, my friend, if friend of thine I be,
Happier are those that welter in their sin,
Swine in the mud, that cannot see for
slime,
Slime of the ditch : but in me lived a sir
So strange, of such a kind, that all of pure,
Noble, and knightly in me twined and
clung
Round that one sin, until the wholesome
flower
And poisonous grew together, each as each,
Not to be pluck'd asunder ; and when
thy knights
Swore, I swear with them only in the hope
That could I touch or see the Holy Grail
They might be pluck'd asunder. Then
I spake
To one most holy saint, who wept and said,
That save they could be pluck'd asunder,
all
My quest were but in vain ; to whom I
vow'd
That I would work according as he will'd.
And forth I went, and while I yearn'd
and strove
To tear the twain asunder in my heart,
My madness came upon me as of old,
And whipt me into waste fields far away ;
There was I beaten down by little men,
Mean knights, to whom the moving of
my sword
And shadow of my spear had been enow
To scare them from me once ; and then
I came
All in my folly to the naked shore,
Wide flats, where nothing but coarse
grasses grew ;
But such a blast, my King, began to blow,
So loud a blast along the shore and sea,
Ye could not hear the waters for the blast,
Tho' heapt in mounds and ridges all the sea
Drove like a cataract, and all the sand
Swept like a river, and the clouded heavens
Were shaken with the motion and the
sound.
And blackening in the sea-foam sway'd a
boat,
Half-swallow'd in it, anchor'd with a
chain ;
And in my madness to myself I said,
“I will embark and I will lose myself,
And in the great sea wash away my sin.”

I burst the chain, I sprang into the boat.
Seven days I drove along the dreary deep,
And with me drove the moon and all the
stars ;

And the wind fell, and on the seventh
night

I heard the shingle grinding in the surge,
And felt the boat shock earth, and look-
ing up,

Behold, the enchanted towers of Carbonek,
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 full.
Then from the boat I leapt, and up the
stairs.

There drew my sword. With sudden-
flaring manes

Those two great beasts rose upright like
a man,

Each gript a shoulder, and I stood be-
tween ;

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 from out my hand,
and fell.

And up into the sounding hall I past ;
But nothing in the sounding hall I saw
No bench nor table, painting on the wall
Or shield of knight ; only the rounded
moon

Thro' the tall oriel on the rolling sea.
But always in the quiet house I heard,
Clear as a lark, high o'er me as a lark,
As sweet voice singing in the topmost tower
To the eastward : up I climb'd a thou-
sand steps

With pain : as in a dream I seem'd to
climb

For ever : 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 Grail.”

Then in my madness I essay'd the door ;
It gave ; and thro' a stormy glare, a heat
As from a seventimes-heated 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
veil'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
liege,’ he said,

‘Hath Gawain fail'd in any quest of thine ?
When have I stinted stroke in foughten
field ?

But as for thine, my good friend, Percivale,
Thy holy nun and thou have driven
men mad,

Yea, made our mightiest madder than
our least.

But by mine eyes and by mine ears I swear,
I will be deaf than the blue-eyed cat,
And thrice as blind as any noonday owl,
To holy virgins in their ecstasies,
Henceforward.'

“‘Deaf, said the blameless King,
‘Gawain, and blinder unto holy things
Hope not to make thyself by idle vows,
Being too blind to have desire to see.
But if indeed there came a sign from
heaven,

Blessed are Bors, Lancelot, and Percivale,
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 spoken truth.

“‘Nay — but thou errest, Lancelot :
never yet

Could all of true and noble in knight
and man

Twine round one sin, whatever it might be,
With such a closeness, but apart there
grew,

Save that he were the swine thou spak-
est of,
Some root of knighthood and pure noble-
ness ;
Whereto see 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 wander-
ing fires,

Lost in the quagmire ?—lost to me and
gone,

And left me gazing at a barren board,
And a lean Order—scarce 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 elsewhere.

“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 hind
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—yea, 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 ETTARRE.

KING ARTHUR made new knights to fill
the gap

Left by the Holy Quest ; and as he sat
In hall at old Caerleon, the high doors
Were softly sunder'd, and thro' these
youth,

Pelleas, and the sweet smell of the fields
Past, and the sunshine came along with
him.

“Make me thy knight, because I
know, Sir King,
All that belongs to knighthood, and I
love,”

Such was his cry ; for having heard the
King

Had let proclaim a tournament—the
prize

A golden circlet and a knightly sword,
Full fain had Pelleas for his lady won
The golden circlet, for himself the sword ;
And there were those who knew him
near the King

And promised for him : and Arthur made
him knight.

And this new knight, Sir Pelleas of
the isles—

But lately come to his inheritance,
And lord of many a barren isle was he—
Riding at noon, a day or twain before,
Across the forest 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 hollies under
them.

But for a mile all round was open space,
And fern and heath : and slowly Pelleas
drew

To that dim day, then binding his good
horse

To a tree, cast himself down ; and as he
lay

At random looking over the brown earth
Thro' that green-glooming 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 crost the dimness of a cloud
Floating, and once the shadow of a bird

Flying, and then a fawn ; and his eyes
closed.

And since he loved all maidens, but no
maid

In special, half-awake he whisper'd,
"Where ?

O where ? I love thee, tho' I know thee
not.

For fair thou art and pure as Guinevere,
And I will make thee with my spear and
sword

As famous — O my queen, my Guinevere,
For I will bethine Arthur when we meet."

Suddenly waken'd with a sound of talk
And laughter at the limit of the wood,
And glancing thro' the hoary boles, he
saw,

Strange as to some old prophet might
have seem'd

A vision hovering on a sea of fire,
Damsels in divers colors like the cloud
Of sunset and sunrise, and all of them
On horses, and the horses richly trapt
Breast-high in that bright line of bracken
stood :

And all the damsels talk'd confusedly,
And one was pointing this way, and one
that,

Because the way was lost.

And Pelleas rose,
And loosed his horse, and led him to the
light.

There she that seem'd the chief among
them said,

"In happy time behold our pilot-star !
Youth, we are damsels-errant, and we
ride,

Arm'd as yesee, to tilt against the knights
There at Caerleon, but have lost our way :
To right ? to left ? straightforward ? back
again ?

Which ? tell us quickly."

And Pelleas gazing thought,
"Is Guinevere herself so beautiful ?"
For large her violet eyes look'd, and her
bloom

A rosy dawn kindled in stainless heavens,
And round her limbs, mature in woman-
hood,

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 abash'd the boy,
As tho' it were the beauty of her soul :
For as the base man, judging of the good,
Puts his own baseness in him by default
Of will and nature, so did Pelleas lend
All the young beauty of his own soul to
hers,

Believing her ; and when she spake to him,
Stammer'd, and could not make her a
reply.

For out of the waste islands had he come,
Where saving his own sisters he had known
Scarce any but the women of his isles,
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 tarn,
The circle widens till it lip the marge,
Spread the slow smile thro' all her com-
pany.

Three knights were thereamong ; and
they too smiled,
Scorning him ; for the lady was Ettarre,
And she was a great lady in her land.

Again she said, "O wild and of the
woods,

Knowest thou not the fashion of our
speech ?

Or have the Heavens but given thee a
fair face,

Lacking a tongue ?"

"O damsel," answer'd he,
"I woke from dreams ; and coming out
of gloom

Was dazzled by the sudden light, and
crave

Pardon : but will ye to Caerleon ? 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 burthen to her, and in her
heart

She mutter'd, "I have lighted on a fool,

Raw, yet so stale !” But since her mind
 was bent
 On 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 circlet : therefore flatter’d
 him,
 Being so gracious, that he well nigh deem’d
 His wish by hers was echo’d ; and her
 knights
 And all her Jamsels 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 wilt thou fight
 for me,
 And win me this fine circlet, Pelleas,
 That I may love thee ?”

Then his helpless heart
 Leapt, and he cried “ Ay ! wilt thou if
 I win ?”
 “ Ay, that will I,” she answer’d, and she
 laugh’d,
 And straitly nipt the hand, and flung it
 from her ;
 Then glanced askew at those three knights
 of hers,
 Till all her ladies laugh’d along with her.

“ O happy world,” thought Pelleas,
 “ all, meseems,
 Are happy ; I the happiest of them all.”
 Nor slept that night for pleasure in his
 blood,
 And green wood-ways, and eyes among
 the leaves ;
 Then 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’ severèd with choice from air, land,
 stream, and sea,
 Oft in mid-banquet measuring with his
 eyes
 His neighbor’s make and might and
 Pelleas 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
 Worshippt, whose lightest whisper movèd
 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 Tournament
 of Youth” :
 For Arthur, loving his young knight,
 withheld
 His older and his mightier from the lists,
 That Pelleas 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 Pelleas kept the field
 With honor : so by that strong hand of his
 The sword and golden circlet were
 achieved.

Then rang the shout his lady loved :
 the heat
 Of pride and glory fired her face ; her eye
 Sparkled ; she caught the circlet from
 his lance,
 And there before the people crown’d her-
 self.
 So for the last time she was gracious to him.

Then at Caerleon for a space — her look
 Bright for all others, cloudier on her
 knight —
 Linger’d Ettarre : and seeing Pelleas
 droop,
 Said Guinevere, “ We marvel at thee
 much,
 O damsel, wearing this unsunny face
 To him who won thee glory !” And she
 said,

“Had ye not held your 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 her-
self,
And those three knights all set their
faces home,
Sir Pelleas follow'd. She that saw him
cried,
“Damsels—and yet I should be shamed
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,
Albeit grizzlier than a bear, to ride
And jest with: take him to you, keep
him off,

And pamper him with papmeat, 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 merry one
To find his mettle, good: and if he fly
us,

Small matter! let him.” This her dam-
sels heard,

And mindful of her small and cruel hand,
They, closing round him thro' the jour-
ney home,

Acted her hest, and always from her side
Restrained him with all manner of device,
So that he could not come to speech with
her.

And when she gain'd her castle, upsprang
the bridge,

Down rang the grate of iron thro' the
groove,

And he was left alone in open field.

“These be the ways of ladies,” Pelleas
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 moan; and, darkness falling,
sought

A priory not far off, there lodged, but rose
With morning every day, and, moist or
dry,

Full-arm'd upon his charger all day long,
Sat by the walls, and no one open'd to
him.

And this 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 Pelleas overthrew them as they dash'd
Against him one by one; and these re-
turn'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—I cannot breathe—
besieges me;

Down! strike him! put my hate into
your strokes,

And drive him from my walls.” And
down they went,

And Pelleas overthrew them one by one;
And from the tower above him cried

Ettarre,

“Bind him, and bring him in.”

He heard her voice;

Then let the strong hand, which had
overthrown

Her minion-knights, by those he over-
threw

Be bounden straight, and so they brought
him in.

Then when he came before Ettarre,
the sight

Of her rich beauty made him at one glance
More bondsman 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 so that I see thy face
But once a day: for I have sworn my vows,

And thou hast given thy promise, and I
know

That all these pains are trials of my faith,
And that thyself when thou hast seen me
strain'd

And sifted 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 dunsels, he was stricken
mute ;
But when she mock'd his vows and the
great King,
Lighted on words : " For pity of thine
own self,
Peace, Lady, peace : is he not thine and
mine ?"
" Thou fool," she said, " I never heard
his voice
But long'd to break away. Unbind him
now,
And thrust him out of doors ; for save
he be
Fool to the midmost marrow of his bones.
He will return no more." And those,
her three,
Laugh'd, and unbound, and thrust him
from the gate.

And after this, a week beyond, again
She call'd them, saying, " There he
watches 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 fulsome 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 reckon 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
couch'd their spears,
Three against one : and Gawain passing by,
Bound upon solitary 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 catiffs !" " Nay," said Pelleas,
" but forbear ;
He needs no aid who doth his lady's will."

So Gawain, looking at the villany done,
Forebore, but in his heat and eagerness

Trembled and quiver'd, as the dog, with-
held

A moment from the vermin that he sees
Before him, shivers, ere he springs and
kills.

And Pelleas overthrew them, one to
three ;

And they rose up, and bound, and brought
him in.

Then first her anger, leaving Pelleas,
burn'd

Full on her knights in many an evil name
Of craven, weakling, and thrice-beaten
hound :

" 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
bonds.

And if he comes again " — there she brake
short ;

And Pelleas answer'd, " Lady, for indeed
I loved you and I deem'd you beautiful,
I cannot brook to see your beauty marr'd
Thro' evil spite : and if ye love me not,
I cannot bear to dream you so forsworn :
I had liefer ye were worthy of my love,
Than to be loved again of you — farewell ;
And tho' ye kill my hope, not yet my love,
Vex not yourself : ye will not see me more."

While thus he spake, she gazed upon
the man

Of princely bearing, tho' in bonds, and
thought,

" Why have I push'd him from me ? this
man loves,

If love there be : yet him I loved not.
Why ?

I deem'd him fool ? yea, so ? or that in him
A something — was it nobler than my-
self ? —

Seem'd my reproach ? He is not of my
kind.

He could not love me, did he know me well.
Nay, let him go — and quickly." And

her knights
Laugh'd not, but thrust him bounden
out of door.

Forth sprang Gawain, and loosed him
from his bonds,

And flung them o'er the walls ; and after-
ward,

Shaking his hands, as from a lazar'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 de-
famed

Thy brotherhood in me and all the rest,
As let these catiffs on thee work their
will?"

And Pelleas answer'd, "O, their wills
are hers

For whom I won the circlet; and mine,
hers,

Thus to be bounden, so to see her face,
Marr'd tho' it be with spite and mockery
now,

Other than when I found her in the woods;
And tho' she hath me bounden but in spite,
And all to flout me, when they bring me in,
Let me be bounden, I shall see her face;
Else must I die thro' mine unhappiness."

And Gawain answer'd kindly 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—Christ
kill me then

But I will slice him handless by the wrist,
And let my lady sear the stump for him,
Howl as he may. But hold me for your
friend:

Come, ye know nothing: here I pledge
my troth,

Yea, by the honor of the Table Round,
I will be leal to thee and work thy work,
And tame thy jailing princess to thine
hand.

Lend me thine horse and arms, and I
will say

That I have slain thee. She will let me in
To hear the manner of thy fight and fall;
Then, when I come within her counsels,
then

From prime to vespers will I chant thy
praise

As prouest knight and truest lover, more
Than any have sung thee living, till she
long

To have thee back in lusty life again,
Not to be bound, save by white bonds
and warn,

Dearer than freedom. Wherefore now
thy horse

And armor: let me go: be comforted:
Give me three days to melt her fancy,
and hope
The third night hence will bring thee news
of gold."

Then Pelleas 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 bugle hanging from his neck,
And wined it, and that so musically
That all the old echoes hidden in the wall
Rang out like hollow woods at hunting-
tide.

Up ran a score of damsels to the tower;
"Avaunt," 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 Pelleas 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!
Pelleas 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 cour-
teously.

"Dead, is it so?" she ask'd. "Ay, ay,"
said he,

"And oft in dying cried upon your name."
"Pity on him," she answer'd, "a good
knight,

But never let me bide one hour at peace."
"Ay," thought Gawain, "and ye be fair
enow:

But I to your dead man have given my
troth,
That whom ye loathe him will I make
you love."

So those three days, aimless about the
land,
Lost in a doubt, Pelleas wandering
Waited, 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
Ere midnight 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 postern portal also wide
Yawning ; and up a slope of garden, all
Of roses white and red, and wild ones
mixt
And overgrowing them, went on, and
found,
Here too, all hush'd below the mellow
moon,
Save that one rivulet from a tiny cave
Came lightening downward, and so spilt
itself
Among the roses, and was lost again.

Then was he ware that white pavilions
rose,
Three from the bushes, gilden-peakt :
in one,
Red after revel, droued her lurdane
knights
Slumbering, and their threesquires across
their feet :
In one, their malice on the placid lip
Froz'n by sweet sleep, four of her dam-
sels lay :
And in the third, the circlet of the jousts
Bound on her brow, were Gawain and
Ettarre.

Back, as a hand that pushes thro' the
leaf

To find a nest and feels a snake, he drew:
Back, as a coward slinks from what he
fears

To cope with, or a traitor proven, or
bound
Beaten, did Pelleas in an utter shame
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
Said, "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 groan-
ing laid
The naked sword athwart their naked
throats,
There left it, and them sleeping ; and
she lay,
The circlet of the tourney round her brows,
And the sword of the tourney across her
throat.

And forth he past, and mounting on
his horse
Stared at her towers that, larger than
themselves
In their own darkness, thron'd into the
moon.
Then crush'd the saddle with his thighs,
and clench'd
His hands, and madden'd with himself
and moan'd :

"Would they have risen against me
in their blood
At the last day? I might have answer'd
them
Even before high God. O towers so
strong,
Huge, 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 charr'd you thro' and
 thro' within,
 Black as the harlot's heart — hollow as
 a skull !
 Let the fierce east scream thro' your eye-
 let-holes,
 And whirl the dust of harlots round and
 round
 In dung and nettles ! hiss, snake — I
 saw him there —
 Let the fox bark, let the wolf yell. Who
 yells
 Here in the still sweet summer night,
 but I —
 I, the poor Pelleas whom she call'd her
 fool ?
 Fool, beast — he, she, or I ? myself most
 fool ;
 Beast too, as lacking human wit — dis-
 graced,
 Dishonor'd all for trial of true love —
 Love ? — we be all alike : only the king
 Hath made us fools and liars. O noble
 vows !
 O great and sane and simple race of brutes
 That own no lust because they have no
 law !
 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 vanish'd thro'
 the night.

Then she, that felt the cold touch on
 her throat,
 Awaking knew the sword, and turn'd
 herself
 To Gawain : “ Liar, for thou hast not
 slain
 This Pelleas ! here he stood and might
 have slain
 Me and thyself.” And he that tells the
 tale
 Says that her ever-veering fancy turn'd
 To Pelleas, as the one true knight on earth,
 And only lover ; and thro' her love her life
 Wasted and pined, desiring him in vain.

But he by wild and way, for half the
 night,
 And over hard and soft, striking the sod

From out the soft, the spark from off the
 hard,
 Rode till the star above the wakening sun,
 Beside that tower where Percivale was
 cowl'd,
 Glanced from the rosy forehead of the
 dawn.
 For so the words were flash'd into his
 heart
 He knew not whence or wherefore : “ O
 sweet star,
 Pure on the virgin forehead of the dawn.”
 And there he would have wept, but felt
 his eyes
 Harder and drier than a fountain bed
 In summer : thither came the village girls
 And linger'd talking, and they come no
 more
 Till the sweet heavens have fill'd it from
 the heights
 Again with living waters in the change
 Of seasons : hard his eyes ; harder his
 heart
 Seem'd ; but so weary were his limbs,
 that he,
 Gasping, “ Of Arthur's hall am I, but
 here,
 Here let me rest and die,” cast himself
 down,
 And gulph'd his griefs in inmost 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
 nigh,
 Sent hands upon him, as to tear him,
 crying
 “ False ! and I held thee pure as Guin-
 evere.”

But Percivale stood near him and re-
 plied,
 “ Am I but false as Guinevere is pure ?
 Or art thou mazed with dreams ? or being
 one
 Of our free-spoken Table hast not heard
 That Lancelot ” — there he check'd him-
 self and paused.

Then fared it with Sir Pelleas as with
 one
 Who gets a wound in battle, and the sword
 That made it plunges thro' the wound
 again,

And pricks it deeper : and he shrank and wail'd,
 "Is the Queen false ?" and Percivale was mute.
 "Have any of our Round Table held their vows ?"
 And Percivale made answer not a word.
 "Is the king true ?" "The king !" said Percivale.
 "Why then let men couple at once with wolves.
 What ! art thou mad ?"

But Pelleas, leaping up,
 Ran thro' the doors and vaulted on his horse
 And fled : small pity upon his horse had he,
 Or on himself, or any, and when he met
 A cripple, one that held a hand for alms —
 Hunch'd as he was, and like an old dwarf-elm
 That turns its back on the salt blast, the boy
 Paused not but overrode him, shouting
 "False,
 And false with Gawain !" and so left him bruised
 And batter'd, and fled on, and hill and wood
 Went ever streaming 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, swerve
 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 groan'd, "ye build too high."

Not long thereafter from the city gates issued Sir Lancelot riding airily,
 Warm with a gracious parting from the Queen,
 Peace at his heart, and gazing at a star
 And marvelling what it was : on whom the boy,
 Across the silent seeded meadow-grass
 Borne, dash'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."
 "Yea, 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, "shalt thou pass."
 "Fight therefore," yell'd the other, and either knight
 Drew back a space, and when they closed, at once
 The weary steed of Pelleas floundering flung
 His rider, who called out from the dark field,
 "Thou art false as Hell : slay me : I have no sword."
 Then Lancelot, "Yea, between thy lips — and sharp ;
 But here will I disgeed it by thy death."
 "Slay then," he shriek'd, "my will is to be slain."
 And Lancelot, with his heel upon the fall'n,
 Rolling his eyes, a moment stood, then spake :
 "Rise, weakling ; I am Lancelot ; say thy say."

And Lancelot slowly rode his war-horse back
 To Camelot, and Sir Pelleas 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 Pelleas, him
 Who had not greeted her, but cast himself
 Down on a bench, hard-breathing. "Have ye fought ?"
 She ask'd of Lancelot. "Ay, my Queen," he said.
 "And thou hast overthrown him ?"
 "Ay, my Queen."
 Then she, turning to Pelleas, "O young knight,
 Hath the great heart of knighthood in thee fail'd

So far thou canst not bide, unfrowardly,
 A fall on 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 Pelleas lifted up an eye so fierce
 She quail'd; and he, hissing "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."

GUINEVERE.



QUEEN GUINEVERE had fled the court,
 and sat
 There in the holy house at Almesbury
 Weeping, none with her save a little maid,
 A novice: one low light betwixt them
 burn'd
 Blurr'd by the creeping mist, for all
 abroad,
 Beneath a moon unseen albeit at full,
 The white mist, like a face-cloth to the
 face,
 Clung to the dead earth, and the land
 was still.

For hither had she fled, her cause of
 flight
 Sir Modred; he that 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 disparage-
 ment;
 And tamper'd with the Lords of the White
 Horse,

Heathen, the brood by Hengist left ; and
 sought
 To make disruption in the Table Round
 Of Arthur, and to splinter it into feuds
 Serving his traitorous end ; and all his
 aims
 Were sharpen'd 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, a-maying and return'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 lissome Vivien, of her court
 The wildest and the worst ; and more than
 this
 He saw not, for Sir Lancelot passing by
 Spied where he couch'd, and as the gardener's hand
 Picks from the colewort a green caterpillar,
 So from the high wall and the flowering
 grove
 Of grass-s Lancelot pluck'd him by the
 heel,
 And cast him as a worm upon the way ;
 But when he knew the Prince tho' marr'd
 with dust,
 He, reverencing king's blood in a bad man,
 Made such excuses as he might, and these
 Full knightly without scorn ; for in those
 days
 No knight of Arthur's noblest dealt in
 scorn ;
 But, if a man were halt or hunch'd, in
 him
 By those whom God had made full-limb'd
 and tall,
 Scorn was allow'd as part of his defect,
 And he was answer'd softly by the King
 And all his Table. So Sir Lancelot hold
 To raise the Prince, who rising twice or
 thrice
 Full sharply smote his knees, and smiled,
 and went :
 But, ever after, the small violence done
 Rankled 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 dusty fall,
 Then 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-foresaw that he, the subtle beast,
 Would track her guilt until he found,
 and hers
 Would be for evermore 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 :
 Henceforward too, the Powers that tend
 the soul,
 To help it from the death that cannot die,
 And save it even in extremes, began
 To vex and plague her. Many a time
 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 doubtful 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 if she slept, she
 dream'd
 An awful dream ; for then she seem'd to
 stand
 On some vast plain before a setting sun,
 And from the sun there swiftly made at her
 A ghastly something, and its shadow flew
 Before it, till it touch'd her, and she
 turn'd —
 When lo ! her own, that broadening from
 her feet,
 And blackening, swallow'd all the land,
 and in it
 Far cities burnt, and with a cry she woke.
 And all this trouble did not pass but grew ;
 Till ev'n the clear face of the guileless
 King,
 And trustful courtesies of household life,
 Became her bane ; and at the last she said,
 " O Lancelot, 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 smouldering scandal break
and blaze
Before the people, and our lord the King.”
And Lancelot ever promised, but remain’d,
And still they met and met. Again she
said,
“O Lancelot, if thou love me get thee
hence.”
And then they were agreed upon a night
(When the good Kings should not be there)
to meet
And part for ever. Passion-pale they met
And greeted: hands in hands, and eye
to eye,
Low on the border of her couch they sat
Stammering and staring: it was their last
hour,
A madness of farewells. And Modred
brought
His creatures to the basement of the tower
For testimony; and crying with full voice
“Traitor, come out, ye are trapt at last,”
aroused
Lancelot, who rushing outward lionlike
Leapt on him, and hurl’d him headlong,
and he fell
Stunn’d, and his creatures took and bare
him off
And all was still: then she, “the end is
come
And I am shamed for ever”; and he said
“Mine be the shame; mine was the sin:
but rise,
And fly to my strong castle overseas:
There will I hide thee, till my life shall end,
There hold thee with my life against the
world.”
She answer’d “Lancelot, wilt thou hold
me so?
Nay friend, for we have taken our fare-
wells.
Would God, that thou couldst hide me
from myself!
Mine is the shame, for I was wife, and thou
Unwedded: yet rise now, and let us fly,
For I will draw me into sanctuary,
And bide 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 Almesbury
fled all night long by glimmering 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 foreruns the
morn,
A blot in heaven, the Raven, flying high,
Croak’d, and she thought “he spies a
field of death;
For now the Heathen of the Northern Sea,
Lured by the crimes and frailties of the
court,
Begin to slay the folk, and spoil the land.”

And when she came to Almesbury she
spake
There to the nuns, and said, “mine
enemies
Pursue me, but, O peaceful Sisterhood,
Receive, and yield me sanctuary, nor ask
Her name, to whom ye yield it, till her
time
To tell you”: and her beauty, grace, and
power
Wrought as a charm upon them, and they
spared
To ask it.

So the stately Queen abode
For many a week, unknown, among the
nuns;
Nor with them mix’d, nor told her name,
nor sought,
Wrapt in her grief, for housel or for shrift,
But communed only with the little maid,
Who pleased her with a babbling heed-
lessness
Which often lured her from herself; but
now,
This night, a rumor wildly blown about
Came, that Sir Modred had usurped the
realm,
And leagued him with the heathen, while
the King
Was waging war on Lancelot: then she
thought,
“With what a hate the people and the
King
Must hate me,” and bow’d down upon
her hands
Silent, until the little maid, who brook’d
No silence, brake it, uttering “late! so
late!
What hour, I wonder, now?” and when
she drew
No answer, by and by began to hum

An air the nuns had taught her ; " late,
so late ! "

Which when she heard, the Queen look'd
up, and said,

" O maiden, if indeed ye list to sing,
Sing, and unbind my heart that I may
weep."

Whereat full willingly sang the little
maid.

" Late, late, so late ! and dark the
night and chill !

Late, late, so late ! but we can enter still.
Too late, too late ! ye cannot enter now.

" No light had we : for that we do re-
pent ;

And learning this, the bridegroom will
relent.

Too late, too late ! ye cannot enter now.

" No light : so late ! and dark and
chill the night !

O let us in, that we may find the light !
Too late, too late : ye cannot enter now.

" Have we not heard the bridegroom
is so sweet ?

O let us in, tho' late, to kiss his feet !
No, no, too late ! ye cannot enter now."

So sang the novice, while full passion-
ately,

Her head upon her hands, remembering
Her thought when first she came, wept
the sad Queen.

Then said the little novice prattling to her.

" O pray you, noble lady, weep no more ;
But let my words, the words of one so
small,

Whoknowing nothing knows but to obey,
And if I do not there is penance given —
Comfort your sorrows ; for they do not
flow

From evil done ; right sure am I of that,
Whosee your tender grace and stateliness.
But weigh your sorrows with our lord
the King's,

And weighing find them less ; for gone
is he

To wage grim war against Sir Lancelot
there,

Round that strong castle where he holds
the Queen ;

And Modred whom he left in charge of
all,

The traitor — Ah sweet lady, the King's
grief

For his own self, and his own Queen,
and realm,

Must needs be thrice as great as any of
ours.

For me, I thank the saints, I am not great
For 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 inno-
cent talk ? "

But openly she answer'd " must not I,
If this false traitor have displaced his

lord,
Grieve with the common grief of all the
realm ? "

" Yea," said the maid, " this is all
woman's grief,

That *she* is woman, whose disloyal life
Hath wrought confusion in the Table

Round
Which good King Arthur founded, years

ago,
With signs and miracles and wonders,
there

At Camelot, ere the coming of the Queen."

Then thought the Queen within her-
self again ;

" Will the child kill me with her foolish
prate ? "

But openly she spake and said to her ;
" O little maid, shut in by nunnery walls,
What canst thou know of Kings and

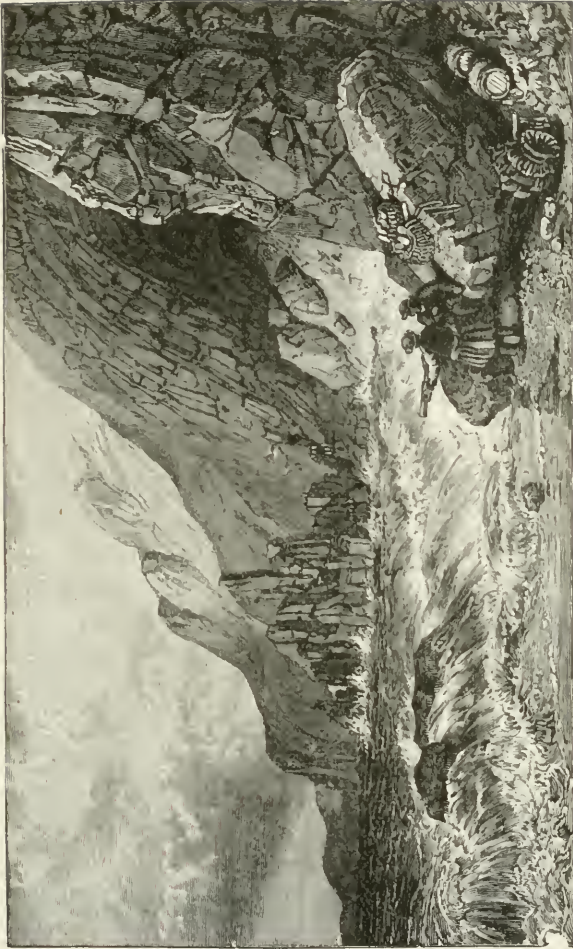
Tables Round,
Or what of signs and wonders, but the

signs
And simple miracles of thy nunnery ? "

To whom the little novice garrulously.
 "Yea, but I know : the land was full of
 signs
 And wonders ere the coming of the Queen.
 So said my father, and himself was knight
 Of the great Table — at the founding of it ;
 And rode thereto from Lyonesse, and
 he said
 That as he rode, an hour or maybe twain
 After the sunset, down the coast, he heard
 Strange music, and he paused and turn-
 ing — there,
 All down the lonely coast of Lyonesse,
 Each with a beacon-star upon his head,
 And with a wild sea-light about his feet,
 He saw them — headland after headland
 flame
 Far on into the rich heart of the west :
 And in the light the white mermaid
 swam,
 And strong man-breasted things stood
 from the sea,
 And sent a deep sea-voice thro' all the land,
 To which the little elves of chasm and
 cleft
 Made answer, sounding like a distant horn.
 So said my father — yea, and furthermore,
 Next morning, while he past the dim-lit
 woods,
 Himself beheld three spirits mad with joy
 Come dashing down on a tall wayside
 flower,
 That shook beneath them, as the thistle
 shakes
 When three gray linnets wrangle for the
 seed :
 And still at evenings on before his horse
 The flickering fairy-circle wheel'd and
 broke
 Flying, and link'd again, and wheel'd
 and broke
 Flying, for all the land was full of life.
 And when at last he came to 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
 Had whatsoever meat he long'd for served
 By hands unseen ; and even as he said
 Down in the cellars merry bloated 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 upor the
 realm ?"

To whom the novice garrulously again.
 "Yea, one, a bard ; of whom my father
 said,
 Full many a noble war-song had he sung,
 Ev'n in the presence of an enemy's fleet,
 Between the steep cliff and the coming
 wave ;
 And many a mystic lay of life and death
 Had chanted on the smoky mountain-
 tops,
 When round him bent the spirits of the
 hills
 With all their dewy hair blown back
 like flame :
 So said my father — and that night the
 bard
 Sang Arthur's glorious wars, and sang
 the King
 As well nigh more than man, and rail'd
 at those
 Who call'd him the false son of Gorlois :
 For there was no man knew from whence
 he came ;
 But after tempest, when the long wave
 broke
 All down the thundering shores of Bude
 and Bos,
 There came a day as still as heaven, and
 then
 They found a naked child upon the sands
 Of dark Tintagil by the Cornish sea ;
 And that was Arthur ; and they foster'd
 him
 Till he by miracle was appoven 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



“By the Cornish sea.” See page 224.





“The sands
Of dark Tintagil by the Cornish sea.”

His vision ; but what doubt that he fore-
saw
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 spake.

Whereat the novice crying, with clasp’d
hands,

Shame on her own garrulity garrulously,
Said the good nuns would check her gad-
ding 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, 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,
Kill’d 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 an-
swer’d her.

“Sir Lancelot, as became a noble knight,
Was gracious to all ladies, and the same
In open battle or the tilting-field
Forbore his own advantage, and the King
In open battle or the tilting-field
Forbore 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 manner-
such fair fruit ?

Then Lancelot’s needs must be a thou-
sand-fold

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,

Pray for him that he scape the doom of
fire,
And weep for her, who drew him to his
doom."

"Yea," said the little novice, "I pray
for both ;

But I should all as soon believe that his,
Sir Lancelot's, were as noble as the King's,
As I could think, sweet lady, yours
would be
Such as they are, were you the sinful
Queen."

So she, like many another babbler, hurt
Whom she would soothe, and harm'd
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 maiden more
For ever ! thou their tool, set on to plague
And play upon, and harry me, petty spy
And traitress." When that storm of
anger brake

From Guinevere, aghast the maiden rose,
White as her veil, and stood before the
Queen

As tremulously as foam upon the beach
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 herself "the simple, fearful
child

Meant nothing, but my own too-fearful
guilt

Simpler than any child, betrays itself.

But help me, heaven, for surely I repent.
For what is true repentance but in
thought —

Not ev'n in inmost thought to think again
The sins that made the past so pleasant
to us :

And I have sworn never to see him more,
To see him more."

And ev'n in saying this,
Her memory from old habit of the mind
Went slipping back upon the golden days
In which she saw him first, when Lance-
lot 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 talk or lively, all on love
And sport and tilts and pleasure, (for
the time

Was maytime, and as yet no sin was
dream'd,)

Rode under groves that look'd a paradise
Of blossom, over sheets of hyacinth
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 where first she saw
the King

Ride toward her from the city, sigh'd to
find

Her journey done, glanced at him,
thought him cold,

High, self-contain'd, and passionless, not
like him,

"Not like my Lancelot" — while she
brooded thus

And grew half-guilty in her thoughts
again,

There rode an armed warrior to the doors.
A murmuring whisper thro' the nunnery
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
Rang coming, prone from off her seat she
fell,

And grov'ell'd with her face against the
floor :

There with her milkwhite arms and shad-
owly hair

She made her face a darkness from the
King :

And in the darkness heard his armed feet
Pause by her ; then came silence, then
a voice,

Monotonous and hollow like a Ghost's
Denouncing judgment, but tho' changed
the King's.

“Liest thou here so low, the child of
one

I honor'd, happy, dead before thy shame?
Well is it that no child is born of thee.
The children born of thee are sword and
fire,

Red ruin, and the breaking up of laws,
The craft of kindred and the Godless hosts
Of heathen swarming o'er the Northern
Sea.

Whom I, while yet Sir Lancelot, my
right arm,
The mightiest of my knights, abode with
me,

Have everywhere about this land of Christ
In twelve great battles ruining over-
thrown.

And knowest thou now from whence I
come — from him,

From waging bitter war with him: and he,
That did not shun to smite me in worse
way,

Had yet that grace of courtesy in him left,
He spared to lift his hand against the King
Who made him knight: but many a
knight was slain;

And many more, and all his kith and kin
Clave to him, and abode in his own land.
And many more when Modred raised re-
volt,

Forgetful of their troth 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.
Bear with me for the last time while I show,
Ev'n for thy sake, the sin which thou hast
sinn'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 of men,
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 it,
To lead sweet lives in purest chastity,

To love one maiden only, cleave to her,
And worship her by years of noble deeds,
Until they won her; for indeed I knew
Of no 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 throve until I wedded thee!
Believing, 'lo mine helpmate, one to feel
My purpose and rejoicing in my joy.'
Then came thy shameful sin with Lance-
lot;

Then came the sin of Tristram and Isolt;
Then others, following these my mightiest
knights,

And drawing foul ensample from fair
names,

Sinn'd also, till the loathsome opposite
Of all my heart had destined did obtain,
And all thro' thee! so that this life of
mine

I guard as God's high gift from scathe
and wrong,

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 high talk of noble deeds
As in the golden days before thy sin.

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 Usk

Thy shadow still would glide from room
to room,
And I should evermore be vext 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 being 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,

Makes wicked lightnings of her eyes, and
saps

The fealty of our friends, and stirs the
pulse

With devil's leaps, and poisons half the
young.

Worst of the worst were that man he that
reigns !

Better the King's waste hearth and aching
heart

Than thou reseated in thy place of light,
The mockery of my people, and their
bane."

He paused, and in the pause she crept
an inch

Nearer, and laid her hands about his feet.
Far off a solitary trumpet blew.

Then waiting by the doors the warhorse
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 weigh'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 sinn'd, and I,
Lo ! I forgive thee, as Eternal God
Forgives : do thou for thine own soul the
rest.

But how to take last leave of all I loved ?
O golden hair, with which I used to play
Not knowing ! O imperial-moulded form,
And beauty such as never woman wore,
Until it came a kingdom's curse with
thee —

I cannot touch thy lips, they are not mine,
But Lancelot's : nay, they never were
the King's.

I cannot take thy hand ; that too is flesh,
And in the flesh 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 soul,
And so thou lean on our fair father Christ,
Hereafter in that world where all are pure
We two may meet before 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 the man
they call

My sister's son — no kin of mine, who
leagues

With lords of the White Horse, heathen,
and knights —

Traitors — 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 lie by thy side, see thee no more,
Farewell !"



“ 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.”

And while she grovell'd at his feet,
 She felt the King's breath wander o'er
 her neck,
 And in the darkness o'er her fallen head,
 Perceived the waving of his hands that
 blest.

Then, listening till those armed steps
 were gone,
 Rose the pale Queen, and in her anguish
 found
 The casement : “ peradventure ” 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 for evermore.
 And while he spake to these his helm was
 lower'd,
 To which for crest the golden dragon clung
 Of Britain ; so she did not see the face,
 Which then was as an angel's, but she saw,
 Wet with the mists and snitten by the
 lights,
 The Dragon of the great Pendragonship
 Blaze, making all the night a steam of
 fire.

And even then he turn'd ; and more and more

The moony vapor rolling round the King,
Whose m'd the phantom of a Giant in it,
Enwound him fold by fold, and made him gray

And grayer, 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 makes me one pollution : he, the
King,

Call'd me polluted : shall I kill myself ?
What help in that ? I cannot kill my
sin,

If soul be soul ; nor can I kill my shame ;
No, nor by living can I live it down.

The days will grow to weeks, the weeks
to months,

The months will add themselves and make
the years,

The years will roll into the centuries,
And mine will ever be a name of scorn.

I must not dwell on that defeat of fame.
Let the world be ; that is but of the
world.

What else ? what hope ? I think there
was a hope,

Except he mock'd me when he spake of
hope ;

His hope he call'd it ; but he never mocks,
For mockery is the fume of little hearts.

And blessed be the King, who hath for-
given

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 warring senses, to thy
knights —

To whom my false voluptuous pride, that
took

Full easily all impressions from below,
Would not look up, or half-dèspised the
height

To which I would not or I could not
climb —

I thought I could not breathe in that fine
air

That pure severity of perfect light —
I wanted warmth and color which I found
In Lancelot — now I see thee what thou
art,

Thou art the highest and most human
too,

Not Lancelot, nor another. Is there none
Will tell the King I love him tho' so
late ?

Now — ere he goes to the great Battle ?
none :

Myself must tell him in that purer life,
But now it were too daring. Ah my God,
What might I not have made of thy fair
world,

Had I but loved thy highest creature
here ?

It was my duty to have loved the highest :
It surely was my profit had I known :
It would have been my pleasure had I
seen.

We needs must love the highest when
we see it,

Not Lancelot, nor another."

Here her hand

Grasp'd, made her veil her eyes : she
look'd and saw

The novice, weeping, suppliant, and said
to her

"Yea, little maid, for am I not forgiven?"
Then glancing up beheld the holy nuns

All round her, weeping ; and her heart
was loosed

Within her, and she wept with these and
said.

"Ye know me then, that wicked one,
who broke

The vast design and purpose of the King,
O shut me round with narrowing nun-
nery-walls,

Meek maidens, from the voices crying
'shame.'

I must not scorn myself: he loves me
still.

Let no one dream but that he loves me
still.

So let me, if you do not shudder at me
Nor shun to call me sister, dwell with
you;

Wear black and white, and be a nun like
you;

Fast with your fasts, not feasting with
your feasts;

Grieve with your griefs, not grieving at
your joys,

But not rejoicing; mingle with your rites;
Pray and be pray'd for; lie before your
shrines;

Do each low office of your holy house;
Walk your dim cloister, and distribute
dole

To poor sick people, richer in his eyes
Who ransom'd us, and haler too than I;
And treat their loathsome hurts and heal
mine own;

And sowear out in almsdeed and in prayer
The sombre close of that voluptuous day,
Which wrought the ruin of my lord the
King."

She said: they took her to themselves;
and she

Still hoping, fearing "is it yet too late?"
Dwelt with them, till in time their Ab-
bess died.

Then she, for her good deeds and her pure
life,

And for the power of ministration in her,
And likewise for the high rank she had
borne,

Was chosen Abbess, there, an Abbess,
lived

For three brief years, and there, an Ab-
bess, past

To where beyond these voices there is
peace.

THE PASSING OF ARTHUR.

THAT story which the bold Sir Bedivere,
First made 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 shrilling "Hollow, hollow all de-
light!

Hail, king! to-morrow thou shalt pass
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 wail their
way

From cloud to cloud, down the long wind
the dream

Shrill'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 wail

Pass to new lords; and Arthur woke
and call'd,

"Who spake? A dream. O light upon
the wind.

Thine, Gawain, was the voice — are
these dim cries

Thine? or doth all that haunts the
waste and wild

Mourn, knowing it will go along with
me?"

This heard the bold Sir Bedivere and
spake:

"O me, my king, let pass whatever will,
Elves, and the harmless glamour of the
field;

But in their stead thy name and glory
cling

To all high places like a golden cloud
For ever: but as yet thou shalt not pass.
Light was Gawain in life, and light in
death

Is Gawain, for the ghost is as the man;
And care not thou for dreams from him,
but rise —

I hear the steps of Modred in the west,
And with him many of thy people and
knights

Once thine, whom thou hast loved, but
grosser grown

Than heathen, spitting at their vows
and thee.

Right well in heart they know thee for
the king.
Arise, go forth and conquer as of old."

Then spake King Arthur to Sir Bedivere :

"Far other is this battle in the west
Whereto 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 him-
self.

And they my knights, who loved me
once, the stroke

That strikes them dead is as my death
to me.

Yet let us hence, and find or feel a way
Thro' this blind haze, which ever since I
saw

One lying in the dust at Almesbury,
Hath folded in the passes of the world."

Then rose the king and moved his host
by night,

And ever push'd Sir Modred, league by
league,

Back to the sunset bound of Lyonesse —
A land of old upheaven from the abyss

By fire, to sink into the abyss again ;
Where fragments of forgotten peoples
dwelt,

And the long mountains 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.

A deathwhite mist slept oversand 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 slew friend not knowing whom
he slew ;

And some had visions out of golden youth,
And some beheld the faces of old ghosts

Look in upon the battle ; and in the mist
Was many a noble deed, many a base,

And chance and craft 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 crash

Of battle-axes on shatter'd helmets, 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 blas-
phemies,

Sweat, writhings, anguish, laboring of
the lungs

In that close mist, and cryings for the
light,

Moans of the dying, and voices of the dead.

Last, as by some one death bed after wail
Of suffering, silence follows, or thro' death
Or deathlike swoon, thus over all that
shore,

Save for some whisper of the seething seas,
A dead hush fell ; but when the dolorous
day

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
Broke in among dead faces, to and fro

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 tho' they had not died for
me?—

O Bedivere, for on my heart hath fall'n
Confusion, till I know not what I am,
Nor 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, unharm'd, the traitor of thine
house.”

Then spake the King : “My house hath
been my doom.

But call not thou this traitor of my house
Who hath but dwelt beneath one roof
with me.

My house are 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 purport of my throne hath
fail'd,

That quick or dead thou holdest me for
king.

King am I, whatsoever 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 liege

Hard on that helm which many a heathen
sword

Had beaten thin ; while Arthur at one
blow,

Striking the last stroke with Excalibur,
Slew him, and all but slain himself, he
fell.

So all day long the noise of 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 unsolders all
The goodliest fellowship of famous knights
Whereof this world holds record. Such
a sleep
They sleep — the men I loved. I think
that we

Shall never more, at any future time,
Delight our souls with talk of 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, —
Tho' Merlin sware that I should come again
To rule once more ; but let what will be,
be.

I am so deeply smitten thro' the helm
That without help I cannot last till morn.
Thou therefore take my brand Excalibur,
Which was my pride : for thou remem-
berest how

In those old days, one summer noon, an
arm

Rose up from out the bosom of the lake,
Clothed in white samite, mystic, wonder-
ful,

Holding the sword — and how I row'd
across

And took it, and have worn it, like a
king ;

And, wheresoever I am sung or told
In aftertime, this also shall be known :

But now delay not : take Excalibur,
And fling him far into the middle mere :
Watch what thou seest, and lightly bring
me word.”

To him replied the bold Sir Bedivere :

“It is not meet, Sir King, to leave thee
thus,

Aidless, alone, and smitten thro' the
helm —

A little thing may harm a wounded man ;

Yet I thy hest will all perform at full,
Watch what I see, and lightly bring thee
word."

So saying, from the ruin'd shrine he
stept,
And in the moon athwart the place of
tombs,
Where lay the mighty bones of ancient
men,
Old knights, and over them the sea-wind
sang
Shrill, 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 Excali-
bur,
And o'er him, drawing it, the winter moon,
Brightening the skirts of a long cloud,
ran forth
And sparkled keen with frost against
the hilt :
For all the haft twinkled with diamond
sparks,
Myriads of topaz-lights, and jacinth-work
Of subtlest jewelry. He gazed so long
That both his eyes were dazzled as he stood,
This way and that dividing the swift mind,
In act to throw : but at the last it seem'd
Better to leave Excalibur conceal'd
There in the many-knotted waterflags,
That whistled stiff and dry about the
marge.
So strode he back slow to the wounded
King.

Then spake King Arthur to Sir Bedi-
vere :
" 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 Bedi-
vere :
" I heard the ripple washing in the reeds,
And the wild water lapping on the crag. "

To whom replied King Arthur, faint
and pale :
" Thou hast betray'd thy nature and thy
name,
Not rendering true answer, as beseem'd
Thy fealty, nor like a noble knight :
For surer sign had follow'd, either hand,

Or voice, or else a motion of the mere.
This is a shameful thing for men to lie.
Yet now, I charge thee, quickly go again,
As thou art lief and dear, and do the thing
I bade thee, watch, and lightly bring me
word. "

Then went Sir Bedivere the second time
Across the ridge, and paced beside the
mere,
Counting the dewy pebbles, fix'd in
thought ;
But when he saw the wonder of the hilt,
How curiously and strangely chased, he
smote
His palms together, and he cried aloud :

" And if indeed I cast the brand away,
Surely a precious thing, one worthy note,
Should thus be lost for ever 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,
Seeing obedience is the bond of rule.
Were it well to obey then, if a king demand
An act unprofitable, against himself ?
The King is sick, and knows not what
he does.
What record, or what relic of my lord
Should be to aftertime, 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 joust 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, 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 widow'd of the power in his eye
That bow'd the will. I see thee what thou art,

For thou, the latest-left of all my knights
In whom should meet the offices of all,
Thou wouldst betray me for the precious hilt ;

Either from lust of gold, or like a girl
Valuing the giddy pleasure of the eyes.
Yet, for a man may fail in duty twice,
And the third time may prosper, get thee hence :

But, if thou spare to fling Excalibur,
I will arise and slay thee with my hands.”

Then quickly rose Sir Bedivere, and ran,
And, leaping down the ridges lightly,
plunged

Among the bulrush-beds, and clutch'd the sword,
And strongly wheel'd and threw it. The great brand

Made lightnings in the splendor of the moon,

And flashing round and round, and whirl'd in an arch,

Shot like a streamer of the northern morn,
Seen where the moving isles of winter shock

By night, with noises of the northern sea.
So flash'd and fell the brand Excalibur :
But ere he dipt the surface, rose an arm
Clothed in white samite, mystic, wonderful,

And caught him by the hilt, and brandish'd him

Three times, and drew him under in the mere.

And lightly went the other to the King.

Then spoke King Arthur, drawing thicker breath :

“Now see I by thine eyes that this is done.
Speak out : what is it thou hast heard,
or seen?”

And answer made the bold Sir Bedivere :

“Sir King, I 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 as yonder hilt.

Then with both hands I flung him, wheeling him ;

But when I look'd again, behold 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 ; 't is time that I were gone.

Make broad thy shoulders to receive my weight,

And bear me to the margin ; yet I fear
My wound hath taken cold, and I shall die.”

So saying, from the pavement he half rose,

Slowly, with pain, reclining on his arm,
And looking wistfully with wide blue eyes
As in a picture. Him Sir Bedivere
Remorsefully regarded thro' his tears,
And would have spoken, but he found not words ;

Then took with care, and kneeling on one knee,

O'er both his shoulders drew the languid hands,

And 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,

Cloth'd with his breath, and looking, as
 he walk'd,
 Larger than human on the frozen hills.
 He heard the deep behind him, and a
 cry
 Before. His own thought drove him like
 a goad.
 Dry clash'd his harness in the icy caves
 And barren chasms, and all to left and
 right
 The bare black cliff clang'd round him,
 as he bas'd
 His feet on juts of slippery crag that rang
 Sharp-smitten with the dint of armed
 heels —
 And on a sudden, lo ! the level lake,
 And the long glories of the winter moon.

Then saw they how there hove a dusky
 barge,
 Dark as a funeral scarf from stem to stern,
 Beneath them ; and descending they were
 ware
 That all the decks were dense with stately
 forms,
 Black-stoled, black-hooded, like a dream
 — by these
 Three Queens with crowns of gold : and
 from them rose
 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 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 call'd him by his name, complaining
 loud,
 And dropping bitter tears against his brow
 Striped with dark blood : for all his face
 was white
 And colorless, and like the wither'd moon
 Smote by the fresh beam of the springing
 east ;
 And all his greaves and cuisses dash'd
 with drops

Of onset ; and the light and lustrous
 curls —
 That made his forehead like a rising sun
 High from the daïs-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 Bedi-
 vere :
 " Ah ! my Lord Arthur, whither shall I
 go ?
 Where shall I hide my forehead and my
 eyes ?
 For ne^m 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 dis-
 solved
 Which was an image of the mighty world ;
 And I, the last, go forth companionless,
 And the days darken round me, and the
 y^{ears},
 Among new men, strange faces, other
 minds."

And slowly answered Arthur from the
 barge :
 " The old order changeth, yielding place
 to new,
 And God fulfil himself in many ways,
 Lest one good custom should corrupt the
 world.
 Comfort thyself : what comfort is in me ?
 I have lived my life, and that which I
 have done
 May He within himself make pure ! but
 thou,
 If thou shouldst never see my face again,
 Pray for my soul. More things are
 wrought by prayer
 Than this world dreams of. Wherefore,
 let thy voice
 Rise like a fountain for me night and
 day.

For what are men better than sheep or goats
 That nourish a blind life within the brain,
 If, knowing God, they lift not hands of prayer
 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 Avilion;
 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,
 Ruffles her pure cold plume, and takes the flood
 With swarthy webs. Long stood Sir Bedivere
 Revolving many memories, till the hull
 Look'd one black dot against the verge of dawn,
 And on the mere the wailing died away.

At length he groan'd, and turning slowly clomb
 The last hard footstep of that iron crag;
 Thence mark'd the black hull moving yet, and cried,
 "He passes to be king among the dead,
 And after healing of his grievous wound
 He comes again; but — if he come no more —
 O me, be you dark Queens in you black boat,
 Whoshriek'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 once
 voice
 Around a king returning from his wars.

Thereat once more he moved about, and clomb
 E'en 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.

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 thither
half
The neighboring borough with their In-
stitute
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-ruin 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 snowshoe, toys in lava, fans
Of sandal, amber, ancient rosaries,
Laborious orient ivory sphere in sphere,
The cursed Malayan crease, and battle-
clubs
From the isles of palm : and higher on
the walls,
Betwixt the monstrous horns of elk and
deer,
His own forefathers' arms and armor hung.

And "this" he said "was Hugh's at
Agincourt ;
And that was old Sir Ralph's at Ascalon :

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, one that
arm'd
Her own fair head, and sallying 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-besieged
By this wildking to force her to his wish,
Nor bent, nor broke, nor shunn'd a sol-
dier'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 overwhelm'd with missiles on
the wall,
And some were push'd with lances from
the rock,
And part were drown'd within the whirl-
ing 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 Lilia 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 gilded ball
 Danced like a wisp: and somewhat low-
 er down
 A man with knobs and wires and vials
 fired
 A cannon: Echo answer'd in her sleep
 From hollow fields: and here were tele-
 scopes
 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 plied
 And shook the lilies: 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; other-
 where
 Pure sport: a herd of boys with clamor
 bowl'd
 And stump'd the wicket; babies roll'd
 about
 Like tumbled fruit in grass; and men
 and maids
 Arranged a country dance, and flew thro'
 light
 And shadow, while the twangling violin
 Struck up with Soldier-laddie, and over-
 head
 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-
 claspt,
 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 sward was trim as any garden lawn:
 And here we lit on Aunt Elizabeth,
 And Lilia with the rest, and lady friends
 From neighbor seats: and there was
 Ralph himself,
 A broken statue propt against the wall,
 As gay as any. Lilia, 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 rosy silk,
 That made the old warrior from his ivied
 nook
 Glow like a sunbeam: near his tomb a
 feast
 Shone, silver-set; about it lay the guests,
 And there we join'd them: then the
 maiden Aunt
 Took this fair day for text, and from it
 preach'd
 An universal culture for the crowd,
 And all things great; but we, unwor-
 thier, told
 Of college: he had climb'd across the
 spikes,
 And he had squeezed himself betwixt
 the bars,
 And he had breath'd the Proctor's dogs;
 and one
 Discuss'd his tutor, rough to common
 men,
 But honeying at the whisper of a lord;
 And one the Master, as a rogue in grain
 Veneer'd with sanctimonious theory.

But while they talk'd, above their
 heads I saw
 The fendal 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, patting Lilia's head (she lay
 Beside him) "lives there such a woman
 now?"

Quick answer'd Lilia " There are thou-
sands 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 great princess, I would
build
Far off from men a college like a man's,
And I would teach them all that men are
taught ;
We are twice as quick ! " And here she
shook aside
The hand that play'd the patron with
her curls.

And one said smiling " Pretty were the
sight
If our old halls could change their sex,
and flaunt
With prudes for proctors, dowagers for
deans,
And sweet girl-graduates in their golden
hair.
I think they should not wear our rusty
gowns,
But move as rich as Emperor-moths, or
Ralph
Who shines so in the corner ; yet I fear,
If there were many Lilias in the brood,
However deep you might embower the
nest,
Some boy would spy it."

At this upon the sward
She tapt her tiny silken-sandal'd foot :
" That 's your light way ; but I would
make it death
For any male thing but to peep at us."

Petulant she spoke, and at herself she
laugh'd ;
A rosebud set with little wilful thorns,
And sweet as English air could make
her, she :
But Walter hail'd a score of names upon
her,
And " petty Ogress," and " ungrateful
Puss,"
And swore he long'd at college, only
long'd,
All else was well, for she-society.
They boated 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 hun-
dred friends,
And caught the blossom of the flying
terms,
But miss'd the mignonette of Vivian-
place,
The little hearth-flower Lilia. Thus he
spoke,
Part banter, part affection.
" True," she said,
" We doubt not that. O yes, you miss'd
us much.
I'll stake 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 he with Lilia's. Daintily she shriek'd
And wrung 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 Muses of the cube and
square
Were out of season : never man, I think,
So moulder'd in a sinecure as he :
For while our cloisters echo'd frosty 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 hollies and the yews of home —
As many little trifling Lilias — play'd
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-disdain
Perch'd on the pouted blossom of her lips :
And Walter nodded at me ; " *He* began,

The rest would follow, each in turn ; and
so

We forged a sevenfold story. Kind ?
what kind ?

Chimeras, crotchets, Christmassoleicisms,
Seven-headed 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 befits the time,
And something it should be to suit the
place

Heroic, for a hero lies beneath,
Grave, solemn !"

Walter warp'd his mouth at this
To something so mock-solemn, that I
laugh'd

And Lilia woke with sudden-shrilling
mirth

An echo like a ghostly woodpecker,
Hid in the ruins ; till the maiden Aunt
(A little sense of wrong had touch'd her
face

With color) turn'd to me with " As you
will ;

Heroic if you will, or what you will,
Or be yourself your hero if you will."

" Take Lilia, then, for heroine " clam-
or'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, shrieks and strange experi-
ments

For which the good Sir Ralph had burnt
them all —

This *were* a medley ! we should have him
back

Who told the ' Winter's tale ' to do it
for us.

No matter : we will say whatever comes.
And let the ladies sing us, if they will,

From time to time, some ballad or a song
To give us breathing-space."

So I began,
And therest follow'd : and the women sang
Between the rougher voices of the men,
Like linnets in the pauses of the wind :
And here I give the story and the songs

I.

A PRINCE I was, blue-eyed, and fair in
face,

Of temper amorous, as the first of May,
With lengths of yellow ringlets, 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 shadow from the substance, and that
one

Should come to fight with shadows and
to fall.

For so, my mother said, the story ran.
And, truly, waking dreams were, more or
less,

An old and strange affection of the house.
Myself too had weird seizures, Heaven
knows what :

On a sudden in the midst of men and day.
And while I walk'd and talk'd as here-
tofore,

I seem'd 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 mutter'd
" catalepsy."

My mother pitying made a thousand
prayers ;

My mother was as mild as any saint,
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 it chanced that I had been,
While life was yet in bud and blade, be-
troth'd
To one, a neighboring Princess : she to me
Was proxy-wedded with a bootless 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 puissance ;
And still I wore her picture by my heart,
And one dark tress ; and all around them
both
Sweet thoughts would swarm as bees about
their queen.

But when the days drew nigh that I
should wed,
My father sent ambassadors with furs
And jewels, gifts, to fetch her : these
brought back
A present, a great labor of the loom ;
And therewithal an answer vague as
wind :
Besides, they saw the king ; he took the
gifts ;
He said there was a compact ; that was
true :
But then she had a will ; was he to blame ?
And maiden fancies ; loved to live alone
Among her women ; certain, would not
wed.

That morning in the presence room I
stood
With Cyril and with Florian, my two
friends :
The first, a gentleman of broken means
(His father's fault) but given to starts
and bursts
Of revel ; and the last, my other heart,
And almost my half-self, for still we moved
Together, twinn'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, snow'd it down,
and rent
The wonder of the loom thro' warp and
woof
From skirt to skirt ; and at the last he
sware
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,
Communing with his captains 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 hospi-
table :
Or, maybe, I myself, my bride once seen,
Whate'er my grief to find her less than
fame,
May rue the bargain made." And Flo-
rian said :
" I have a sister at the foreign court,
Who moves about the Princess ; she,
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 strait ;
I grate on rusty hinges here " : but
" No ! "
Roar'd the rough king, " you shall not ;
we ourself
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 like-
ness out ;
Laid it on flowers, and watch'd it lying
bathed
In the green gleam of dewy-tassell'd trees :
What were those fancies ? wherefore break
her troth ?
Proud look'd the lips : but while I medi-
tated
A wind arose and rush'd upon the South,
And shook the songs, the whispers, and
the shrieks

Of the wild woods together ; and a Voice
Went with it, " Follow, follow, thou shalt
win."

Then, ere the silver 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 in
dread

To hear my father's clamor at our backs
With Ho ! from some bay-window shake
the night ;

But all was quiet : from the bastion'd
walls

Like threaded spiders, one by one, we
dropt,

And flying reach'd the frontier : then we
crost

To a livelier land ; and so by tilth and
grange,

And vines, and blowing bosks of wilder-
ness,

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 wrin-
kling 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 signet gem,

" All honor. We remember love ourselves
In our sweet youth : there did a com-

compact pass
Long summers back, a kind of cere-

mony —
I think the year in which our olives fail'd.

I would you had her, Prince, with all
my heart,

With my full heart : but there were
widows here,

Two widows, Lady Psyche, Lady Blanche ;
They fed her 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 ban-
quets 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 daugh-
ter 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 ; odes

About this losing of the child ; and rhymes
And dismal lyrics, prophesying change

Beyond all reason : these the women sang ;
And they that know such things — I

sought but peace ;
No critic ! — would call them master-

pieces :
They master'd me. At last she begg'd a

boon
A certain summer-palace which I have

Hard by your father's frontier : I said no,
Yet being an easy man, gave it : and there,

All wild to found an University
For maidens, on the spur she fled ; and

more
We know not, — only this : they see no

men,
Not ev'n her brother Arac, nor the twins

Her brethren, tho' they love her, look
upon her

As on a kind of paragon ; and I
(Pardon me saying it) were much loath

to breed
Dispute betwixt myself and mine : but

since
(And I confess with right) you think me

bound
In some sort, I can give you letters to her ;

And yet, to speak the truth, I rate your
chance

Almost at naked nothing."
Thus the king ;

And I, tho' nettled that he seem'd to slur
With garrulous ease and oily courtesies

Our formal compact, yet, not less (all
frets,

But chafing me on fire to find my bride)
Went forth again with both my friends.

We rode
Many a long league back to the North.

At last
From hills, that look'd across a land of

hope,
We dropt with evening on a rustic town

Set in a gleaming river's crescent-curve,
Close at the boundary of the liberties ;

There, enter'd an old hostel, call'd mine
 host
 To council, plied him with his richest
 wines,
 And show'd the late-writ letters of the
 king.

He with a long low sibilation, stared
 As blank as death in marble; then ex-
 claim'd

Averting it was clear against all rules
 For any man to go: but as his brain
 Began to mellow, "If the king," he said,
 "Had given us letters, was he bound to
 speak?

The king would bear him out"; and at
 the last —

The summer of the vine in all his veins —
 "No doubt that we might make it worth
 his while.

She once had past that way; he heard
 her speak;

She scared him; life! he never saw the like;
 She look'd as grand as doomsday and as
 grave:

And he, he revered his liege-lady there;
 He always made a point to post with mares;
 His daughter and his housemaid were
 the boys:

The land, he understood, for miles about
 Was till'd by women; all the swine were
 sows,
 And all the dogs" —

But while he jested thus,
 A thought flash'd thro' me which I clothed
 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, help
 To lace us up, till, each, in maiden plumes
 We rustled: him we gave a costly bribe
 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 glitter firefly-like in copse
 And linden alley: then we past an arch,
 Whereon a woman-statue rose with wings

From four wing'd horses dark against
 the stars;

And some inscription ran along the front,
 But deep in shadow: further on we 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 ham-
 mers falling

On silver anvils, and the splash and stir
 Of fountains spouted up and showering
 down

In meshes of the jasmine and the rose:
 And all about us peal'd the nightingale,
 Rapt in hersong, and careless of the snare.

There stood a bust of Pallas for a sign,
 By twosphere lamps blazon'd like Heaven
 and Earth

With constellation and with continent,
 Above an entry: riding in, we call'd;
 A plump-arm'd Ostleress and a stable
 wench

Came ruming at the call, and help'd us
 down.

Then slept a buxom hostess forth, and
 sail'd,

Full-blown, before us into rooms which
 gave

Upon a pillar'd porch, the bases lost
 In laurel: her we ask'd of that and this,
 And who were tutors. "Lady Blanche"
 she said,

"And Lady Psyche." "Which was
 prettiest,
 Best-natured?" "Lady Psyche." "Hers
 are we,"

One voice, we cried; and I sat down and
 wrote,

In such a hand as when a field of corn
 Bows all its ears before the roaring East;

"Three ladies of the Northern empire
 pray

Your Highness would enroll them with
 your own,
 As Lady Psyche's pupils."

This I seal'd
 The seal was Cupid bent above a scroll,
 And o'er his head Uranian Venus hung,
 And raised the blinding bandage from
 his eyes:

I gave the letter to be sent with dawn;
 And then to bed, where half in doze I
 seem'd

To float about a glimmering night, and
 watch

A full sea glazed with muffled moonlight,
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.
And blessings on the falling out
That all the more endears,
When we fall out with those we love
And kiss again with tears !
For when we came where lies the child
We lost in other years,
There above the little grave,
O there above the little grave,
We kiss'd again with tears.

II.

At break of day the College Portress came :
She brought us Academic silks, in hue
The lilac, with a silken hood to each,
And zoned with gold ; and now when
these were on,
And was rich as moths from dusk cocoons,
She, curtseying her obeisance, let us know
The Princess Ida waited : out we paced,
I first, and following thro' the porch that
sang
All round with laurel, issued in a court
Compact with lucid marbles, boss'd with
lengths
Of classic frieze, with ample awnings gay
Betwixt the pillars, and with great urns
of flowers.
The Muses and the Graces, group'd in
threes,
Enring'd a billowing fountain in the midst ;
And here and there on lattice edges lay
Or book or lute ; 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 ! are the ladies of your land so tall ? ”
“ We of the court ” said Cyril. “ From
the court ”
She answer'd, “ then ye know the Prince ? ”
and he :
“ The climax of his age ! as tho' there were
One rose in all the world, your Highness
that,
He worships your ideal ” : she replied :
“ We scarcely thought in our own hall
to hear
This barren verbiage, current among men,
Light coin, the tinsel clink 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
ourselves
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 self-styled our lords
ally
Your fortunes, justlier balanced, scale
with scale.”

At those high words, we conscious of
ourselves,
Perused the matting ; then an officer
Rose up, and read the statutes, such as
these :
Not for three years to correspond with
home ;
Not for three years to cross the liberties ;
Not for three years to speak with any men ,

And many more, which hastily sub-
scribed,
We enter'd on the boards : and " Now "
she cried
" Ye are green wood, see ye warp not.
Look, our hall !
Our statues !—not of those that men
desire,
Sleek Odaliques, or oracles of mode,
Nor stunted squaws 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
That fought Aurelian, and the Roman
brows
Of Agrippina. 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 na-
tures up :
Embrace our aims : work out your free-
dom. Girls,
Knowledge is now no more a fountain
seal'd :
Drink deep, until the habits of the slave,
The sins of emptiness, gossip and spite
And slander, die. Better not be at all
Than not be noble. Leave us : you may
go :
To-day the Lady Psyche will harangue
The fresh arrivals of the week before ;
For they press in from all the provinces,
And fill the hive."
She spoke, and bowing waved
Dismissal : back again we crost the court
To Lady Psyche's : as we enter'd in,
There sat along the forms, like morning
doves
That sun their milky bosoms on the
thatch,
A patient range of pupils ; she herself
Erect behind a desk of satin-wood,
A quick brunette, well-moulded, falcon-
eyed,
And on the hither side, or so she look'd,
Of twenty summers. At her left, a child,
In shining draperies, headed like a star,
Her maiden babe, a double April old,
Aglaiā slept. We sat : the Lady glanced :
Then Florian, but no livelier than the
dame
That whisper'd " Asses' ears " among the
sedge,

" My sister." " Comely too by all that's
fair "
Said Cyril. " O hush, hush ! " and she
began.

" This world was once a fluid haze 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 ;
Tattoo'd or woaded, winter-clad in skins,
Raw from the prime, and crushing down
his mate ;
As yet we find in barbarous isles, and here
Among the lowest."

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 wine with Lar and Lucumo ;
Ran down the Persian, Grecian, Roman
lines
Of empire, and the woman's state in each,
How far from just ; till warming with
her theme
She fulminated her scorn of laws Salique
And little-footed China, touch'd on Ma-
homet
With much contempt, and came to chiv-
alry :
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 promise ; fruit would follow. Deep,
indeed,
Their debt of thanks to her who first had
dared
To leap the rotten pales of prejudice,
Disyoke 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 men
were taught :
Let them not fear : some said their heads
were less :
Some men's were small ; not they the
least of men ;

For often fineness compensated size :
 Besides the brain was like the hand, and
 grew
 With using ; thence the man's, if more
 was more ;
 He took advantage of his strength to be
 First in the field : some ages had been lost ;
 But woman ripen'd earlier, and her life
 Was longer ; and albeit their glorious
 names
 Were fewer, scatter'd stars, yet since in
 truth
 The highest is the measure of the man,
 And not the Kafir, Hottentot, Malay,
 Nor those horn-handed breakers of the
 glebe,
 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 vie'd with any man :
 And, last not least, she who had left her
 place,
 And bow'd her state to them, that they
 might grow
 To use and power on this Oasis, lapt
 In the arms of leisure, sacred from the
 blight
 Of ancient influence and scorn.

At last

She rose upon a wind of prophecy
 Dilating on the future ; " everywhere
 Two heads in council, two beside the
 hearth,
 Two in the tangled business of the world,
 Two in the liberal offices of life,
 Two plummetts 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 bounteous
 Earth
 Should bear a double growth of those rare
 souls,
 Poets, whose thoughts enrich the blood
 of the world."

She ended here, and beckon'd us : the
 rest
 Parted ; and, glowing full-faced welcome,
 she
 Began to address us, and was moving on
 In gratulation, till as when a boat
 Tacks, and the slacken'd sail flaps, 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 Adams of your Academe,
 O sister, Sirens tho' they be, were such
 As chanted 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 iron will,
 That axelike edge unturnable, our Head,
 The Princess. " " Well then, Psyche,
 take my life,
 And nail me like a weasel on a grange
 For warning : bury me beside the gate,
 And cut this epitaph above my bones ;
*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 countryman, affianced years ago
 To the Lady Ida : here, for here she was,
 And thus (what other way was left) I
 came. "
 " O Sir, O Prince, I have no country ;
 none ;
 If any, this ; but none. Whate'er I was
 Disrooted, what I am is grafted here.
 Affianced, Sir ? love-whispers may not
 breathe
 Within this restal limit, and how should I,
 Who am not mine, say, live : the thun-
 derbolt
 Hangs silent ; but prepare : I speak ; it
 falls. "
 " Yet pause, " I said : " for that inscrip-
 tion there,
 I think no more of deadly lurks therein,

Than in a clapper clapping in a garth,
To scare the fowl from fruit : if more
there be,

If more and acted on, what follows ? war ;
Your own work marr'd : for this your
Academe,

Whichever side be Victor, in the halloo
Will topple to the trumpet down, and pass
With all fair theories only made to gild
A stormless summer." "Let the Princess
judge

Of that" she said : "farewell Sir — and
to you.

I shudder at the sequel, but I go."

"Are you that Lady Psyche" I rejoind'd,
"The fifth in line from that old Florian,
Yet hangs his portrait in my father's hall
(The gaunt old Baron with his beetle brow
Sun-shaded in the heat of dusty fights)
As he bestrode my Grandsire, when he
fell,

And all else fled : we point to it, and we
say,

The loyal warmth of Florian is not cold,
But branches current yet in kindred
veins."

"Are you that Psyche" Florian added
"she

With whom I sang about the morning
hills,

Flung 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
draught

Of fever, tell me pleasant tales, and read
My sickness down to happy dreams ? are
you

That brother-sister Psyche, both in one ?
You were that Psyche, but what are you
now ?"

"You are that Psyche," Cyril said, "for
whom

I would be that for ever which I seem,
Woman, if I might sit beside your feet,
And glean your scatter'd sapience."

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 an-
cient ties

Would still be dear beyond the southern
hills ;

That were there any of our people there
In want or peril, there was one to hear
And help them : look ! for such are these
and I."

"Are you that Psyche" Florian ask'd
"to whom,

In gentler days, your arrow-wounded fawn
Came flying while you sat beside 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 kisses."

"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 swerved from right
to save

A prince, a brother ? a little will I yield.
Best so, perchance, for us, and well for
you.

O hard, when love and duty clash ! I fear
My conscience will not count me fleck-
less ; yet —

Hear my conditions : promise (otherwise
You perish) as you came, to slip away,
To-day, to-morrow, soon : it shall be said,
These women were too barbarous, would
not learn ;

They fled, who might have shamed us :
promise, all."

What could we else, we promised each ;
and she,
Like some wild creature newly-caged,
commenced
A to-and-fro, so pacing till she paused

By Florian ; holding out her lily arms
Took 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
(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 —
you !

You heard us ? ” and Melissa, “ O pardon
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 you ” said the other “ for we two
Were always friends, none closer, elm and
vine :

But yet your mother’s jealous tempera-
ment —

Let not your prudence, dearest, drowse,
or prove

The Danaid of a leaky vase, for fear
This whole foundation ruin, and I lose

My honor, these their lives. ” “ Ah,
fear me not ”

Replied Melissa “ no — I would not tell,
No, not for all Aspasia’s cleverness,
No, not to answer, Madam, all those
hard things

That Sheba came to ask of Solomon. ”

“ Be it so ” the other “ that we still may
lead

The new light up, and culminate in peace,
For Solomon may come to Sheba yet. ”

Said Cyril “ Madam, he the wisest man
Feasted the woman wisest then, in halls
Of Lebanonian 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 swoll’n cheek of a trum-
peter,

While Psyche watch’d them, smiling, and
the child

Push’d her flat hand against his face and
laugh’d ;

And thus our conference closed.

And then we stroll’d
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 rounded under female hands
With flawless demonstration : follow’d
then

A classic lecture, rich in sentiment,
With scraps of thundrous Epic lilted out
By violet-hooded Doctors, elegies
And quoted odes, and jewels five-words-
long

That on the stretch’d forefinger of all
Time

Sparkle for ever : then we dipt 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 glutted all night long breast-deep
 in corn,
 We issued gorged with knowledge, and I
 spoke :
 " Why, Sirs, they do all this as well as
 we."
 " They hunt old trails " said Cyril " very
 well ;
 But when ' did woman ever yet 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
 sad ? "
 " 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 tumbled a science in.
 A thousand hearts lie fallow in these halls,
 And round these halls a thousand baby
 loves
 Fly twanging headless arrows at the
 hearts,
 Whence follows many a vacant pang ;
 but O
 With me, Sir, enter'd in the bigger boy,
 The Head of all the golden-shafted firm,
 The long-limb'd lad that had a Psyche too ;
 He left 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 malison on me,
 No ghostly hauntings like his Highness. 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 tat-
 ter'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 thirsty
 plants
 Imbibing ! once or twice I thought to roar,
 To break my chain, to shake my mane :
 but thou,
 Modulate me, Soul of mincing mimicry !
 Make liquid treble of that bassoon, my
 throat ;
 Abase those eyes that ever loved to meet
 Star-sisters answering under crescent
 brows ;
 Abate the stride, which speaks of man,
 and loose
 A flying 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 twos and threes, 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 Astræan age,
 Sat compass'd with professors : they, the
 while,
 Discuss'd a doubt and tost 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 reciting by herself, and one
 In this hand held a volume as to read,
 And smoothed a petted peacock down
 with that :
 Some to a low song oar'd a shallop by,

Or under arches of the marble bridge
 Hung, shadow'd from the heat : some
 hid and sought
 In the orange thickets : others tost a
 ball
 Above the fountain-jets, and back again
 With laughter : others lay about the
 lawns,
 Of the older sort, and murmur'd that
 their May
 Was passing : what was learning unto
 them ?
 They wish'd to marry ; they could rule
 a house ;
 Men hated learned women : but we three
 Sat muffled like the Fates ; and often
 came
 Melissa hitting all we saw with shafts
 Of gentle satire, kin to charity,
 That harm'd 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 sails 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 courts that lay three parts
 In shadow, but the Muses' heads were
 touch'd
 Above the darkness from their native
 East.

There while we stood beside the fount,
 and watch'd
 Or seem'd to watch the daucing bubble,
 approach'd
 Melissa, tinged with wan from lack of
 sleep,
 Or grief, and glowing round her dewy eyes
 The circled Iris of a night of tears ;
 "And fly" she cried, "O fly, while yet
 you may !
 My mother knows" : and when I ask'd
 her "how"
 "My fault" she wept "my fault ! and
 yet not mine ;
 Yet mine in part. O hear me, pardou me.
 My mother, 't is her wont from night to
 night
 To rail at Lady Psyche and her side.
 She says the Princess should have been
 the Head,
 Herself and Lady Psyche the two arms ;
 And so it was agreed when first they came ;
 But Lady Psyche was the right hand now,
 And she the left, or not, or seldom used ;
 Hers more than half the students, all
 the love.

And so last night she fell to canvass you :
Her countrywomen ! she did not envy her.
 ' Who ever saw such wild barbarians ?
 Girls ? — more like men ! ' and at these
 words the snake,
 My secret, seem'd to stir within my breast ;
 And oh, Sirs, could I help it, but my
 cheek
 Began to burn and burn, and her lynx eye
 To fix and make me hotter, till she
 laugh'd :
 ' O marvellously modest maiden, you !
 Men ! girls, like men ! why, if they had
 been men
 You need not set your thoughts in rubric
 thus
 For wholesale comment.' Pardon, I am
 shamed
 That I must needs repeat for my excuse

What looks so little graceful : 'men'
(for still

My mother went revolving on the word)
'And so they are, — very like men in-
deed —

And with that woman closeted for hours !
Then came these dreadful words out one
by one,

'Why — these — *are* — men' : I shud-
der'd : 'and you know it.'

'O ask me nothing,' I said : 'And she
knows too,
And she conceals it.' So my mother
clutch'd

The truth at once, but with no word
from me ;

And now thus early risen she goes to in-
form

The Princess : Lady Psyche will be crush'd ;
But you may yet be saved, and therefore
fly :

But heal me with your pardon ere you go."

"What pardon, sweet Melissa, for a
blush ?"

Said Cyril : "Pale one, blush again :
than wear

Those lilies, better blush our lives away.
Yet let us breathe for one hour more in
Heaven"

He added, "lest some classic Angel speak
In scorn of us, 'they mounted, Gany-
medes,

To tumble, Vulcans, on the second morn.'
But I will melt this marble into wax
To yield us farther furlough" : and he
went.

Melissa shook her doubtful curls, and
thought

He scarce would prosper. "Tell us,"
Florian ask'd,

"How grew this feud betwixt the right
and left."

"O long ago," she said, "betwixt these
two

Division smoulders hidden ; 'tis my
mother,

Too jealous, often fretful 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 rail'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) inosculated ;
Consonant chords that shiver to one note ;
One mind in all things : yet my mother
still

Affirms your Psyche thieved her theories,
And angled with them for her pupil's love :
She calls her plagiarist ; 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 Florian gazing after
her.

"An open-hearted maiden, true and pure.
If I could love, why this were she : how
pretty

Her blushing was, and how she blush'd
again,

As if to close with Cyril's random wish :
Not like your Princess cramm'd with
erring pride,

Nor like poor Psyche whom she drags
in tow."

"The crane," I said, "may chatter of
the crane,

The dove may murmur of the dove, but I
An eagle clang an eagle to the sphere.

My princess, O my princess ! true she
errs.

But in her own grand way : being herself
Three times more noble than threescore
of men,

She sees herself in every woman else,
And so she wears her error like a crown
To blind the truth and me : for her, and
her,

Hebes are they to hand ambrosia, mix
The nectar ; but — ah she — when'er
she moves

The Samian Herè 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 empurpled champaign, drank
the gale

That blown about the foliage underneath,
And sated with the innumerable rose,
Beat balm upon our eyelids. Hither came

Cyril, and yawning "O hard task," he
cried ;

"No fighting shadows here ! I forced a
way

Thro' solid opposition crabb'd and gnarl'd.
Better to clear prime forests, heave and
thump

A league of street in summer solstice down,
Than hammer at this reverend gentle-
woman.

I knock'd and, bidden, enter'd ; found
her there

At point to move, and settled in her eyes
The green malignant light of coming
storm.

Sir, I was courteous, every phrase well-
oil'd,

As man's could be ; yet maiden-meeek 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 hush'd amaze of hand and
eye.

But when I dwelt upon your old affiancè,
She answer'd sharply that I talk'd astray.
I urged the fierce inscription on the gate,
And our three lives. True — we had
limed ourselves

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
befall

Melissa, knowing, saying not she knew :
Her answer was 'Leave me to deal with
that.'

I spoke of war to come and many deaths,
And she replied, her duty was to speak,
And duty duty, clear of consequences.
I grew discouraged, Sir ; but since I knew
No rock so hard but that a little wave
May beat admission in a thousand years,
I recommenced ; 'Decide not ere you
pause.

I find you here but in the second place,
Some say the third—the authentic found-
ress 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 broad-
ening time

For ever.' Well, she balanced this a little,
And told me she would answer us to-day,
Meantime be mute : thus much, no
more I gain'd."

He ceasing, came a message from the
Head.

"That afternoon the Princess rode to take
The dip of certain strata to the North.
Would we go with her ? we should find
the land

Worth seeing ; and the river made a 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 sandal. I drew near ;
I gazed. On a sudden my strange seizure
came

Upon me, the weird vision of our house :
The Princess Ida seem'd a hollow show,
Her gay-furr'd cats a painted fantasy,
Her college and her maidens, empty
masks,

And I myself the shadow of a dream,
For all things were and were not. Yet
I felt

My heart beat thick with passion and
with awe ;

Then from my breast the involuntary sigh
Broke, as she smote me with the light of
eyes

That lent my knee desire to kneel, and
shook

My pulses, till to horse we got, and so
Went forth in long retinue 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 yestermorn ;
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 ambassa-
dresses

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 pre-
contract?"

There is no truer-hearted — ah, you seem
All he prefigured, 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 baser courses, children of despair."

"Poor boy" she said "can he not read
— no books?"

Quoit, tennis, ball — no games? nor deals
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 mean-
ing here,

To lift the woman's fall'n divinity
Upon an even pedestal with man."

She paused, and added with a haugh-
tier smile

"And as to precontracts, we move, my
friend,

At no man's beck, but know ourself and
thee,

O Vashti, noble Vashti! Summon'd out
She kept her state, and left the drunken
king

To brawl at Shushan 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
fail;

Then comes the feebler heiress of your
plan,

And takes and ruins all; and thus your
pains

May only make that footprint upon sand
Which old-recurring waves of prejudice

Resmooth to nothing: might I dread that
you,

With only Fame for spouse 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 exclaim'd,

"Peace, you young savage of the North-
ern 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,

Howe'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 our-
selves —

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 *POU STO* whence
after-hands

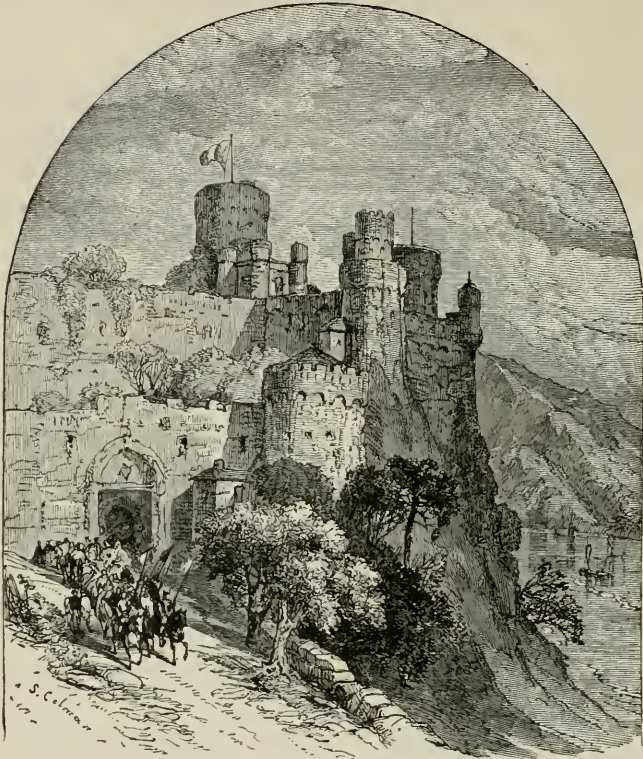
May move the world, tho' she herself
 effect
 But little : wherefore up and act, nor
 shrink
 For fear our solid aim be dissipated
 By frail successors. Would, indeed, we
 had been,
 In lieu of many mortal flies, a race
 Of giants living, each, a thousand years,
 That we might see our own work out, and
 watch
 The sandy footprint harden into stone."

I answer'd nothing, doubtful in my-
 self
 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 gynæceum, fail 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 —
 Oh 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 breadth 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 roar'd
 Before man was. She gazed awhile and
 said,
 "As these rude bones to us, are we to her
 That will be." "Dare we dream of
 that," I ask'd,

"Which wrought us, as the workman
 and his work,
 That practice betters?" "How," she
 cried, "you love
 The metaphysics! read and earn our prize,
 A golden brooch : beneath an emerald
 plane
 Sits Diotima, teaching him that died
 Of hemlock ; our device ; wrought to the
 life ;
 She rapt upon her subject, he on her :
 For there are schools for all." "And
 yet" I said
 "Methinks I have not found among them
 all
 One anatomic." "Nay, we thought of
 that,"
 She answer'd, "but it pleased us not :
 in truth
 We shudder but to dream our maids
 should ape
 Those 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 shame-
 ful jest,
 Encarnalize their spirits : yet we know
 Knowledge is knowledge, and this matter
 hangs :
 Howbeit myself, 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 touches on 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,
 As parts, can see but parts, now this, now
 that,
 And live, perforce, 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."



“ The splendor falls on castle walls
And snowy summits old in story.”

She spake
With kindled eyes : we rode a league be-
yond,
And, o'er a bridge of pinewood crossing,
came
On flowery levels underneath the crag,
Full of all beauty. “ O how sweet ” I said
(For I was half-oblivious of my mask)
“ To linger here with one that loved us.”
“ Yea ”

She answer'd “ or with fair philosophies
That lift the fancy ; for indeed these fields
Are lovely, lovelier not the Elysian lawns,
Where paced the Demigods of old, and
saw
The soft white vapor streak the crowned
towers

Built to the Sun ” : then, turning to her
maids,
“ Pitch our pavilion here upon the sward ;
Lay out the viands.” At the word, they
raised
A tent of satin, elaborately wrought
With fair Corinna's triumph ; here she
stood,
Engirt with many a florid maiden-cheek,
The woman - conqueror ; woman - con-
quer'd there
The bearded Victor of ten - thousand
hymns,
And all the men mourn'd at his side ;
but we
Set forth to climb ; then, climbing, Cyril
kept

With Psyche, with Melissa 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 crag : and then we turn'd,
 we wound
 About the cliffs, the copses, out and in,
 Hammering and clinking, chattering
 stony names
 Of shale and hornblende, rag and trap
 and tuff,
 Amygdaloid and trachyte, till the Sun
 Grew broader toward his death and fell,
 and all
 The rosy heights came out above the lawns.

The splendor falls on castle walls
 And snowy summits old in story :
 The long light shakes across the lakes,
 And the wild cataract leaps in glory.
 Blow, bugle, blow, set the wild echoes
 flying,
 Blow, bugle ; answer, echoes, dying, dy-
 ing, dying.

O hark, O hear ! how thin and clear,
 And thinner, clearer, farther going !
 O sweet and far from cliff and scar
 The horns of Elfland faintly blowing !
 Blow, let us hear the purple glens replying :
 Blow, bugle ; answer, echoes, dying, dy-
 ing, dying.

O love, they die in yon rich sky,
 They faint on hill or field or river :
 Our echoes roll from soul to soul,
 And grow for ever and for ever.
 Blow, bugle, blow, set the wild echoes
 flying,
 And answer, echoes, answer, dying, dy-
 ing, dying.

IV.

“THERE 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 preci-
 pices,
 By every coppice-feather'd chasm and
 cleft,

Dropt thro' the ambrosial gloom to where
 below
 No bigger than a glow-worm shone the
 tent
 Lamp-lit from the inner. Once she lean'd
 on me,
 Descending ; once or twice she lent her
 hand,
 And blissful palpitations in the blood,
 Stirring a sudden transport rose and fell

But when we planted level feet, and dipt
 Beneath the satin dome and enter'd in,
 There leaning deep in broider'd down we
 sank
 Our elbows : on a tripod in the midst
 A fragrant flamerose, and before us glow'd
 Fruit, blossom, viand, amber wine, and
 gold.

Then she “Let some one sing to us :
 lightlier move
 The minutes fledged with music” : and
 a maid,
 Of those beside her, smote her harp, and
 sang.

“Tears, idle tears, I know not what
 they mean,
 Tears from the depth of some divine de-
 spair
 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 un-
 derworld,
 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 sum-
 mer 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
 feign'd
 On lips that are for others ; deep as love,



'In looking on the happy Autumn-fields,
And thinking of the days that are no more.'

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 moulder'd 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 by-gones be,
While down the streams that float us
each and all
To the issue, goes, like glittering bergs
of ice,
Throne after throne, and molten on the
waste
Becomes a cloud : for all things serve
their time
Toward that great year of equal might
and rights,
Nor would I fight with iron laws, in the end
Found golden : let the past be past ; let be

Their cancell'd Babels: tho' the rough
kex break

The starr'd mosaic, and the beard-blown
goat

Hang on the shaft, and the wild fig trees split
Their monstrous idols, care not while we
hear

A trumpet in the distance pealing news
Of better, and Hope, a poisoning eagle, burns
Above the unrisen morrow": then to me;
"Know you no song of your own land,"
she said,

"Not such as moans about the retrospect,
But deals with the other distance and
the hues

Of promise; not a death's-head at the
wine."

Then I remember'd one myself had
made,

What time I watch'd the swallow wing-
ing south

From mine own land, part made long
since, and part

Now while I sang, and maidenlike 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 eaves,
And tell her, tell her, what I tell to thee.

"O tell her, Swallow, thou that know-
est 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 lattice, I would 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 lingereth she to clothe her heart
with love,

Delaying as the tender ash delays
To clothe herself, when all the woods are
green?

"O tell her, Swallow, that thy brood
is flown:

Say to her, I do but wanton in the South,
But in the North long since my nest is
made.

"O tell her, brief is life but love is long
And brief the sun of summer in the North,
And brief the moon of beauty in the South.

"O Swallow, flying from the golden
woods,

Fly to her, and pipe and woo her, and
make her mine,

And tell her, tell her, that I follow thee."

I ceased, and all the ladies, each at each,
Like the Ithacensian suitors in old time,
Stared with great eyes, and laugh'd with
alien lips,

And knew not what they meant; for
still my voice

Rang false: but smiling "Not for thee,"
she said,

"O Bulbul, any rose of Gulistan
Shall burst her veil: marsh-divers,
rather, maid,

Shall croak 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 dress 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: ourself have often
tried

Valkyrian hymns, or into rhythm have
dash'd

The passion of the prophetess; for song
Is due to 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,

Not vassals to be beat, nor petty babes
To be dandled, no, but living wills, and
sphered
Whole in ourselves and owed to none.
Enough !
But now to leaven play with profit, you,
Know you no song, the true growth of
your soil,
That gives the manners of your country-
women ? ”

She spoke and turn'd her sumptuous
head with eyes
Of shining expectation fixt on mine.
Then while I dragg'd my brains for such
a song,
Cyril, with whom the bell-mouth'd glass
had wrought,
Or master'd by the sense of sport, began
To troll a careless, careless tavern-catch
Of Moll and Meg, and strange experiences
Unmeet for ladies. Florian nodded at
him,
I frowning ; Psyche flush'd and wann'd
and shook ;
The lilylike Melissa droop'd her brows ;
“ Forbear ” the Princess cried ; “ For-
bear, Sir ” I ;
And heated thro' and thro' with wrath
and love,
I smote him on the breast ; he started up ;
There rose a shriek as of a city sack'd ;
Melissa clamor'd “ Flee the death ” ;
“ To horse ”
Said Ida ; “ home ! to horse ! ” and fled,
as flies
A troop of snowy dovesathwart the dusk,
When some one batters at the dovecot-
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 every hoof a knell to my desires,
Clang'd on the bridge ; and then another
shriek,
“ The Head, the Head, the Princess. O
the Head ! ”
For blind with rage she miss'd the plank,
and roll'd
In the river. Out I sprang from glow to
gloom :
There whirl'd her white robe like a blos-
som'd branch
Rapt to the horrible fall : a glance I gave,

No more ; but woman-vested as I was
Plunged ; and the flood drew ; yet I
caught her ; then
Oaring one arm, and bearing in my left
The weight of all the hopes of half the
world,
Strove to buffet to land in vain. A tree
Was half-disrooted from his place and
stoop'd
To drench his dark locks in the gurgling
wave
Mid-channel. Right on this we drove
and caught,
And grasping down the boughs I gain'd
the shore.

There stood her maidens glimmeringly
group'd
In the hollow bank. One reaching for-
ward drew
My burden from mine arms ; they cried
“ she lives ” :
They bore her back into the tent : but I,
So much a kind of shame within me
wrought,
Not yet ventured 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 hiveward, found
at length
The garden portals. Two great statues,
Art
And Science, Caryatids, lifted up
A weight of emblem, and betwixt were
valves
Of open-work in which the hunter rued
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 o'er at top with
pain,
Dropt on the sward, and up the linden
walks,
And, tost on thoughts that changed from
hue to hue,
Now poring on the glowworm, now the
star,
I paced the terrace, till the Bear had
wheel'd
Thro' a great arc his seven slow suns.

A step
Of lightest echo, then a loftier form
Than female, moving thro' the uncertain
gloom,
Disturb'd me with the doubt "if this
were she"

But it was Florian. "Hist O Hist," he
said,

"They seek us : out so late is out of rules.
Moreover 'seize the strangers' is the cry.
How came you here ?" I told him : "I"
said he,

"Last of the train, a moral leper, I,
To whom none spake, half-sick at heart,
return'd.

Arriving all confused among the rest
With hooded brows I crept into the hall,
And, couch'd behind a Judith, under-
neath

The head of Holofernes peep'd and saw.
Girl after girl was call'd to trial : each
Disclaim'd all knowledge of us : last of all,
Melissa : trust me, Sir, I pitied her.
She, question'd if she knew us men, at
first

Was silent ; closer prest, denied it not :
And then, demanded if her mother 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 sent 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 :
What, if together ? that were not so well.
Would rather we had never come ! I dread
His wildness, and the chances of the dark."

"And yet," I said, "you wrong him
more than I

That struck him : this is proper to the
clown,

Tho' smock'd, or furr'd and purpled,
still the clown,

To harm the thing that trusts him, and
to shame

That which he says he loves : for Cyril,
how'er

He deal in frolic, as to-night — the song
Might have been worse and sinn'd in
grosser lips

Beyond all pardon — as it is, I hold

These flashes on the surface are not he.
He has a solid base of temperament :
But as the waterlily starts and slides
U'pon the level in little puffs of wind
Tho' anchor'd to the bottom, such is he."

Scarce had I ceased when from a tam-
arisk near

Two Proctors leapt upon us, crying,
"Names" :

He, standing still, was clutch'd ; but I
began

To thrid the musky-circled mazes, wind
And double in and out the boles, and race
By all the fountains : fleet I was of foot :
Before me shower'd the rose in flakes ;
behind

I heard the puff'd pursuer ; at mine ear
Bubbled the nightingale and heeded not,
And secret laughter tickled all my soul.
At last I hook'd my ankle in a vine,
That claspt the feet of a Mnemosyne,
And falling on my face was caught and
known.

They haled 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 toward her, combing out her long
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 labor. Each was like a Druid rock ;
Or like a spire of land that stands apart
Cleft from the main, and wail'd about
with mews.

Then, as we came, the crowd dividing
clove

An advent to the throne : and there beside,
Half-naked 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 shoulder shaken with
her sobs,

Melissa knelt ; but Lady Blanche 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 Castalies ;
 I fed you with the milk of every Muse ;
 I loved you like this kneeler, and you me
 Your second mother : those were gracious
 times.
 Then came your new friend : you began
 to change —
 I saw it and grieved — to slacken and to
 cool ;
 Till taken with her seeming openness
 You turn'd 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 chiefly you were born for something
 great,
 In which I might your fellow-worker be,
 When time should serve ; and thus a
 noble scheme
 Grew up from seed we two long since
 had sown ;
 In us true growth, in her a Jonah's gourd,
 Up in one night and due to sudden sun :
 We took this palace ; but even from the
 first
 You stood in your own light and darken'd
 mine.
 What student came but that you planed
 her path
 To Lady Psyche, younger, not so wise,
 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 :
 Then came these wolves : *they* knew her :
they endured,
 Long-closeted with her the yestermorn,
 To tell her what they were, and she to
 hear :
 And me none told : not less to an eye
 like mine,
 A lidless watcher of the public weal,
 Last night, their mask was 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 miscounted 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 ta'en for public
 use,
 I broke the letter of it to keep the sense.
 I spoke not then at first, but watch'd
 them well,
 Saw that they kept apart, no mischief
 done ;
 And yet this day (tho' you should hate
 me for it)
 I came to tell you ; found that you had
 gone,
 Ridd'n to the hills, she likewise : now, I
 thought,
 That surely she will speak ; if not, then I :
 Did she ? These monsters blazon'd what
 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 ;
 And I remain on whom to wreak your
 rage,
 I, that have lent my life to build up yours,
 I that have wasted here health, wealth,
 and time,
 And talents, I — you know it — 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 our-
 self."

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 propt,
Half-drooping 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 Niobëan 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,
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,

Palpitated, her hand shook, and we heard
In the dead hush 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 jarr'd on her ire ; she
crush'd

The scrolls together, made a sudden turn
As if to speak, but, utterance falling her,
She whirl'd them on to me, as who should
say

"Read," and I read — two letters — one
her sire's.

"Fair daughter, when we sent the
Prince your way
We knew not your ungracious laws,
which learnt,

We, conscious of what temper you are
built,

Came all in haste to hinder wrong, but
fell

Into his father's hands, who has this night,
You lying close upon his territory,
Slipt round and in the dark invested you,
And here he keeps me hostage for his
son."

The second was my father's running
thus :

"You have our son : touch not a hair of
his head :

Render him up unscathed : give him your
hand :

Cleave to your contract : tho' indeed we
hear

You hold the woman is the better man ;
A rampant 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 this night should pluck your
palace down ;

And we will do it, unless you send us back
Our son, on the instant, whole."

So far I read ;
And then stood up and spoke impetuously.

"O not to pry and peer on your reserve,
But led by golden wishes, and a hope
The child of regal compact, did I break
Your precinct ; not a scorner of your sex
But venerator, zealous it should be
All that it might be : hear me, for I bear,
Tho' man, yet human, whatsoever your
wrongs,

From the flaxen curl to the gray 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 blown to inmost north ; at eve and
dawn

With Ida, Ida, Ida, rang the woods ;
The leader wildswan in among the stars
Would clang it, and lapt in wreaths of
glowworm light

The mellow breaker murmur'd Ida. Now,
Because I would have reach'd you, had
you been

Sphered up with Cassiopëia, or the enthroned

Persphone in Hades, now at length,
Those winters of abeyance all worn out,
A man I came to see you : but, indeed,
Not in this frequency can I lend full tongue,

O noble Ida, to those 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 presage ; tho' when known, there grew

Another kind of beauty in detail
Made them worth knowing : but in you I found

My boyish dream involved and dazzled down

And master'd, while that after-beauty makes

Such head from act to act, from hour to hour,

Within me, that except you slay me here,

According to your bitter statute-book,
I cannot cease to follow you, as they say
The seal does music ; who desire you more
Than growing boys their manhood ; dying lips,

With many thousand matters left to do,
The breath of life ; O more than poor men wealth,

Than sick men health — yours, yours, not mine — but half

Without you ; with you, whole ; and of those halves

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 antagonisms
To follow up the worthiest till he die :
Yet that I came not all unauthorized
Behold your father's letter."

On one knee
Kneeling, I gave it, which she caught,
and dash'd

Unopen'd at her feet : a tide of fierce
Invective seem'd to wait behind her lips,
As waits a river level with the 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 maids

Gather'd together : from the illumined hall

Long lanes of splendor slanted o'er a press
Of snowy shoulders, thick as herded ewes,
And rainbow robes, and gems and gemlike eyes,

And gold and golden heads ; they to and fro

Fluctuated, as flowers in storm, some red, some pale,

All open-mouth'd, all gazing to the light,
Some crying there was an army in the land,

And some that men were in the very walls,
And some they cared not ; till a clamor grew

As of a new-world Babel, woman-built,
And worse-confounded : high above them stood

The placid marble Muses, looking peace.

Not peace she look'd, the Head : but rising up

Robed in the long night of her deep hair, so
To the open window moved, remaining there

Fixt like a beacon-tower above the waves
Of tempest, when the crimson-rolling eye
Glares 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 banner of our rights,
And clad in iron burst the ranks of war,
Or, falling, protomartyr of our cause,

Die : yet I blame you not so much for fear ;
Six thousand years of fear have made you that

From which I would redeem you ; but for those

That stir this hubbub — you and you — I know

Your faces there in the crowd — to-morrow morn

We hold a great convention : then shall they

That love their voices more than duty,
 learn
 With whom they deal, dismiss'd in shame
 to live
 No wiser than their mothers, household
 stuff,
 Live chattels, mincers of each other's fame,
 Full of weak poison, turnspits for the
 clown,
 The drunkard's football, laughing-stocks
 of Time,
 Whose brains are in their hands and in
 their heels,
 But fit to flaunt, to dress, to dance, to
 thrum,
 To tramp, to scream, to burnish, and to
 scour,
 For ever 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 gen-
 tleman,
 And like a prince : you have our thanks
 for all :
 And you look well too in your woman's
 dress :
 Well have you done and like a gentleman.
 You saved our life : we owe you bitter
 thanks :
 Better have died and spilt 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
 live,
 You would-be quenehers of the light to be,
 Barbarians, grosser than your native
 bears —
 O would I had his sceptre for one hour !
 You that have dared to break our bound,
 and gull'd
 Our servants, wrong'd and lied and
 thwarted us —
 I wed with thee ! I bound by precontract
 Your bride, your bonds slave ! not tho' 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 hateful
 to us :
 I trample on your offers and on you :
 Begone : we will not look upon you more.
 Here, push them out at gates."
 In wrath she spake.
 Then those eight mighty daughters of
 the plough
 Bent their broad faces toward us and
 address'd
 Their motion : twice I sought to plead
 my cause,
 But on my shoulder hung their heavy
 hands,
 The weight of destiny : so from her face
 They push'd us, down the steps, and
 thro' the court,
 And with 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 voices murmuring. While I listen'd,
 came
 On a sudden the weird seizure 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 kings
 Were shadows ; and the long fantastic
 night
 With all its doings had and had not been,
 And all things were and were not.

This went by
 As strangely as it came, and on my spirits
 Settled a gentle cloud of melancholy ;
 Not long ; I shook it off ; for spite of
 doubts
 And sudden ghostly shadowings I was one
 To whom the touch of all mischance but
 came
 As night 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, feigning pique at what she
 call'd

'The raillery, or grotesque, or false sub-
 lime—

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 enpty glove upon the tomb
 Lay by her like a model of her hand.

She took it and she flung it. "Fight"
 she said,

"And make us all 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 stumbled on a stationary voice,
 And "Stand, who goes?" "Two from
 the palace" I.

"The second two : they wait," he said,
 "pass on ;

His Highness wakes" : and one, that
 clash'd in arms,

By glimmering lanes and walls of canvas,
 led

Threading the soldier-city, till we heard
 The drowsy folds of our great ensign shake
 From blazon'd lions o'er the imperial tent
 Whispers of war.

Entering, the sudden light
 Dazed me half-blind : I stood and seem'd
 to hear,

As in a poplar grove when a light wind
 wakes

A lisp of the innumerable leaf and
 dies,

Each hissing in his neighbor's ear ; and
 then

A strangled titter, 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 gilded
 Squire.

At length my Sire, his rough cheek
 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 dragged mawkin,
 thou,

That tends her bristled grunners in the
 sludge" :

For I was drench'd with ooze, and torn
 with briers,

More crumpled than a poppy from the
 sheath,

And all one rag, disprinc'd from head to
 heel.

Then some one sent beneath his vaulted
 palm

A whisper'd jest to some one near him
 "Look,

He has been among his shadows." "Sa-
 tan take

The old women and their shadows ! (thus
 the King

Roar'd) make yourself a man to fight with
 men.

Go : Cyril told us all."

As boys that slink
 From ferule and the trespass-chiding eye,
 Away we stole, and transient in a trice

From what was left of faded woman-slough
 To sheathing splendors and the golden
 scale

Of harness, issued in the sun, that now
 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, resolder'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 tent
A stone-shot off: we enter'd in, and there
Among piled arms and rough accoutrements,

Pitiful sight, wrapp'd in a soldier's cloak,
Like some sweet sculpture draped from head to foot,

And push'd by rude hands from its pedestal,

All her fair length upon the ground she lay:
And at her head a follower of the camp,
A char'd and wrinkled piece of womanhood,

Sat watching like a watcher by the dead.

Then Florian knelt, and "Come" he whisper'd to her,

"Lift up your head, sweet sister: lie 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 moved,

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—

Parted from her—betray'd her cause 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

Take comfort: live, dear lady, for your child!"

At which she lifted up her voice and cried.

"Ah me, my babe, my blossom, ah my child,

My one sweet child, whom I shall see no more!

For now will cruel Ida keep her back;
And either she will die from want of care,
Or sicken with ill-usage, when they say
The child is hers—for every little fault,
The child is hers; and they will beat my girl

Remembering her mother: O my flower!
Or they will take her, they will make her hard,

And she will pass me by in after-life
With some cold reverence worse than were she dead.

Ill mother that I was to leave her there,
To lag behind, scared by the cry they made,

The horror of the shame among them all:
But I will go and sit beside the doors,

And make a wild petition night and day,
Until they hate to hear me like a wind

Wailing for ever, till they open to me,
And lay my little blossom at my feet,

My babe, my sweet Aglaia, my one child:
And I will take her up and go my way,

And satisfy my soul with kissing her:
Ah! what might that man not deserve

of me,
Who gave me back my child?" "Be

comforted"

Said Cyril "you shall have it": but again
She veil'd her brows, and prone she sank,

and so
Like tender things that being caught feign death,

Spoke not, nor stir'd.

By this a murmur ran
Thro' all the camp and inward raced the scouts

With rumor of Prince Arac hard at hand.
We left her by the woman, and without

Found the gray kings at parle: and
"Look you" cried

My father "that our compact be fulfill'd:
You have spoilt this child; she laughs

at you and man:
She wrongs herself, her sex, and me, and him:

But red-faced war has rods of steel and fire;
She yields, or war."

Then Gama turn'd to me:

“We fear, indeed, you spent a stormy time
With our strange girl : and yet they say
that still

You love her. Give us, then, your mind
at large :

How say you, war or not ?”

“Not war, if possible,
O king,” I said, “lest from the abuse of
war,

The desecrated shrine, the trampled year,
The smouldering homestead, and the
household flower

Torn from the lintel— all the common
wrong—

A smoke go up thro’ which I loom to her
Three times a monster : now she lightens
scorn

At him that mars her plan, but then
would hate

(And every voice she talk’d with ratify it,
And every face she look’d on justify it)

The general foe. More soluble is this knot,
By gentleness than war. I want her love.
What were I nigher this altho’ we dash’d
Your cities into shards with catapults,
She would not love ;— or brought her
chain’d, a slave,

The lifting of whose eyelash is my lord,
Not ever would she love ; but brooding
turn

The book of scorn, till all my fitting chance
Were caught within the record of her
wrongs,

And crush’d to death : and rather, Sire,
than this

I would the old God of war himself were
dead,

Forgotten, rusting on his iron hills,
Rotting on some wild shore with ribs of
wreck,

Or like an old-world mammoth bulk’d
in ice,

Not to be molten out.”

And roughly spake
My father, “Tut, you know them not,
the girls.

Boy, when I hear you prate I almost think
That idiot legend credible. Look you, Sir !
Man is the hunter ; woman is his game :
The sleek and shining creatures of the
chase,

We hunt them for the beauty of their skins ;
They love us for it, and we ride them down.
Wheedling and siding with them ! Out !
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 beauteous battle,
comes

With the air of the trumpet round him,
and leaps in

Among the women, snares them by the
score

Flatter’d and fluster’d, wins, tho’ dash’d
with death

He reddens what he kisses : thus I won
Your mother, a good mother, a good wife,
Worth winning ; but this firebrand—
gentleness

To such as her ! if Cyril spake her true,
To catch a dragon in a cherry net,
To trip a tigress with a gossamer,
Were wisdom to it.”

“Yea but Sire,” I cried,
“Wild natures need wise curbs. The
soldier ? No :

What dares not Ida do that she should
prize

The soldier ? I beheld her, when she rose
The yesternight, and storming in extremes
Stood for her cause, and flung defiance
down

Gagelike to man, and had not shunn’d
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 from elm : one loves the soldier,
one

The silken priest of peace, one this, one
that,

And some unworthily ; their sinless faith,
A maiden moon that sparkles on a sty,
Glorifying clown and satyr ; whence they
need

More breadth of culture : is not Ida right ?
They worth it ? truer to the law within ?
Severer 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 minted in the golden moods
Of sovereign artists ; not a thought, a
touch,

But pure as lines of green that streak the
white

Of the first snowdrop’s sinner leaves ; I say,
Not like the piebald miscellany, man,
Bursts of great heart and slips in sensual
mire,

But whole and one : and take them all-
 in-all,
 Were we ourselves but half as good, as
 kind,
 Astruthful, much that Ida claims as right
 Had ne'er been mooted, but as frankly
 theirs
 As dues of Nature. To our point : not
 war :

Lest I lose all."

"Nay, nay, you spake but sense"
 Said Gama. "We remember love our-
 self

In our sweet youth ; we did not rate him
 then

This red-hot iron to be shaped with blows.
 You talk almost like Ida : *she* can talk ;
 And there is something in it as you say :
 But you talk kindlier : we esteem you
 for it. —

He seems a gracious and a gallant Prince,
 I would he had our daughter : for the rest,
 Our own detention, why, the causes
 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 goblins in the night,
 Nor in the furrow broke the ploughman's
 head,

Nor burnt the grange, nor buss'd the
 milking-maid,

Nor robb'd the farmer of his bowl of cream :
 But let your Prince (our royal word upon it,
 He comes back safe) ride with us to 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 guests, if so you
 will,

Follow us : who knows ? we four may
 build some plan

Foursquare to opposition."

Here he reach'd

White hands of farewell to my sire, who
 growl'd

An answer which, half-muffled in his
 beard,

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 bole, 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 oozed

All o'er with honey'd answer as we rode ;
 And blossom-fragrant slipt the heavy dews
 Gather'd by night and peace, with each
 light air

On our mail'd heads : but other thoughts
 than Peace

Burnt in us, when we saw the embattled
 squares,

And squadrons 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 yell'd ; they clash'd their
 arms ; the drum

Beat ; merrily-blowing shrill'd the mar-
 tial fife ;

And in the blast and bray of the long horn
 And serpent-throated bugle, undulated
 The banner : anon to meet us lightly
 pranced

Three captains out ; nor ever had I seen
 Such thews of men : the midmost and the
 highest

Was Arac : all about his motion clung
 The shadow of his sister, as the beam
 Of the East, that play'd upon them, made
 them glauce

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-music, 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 wan-
 dering hand

And now a pointed finger, told them all :
 A common light of smiles at our disguise
 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 ! myself, what care I, war
or no ?
But then this question of your troth re-
mains :
And there's a downright honest mean-
ing 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 womankind,
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
swear it —
'Sdeath — and with solemn rites by can-
dle-light —
Swear by St. something — I forget her
name —
Her that talk'd down the fifty wisest men ;
She was a princess too ; and so I swore.
Come, this is all ; she will not : waive
your claim :
If not, the foughten field, what else, at
once
Decides it, 'sdeath ! against my father's
will.”

I lagg'd in answer loath to render up
My precontract, 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.”
A taunt that clench'd his purpose like a
blow !
For fiery-short was Cyril's counter-scoff,

And sharp I answer'd, touch'd upon the
point
Where idle boys are cowards to their
shame,
“ Decide it here : why not ? we are three
to three.”

Then spake the third “ But three to
three ? no more ?
No more, and in our noble sister's cause !
More, more, for honor : every captain
waits
Hungry for honor, angry for his king.
More, more, some fifty on a side, that
each
May breathe himself, and quick ! by
overthrow
Of these or those, the question settled die.”

“ Yea ” answer'd I “ for this wild
wreath of air,
This flake of rainbow flying on the highest
Foam of men's deeds — this honor, if ye
will.
It needs must be for honor if at all :
Since, what decision ? if we fail, we fail,
And if we win, we fail : she would not
keep
Her compact.” “ 'Sdeath ! but we will
send to her,”
Said Arac, “ worthy reasons why she
should
Bide by this issue : let our missive thro',
And you shall have her answer by the
word.”

“ Boys ! ” shriek'd the old king, but
vainlier than a hen
To her false daughters in the pool ; for
none
Regarded ; neither seem'd there more to
say :
Back rode we to my father's camp, and
found
He thrice had sent a herald to the gates,
To learn if Ida yet would cede our claim,
Or by denial flush her babbling wells
With her own people's life : three times
he went :
The first, he blew and blew, but none
appear'd :
He batter'd at the doors ; none came ;
the next,
An awful voice within had warn'd him
thence :
The third, and those eight daughters of
the plough

Came sallying thro' the gates, and caught
 his hair,
 And so belabor'd him on rib and cheek
 They made him wild : not less one glance
 he caught
 Thro' open doors of Ida station'd there
 Unshaken, clinging to her purpose, firm
 Tho' compass'd by two armies and the
 noise
 Of arms ; and standing like a stately Pine
 Set in a cataract on an island-crag,
 When storm is on the heights, and right
 and left
 Suck'd from the dark heart of the long
 hills roll
 The torrents, dash'd to the vale : and yet
 her will
 Bred will in me to overcome it or fall.

But when I told the king that I was
 pledged
 To fight in toarney for my bride, he
 clash'd
 His iron palms together with a cry ;
 Himself would tilt it out among the lads :
 But overborne by all his bearded lords
 With reasons drawn from age and state,
 perforce
 He yielded, wroth and red, with fierce
 demur :
 And many a bold knight started up in
 heat,
 And sware to combat for my claim till
 death.

All on this side the palace ran the field
 Flat to the garden-wall : and likewise
 here,
 Above the garden's glowing blossom-
 belts,
 A column'd entry shone and marble stairs,
 And great bronze valves, emboss'd with
 Tomyris
 And what she did to Cyrus after fight,
 But now fast barr'd : so here upon the flat
 All that long morn the lists were ham-
 mer'd up,
 And all that morn the heralds to and fro,
 With message and defiance, went and
 came ;
 Last, Ida's answer, in a royal hand,
 But shaken here and there, and rolling
 words
 Oration-like. I kiss'd it and I read.

“ O brother, you have known the pangs
 we felt,

What heats of indignation when we heard
 Of those that iron-cramp'd their women's
 feet ;
 Of lands in which at the altar the poor
 bride
 Gives her harsh groom for bridal-gift a
 scourge ;
 Of living hearts that crack within the fire
 Where smoulder their dead despots ; and
 of those, —
 Mothers, — that, all prophetic pity, fling
 Their pretty maids 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 men : the old leaven
 leaven'd all :
 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.
 Far off from men I built a fold for them :
 I stored it full of rich memorial :
 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,
 Mask'd like our maids, 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 aught of
 false —
 Is not our cause pure ? and whereas I know
 Your prowess, Arac, and what mother's
 blood
 You draw from, fight ; you failing, I abide
 What end soever : fail you will not. Still
 Take not his life : he risk'd it for my own ;
 His mother lives : yet whatso'er you do,
 Fight and fight well ; strike and strike
 home. O dear
 Brothers, the woman's Angel guards you,
 you
 The sole men to be mingled with our cause,
 The sole men we shall prize 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 claim 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 crown'd
twins,
Commerce and conquest, shower the fiery
grain
Of freedom broadcast over all that orbs
Between the Northern and the Southern
morn."

Then came a postscript dash'd across
the rest.
"See that there be no traitors in your
camp :
We seem a nest of traitors — none to
trust
Since our arms fail'd — this Egypt-
plague of men !
Almost our maids were better at their
homes,
Than thus man-girdled here : indeed I
think
Our chiefest comfort is the little child
Of one unworthy mother ; which she left :
She shall not have it back : the child
shall grow
To prize the authentic mother of her mind.
I took it for an hour in mine own bed
This morning : there the tender orphan
hands
Felt at my heart, and seem'd to charm
from thence
The wrath I nursed against the world :
farewell."

I ceased ; he said : "Stubborn, but
she may sit
Upon a king's right hand in thunder-
storms,
And breed up warriors ! See now, tho'
yourself
Be dazzled by the wildfire Love to sloughs
That swallow common sense, the spin-
dling king,
This Gama swamp'd in lazy tolerance.
When the man wants weight, the wo-
man takes it up,

And topples down the scales ; but this
is fixt
As are the roots of earth and base of all ;
Man for the field and woman for the hearth :
Man for the sword and for the needle
she :
Man with the 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 good-
man
Shrinks in his arm-chair while the fires
of Hell
Mix with his hearth : but you — she 's
yet a colt —
Take, break her : strongly groom'd and
straitly curb'd
She might not rank with those detestable
That let the bantling scald at home, and
brawl
Their rights or wrongs like potherbs in
the street.
They say she 's comely ; there's the fairer
chance :
I like her none the less for rating at her !
Beside, the woman wed is not as we,
But suffers change of frame. A lusty
brace
Of twins may weed her of her folly. Boy,
The bearing and the training of a child
Is woman's wisdom."

Thus the hard old king :
I took my leave, for it was nearly noon :
I pored upon her letter which I held,
And on the little clause "take not his
life" :
I mused on that wild morning in the
woods,
And on the "Follow, follow, thou shalt
win" :
I thought on all the wrathful king had
said,
And how the strange betrothment was
to end :
Then I remember'd that burnt sorcerer's
curse
That one should fight with shadows and
should fall ;
And like a flash the weird affection came :
King, camp, and college turn'd to hollow
shows ;
I seem'd to move in old memorial tilts,
And doing battle with forgotten ghosts,
To dream myself the shadow of a dream :

And ere I woke it was the point of noon,
The lists were ready. Empanoplied and
plumed

We enter'd in, and waited, fifty there
Opposed to fifty, till the trumpet blared
At the barrier like a wild horn in a land
Of echoes, and a 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 haunches rose the
steed,

And into fiery splinters leapt the lance,
And out of stricken helmets sprang the
fire.

Part sat like rocks: part reel'd but kept
their seats:

Part roll'd on the earth and rose again
and drew:

Part stumbled mixt with floundering
horses. Down

From those two bulks at Arac's side, and
down

From Arac's arm, as from a giant's flail,
The large blows rain'd, as here and every-
where

He rode the mellay, lord of the ringing
lists,

And all the plain, — brand, mace, and
shaft, and shield —

Shock'd, like an iron-clanging anvil bang'd
With hammers; till I thought, can this
be he

From Gama's dwarfish loins? 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 Jael,
With Psyche's babe, was Ida watching us,
A single band of gold about her hair,
Like a Saint's glory up in heaven: but
she

No saint — inexorable — no tenderness —
Too hard, too cruel: yet she sees me fight,
Yea, let her see me fall! with that I
drave

Among the thickest and bore down a
Prince,

And Cyril, one. Yea, let me make my
dream

All that I would. But that large-mould-
ed man,

His visage all agrin as at a wake,
Made at me thro' the press, and, stagger-
ing back

With stroke on stroke the horse and
horseman, came

As comes a pillar of electric cloud,
Flaying the roofs and sucking up the
drains,

And shadowing down the champaign till
it strikes

On a wood, and takes, and breaks, and
cracks, and splits,

And twists the grain with such a roar
that Earth

Reels, and the herdsmen cry; for every-
thing

Gave way before him: only Florian, he
That loved me closer than his own right
eye,

Thrust in between; but Arac rode him
down:

And Cyril seeing it, push'd against the
Prince,

With Psyche's color round his helmet,
tough,

Strong, supple, sinew-corded, apt at
arms;

But tougher, heavier, stronger, he that
smote

And threw him: last I spurr'd; I felt
my veins

Stretch with fierce heat; a moment hand
to hand,

And sword to sword, and horse to horse
we hung,

Till I struck out and shouted; the blade
glanced;

I did but shear a feather, and dream and
truth

Flow'd from me; darkness closed me
and I fell.

—

Home they brought her warrior dead:
She nor swoon'd, nor utter'd cry:
All her maidens, watching, said,
"She must weep or she will die."

Then they praised him, soft and low,
Call'd him worthy to be loved,



" Like summer tempest came her tears —
 ' Sweet my child, I live for thee.' "

Truest friend and noblest foe ;
 Yet she neither spoke nor moved.

Stole a maiden from her place,
 Lightly to the warrior stept,
 Took the face-cloth from the face ;
 Yet she neither moved nor wept.

Rose a nurse of ninety years,
 Set his child upon her knee —
 Like summer tempest came her tears —
 " Sweet my child, I live for thee. "

VI.

My dream had never died or lived again.
 As in some mystic middle state I lay ;
 Seeing I saw not, hearing not I heard ;
 Tho', if I saw not, yet they told me
 all
 So often that I speak as having seen.

For so it seem'd, or so they said to me,
 That all things grew more tragic and
 more strange ;

That when our side was vanquish'd and
 my cause
 For ever lost, there went up a great cry,
 The Prince is slain. My father heard
 and ran
 In on the lists, and there unlaced my casque
 And grovell'd on my body, and after him
 Came Psyche, sorrowing for Aglaïa.

But high upon the palace Ida stood
 With Psyche's babe in arm : there on
 the roofs
 Like that great dame of Lapidoth she sang.

“Our enemies have fall'n, have fall'n :
 the seed,
 The little seed they laugh'd at in the dark,
 Has risen and cleft the soil, and grown
 a bulk
 Of spanless girth, that lays on every side
 A thousand arms and rushes to the Sun.

“Our enemies have fall'n, have fall'n :
 they came ;
 The leaves were wet with women's tears :
 they heard
 A noise of songs they would not under-
 stand :
 They mark'd it with the red cross to the
 fall,
 And would have strown it, and are fall'n
 themselves.

“Our enemies have fall'n, have fall'n :
 they came,
 The woodmen with their axes : lo the tree !
 But we will make it fagots for the hearth,
 And shape it plank and beam for roof
 and floor,
 And boats and bridges for the use of men.

“Our enemies have fall'n, have fall'n :
 they struck ;
 With their own blows they hurt them-
 selves, nor knew
 There dwelt an iron nature in the grain :
 The glittering axe was broken in their
 arms,
 Their arms were shatter'd to the shoulder
 blade.

“Our enemies have fall'n, but this
 shall grow
 A night of Summer from the heat, a
 breadth
 Of Autumn, dropping fruits of power ;
 and roll'd

With music in the growing breeze of Time,
 The tops shall strike from star to star,
 the fangs
 Shall move the stony bases of the world.

“And now, O maids, behold our sanc-
 tuary
 Is violate, our laws broken : fear we not
 To break them more in their behoof,
 whose arms
 Champion'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
 mankind,
 Ill nurses ; but descend, and proffer these
 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 maids in train across the Park.
 Some cowl'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 wavering
 fell,
 And over them the tremulous isles of light
 Slided, they moving under shade : but
 Blanche
 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 ;
 Here stay'd ;

Knelt on one knee, — the child on one,
 — and prest
 Their hands, and call'd them dear deliver-
 ers,
 And happy warriors, 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 mute, and motionlessly
 pale,
 Cold ev'n to her, she sigh'd ; and when
 she saw
 The haggard father's face and reverend
 beard
 Of grisly twine, all dabbled with the blood
 Of his own son, shudder'd, a twitch of pain
 Tortured her mouth, and o'er her fore-
 head 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 tress,
 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 tress
 With kisses, ere the days of Lady Blanche :
 And then once more she look'd at my
 pale face :
 Fill 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 bow'd, she set the child on the earth ;
 she laid
 A feeling finger on my brows, and pres-
 ently
 "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 falter to the woman's goal."

She said : but at the happy word "he
 lives"
 My father stoop'd, re-father'd o'er my
 wounds.
 So those two foes above my fallen life,
 With brow to brow like night and even-
 ing mixt
 Their dark and gray, while 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, spied its mother and began
 A blind and babbling laughter, and to
 dance
 Its body, and reach its fatling innocent
 arms
 And lazy lingering fingers. She the appeal
 Brook'd not, but clamoring out, "Mine—
 mine — not yours,
 It is not yours, but mine : give me the
 child"
 Ceased all on tremble : piteous was the cry :
 So stood the unhappy mother open-
 mouth'd,
 And turn'd each face her way : wan was
 her cheek
 With hollow watch, her blooming man-
 tle torn,
 Red grief and mother's hunger in hereye,
 And down dead-heavy sank her curls,
 and half
 The sacred mother's bosom, panting, burst
 The laces toward her babe ; but she nor
 cared
 Norknew it, clamoring on, till Ida heard,
 Look'd up, and rising slowly from me,
 stood
 Erect and silent, striking with her glance
 The mother, me, the child ; but he that lay
 Beside us, Cyril, batter'd as he was,
 Trail'd himself up on one knee ; then he
 drew
 Her robe to meet his lips, and down she
 look'd
 At the arm'd man sideways, pitying as it
 seem'd,
 Or self-involved ; but when she learnt his
 face,
 Remembering his ill-omen'd song, arose
 Once more thro' all her height, and o'er
 him grew

Tall as a figure lengthen'd on the sand
When the tide ebbs in sunshine, and he
said :

“O fair and strong and terrible! Lioness
That with your long locks play the Lion's
mane!

But Love and Nature, these are two more
terrible

And stronger. See, your foot is on our
necks,

We vanquish'd, you the Victor of your
will.

What would you more? give her the child!
remain

Orb'd in your isolation: he is dead,
Or all as dead: henceforth we let you be:

Win you the hearts of women; and beware
Lest, where you seek the common love

of these,
The common hate with the revolving
wheel

Should drag you down, and some great
Nemesis

Break from a darken'd future, crown'd
with fire,

And tread you out forever: but howso'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 dandled
you,

Orown one part of sense not flint to prayer,
Give her the child! or if you scorn to

lay it,
Yourself, in hands so lately claspt with
yours,

Or speak to her, your dearest, her one fault
The tenderness, not yours, that could

not kill,
Give me it: *I will give it her.*”

He said :

At first her eye with slow dilation roll'd
Dry flame, she listening; after sank and

sank
And, into mournful twilight mellowing,
dwelt

Full on the child; she took it: “Pretty
bud!

Lily of the vale! half open'd bell of the
woods!

Sole comfort of my dark hour, when a world
Of traitorous friend and broken system

made
No purple in the distance, mystery,

Pledge of a love not to be mine, farewell;
These men are hard upon us as of old,

We two must part: and yet how fain was I
To dream thy cause embraced in mine,

to think
I might be something to thee, when I felt
Thy helpless warmth about my barren

breast
In the dead prime: but may thy mother
prove

As true to thee as false, false, false to me!
And, if thou needs must bear the yoke,

I wish it
Gentle as freedom”—here she kiss'd it:

then—
“All good go with thee! take it Sir”
and so

Laid the soft babe in his hard-mailed
hands,

Who turn'd half-round to Psyche as she
sprang

To meet it, with an eye that swum in
thanks;

Then felt it sound and whole from head
to foot,

And hugg'd and never hugg'd it close
enough,

And in her hunger mouth'd and mum-
bled 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

For ever: 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—'s death! 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:

'Sdeath! I would sooner fight thrice o'er
than see it.”

But Ida spoke not, gazing on the ground,
And reddening in the furrows of his

chin,
And moved beyond his custom, Gama
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'—just 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 Lady Blanche: much profit! Not
 one word;
 No! tho' your father sues: see how you
 stand
 Stiff as Lot's wife, and all the good knights
 main'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,
 Where we withdrew from summer heats
 and state,
 And had our wine and chess beneath the
 planes,
 And many a pleasant hour with her that's
 gone,
 Ere you were born to vex us? Is it kind?
 Speak to her I say: is this not she of whom,
 When first she came, all flush'd you said
 to me
 Now had you got 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 arc, spheroid and azimuth,
 And right ascension, Heaven knows what;
 and now
 A word, but one, one little kindly word,
 Not one to spare her: out upon you, flint!
 You love nor her, nor me, nor any; nay,
 You shame your mother's judgment too.
 Not one?
 You will not? well—no heart have you,
 or such
 As fancies like the vermin in a nut
 Have fretted all to dust and bitterness."
 So said the small king moved beyond his
 wont.

But Ida stood nor spoke, drain'd of her
 force
 By many a varying influence and so long.
 Down thro' her limbs a drooping languor
 wept:
 Her head a little bent; and on her mouth
 A doubtful smile dwelt like 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 wish'd it—but
 we see
 The accomplice of your madness unfor-
 given,
 And think that you might mix his draught
 with death,
 When your skies change again: the
 rougher hand
 Is safer: on to the tents: take up the
 Prince."

He rose, and while each ear 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.
 O Psyche," she cried out, "embrace me,
 come,
 Quick while I melt; make 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 being
 chid!
 I seem no more: I want forgiveness too:
 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 wa'
 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 maids
 Till happier times each to her proper
 hearth :
 What use to keep them here — now ? grant
 my prayer.
 Help, father, brother, help ; speak to the
 king :
 Thaw this male nature to some touch of
 that
 Which kills me with myself, and drags
 me down
 From my fixt height to mob me up with all
 The soft and milky rabble of womankind,
 Poor weakling 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 :
 't was I.
 I had been wedded wife, I knew mankind,
 And block'd them out ; but these men
 came to woo
 Your Highness — verily I think to win."

So she, and turn'd askance a wintry
 eye :
 But Ida with a voice, that like a bell
 Toll'd by an earthquake in a trembling
 tower,
 Rang ruin, answer'd full of grie' and scorn.

" Fling our doors wide ! all, all, not
 one, but all,
 Not only he, but by my mother's soul,
 Whatever man lies wounded, friend or foe,
 Shall enter, if he will. Let our girls flit,
 Till the storm die ! but had you stood by
 us,
 The roar that breaks the Pharos from his
 base
 Had left us rock. She fain would sting
 us too,
 But shall not. Pass, and mingle with
 your likes.
 We brook no further insult but are gone."

She turn'd ; the very nape of her white
 neck
 Was rosed with indignation : but the
 Prince
 Her brother came ; the king her father
 charm'd
 Her wounded soul with words : nor did
 mine own
 Refuse her proffer, lastly gave his hand.

Then us 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 crush was, and
 each base,
 To left and right, of those tall columns
 drown'd
 In silken fluctuation and the swarm
 Of female whisperers : at the further end
 Was Ida by the throne, the two great cats
 Close by her, like supporters on a shield,
 Bow-baek'd with fear : but in the centre
 stood
 The common men with rolling eyes ;
 amazed
 They glared upon the women, and aghast
 The women stared at these, all silent, save
 When armor clash'd or jingled, while the
 day,
 Descending, struck athwart the hall, and
 shot
 A flying splendor out of brass and steel,
 That o'er the statues leapt from head to
 head,
 Now fired an angry Pallas on the helm,
 Now set a wrathful Dian's moon on flame,
 And now and then an eeho started up,

And shuddering fled from room to room,
and died
Of fright in far apartments.

Then the voice
Of Ida sounded, issuing ordinance :

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 elsewhere 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 sagest, and the great lords out and in,
From those two hosts that lay beside the
walls,

Walk'd at their will, and everything was
changed.

Ask me no more : the moon may draw
the sea ;

The cloud may stoop from heaven and
take the shape,

With fold to fold, of mountain or of cape ;
But O too fond, when have I answer'd thee ?

Ask me no more.

Ask me no more : what answer should I
give ?

I love not hollow cheek or 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.

VII.

So was their sanctuary 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 every-
where

Low voices with the ministering hand
Hung round the sick : the maidens 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
With books, with flowers, with Angel of-
fices,

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, blent with
shame.

Old studies fail'd ; seldom she spoke ;
but oft

Clomb to the roofs, and gazed alone for
hours

On that disastrous leaguer, swarms of men
Darkening her female field : void was
her use,

And she as one that climbs a peak to gaze
O'er land and main, and sees a great black
cloud

Drag inward from the deeps, a wall of
night,

Blot out the slope of sea from verge to
shore,

And suck the blinding splendor from the
sand,

And quenching lake by lake and tarn by
tarn

Expunge the world : so far'd she gazing
there ;

So blacken'd all her world in secret, blank
And waste it seem'd and vain ; till down
she came,

And found fair peace once more among
the sick.

And twilight dawn'd ; and morn by
morn the lark

Shot up and shrill'd in flickering gyres,
but I

Lay silent in the muffled cage of life :
And twilight gloom'd ; and broader-
grown the 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 sunder'd from the moving Universe,

Nor knew what eye was on me, nor the hand
That nursed me, more than infants in their sleep.

But Psyche tended Florian : with her oft,
Melissa came ; for Blanche had gone, but left
Her child among us, willing she should keep
Court-favor : here and there the small bright head,
A light of healing, glanced about the couch,
Or thro' the parted silks the tender face
Peep'd, shining in upon the wounded man
With blush and smile, a medicine in themselves
To wile 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 dewdrops on the petal shake
To the same sweet air, and tremble deeper down,
And slip at once all-fragrant into one.

Less prosperously the second suit obtain'd
At first with Psyche. Not tho' 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 liked him, yielded she, but fear'd
To incense the Head once more ; till on a day
When Cyril pleaded, Ida came behind
Seen but of Psyche : on her foot she hung
A moment, and she heard, at which her face
A little flush'd, and she past on ; but each
Assumed from thence a half-consent involved
In stillness, plighted 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, gripe it hard,
And fling it like a viper off, and shriek
" You are not Ida " ; clasp it once again,
And call her Ida, tho' I knew her not,
And call her sweet, as if in irony,
And call her hard and cold which seem'd a truth :
And still she fear'd that I should lose my mind,
And often she believed that I should die :
Till out of long frustration of her care,
And pensive tendance in the all-weary noons,
And watches in the dead, the dark, when clocks
Throbb'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 listenings to my muttered dream,
And often feeling of the helpless hands,
And wordless broodings on the wasted cheek —
From all a closer interest flourish'd up,
Tenderness touch by touch, and last, to these,
Love, like an Alpine harebell hung with tears
By some cold morning glacier ; frail at first
And feeble, all unconscious of itself,
But such as gather'd color day by day.

Last I woke sane, but wellnigh close to death
For weakness : it was evening : silent light

Slept on the painted walls, wherein were wrought

Two grand designs ; for on one side arose
The women up in wild revolt, and storm'd
At the Opian law. Titanic shapes, they
cramm'd

The forum, and half-crush'd among the
rest

A dwarf-like Cato cower'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 triumvirs ; and before them
paused

Hortensia, pleading : angry was her face.

I saw the forms : I knew not where I
was :

They did but look like hollow shows ; nor
more

Sweet Ida : palm to palm she sat : the dew
Dwelt in her eyes, and softer all her shape
And rounder seem'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 whisper-
ingly :

“If you be, what I think you, some
sweet dream,

I would but ask you to fulfil 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
My spirit closed with Ida's at the lips ;
Till back I fell, and from mine arms she
rose

Glowing all over noble shame ; and all
Her falser self slipt 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 deck'd
her out

For worship without end ; nor end of
mine,

Stateliest, for thee ! but mute she glided
forth,

Nor glanced behind her, and I sank and
slept,

Fill'd thro' and thro' with Love, a happy
sleep.

Deep in the night I woke : she, near
me, held

A volume of the Poets of her land :
There to herself, all in low tones, she read.

“Now sleeps the crimson petal, now
the white ;

Nor waves the cypress in the palace walk ;
Nor winks the gold fin in the porphyry
font :

The fire-fly wakens : waken thou with me.

“Now droops the milkwhite peacock
like a ghost,

And like a ghost she glimmers on to me.

“Now lies the Earth all Danaë 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.”



“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 ?”

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 shep-
 herd 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 the happy threshold, he,
 Or hand in hand with Plenty in the maize,
 Or red with spirted purple of the vats,

Or foxlike in the vine : nor cares to walk
 With Death and Morning on the silver
 horns,

Nor wilt thou snare him in the white
 ravine,

Nor find him dropt upon the firths of ice,
 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 dangling
 water-smoke,

That like a broken purpose waste in air :
 So waste not thou ; but come ; for all
 the vales

Await thee, azure pillars of the hearth
 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 moan of doves in immemorial elms,
 And murmuring of innumerable bees."

So she low-toned ; while with shut
 eyes I lay

Listening ; then look'd. Pale was the
 perfect face ;

The bosom with long sighs labor'd ; and
 meek

Seem'd the full lips, and mild the lu-
 minous 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 pray'd me not to judge their cause
 from her

That wrong'd it, sought far less for truth
 than power

In knowledge : something wild within
 her breast,

A greater than all knowledge, beat her
 down.

And she had nursed 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
 farce !

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 thro' all the faultful
 Past

Went sorrowing in a pause I dared not
 break ;

Till notice of a change in the dark world
 Was lispt 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 cause 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 her
 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 forms
 That seem to keep her up but drag her
 down —

Will leave her space to burgeon out of all
 Within her — let her make herself her own

To give or keep, to live and learn and be
 All that not harms distinctive woman-
 hood.

For woman is not undevelop't man,
 But diverse : could we make her as the
 man,

Sweet Love were slain : his dearest bond
 is this,

Not like to like, but like in difference.
 Yet in the long years liker must they grow ;

The man be more of woman, she of man ;
 He gain in sweetness and in moral height,
 Nor lose the wrestling thews that throw
 the world ;

She mental breadth, nor fail in childward
 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-summ'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 statelier Eden back to
 m-n :

Then reign the world's great bridal,
 chaste and calm :

Then springs the crowning race of hu-
 mankind.

May these things be ! "

Sighing she spoke " I fear
 They will not. "

" Dear, but let us type them now
 In our own lives, and this proud watch-
 word rest

Of equal ; seeing either sex alone
 Is half itself, and in true marriage lies
 Nor equal, nor unequal : each fulfils
 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, lives
 A drowning life, besotted in sweet self,
 Or pines in sad experience worse than
 death,

Or keeps his wing'd affections clipt with
 crime :

Yet was there one thro' whom I loved
 her, one

Not learned, save in gracious household
 ways,

Not perfect, nay, but full of tender wants,
 No Angel, but a dearer being, all dipt
 In Angel instincts, breathing Paradise,
 Interpreter between the Gods and men,
 Who look'd all native to her place, and yet
 On tiptoe seem'd to touch upon a sphere
 Too gross to tread, and all male minds
 perforce

Sway'd to her from their orbits as they
 moved,

And girdled her with music Happy he
 With such a mother ! faith in womankind
 Beats with his blood, and trust in all
 things high

Comes easy to him, and tho' he trip and
 fall

He shall not blind his soul with clay. "

" But I, "
 Said Ida, tremulously, " so all unlike—
 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 seen,
 and saw

Thee woman thro' the crust of iron moods
 That mask'd thee from men's reverence
 up, and forced

Sweet love on pranks of saucy boyhood :
 now,

Giv'n back to life, to life indeed, thro'
 thee,

Indeed I love : the new day comes, the
 light

Dearer for night, as dearer thou for faults
 Lived over : lift 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 fine air I tremble, all the past
 Melts mist-like into this bright hour, and
 this

Is morn to more, and all the rich to-come
 Reels, as the golden Autumn woodland
 reels

Athwart the smoke of burning weeds.
 Forgive me,

I waste my heart in signs : 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 no man knows. Indeed I love thee:
 come,

Yield thyself up : my hopes and thine
 are one :

Accomplish thou my manhood and thy-
self ;
Lay thy sweet hands in mine and trust
to me."

CONCLUSION.

So closed our tale, of which I give you all
The random scheme as wildly as it rose :
The words are mostly mine ; for when
we ceased

There came a minute's pause, and Walter
said,

"I wish she had not yielded !" then to me,
"What, if you drest it up poetically !"
So pray'd the men, the women : I gave
assent :

Yet how to bind the scattered 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 Lilia first :
The women — and perhaps they felt their
power,

For something in the ballads which they
sang,

Or in their silent influence as they sat,
Had ever seem'd to wrestle with burlesque,
And drove us, last, to quite a solemn
close —

They hated banter, wish'd for something
real,

A gallant fight, a noble princess — why
Not make her true-heroic — true-sublime ?
Or all, they said, as earnest as the close ?
Which yet with such a framework scarce
could be.

Then rose a little feud betwixt the two,
Betwixt the mockers and the realists :
And I, betwixt them both, to please
them both,

And yet to give the story as it rose,
I moved as in a strange diagonal,
And maybe neither pleased myself nor
them.

But Lilia pleased me, for she took no
part

In our dispute : the sequel of the tale
Had touch'd her ; and she sat, she pluck'd
the grass,

She flung it from her, thinking : last,
she fixt

A showery glance upon her, and said,
"You — tell us what we are" who might
have told,

For she was cram'm'd with theories out
of books,

But that there rose a shout : the gates
were closed

At sunset, and the crowd were swarming
now,

To take their leave, about the garden rails.

So I and some went out to these : we
climb'd

The slope to Vivian-place, and turningsaw
The happy valleys, half in light, and half
Far-shadowing from the west, a land of
peace ;

Gray halls alone among their 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 seas ;

A red sail, or a white ; and far beyond,
Imagined more than seen, the skirts of
France.

"Look there, a garden !" said my
college friend,

The Tory member's elder son "and there !
God bless the narrow sea which keeps
her off,

And keeps our Britain, whole within
herself,

A nation yet, the rulers and the ruled —
Some sense of duty, something of a faith,
Some reverence for the laws ourselves
have made,

Some patient force to change them when
we will,

Some civic manhood firm against the
crowd —

But yonder, whiff ! there comes a sudden
heat,

The 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 old woman, and down rolls the
world

In mock heroics stranger than our own ;
Revolts, republics, revolutions, most
No graver than a schoolboys' barring out ;
Too comic for the solemn things they are,

Too solemn for the comic touches in them,
Like our wild Princess with as wise a dream
As some of theirs — God bless the narrow
seas !
I wish they were a whole Atlantic broad."

"Have patience," I replied, "ourselves
are full
Of social wrong; and maybe wildest
dreams
Are but the needful 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 go-cart. Patience ! Give it
time
To learn its limbs : there is a hand that
guides."

In such discourse we gain'd the gar-
den rails,
And there we saw Sir Walter where he
stood,
Before a tower of crimson holly-oaks,
Among six boys, head under head, and
look'd
No little lily-handed Baronet he,
A great broad-shoulder'd genial English-
man,
A lord of fat prize-oxen and of sheep,
A raiser of huge melons and of pine,
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 pithy, such
as closed

Welcome, farewell, and welcome for the
year
To follow : a shout rose again, and made
The long line of the approaching rook-
ery swerve
From the elms, and shook the branches
of the deer
From slope to slope thro' distant ferns,
and rang
Beyond the bourn of sunset ; O, a shout
More joyful than the city-roar that hails
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 revery,
Perchance upon the future man : the walls
Blacken'd about us, bats wheel'd, and owls
whoop'd,
And gradually the powers of the night,
That range above the region of the wind,
Deepening the courts of twilight broke
them up
Thro' all the silent spaces of the worlds,
Beyond all thought into the Heaven of
Heavens.

Last little Lilia, rising quietly,
Disrobed the glimmering statue of Sir
Ralph
From those rich silks, and home well-
pleas'd 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 seemest human and divine,
The highest, holiest manhood, thou :
Our wills are ours, we know not how ;
Our wills are ours, to make them thine.

Our little systems have their day ;
They have their day and cease to be :
They are but broken lights of thee,
And thou, O Lord, art more than they.

We have but faith : we cannot know ;
For knowledge is of things we see ;
And yet we trust it comes from thee,
A beam in darkness : let it grow.

Let knowledge grow from more to more,
But more of reverence in us dwell :
That mind and soul, according well,
May make one music as before,

But vaster. We are fools and slight ;
We mock thee when we do not fear :
But help thy foolish ones to bear ;
Help thy vain worlds to bear thy light.

Forgive what seem'd my sin in me ;
What seem'd my worth since I began ;
For merit lives from man to man,
And not from man, O Lord, to thee.

Forgive my grief for one removed,
Thy creature, whom I found so fair.
I trust he lives in thee, and there
I find him worthier to be loved.

Forgive these wild and wandering cries,
Confusions of a wasted youth ;
Forgive them where they fail in truth,
And in thy wisdom make me wise.

IN MEMORIAM.

A. H. H.

OBIIT MDCCCXXXIII.

I.

I HELD it truth, with him who sings
To one clear harp in divers tones,
That men may rise on stepping-stones
Of their dead selves to higher things.

But who shall so forecast the years
And find in loss a gain to match ?
Or reach a hand thro' time to catch
The far-off interest of tears ?

Let Love clasp Grief lest both be drown'd,
Let darkness keep her 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 under-lying 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 stubborn hardihood,
I seem to fail from out my blood
And grow incorporate into thee.

III.

O SORROW, cruel fellowship,
O Priestess in the vaults of Death,
O sweet and bitter in a breath,
What whispers from thy lying lip ?

"The stars," she whispers, "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 bondsman to the dark ;
I sit within a helmless bark,
And with my heart I muse and say :

O heart, how fares it with thee now,
That thou shouldst fail from thy desire,
Who scarcely darest to inquire,
"What is it makes me beat so low ?"

Something it is which thou hast lost,
Some pleasure from thine early years.
Break, thou deep vase of chilling tears,
That grief hath shaken into frost !

Such clouds of nameless trouble cross
All night below the darken'd eyes ;
With morning wakes the will, and cries,
"Thou shalt not be the fool of loss."

V.

I SOMETIMES hold it half a sin
To put in words the grief I feel ;
For words, like Nature, half reveal
And half conceal the Soul within.

But, for the unquiet heart and brain,
A use in measured language lies ;
The sad mechanic exercise,
Like dull narcotics, numbing pain.

In words, like weeds, I'll wrap me o'er,
Like coarsest clothes against the cold ;
But that large grief which these unfold
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, wheresoc'er thou be,
Who pledgest now thy gallant son ;
A shot, ere half thy draught be done,
Hath 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, even when she turn'd, the curse
Had fallen, and her future Lord
Was drown'd in passing thro' the ford,
Or kill'd in falling from his horse.

O what to her shall be the end ?
And what to me remains of good ?
To her, perpetual maidenhood,
And unto me no second friend.

VII.

DARK house, by which once more I stand
Here in the long unlovely street,
Doors, where my heart was used to beat
So quickly, waiting for a hand,

A hand that can be clasp'd no more, —
Behold me, for I cannot sleep,
And like a guilty thing I creep
At earliest morning to the door.

He is not here ; but far away
The noise of life begins again,
And 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 saddens, all the magic light
Dies off at once from bower and hall,
And all the place is dark, and all
The chambers emptied of delight :

So find I every pleasant spot
In which we two were wont to meet,
The field, the chamber, and the street,
For all is dark where thou art not.

Yet as that other, wandering there
In those deserted walks, may find
A flower beat with rain and wind,
Which once she foster'd up with care ;

So seems it in my deep regret,
O my forsaken heart, with thee
And this poor flower of poesy
Which little cared for fades not yet.

But since it pleased a 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
Sailest the placid ocean-plains
With my lost Arthur's loved remains,
Spread thy full wings, and waft him o'er.

So draw him home to those that mourn
In vain ; a favorable speed
Ruffle thy mirror'd mast, and lead
Thro' prosperous floods his holy urn.

All night no ruder air perplex
Thy sliding keel, till Phosphor, bright
As our pure love, thro' early light
Shall glimmer on the dewy decks.

Sphere all your lights around, above ;
Sleep, gentle heavens, before the prow ;
Sleep, gentle winds, as he sleeps now,
My friend, the brother of my love ;

My Arthur, whom I shall not see
Till all my widow'd race be run ;
Dear as the mother to the son,
More than my brothers are to me.

X.

I HEAR the noise about thy keel ;
I hear the bell struck in the night ;
I see the cabin-window bright ;
I see the sailor at the wheel.

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

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

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

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

XI.

CALM is the morn without a sound,
Calm as to suit a canner grief,
And only thro' the faded 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 silvery gossamers
That twinkle into green and gold :

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

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



“Fair ship, that from the Italian shore
Sailed the placid ocean-plains.”

Calm on the seas, and silver sleep,
And waves that sway themselves in rest,
And dead calm in that noble breast
Which heaves but with the heaving deep.

XII.

Lo, as a dove when up she springs
To bear thro' Heaven a tale of woe,
Some dolorous message knit below
The wild pulsation of her wings ;
Like her I go ; I cannot stay ;
I leave this mortal ark behind,
A weight of nerves without a mind,
And leave the cliffs, and haste away
O'er ocean-mirrors rounded large,
And reach the glow of southern skies,
And see the sails at distance rise,
And linger weeping on the marge,
And saying ; “Come, thus, my friend ?
Is this the end of my care ?”
And circle moans, in the air :
“Is this the end ? Is this the end ?

And forward dart again, and play
About the prow, and back return
To where the body sits, and learn,
That I have been an hour away.

XIII.

TEARS of the widower, when he sees
A late-lost form that sleep reveals,
And moves his doubtful arms, and feels
Her place is empty, fall like these ;
Which weep a loss for ever new,
A void where heart on heart reposed ;
And, where warm hands have prest and
closed,
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 rise on wing,
And glance about the approaching sails,
As tho' they brought but merchants'
bales,
And not the burden 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 plank,
And beckoning unto those they know ;

And if along with these should come
The man I held as half-divine ;
Should strike a sudden hand in mine,
And ask a thousand things of home ;

And I should tell him all my pain,
And how my life had 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.

XV.

TO-NIGHT the winds begin to rise
And roar from yonder dropping day :
The last red leaf is whirl'd 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
Athwart a plane of molten glass,
I scarce could brook the strain and stir

That makes the barren branches loud ;
And but for fear it is not so,
The wild unrest that lives in woe
Would dote and pore on yonder cloud

That rises upward always higher,
And onward drags a laboring breast,
And topples round the dreary west,
A looming bastion fringed with fire.

XVI.

WHAT words are these have fall'n from me?
Can calm despair and wild unrest
Be tenants of a single breast,
Or so frow such a changeling be ?

Or doth she only seem to take
The touch of change in calm or storm ;
But knows no more of transient form
In her deep self, than some dead lake

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

That strikes by night a craggy shelf,
And staggers 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 fuses old and new,
And flashes into false and true,
And mingles all without a plan ?

XVII.

THOU comest, much wept for : such a
breeze
Compell'd thy canvas, and my prayer
Was as the whisper of an air
To breathe thee over lonely seas.

For I in spirit saw thee move
Thro' circles of the bounding sky,
Week after week : the days go by :
Come quick, thou bringest all I love.

Henceforth, wherever thou mayst roam,
My blessing, like a line of light,
Is on the waters day and night,
And like a beacon guards thee home.

So may whatever tempest mars
Mid-ocean, spare thee, sacred bark ;
And balmy drops in summer dark
Slide from the bosom of the stars.

So kind an office hath been done,
Such precious relics brought by thee ;
The dust of him I shall not see
Till all my widow'd race be run.

XVIII.

It 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.

It 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 thro' his lips impart
The life that almost dies in me ;

That dies not, but endures with pain,
And slowly forms the firmer mind,
Treasuring the look it cannot find,
The words that are not heard again.

XIX.

THE Danube to the Severn gave
The 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 hushes half the babbling Wye,
And makes a silence in the hills.

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

The tide flows down, the wave again
Is vocal in its wooded walls ;
My deeper anguish also falls,
And I can speak a little then.

XX.

THE lesser griefs that may be said,
That breathe a thousand tender vows,
Are but as servants in a house
Where lies the master newly dead ;

Who speak their feeling as it is,
And weep the fulness from the mind :
"It will be hard," they say, "to find
Another service such as this."

My lighter moods are like to these,
That out of words a comfort win ;
But there are other griefs within,
And tears that at their fountain freeze ;

For by the hearth the children sit
Cold in that atmosphere of Death,
And scarce endure to draw the breath,
Or like to noiseless phantoms flit :

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 SING to him that rests below,
And, since the grasses round me wave,
I take the grasses of the grave,
And make them pipes whereon to blow.

The traveller hears me now and then,
And sometimes harshly will he speak ;
"This fellow would make weakness
weak,
And melt the waxen hearts of men."

Another answers, "Let him be,
He loves to make parade of pain,
That with his piping he may gain
The praise that comes to constancy."

A third is wroth, "Is this an hour
For private sorrow's barren song,
When more and more the people throng
The chairs and thrones of civil power ?

"A time to sicken and to swoon,
When Science reaches forth her arms
To feel from world to world, and charms
Her secret from the latest moon ?"

Behold, ye speak an idle thing :
Ye never knew the sacred dust :
I do but sing because I must,
And pipe but as the linnets sing :

And one is glad ; her note is gay,
For now her little ones have ranged ;
And one is sad ; her note is changed,
Because her brood is stol'n away.

XXII.

THE path by which we twain did go,
Which led by tracts that pleased us well,
Thro' 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 cloak'd from head to foot,

Who keeps the keys of all the creeds,
 I wander, often falling lame,
 And looking back to whence I came,
 Or on to where the pathway leads ;

And crying, How changed from where
 it ran
 Thro' lands where not a leaf was dumb ;
 But all the lavish hills would hum
 The murmur of a happy Pan :

When each by turns was guide to each,
 And Fancy light from Fancy caught,
 And Thought leapt out to wed with
 Thought
 Ere Thought could wed itself with Speech ;

And all we met was fair and good,
 And all was good that Time could bring,
 And all the secret of the Spring
 Moved in the chambers of the blood ;

And many an old philosophy
 On Argive heights divinely sang,
 And round us all the thicket rang
 To many a flute of Arcady.

XXIV.

AND was the day of my delight
 As pure and perfect as I say ?
 The very source and fount of Day
 Is dash'd with wandering isles of night.

If all was good and fair we met,
 This earth had been the Paradise
 It never look'd to human eyes
 Since Adam left his garden yet.

And is it that the haze of grief
 Makes former gladness loom so great?
 The lowness of the present state,
 That sets the past in this relief ?

Or that the past will always win
 A glory from its being far ;
 And orb into the perfect star
 We saw not, when we moved therein ?

XXV.

I KNOW that this was Life, — the track
 Whereon with equal feet we fared ;
 And then, as now, the day prepared
 The daily burden for the back.

But this it was that made me move
 As light as carrier-birds in air ;
 I loved the weight I had to bear,
 Because it needed help of Love :

Nor could I weary, heart or limb,
 When mighty Love would cleave in
 twain
 The lading of a single pain,
 And part it, giving half to him.

XXVI.

STILL onward winds the dreary way ;
 I with it ; for I long to prove
 No lapse of moons can canker Love,
 Whatever fickle tongues may say.

And if that eye which watches guilt
 And goodness, and hath power to see
 Within the green the moulder'd tree,
 And towers fall'n as soon as built —

O, if indeed that eye foresee
 Or see (in Him is no before)
 In more of life true life no more
 And Love the indifference to be,

Then might I find, ere yet the morn
 Breaks hither over Indian seas,
 That Shadow waiting with the keys,
 To shroud me from my proper scorn.

XXVII.

I ENVY not in any moods
 The captive void of noble rage,
 The linnet born within the cage,
 That never knew the summer woods :

I envy not the beast that takes
His license in the field of time,
Unfetter'd by the sense of crime,
To whom a conscience never wakes ;

Nor, what may count itself as blest,
The heart that never plighted troth,
But stagnates in the weeds of sloth ;
Nor any want-begotten rest.

I hold it true, whate'er befall ;
I feel it, when I sorrow most ;
'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 fail, 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 goodwill, goodwill and peace,
Peace and goodwill, 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 controll'd me when a boy ;
They bring me sorrow touch'd with joy,
The merry merry bells of Yule.

XXIX.

WITH 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 holly boughs
Entwine 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.

WITH trembling fingers did we weave
The holly 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 gamboll'd, making vain pretence
Of gladness, with an awful sense
Of one mute Shadow watching all.

We paused : the winds were in the beech ;
We heard them sweep the winter land ;
And in a circle hand-in-hand
Sat silent, looking each at each.

Then echo-like our voices rang ;
We sung, tho' every eye was dim,
A merry song we sang with him
Last year : impetuously we sang :

We ceased : a gentler feeling crept
Upon us : surely rest is meet :
"They rest," we said, "their sleep is
sweet,"

And silence follow'd, and we wept.

Our voices took a higher range ;
Once more we sang : "They do not die
Nor lose their mortal sympathy,
Nor change to us, although they change ;

"Rapt from the fickle and the frail
With gather'd power, yet the same,
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 wert 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.

HER eyes are homes of silent prayer,
No other thought her mind admits
But, he was dead, and there he sits,
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 subtle 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 hath centre everywhere,
Nor cares to fix itself to form,

Leave thou thy sister when she prays,
Her early Heaven, her happy views ;
Nor thou with shadow'd hint confuse
A life that leads melodious days.

Her faith thro' form is pure as thine,
Her hands are quicker unto good :
O, sacred be the flesh and blood
To which she links a truth divine !

See thou, that countest reason ripe
In holding by the law within,
Thou fail not in a world of sin,
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,
Fantastic beauty ; such as lurks
In some wild Poet, when he works
Without a conscience or an aim.

What then were God to such as I ?
'T were hardly worth my while to choose
Of things all mortal, or to use
A little patience ere I die ;

'T were best at once to sink to peace,
Like birds the charming serpent draws,
To drop head-foremost in the jaws
Of vacant darkness and to cease.

XXXV.

YET if some voice that man could trust
Should murmur from the narrow house,
"The cheeks 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 moanings of the homeless sea,
The sound of streams that swift or slow
Draw down Æonian 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 shunt,

Mere fellowship of sluggish moods,
Or in his coarsest Satyr-shape
Had crushed the herb and crush'd the
grape,
And bask'd and batten'd in the woods.

XXXVI.

THO' truths in manhood darkly join,
Deep-seated in our mystic frame,
We yield all blessing to the name
Of Him that made them current coin ;

For Wisdom dealt with mortal powers,
Where truth in closest words shall 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 poetic 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 :
 "Thou pratest here where thou art
 least ;
 This faith has many a purer priest,
 And many an abler voice than thou.

"Go down beside thy native rill,
 On thy Parnassus set thy feet,
 And hear thy laurel whisper sweet
 About the ledges of the hill."

And my Melpomene 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 owning 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 sanctities with song."

XXXVIII.

WITH weary steps I loiter on,
 Tho' always under 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 doubtful gleam of solace lives.

If any care for what is here
 Survive in spirits render'd free,
 Then are these songs I sing of thee
 Not all ungrateful to thine ear.

XXXIX.

OLD warder of these buried bones,
 And answering now my random stroke
 With fruitful cloud and living smoke,
 Dark yew, that graspest at the stones

And dippest toward the dreamless head
 To thee too comes the golden hour
 When flower is feeling after flower ;
 But Sorrow fixt upon the dead,

And darkening the dark graves of men,
 What whisper'd from her lying lips ?
 Thy gloom is kindled at the tips,
 And passes into gloom again.

XL.

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 blessings 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 as suit
 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.

XLI.

THY spirit ere our fatal loss
 Did ever rise from high to higher ;
 As mounts the heavenward altar-fire,
 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 leap the grades of life and light,
 And flash at once, my friend, to thee :

For tho' my nature rarely yields
 To that vague fear implied in death ;
 Nor shudders 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.

XLII.

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 he the much-beloved again,
 A lord of large experience, train
 To riper growth the mind and will :

And what delights can equal those
 That stir the spirit's inner deeps,
 When one that loves but knows not,
 reaps
 A truth from one that loves and knows ?

XLIII.

IF Sleep and Death be truly one,
 And every spirit's folded bloom
 Thro' all its intervital gloom
 In some long trance should slumber on ;

Unconscious of the sliding hour,
 Bare of the body, might it last,
 And silent traces of the past
 Be all the color of the flower :

So then were nothing lost to man,
 So that still garden of the souls
 In many a figured leaf enrolls
 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
 Rewaken with the dawning soul.

XLIV.

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 vanish'd, 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 Lethæan springs)
 May some dim touch of earthly things
 Surprise thee ranging with thy peers.

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

XLV.

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 I" :

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

So 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.

XLVI.

WE ranging down this lower track,
 The path we came by, thorn and flower,
 Is shadow'd by the growing hour,
 Lest life should fail in looking back.

So be it: there no shade can last
 In that deep dawn behind the tomb,
 But clear from marge to marge shall
 bloom
 The eternal landscape of the past ;

A lifelong tract of time 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.

XLVII.

THAT each, who seems a separate whole,
 Should move his rounds, and fusing all
 The skirts of self again, should fall
 Remerging in the general Soul,

Is faith as vague as all unsweet :
 Eternal form shall still divide
 The eternal soul from all beside ;
 And I shall know him when we meet :

And we shall sit at endless feast,
 Enjoying each the other's good :
 What vaster dream can hit the mood
 Of Love on earth ? He seeks at least

Upon the last and sharpest height,
 Before the spirits fade away,
 Some landing-place, to clasp and say,
 " Farewell ! We lose ourselves in light."

XLVIII.

IF these brief lays, of Sorrow born,
 Were taken to be such as closed
 Grave doubts and answers here pro-
 posed,
 Then these were such as men might scorn :

Her care is not to part and prove ;
 She takes, when harsher moods remit,
 What slender shade of doubt may flit,
 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-flights of song, that dip
 Their wings in tears, and skim away.

XLIX.

FROM art, from nature, from the schools,
 Let random influences glance,
 Like light in many a shiver'd lance
 That breaks about the dappled pools :

The lightest wave of thought shall lisp,
 The fancy's tenderest eddy wreath,
 The slightest air of song shall breathe
 To make the sullen surface crisp.

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.

Beneath all fancied hopes and fears
 Ay me ! the sorrow deepens down,
 Whose muffled motions blindly drown
 The bases of my life in tears.

L.

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 slinging flame.

Be near me when my faith is dry,
 And men the flies of latter spring,
 That lay their eggs, and sting and sing,
 And weave their petty cells and 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.

LI.

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 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 blained 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

LII.

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.
Abide : thy wealth is gather'd in,
When Time hath sunder'd shell from
pearl."

LIII.

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
Procuress to the Lords of Hell.

LIV.

O YET we trust that somehow good
Will be the final goal of ill,
To pangs of nature, sins of will,
Defects of doubt, and taints of blood ;

That nothing walks with aimless feet ;
That not one life shall be destroy'd,
Or cast as rubbish to the void,
When God hath made the pile complete ;

That not a worm is cloven in vain ;
That not a moth with vain desire
Is shrivel'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 — far off — at last, to all,
And every winter change to spring.

So runs my dream : but what am I ?
An infant crying in the night :
An infant crying for the light :
And with no language but a cry.

LV.

THE wish, that of the living whole
No life may fail 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 altar-stairs
That slope thro' darkness up to God,

I stretch lame hands of faith, and grope,
And gather dust and chaff, and call
To what I feel is Lord of all,
And faintly trust the larger hope.

LVI.

"So careful of the type ?" but no.
From scarp'd cliff and quarried stone
She cries, "A thousand types are gone:
I care for nothing, all shall go.

"Thou makest thine appeal to me :
I bring to life, I bring to death :
The spirit does but mean the breath
I know no more." And he, shall he,

Man, her last work, who seem'd 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
Withraving, 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.

LVII.

PEACE ; come away : the song of woe
Is after all an earthly song :
Peace ; come away : we do him wrong
To sing so wildly : let us go.

Come ; let us go : your cheeks are pale ;
But half my life I leave behind :
Methinks my friend is richly shroued ;
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" for evermore.

LVIII.

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-conscious of their dying clay,
And those cold crypts where they shall
cease.

The high Muse answer'd : " Wherefore
grieve
Thy brethren with a fruitless tear ?
Abide a little longer here,
And thou shalt take a nobler leave."

LIX.

O SORROW, wilt thou live with me,
No casual mistress, but a wife,
My bosom-friend and half of life ;
As I confess it needs must be ;

O Sorrow, wilt thou rule my blood,
Be sometimes lovely like a bride,
And put thy harsher moods aside,
If thou wilt have me wise and good.

My 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.

LX.

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 ?"

LXI.

IF, in thy second state sublime,
Thy ransom'd 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.

LXII.

Tho' if an eye that's downward cast
Could make thee somewhat blench or
fail,
Then be my love an idle tale,
And fading legend of the past;

And thou, 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.

LXIII.

YET pity 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 thou, perchance, art more than I,
And yet I spare them sympathy
And I would set their pains at ease.

So mayst thou watch me where I weep,
As, untraced vaster motions bound,
The circuits of thine orbit round
A higher height, a deeper deep.

LXIV.

Dost 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 invidious bar,
And grasps the skirts of happy chance,
And breasts the blows of circumstance,
And grapples with his evil star;

Who makes by force his merit known
And lives to clutch the golden keys,
To mould a mighty state's decrees,
And shape the whisper of the throne;

And moving up from high to higher,
Becomes on Fortune's crowning slope
The pillar of a people's hope,
The centre of a world's desire;

Yet feels, as in a pensive dream,
When all his active powers are still,
A distant dearness in the hill,
A secret sweetness in the stream,

The limit of his narrower fate,
While yet beside its vocal springs
He play'd at counsellors and kings,
With one that was his earliest mate;

Who ploughs with pain his native lea
And reaps the labor of his hands,
Or in the furrow musing stands;
"Does my old friend remember me?"

LXV.

SWEET soul, do with me as thou wilt;
I lull a fancy trouble-tost
With "Love's too precious to be lost,
A little grain shall not be spilt."

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.

LXVI.

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 crost,
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

LXVII.

WHEN on my bed the moonlight falls,
I know that in thy place of rest,
By that broad water of the west,
There comes a glory on the walls :

Thy marble bright in dark appears,
As slowly steals a silver flame
Along the letters of thy name,
And o'er the number of thy years.

The mystic glory swims away ;
From off my bed the moonlight dies ;
And closing eaves of wearied 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 ghost
Thy tablet glimmers to the dawn.

LXVIII.

WHEN in the down I sink my head,
Sleep, Death's twin-brother, times my
breath ;
Sleep, Death's twin-brother, knows
not Death,
Nor can I dream of thee as dead :

I walk as ere I walk'd forlorn,
When all our path was fresh with dew,
And all the bugle breezes blew
Reveillée to the breaking morn.

But what is this? I turn about,
I find a trouble in thine eye,
Which makes me sad I know not why,
Nor can my dream resolve the doubt :

But ere the lark hath left the lea
I wake, and I discern the truth ;
It is the trouble of my youth
That foolish sleep transfers to thee.

LXIX.

I DREAM'D there would be Spring no more,
That Nature's ancient power was lost :
The streets were black with smoke
and frost,
They chatter'd trifles at the door :

I wander'd from the noisy town,
I found a wood with thorny boughs :
I took the thorns to bind my brows,
I wore them like a civic crown :

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.

LXX.

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 shoals of pucker'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.

LXXI.

SLEEP, kinsman thou to death and trance
And madness, thou hast forged at last
A night-long Present of the Past
In which we went thro' summer France.

Hadst thou such credit with the soul?
Then bring an opiate trebly strong,
Drug down the blindfold sense of wrong
That so my pleasure may be whole ;

While now we talk as once we talk'd
Of men and minds, the dust of change,
The days that grow to something
strange,
In walking as of old we walk'd

Beside the river's wooded reach,
The fortress, and the mountain ridge,
The cataract flashing from the bridge,
The breaker breaking on the beach.



"I found a wood with thorny boughs."

LXXII.

Rise thou thus, dim dawn, again,
And howlest, issuing out of night,
With blasts that blow the poplar white,
And lash with storm the streaming pane ?

Day, when my crown'd estate begun
To pine in that reverse of doom,
Which sicken'd every living bloom,
And blurr'd the splendor of the sun ;

Who usherest in the dolorous hour
With thy quick tears that make the rose
Pull sideways, and the daisy close
Her crimson fringes to the shower ;

Who mightst have heaved a windless flame
Up the deep East, or, whispering, play'd

A checker-work of beam and shade
Along the hills, yet look'd the same,

As wan, as chill, as wild as now ;
Day, mark'd as with some hideous
crime,

When the dark hand struck down thro'
time,

And cancell'd nature's best : but thou,

Lift as thou mayst thy burden'd brows
Thro' 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, disastrous day ;

Touch thy dull goal of joyless gray,
And hide thy shame beneath the ground.

LXXIII.

So many worlds, so much to do,
So little done, such things to be,
How know I what had need of thee,
For thou wert strong as thou wert true ?

The fame is quench'd that I foresaw,
The head hath miss'd an earthly wreath:
I curse not nature, no, nor death ;
For nothing is that errs from law.

We pass ; the path that each man trod
Is dim, or will be dim, with weeds :
What fame is left for human deeds
In endless age ? It rests with God.

O hollow wraith of dying fame,
Fade wholly, while the soul exults,
And self-infolds the large results
Of force that would have forged a name.

LXXIV.

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.

LXXV.

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 howso'er expert
In fitting aptest words to things,
Or voice the richest-toned that sings,
Hath power to give thee as thou wert ?

I care not in these fading 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.

LXXVI.

TAKE wings of fancy, and ascend,
And in a moment set thy face
Where all the starry heavens of space
Are sharpen'd to a needle's end ;

Take wings of foresight ; lighten thro'
The secular abyss to come,
And lo, thy deepest lays are dumb
Before the mouldering 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 ?

LXXVII.

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.

LXXVIII.

AGAIN at Christmas did we weave
The holly round the Christmas hearth ;
The silent snow possess'd the earth,
And calmly fell our Christmas-eve :

The yule-clog sparkled keen with frost,
 No wing of wind the region swept,
 But over all things brooding slept
 The quiet sense of something lost.

As in the winters left behind,
 Again our ancient games had place,
 The mimic picture's breathing grace,
 And dance and song and hoodman-blind.

Who show'd a token of distress?
 No single tear, no mark of pain:
 O sorrow, then can sorrow wane?
 O grief, can grief be changed to less?

O last regret, regret can die!
 No—mix with all this mystic frame,
 Her deep relations are the same,
 But with long use her tears are dry.

LXXIX.

“MORE than my brothers are to me”—
 Let this not vex thee, noble heart!
 I know thee of what force thou art
 To hold the costliest love in fee.

But thou and I are one in kind,
 As moulded like in nature's mint;
 And hill and wood and field did print
 The same sweet forms in either mind.

For us the same cold streamlet curl'd
 Thro' all his eddying coves; the same
 All winds that roam the twilight came
 In whispers of the beauteous world.

At one dear knee we proffer'd vows,
 One lesson from one book we learn'd,
 Ere childhood's flaxen ringlet turn'd
 To black and brown on kindred brows.

And so my wealth resembles thine,
 But he was rich where I was poor,
 And he supplied my want the more
 As his unlikeness fitted mine.

LXXX.

IF any vague desire should rise,
 That holy Death ere Arthur died
 Had moved me kindly from his side,
 And dropt the dust on tearless eyes;

Then fancy shapes, as fancy can,
 The grief my loss in him had wrought,
 A grief as deep as life or thought,
 But stay'd in peace with God and man.

I make a picture in the brain;
 I hear the sentence that he speaks;
 He bears the burden of the weeks;
 But turns his burden into gain.

His credit thus shall set me free;
 And, influence-rich to soothe and save,
 Unused example from the grave
 Reach out dead hands to comfort me.

LXXXI.

COULD I have said while he was here,
 “My love shall now no further range;
 There cannot come a mellow change,
 For now is love mature in ear.”

Love, then, had hope of richer store:
 What end is here to my complaint?
 This haunting whisper makes me faint,
 “More years had made me love thee more.”

But Death returns an answer sweet:
 “My sudden frost was sudden gain,
 And gave all ripeness to the grain,
 It might have drawn from after-heat.”

LXXXII.

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, elsewhere.

For this alone on Death I wreak
 The wrath that garners in my heart;
 He put our lives so far apart
 We cannot hear each other speak.

LXXXIII.

DIP down upon the northern shore,
 O sweet new-year delaying long;
 Thou doest expectant nature wrong;
 Delaying long, delay no more.

What stays thee from the clouded noons
 Thy sweetness from its proper place?
 Can trouble live with April days,
 Or sadness in the summer moons?

Bring orchis, bring the foxglove spire,
The little speedwell's darling blue,
Deep tulips dash'd with fiery dew,
Laburnums, dropping-wells of fire.

O thou, new-year, delaying long,
Delayest the sorrow in my blood,
That longs to burst a frozen bud,
And flood a fresher throat with song.

LXXXIV.

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

I see thee sitting crown'd with good,
A central warmth diffusing bliss
In glance and smile, and clasped kiss,
On all the branches of thy blood ;

Thy blood, my friend, and partly mine ;
For now the day was drawing on,
When thou shouldst link thy life with
one

Of mine own house, and boys of thine

Had babbled "Uncle" on my knee ;
But that remorseless iron hour
Made cypress of her orange flower,
Despair of Hope, and earth of thee.

I seem to meet their least desire,
To clap their cheeks, to call them mine.
I see their unborn faces shine
Beside the never-lighted fire.

I see myself an honor'd guest,
Thy partner in the flowery walk
Of letters, genial table-talk,
Or deep dispute, and graceful jest ;

While now thy prosperous labor 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 bounteous hours
Conduct by paths of growing powers
To reverence and the silver hair ;

Till slowly worn her earthly robe,
Her lavish mission richly wrought,
Leaving great legacies of thought,
Thy spirit should fall from off the globe ;

What time mine own might also flee,
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.

LXXXV.

THIS truth came borne with bier and pall,
I felt it, when I sorrow'd most,
'T is better to have loved and lost,
Than never to have loved at all —

O true in word, and tried in deed,
Demanding, so to bring relief
To this which is our common grief,
What kind of life is that I lead ;

And whether trust in things above
Be dimm'd of sorrow, or sustain'd ;
And whether love for him have drain'd
My capabilities of love ;

Your words have virtue such as draws
A faithful answer from the breast,
Thro' light reproaches, half express,
And loyal unto kindly laws.

My blood an even tenor kept,
Till on mine ear this message falls,
That in Vienna's fatal walls
God's finger touch'd him, and he slept.

The great Intelligences fair
That range above our mortal state,
In circle round the blessed gate,
Received and gave him welcome there ;

And led him thro' the blissful climes,
And show'd him in the fountain fresh
All knowledge that the sons of flesh
Shall gather in the cycled times.

But I remain'd, whose hopes were dim,
Whose life, whose thoughts were little
worth,
To wander on a darken'd earth,
Where all things round me breathed of
him.

O friendship, equal-poised control,
 O heart, with kindest 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 blow.

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

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 swells the narrow
 brooks,
 And Autumn, with a noise of rooks,
 That gather in the waning 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, yearns 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 ;
 “ 'T is 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-hands, 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 later year,
 As not unlike to that of Spring.

LXXXVI.

SWEET after showers, ambrosial air,
 That rollest 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-tassel'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."

LXXXVII.

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 oars
Among the willows ; paced the shores
And many a bridge, and all about

The same gray flats again, and felt
The same, but not the same ; and last
Up that long walk of limes 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 crash'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 hung 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.

LXXXVIII.

WILD bird, whose warble, liquid sweet,
Rings Eden thro' the budded quicks,
O tell me where the senses mix,
O tell me where the passions meet,

Whence radiate : fierce extremes employ
Thy spirits in the darkening leaf,
And in the midmost heart of grief
Thy passion clasps a secret joy :

And I — my harp would prelude woe —
I cannot all command the strings ;
The glory of the sum of things
Will flash along the chords and go.

LXXXIX.

WITCH-ELMS that counterchange the floor
Of this flat lawn with dusk and bright ;
And thou, with all thy breadth and
height
Of foliage, towering sycamore ;

How 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 brawling
courts
And dusty parlours of the law.

O joy to him in this retreat,
Lummantled in ambrosial dark,
To drink the cooler air, and mark
The landscape winking thro' the heat :

O sound to ro it the brood of cares,
The sweep of scythe in morning dew,
The gust that round the garden flew,
And tumbled half the mellowing pears

O bliss, when all in circle drawn
About him, heart and ear were fed
To hear him, as he lay and read
The Tuscan poets on the lawn :

Or in the all-golden afternoon
 A guest, or happy sister, sung,
 Or here she brought the harp and flung
 A ballad to the brightening moon :

Nor less it pleased in livelier moods,
 Beyond the bounding hill to stray,
 And break the livelong summer day
 With banquet in the distant woods ;

Whereat we glanced from theme to theme,
 Discuss'd the books to love or hate,
 Or touch'd the changes of the state,
 Or threaded some Socratic dream ;

But if I praised the busy town,
 He loved to rail against it still,
 For "ground in yonder social mill
 We rub each other's angles down,

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

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

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

XC.

HE tasted love with half his mind,
 Nor ever drank the inviolate spring
 Where nighest heaven, who first could
 fling
 This bitter seed among mankind ;

That could the dead, whose dying eyes
 Were closed with wail, 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 past 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.

XCI.

WHEN rosy plumelets tint 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, beauteous in thine after form,
 And like a finer light in light.

XCII.

If any vision should reveal
 Thy likeness, I might count it vain
 As but the canker of the brain ;
 Yea, tho' it spake and made appeal

To chances where our lots were cast
 Together in the days behind,
 I might but say, I hear a wind
 Of memory murmuring the past.

Yea, tho' it spake and bared to view
 A fact within the coming year ;
 And tho' the months, revolving near,
 Should prove the phantom-warning true

They might not seem thy prophecies,
 But spiritual presentiments,
 And such refraction of events
 As often rises ere they rise.

XCIII.

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.

O, therefore from thy sightless range
With gods in un conjectured 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 blindness of the frame
My Ghost may feel that thine is near.

XCIV.

How pure at heart and sound in head,
With what divine affections bold
Should be the man whose thought
would hold
An hour's communion with the dead.

In vain shalt thou, or any, call
The spirits from their golden day,
Except, like them, thou too canst say,
My spirit is at peace with all.

They haunt the silence of the breast,
Imaginations calm and fair,
The memory like a cloudless air,
The conscience as a sea at rest :

But when the heart is full of din,
And doubt beside the portal waits,
They can but listen at the gates,
And hear the household jar within.

XCV.

By night we linger'd on the lawn,
For underfoot the herb was dry ;
And genial warmth ; and o'er the sky
The silvery haze of summer drawn ;

And calm that let the tapers burn
Unwavering : not a cricket chirr'd :
The brook alone far-off was heard,
And on the board the fluttering urn :

And bats went round in fragrant skies,
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 which 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' worldly snares 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 whirl'd
About empyreal heights of thought,
And came on that which is, and caught
The deep pulsations of the world,

Eonian music measuring out
The steps of Time—the shocks of
Chance—
The blows of Death. At length my
trance

Was cancell'd, stricken thro' with doubt.

Vague words ! but ah, how hard to frame
In matter-moulded forms of speech,
Or ev'n for intellect to reach
Thro' memory that which I became :

Till now the doubtful dusk reveal'd
The knolls once more where, couch'd at
ease,

The white kine glimmer'd, and the trees
Laid their dark arms about the field :

And suck'd from out the distant gloom
A breeze began to tremble o'er

The large leaves of the sycamore,
 And fluctuate all the still perfume,
 And gathering freshlier overhead,
 Rock'd the full-foliaged elms, and
 swung
 The heavy-folded rose, and flung
 The lilies to and fro, and said
 "The dawn, the dawn," and died away ;
 And East and West, without a breath,
 Mixt their dim lights, like life and
 death,
 To broaden into boundless day.

XCVI.

You say, but with no touch of scorn,
 Sweet-hearted, you, whose light-blue
 eyes
 Are tender over drowning flies,
 You tell me, doubt is Devil-born.

I know not : one indeed I knew
 In many a subtle question versed,
 Who touch'd a jarring lyre at first,
 But ever strove to make it true :

Perplext in faith, but pure in deeds,
 At last he beat his music out.
 There lives more faith in honest doubt,
 Believe me, than in half the creeds.

He fought his doubts and gather'd
 strength,
 Hewould 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.

XCVII.

My love has talk'd with rocks and trees ;
 He finds on misty mountain-ground
 His own vast shadow glory-crown'd ;
 He sees himself in all he sees.

Two partners of a married life —
 I look'd on these and thought of thee

In vastness and in mystery,
 And of my spirit as of a wife.

These two — they dwelt with eye on eye,
 Their hearts of old have beat in tune,
 Their meetings made December June,
 Their every parting was to die.

Their love has never past away ;
 The days she never can forget
 Are earnest that he loves her yet.
 Whate'er 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 thrids 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."

XCVIII.

You leave us : you will see the Rhine,
 And those fair hills I sail'd below,
 When I was there with him ; and go
 By summer belts of wheat and vine

To where he breathed his latest breath,
 That City. All her splendor seems
 No livelier than the wisp that gleams
 On Lethe in the eyes of Death.

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

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

Gnarr at the heels of men, and prey
By each cold hearth, and sadness flings
Her shadow on the blaze of kings :
And yet myself have heard him say,

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

Of lustier leaves ; nor more content,
He told me, lives in any crowd,
When all is gay with lamps, and loud
With sport and song, in booth and tent,

Imperial halls, or open plain ;
And wheels the circled dance, and
breaks
The rocket molten into flakes
Of crimson or in emerald rain.

XCIX.

RISEST 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 tremblest thro' thy darkling red
On yon swoll'n brook that bubbles fast
By meadows breathing of the past,
And woodlands holy to the dead ;

Who murmurest in the foliaged eaves
A song that slights the coming care,
And Autumn laying here and there
A fiery finger on the leaves ;

Who wakenest with thy balmy breath
To myriads on the genial earth,
Memories of bridal, or of birth,
And unto myriads more, of death.

O, wheresoever those may be,
Betwixt the slumber of the poles,
To-day they count as kindred souls ;
They know me not, but mourn with me.

C.

I CLIMB the hill : from end to end
Of all the landscape underneath,
I find no place that does not breathe
Some gracious memory of my friend ;

No gray old grange, or lonely fold,
Or low morass and whispering reed.
Or simple stile from mead to mead,
Or sheepwalk up the windy wold ;

Nor 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.

CI.

UNWATCH'D, the garden bough shall sway,
The tender blossom flutter down,
Unloved, that beech will gather brown,
This maple burn itself away ;

Unloved, the sun-flower, shining fair,
Ray round with flames her disk of seed,
And many a rose-carnation feed
With summer spice the humming air ;

Unloved, by many a sandy bar,
The brook shall babble down the plain,
At noon or when the lesser wain
Is twisting round the polar star ;

Uncared for, gird the windy grove,
And flood the haunts of hern and crake ;
Or into silver arrows break
The sailing moon in creek and cove ;

Till from the garden and the wild
A fresh association blow,
And year by year the landscape grow
Familiar to the stranger's child ;

As year by year the laborer tills
His wonted glebe, or lops the glades ;
And year by year our memory fades
From all the circle of the hills.

CII.

WE leave the well-beloved place
Where first we gazed upon the sky ;
The roofs, that heard our earliest cry
Will shelter one of stranger race.

We go, but ere we go from home,
As down the garden-walks I move,
Two spirits of a diverse love
Contend for loving masterdom.

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

The other answers, "Yea, but here
 Thy feet have stray'd in after hours
 With thy lost friend among the bowers,
 And this hath made them trebly dear."

These two have striven half the day,
 And each prefers his separate claim,
 Poor rivals in a losing game,
 That will not yield each other way.

I turn to go : my feet are set
 To leave the pleasant fields and farms ;
 They mix in one another's arms
 To one pure image of regret.

CIII.

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
 For ever : then flew in a dove
 And brought a summons from the sea :

And when they learnt that I must go
 They wept and wail'd, but led the way
 To where a little shallop lay
 At anchor in the flood below ;

And on by many a level mead,
 And shadowing bluff 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 thews of Anakim,
 The pulses of a Titan's heart ;

As one would sing the death of war,
 And one would chant the history
 Of that great race, which is to be,
 And one the shaping of a star ;

Until the forward-creeeping tides
 Began to foam, and we to draw
 From deep to deep, to where we saw
 A great ship lift her shining sides.

The man we loved was there on deck,
 But thrice as large as man he bent
 To greet us. Up the side I went,
 And fell in silence on his neck :

Whereat those maidens with one mind
 Bewail'd their lot ; I did them wrong :
 "We served thee here," they said, "so
 long,
 And wilt thou leave us now behind ?"

So rapt I was, they could not win
 An answer from my lips, but he
 Replying, "Enter likewise ye
 And go with us" : they enter'd in.

And while the wind began to sweep
 A music out of sheet and shroud,
 We steer'd her toward a crimson cloud
 That landlike slept along the deep.

CIV.

THE time draws near the birth of Christ ;
 The moon is hid, the night is still ;
 A single church below the hill
 Is pealing, folded in the mist.

A single peal of bells below,
 That wakens at this hour of rest
 A single murmur in the breast,
 That these are not the bells I know.

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

CV.

TO-NIGHT, ungather'd, let us leave
 This laurel, let this holly stand :
 We live within the stranger's land,
 And strangely falls our Christmas eve.

Our father's dust is left alone
 And silent under other snows :
 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 chiefly proved,
 A little spare the night I loved,
 And hold it solemn to the past.

But let no footstep beat the floor,
 Nor bowl of wassail mantle warm ;
 For who would keep an ancient form
 Thro' which the spirit breathes no more ?

Be neither song, nor game, nor feast ;
 Nor harp be 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 sleeps the summer in the seed ;
 Run out your measured arcs, and lead
 The closing cycle rich in good.

CVI.

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.

CVII.

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 sharpen'd eaves,

And bristles all the brakes and thorns
 To yon 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 ;

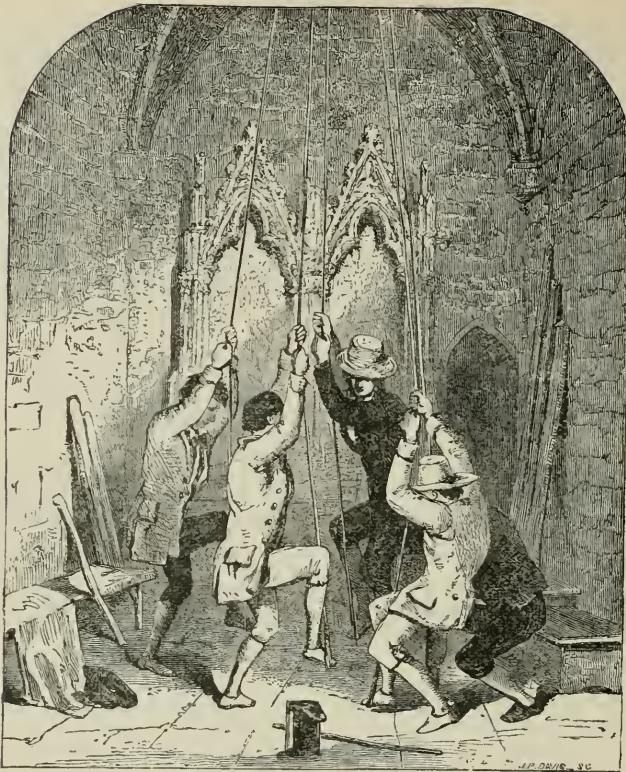
Bring in great logs and let them lie,
 To make a solid core of heat ;
 Be cheerful-minded, talk and treat
 Of all things ev'n as he were by ;

We keep the day. With festal cheer,
 With books and music, surely we
 Will drink to him, whate'er he be,
 And sing the songs he loved to hear.

CVIII.

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 ?



"Ring out, wild bells, to the wild sky."

What find I in the highest place,
But mine own phantom chanting
hymns?

And on the depths of death there swims
The reflex of a human face.

I'll rather take what fruit may be
Of sorrow under human skies :
'T is held that sorrow makes us wise,
Whatever wisdom sleep with thee.

CIX.

HEART-AFFLUENCE in discursive talk
From household fountains never dry ;
The critic clearness of an eye,
That saw thro' all the Muses' walk ;

Seraphic intellect and force
To seize and throw the doubts of man ;

Impassion'd logic, which outran
The hearer in its fiery course ;

High nature amorous of the good,
But touch'd with no ascetic gloom ;
And passion pure in snowy bloom
Thro' all the years of April blood ;

A love of freedom rarely felt,
Of freedom in her regal seat
Of England ; not the schoolboy heat,
The blind hysterics of the Celt ;

And manhood fused with female grace
In such a sort, the child would twine
A trustful hand, unasked, 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.

CX.

THY converse drew us with delight,
The men of rathe and riper years :
The feeble soul, a haunt of fears,
Forgot his weakness in thy sight.

On thee the loyal-hearted hung,
The proud was half disarm'd of pride,
Nor cared the serpent at thy side
To flicker with his double tongue.

The stern were mild when thou wert by,
The flippant put himself to school
And heard thee, and the brazen fool
Was soften'd, and he knew not why ;

While I, thy dearest, sat apart,
And felt thy triumph was as mine ;
And loved them more, that they were
thine,
The graceful tact, the Christian art ;

Nor 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.

CXI.

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

The churl in spirit, howe'er he veil
His want in forms for fashion's sake,
Will let his coltish nature break
At seasons thro' the gilded pale :

For who can always act ? but he,
To whom a thousand memories call,
Not being less but more than all
The gentleness he seem'd to be,

Best seem'd the thing he was, and join'd
Each office of the social hour
To noble manners, as the flower
And native growth of noble mind ;

Nor ever narrowness or spite,
Or villain fancy fleeting by,
Drew in the expression of an eye,
Where God and Nature met in light ;

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

CXII.

HIGH wisdom holds my wisdom less,
That I, who gaze with temperate eyes
On glorious insufficiencies,
Set light by narrower perfectness.

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 wert thou ? some novel power
Sprang up for ever 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.

CXIII.

'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 fulfil —
I doubt not what thou wouldst have been .

A life in civic action warm,
A soul on highest mission sent,
A potent voice of Parliament,
A pillar steadfast in the storm,

Should licensed boldness gather force,
Becoming, when the time has birth,
A lever to uplift the earth
And roll it in another course,

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

CXIV.

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.

CXV.

Now fades the last long streak of snow,
Now bourgeons 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 seamew pipes, or dives
In yonder greenening gleam, 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.

CXVI.

Is it, then, regret for buried time
That keenlier 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.

CXVII.

O DAYS and hours, your work is this,
To hold me from my proper place,
A little while from his embrace,
For fuller gain of after bliss :

That out of distance might ensue
Desire of nearness doubly sweet ;
And unto meeting when we meet,
Delight a hundredfold 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.

CXVIII.

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
For ever nobler ends. They say,
The solid earth whereon we tread

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



“There rolls the deep.” See page 319.

Who throve 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 dipt in baths of hissing tears,
And batter'd with the shocks of doom

To shape and use. Arise and fly
The reeling Faun, the sensual feast ;
Move upward, working out the beast,
And let the ape and tiger die.

CXIX.

Doors, where my heart was used to beat
So quickly, not as one that weeps
I come once more ; the city sleeps ;
I smell the meadow in the street ;

I hear a chirp of birds ; I see
Betwixt the black fronts long-with-
drawn
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.

CXX.

I TRUST I have not wasted breath :
I think we are not wholly brain,
Magnetic mockeries ; not in vain,
Like Paul with beasts, I fought with
Death ;

Not only cunning casts in clay :
Let Science prove we are, and then
What matters Science unto men,
At least to me ? I would not stay.

Let him, the wiser man who springs
Hereafter, up from childhood shape
His action like the greater ape,
But I was born to other things.

CXXI.

SAD Hesper o'er the buried sun
And ready, thou, to die with him,

Thou watehest all things ever dim
And dimmer, and a glory done :

The team is loosen'd from the wain,
The boat is drawn upon the shore ;
Thou listenest to the closing door,
And life is darken'd in the brain.

Bright Phosphor, fresher for the night,
By thee the world's great work is heard
Beginning, and the wakeful bird ;
Behind thee comes the greater light :

The market boat is on the stream,
And voices hail it from the brink ;
Thou hear'st 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.

CXXII.

O, WAST thou with me, dearest, then,
While I rose up against my doom,
And yearn'd 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 brow,
Till all my blood, a fuller wave,

Be quicken'd with a livelier breath,
And like an inconsiderate boy,
As in the former flash of joy,
I slip the thoughts of life and death ;

And all the breeze of Fancy blows,
And every dew-drop paints a bow,
The wizard lightnings deeply glow,
And every thought breaks out a rose.

CXXIII.

THERE rolls the deep where grew the tree.
O earth, what changes hast thou seen !
There where the long street roars, hath
been
The stillness of the central sea.

The hills are shadows, and they flow
From form to form, and nothing stands :

They melt like mist, the solid lands,
Like clouds they shapethemselvesand 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.

CXXIV.

THAT which we dare invoke to bless ;
Our dearest faith ; ourghastliestdoubt ;
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 :
But that blind clamor made me wise ;
Then was I as a child that cries,
But, crying, knows his father near ;

And what I am beheld again
What is, and no man understands ;
And out of darkness came the hands
That reach thro' nature, moulding men.

CXXV.

WHATEVER I have said or sung,
Some bitter notes my harp would give,
Yea, tho' there often seem'd to live
A contradiction on the tongue,

Yet Hope had never lost her youth ;
She did but look through dimmer 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.

CXXVI.

LOVE is and was my Lord and King,
And in his presence I attend
To hear the tidings of my friend,
Which every hour his couriers bring.

Love is and was my King and Lord,
And will be, tho' as yet I keep
Within his court on earth, and sleep
Encompass'd by his faithful guard,

And hear at times a sentinel
Who moves about from place to place,
And whispers to the worlds of space,
In the deep night, that all is well.

CXXVII.

AND all is well, tho' faith and form
Be sunder'd in the night of fear ;
Well roars the storm to those that hear
A deeper voice across the storm,

Proclaiming social truth shall spread,
And justice, ev'n tho' thrice again
The red fool-fury of the Seine
Should pile her barricades with dead.

But ill for him that wears a crown,
And him, the lazar, in his rags :
They tremble, the sustaining crags ;
The spires of ice are toppled down,

And molten up, and roar in flood ;
The fortress crashes from on high,
The brute earth lightens to the sky,
And the great Æon sinks in blood,

And compass'd by the fires of Hell ;
While thou, dear spirit, happy star,
O'erlook'st the tumult from afar,
And smilest, knowing all is well.

CXXVIII.

THE love that rose on stronger wings,
Unpalsied when he met with Death,
Is comrade of the lesser faith
That sees the course of human things.

No doubt vast eddies in the flood
Of onward time shall yet be made,
And throned races may degrade ;
Yet, O ye mysteries of good,

Wild Hours that fly with Hope and Fear,
 If all your office had to do
 With old results that look like new ;
 If this were all your mission here,

To draw, to sheathe a useless sword,
 To 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 cramp the student at his desk,
 To make old bareness 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 toil cöoperant to an end.

CXXXIX.

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, for ever, ever mine ;

Strange friend, past, present, and to be ;
 Love deeper, darker understood ;
 Behold, I dream a dream of good,
 And mingle all the world with thee.

CXXX.

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 tho' 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 is vaster passion now ;
 Tho' mix'd with God and Nature thou,
 I seem to love thee more and more.

Far off thou art, but ever nigh ;
 I have thee still, and I rejoice ;
 I prosper, circled with thy voice ;
 I shall not lose thee tho' I die.

CXXXI.

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 trust,

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 TRUE 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 moulded in colossal calm.

Regret is dead, but love is more
 Than in the summers that are flown,
 For I myself with these have grown
 To something greater than before ;

Which makes appear the songs I made
 As echoes out of weaker times,
 As half but idle 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 bud,
He too foretold the perfect rose.
For thee she grew, for thee she grows
For ever, and as fair as good.

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

But now set out : the 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 "wilt thou" answer'd, and again
The "wilt thou" ask'd, till out of twain
Her sweet "I will" has made ye one.

Now sign your names, which shall be read,
Mute symbols of a joyful morn,
By village eyes as yet unborn ;
The names are sign'd, and overhead

Begins the clash and clang that tells
The joy to every wandering breeze ;
The blind wall rocks, and on the trees
The dead leaf trembles to the bells.

O happy hour, and happier hours
Await them. Many a merry face
Salutes them — maidens 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.

Let 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 white-favor'd horses wait ;
They rise, but linger ; it is late ;
Farewell, we kiss, and they are gone.

A shade falls on us like the dark
From little cloudlets on the grass,
But sweeps away as out we pass
To range the woods, to roam the park,

Discussing how their courtship grew,
And talk of others that are wed,
And how she look'd, and what he said,
And back we come at fall of dew.

Again the feast, the speech, the glee,
The shade of passing thought, the
wealth
Of words and wit, the double health,
The crowning cup, the three-times-three,

And last the dance ; — till I retire :
Dumb is that tower which spakes aloud,
And high in heaven the streaming
cloud,
And on the downs 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 o'er the friths that branch and
spread
Their sleeping silver 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 act 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-akin 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. I HATE 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."

II.

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

III.

Did he fling himself down ? who knows ?
 for a vast speculation had fail'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 wail'd.

And the flying gold of the ruin'd wood
 lands drove thro' the air.

IV.

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

V.

Villany somewhere ! whose ? One says,
 we are villains all.
 Not he : his honest fame should at least
 by me be maintained :
 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 drain'd.

VI.

Why do they prate of the blessings of
 Peace ? we have made them a curse,
 Pickpockets, each hand lusting for all
 that is not its own ;
 And lust 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 ?



“ I hate the dreadful hollow behind the little wood.”

VII.

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 bear-
ing the sword.

VIII.

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.

IX.

Peace sitting under her olive, and slur-
ring the days gone by,
When the poor are hovell'd and hustlec
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.

X.

And the vitriol madness flushes up in
the ruffian's head,

Till the filthy by-lane rings to the yell
of the trampled wife,
And chalk and alum and plaster are sold
to the poor for bread,
And the spirit of murder works in the
very means of life,

XI.

And Sleep must lie down arm'd, for the
villanous 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.

XII.

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 shak-
ing a hundred thrones.

XIII.

For I trust if an enemy's fleet came yon-
der round by the hill,
And the rushing battle-bolt sang from
the three-decker out of the foam,
That the smooth-faced snubnosed rogue
would leap from his counter and
till,
And strike, if he could, were it but with
his cheating yardwand, home. —

XIV.

What! am I raging alone as my father
raged in his mood?
Must I too creep to the hollow and dash
myself down and die
Rather than hold by the law that I made,
nevermore to brood
On a horror of shatter'd limbs and a
wretched swindler's lie?

XV.

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.

XVI.

I am sick of the Hall and the hill, I am
sick of the moor and the main.
Why should I stay? can a sweeter chance
- ever come to me here?
O, having the nerves of motion as well
as the nerves of pain,
Were it not wise if I fled from the place
and the pit and the fear?

XVII.

Workmen up at the Hall! — they are
coming back from abroad;
The dark old place will be gilt by the
touch of a millionaire:
I have heard, I know not whence, of the
singular beauty of Maud;
I play'd with the girl when a child; she
promised them to be fair.

XVIII.

Maud with her venturous climbings and
tumbles and childish escapes,
Maud the delight of the village, the ring-
ing joy of the Hall,
Maud with her sweet purse-mouth when
my father dangled the grapes,
Maud the beloved of my mother, the
moon-faced darling of all, —

XIX.

What is she now? My dreams are bad.
She may bring me a curse.
No, there is fatter game on the moor;
she will let me alone.
Thanks, for the fiend best knows whether
woman or man be the worse.
I will bury myself in myself, and the
Devil may pipe to his own.

II.

LONG have I sigh'd for a calm: God
grant I may find it at last!
It will never be broken by Maud, she
has neither savor nor salt,
But a cold and clear-cut face, as I found
when her carriage past,
Perfectly beautiful: let it be granted her:
where is the fault?

All that I saw (for her eyes were down-
cast, not to be seen)
Faultily faultless, icily regular, splen-
didly null,
Dead perfect, 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 full,
Or the least little delicate aquiline curve
in a sensitive nose,
From which I escaped heart-free, with
the least little touch of spleen.

III.

COLD and clear-cut face, why come you
so cruelly meek,
Breaking a slumber in which all spleenful
folly was drown'd,
Pale with the golden beam of an eyelash
dead on the cheek,
Passionless, pale, cold face, star-sweet on
a gloom profound;
Womanlike, taking revenge too deep for
a transient wrong
Done but in thought to your beauty, and
ever as pale as before
Growing and fading and growing upon
me without a sound,
Luminous, gemlike, ghostlike, deathlike,
half the night long
Growing and fading and growing, till I
could bear it no more,
But arose, and all by myself in my own
dark garden ground,
Listening now to the tide in its broad-
flung shipwrecking roar,
Now to the scream of a madden'd beach
dragg'd down by the wave,
Walk'd in a wintry wind by a ghastly
glimmer, and found
The shining daffodil dead, and Orion low
in his grave.

IV.

I.

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 sail is blown by the
breeze of a softer clime,
Half-lost in the liquid azure bloom of a
crescent of sea,
The silent sapphire-spangled marriage
ring of the land?

II.

Below me, there, is the village, and looks
how quiet and small!
And yet bubbles o'er like a city, with
gossip, scandal, and spite;
And Jack on his alehouse bench has as
many lies as a Czar;
And here on the landward side, by a red
rock, glimmers 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!

III.

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.

IV.

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 stoic, 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 shriek,
And the whole little wood where I sit is
a world of plunder and prey.

V.

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.

VI.

A monstrous eft 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 ripe for his birth,
 So many a million of ages have gone to
 the making of man :
 He now is first, but is he the last ? is he
 not too base ?

VII.

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 whirl'd
 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.

VIII.

For the drift of the Maker is dark, an
 Isis hid by the veil.
 Who knows the ways of the world, how
 God will bring them about ?
 Our planet is one, the suns are many,
 the world is wide.
 Shall I weep if a Poland fall ? shall I
 shriek if a Hungary fail ?
 Or an infant civilization be ruled with
 rod or with knout ?
 I have not made the world, and He that
 made it will guide.

IX.

Be mine a philosopher's life in the quiet
 woodland ways,
 Where if I cannot be gay let a passion-
 less peace be my lot,

Far-off from the clamor of liars belied
 in the hubbub of lies ;
 From the long-neck'd geese of the world
 that are ever hissing dispraise
 Because their natures are little, and,
 whether he heed it or not,
 Where each man walks with his head in
 a cloud of poisonous flies.

X.

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 milkwhite 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 wan-
 der about at your will ;
 You have but fed on the roses, and lain
 in the lilies of life.

V.

I.

A VOICE by the cedar tree,
 In the meadow under the Hall :
 She is singing an air that is known to me,
 A passionate ballad gallant and gay,
 A martial song like a trumpet's call !
 Singing alone in the morning of life,
 In the happy morning of life and of May,
 Singing of men that in battle array,
 Ready in heart and ready in hand,
 March with banner and bugle and fife
 To the death, for their native land.

II.

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 he-
 grace,
 Singing of Death, and of Honor that
 cannot die,
 Till I well could weep for a time so sor-
 did and mean,
 And myself so languid and base.

III.

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.

I.

MORNING arises stormy and pale,
 No sun, but a wannish glare
 In fold upon fold of hueless cloud,
 And the budded peaks of the wood are
 bow'd
 Caught and cuff'd by the gale:
 I had fancied it would be fair.

II.

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.

III.

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.

IV.

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.

V.

Ah, what shall I be at fifty
 Should Nature keep me alive,
 If I find the world so bitter
 When I am but twenty-five?
 Yet, if she were not a cheat,
 If Maud were all that she seem'd,
 And her smile were all that I dream'd
 Then the world were not so bitter
 But a smile could make it sweet.

VI.

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 curl'd Assyrian Bull
 Smelling of musk and of insolence,
 Her brother, from whom I keep aloof,
 Who wants the finer politic sense
 To mask, tho' but in his own 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 feign'd,
 And a moist mirage in desert eyes,
 That so, when the rotten hustings shake
 In another month to his brazen lies,
 A wretched vote may be gain'd.

VII.

For a raven ever croaks, at my side,
 Keep watch and ward, keep watch and
 ward,
 Or thou wilt prove their tool.
 Yea too, myself from myself I guard,
 For often a man's own angry pride
 Is cap and bells for a fool.

VIII.

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-hid in the gleaming wood,
 Where I hear the dead at midday moan,
 And the shrieking rush of the wainscot
 mouse,
 And my own sad name in corners cried,
 When the shiver of dancing leaves is
 thrown

About its echoing chambers wide,
Till a morbid hate and horror have grown
Of a world in which I have hardly mixt,
And a morbid eating lichen fixt
On a heart half-turn'd to stone.

IX.

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 ?

X.

I have play'd with her when a child ;
She remembers it now we meet.
Ah well, well, well, I *may* be beguiled
By some coquettish deceit.
Yet, if she were not a cheat,
If Maud were all that she seem'd,
And her smile had all that I dream'd,
Then the world were not so bitter
But a smile could make it sweet.

VII.

I.

DID I hear it half in a doze
Long since, I know not where ?
Did I dream it an hour ago,
When asleep in this arm-chair ?

II.

Men were drinking together,
Drinking and talking of me ;
" Well, if it prove a girl, the boy
Will have plenty : so let it be."

III.

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

IV.

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
Wept over her, carved in stone ;
And once, but once, she lifted her eyes,
And suddenly, sweetly, strangely blush'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, dilettante,
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,
Then returns the dark
With no more hope of light.

X.

I.

SICK, am I sick of a jealous dread ?
Was not one of the two at her side
This new-made lord, whose splendor
plucks
The slavish hat from the villager's head ?
Whose old grandfather has lately died,
Gone to a blacker pit, for whom
Grimy 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,



"She came to the village church,
And sat by a pillar alone."

Strong in the power that all men adore,
And simpler and set their voices lower,
And soften as if to a girl, and hold
Awe-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) pricking a cockney ear.

II.

What, has he found my jewel out?
For one of the two that rode at her side
Bound for the Hall, I am sure was he:
Bound for the Hall, and I think for a
bride.

Blithe would her brother's acceptance be
Maud could be gracious too, no doubt,
To a lord, a captain, a padded shape,
A bought commission, a waxen face,
A rabbit mouth that is ever agape —
Bought? what is it he cannot buy?
And therefore 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.

III.

Last week came one to the county town,
To preach our poor little army down,
And play the game of the despot kings,

Tho' the state has done it and thrice as well :

This broad - brimm'd hawker of holy things,

Whose ear is cramm'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.

IV.

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.

V.

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.

VI.

And ah for a man to arise in me,
That the man I am may cease to be !

XI.

I.

O LET the solid ground
Not fail 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.

II.

Let the sweet heavens endure,
Not close and darken above me

Before I am quite quite sure
That there is one to love me ;
Then let come what come may
To a life that has been so sad,
I shall have had my day.

XII.

I.

BIRDS in the high Hall-garden
When twilight was falling,
Maud, Maud, Maud, Maud,
They were crying and calling.

II.

Where was Maud ? in our wood ;
And I, who else, was with her,
Gathering woodland lilies,
Myriads blow together.

III.

Birds in our wood sang
Ringing thro' the valleys,
Maud is here, here, here
In among the lilies.

IV.

I kiss'd her slender hand,
She took the kiss sedately ;
Maud is not seventeen,
But she is tall and stately.

V.

I to cry out on pride
Who have won her favor !
O Maud were sure of Heaven
If lowliness could save her.

VI.

I know the way she went
Home with her maiden posy,
For her feet have touch'd the meadows
And left the daisies rosy.

VII.

Birds in the high Hall-garden
Were crying and calling to her,
Where is Maud, Maud, Maud,
One is come to woo her.

VIII.

Look, a horse at the door,
And little King Charley snarling,
Go back, my lord, across the moor,
You are not her darling.

XIII.

I.

SCORN'D, to be scorn'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 vext with his pride!
I past him, I was crossing his lands;
He stood on the path a little aside;
His face, as I grant, in spite of spite,
Has a broad-blown 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
Sunn'd itself on his breast and his hands.

II.

Who shall call me ungentle, unfair,
I long'd so heartily then and there
To give him the grasp of fellowship;
But while I past he was humming an
air,

Stopt, and then with a riding whip
Leisurely tapping a glossy boot,
And curving a contumelious lip,
Gorgonized me from head to foot
With a stony British stare.

III.

Why sits he here in his father's chair?
That old man never comes to his place:
Shall I believe him ashamed to be seen?
For only once, in the village street,
Last year, I caught a glimpse of his face,
A gray old wolf and a lean.
Scarcely, now, would I call him a cheat;
For then, perhaps, as a child of deceit,
She might by a true descent be untrue;
And Maud is as true as Maud is sweet:
Tho' I fancy her sweetness only due
To the sweeter blood by the other side;
Her mother has been a thing complete,
However she came to be so allied.
And fair without, faithful within,
Maud to him is nothing akin:
Some peculiar mystic grace
Made her only the child of her mother,
And heap'd the whole inherited sin
On that huge scapegoat of the race,
All, all upon the brother.

IV.

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

XIV.

I.

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.

II.

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 hasp 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.

III.

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.

IV.

I heard no sound where I stood
But the rivulet on from the lawn
Running down to my own dark wood;
Or the voice of the long sea-wave as it
swell'd
Now and then in the dim-gray dawn;
But I look'd, and round, all round the
house I beheld
The death-white curtain drawn;
Felt a horror over me creep,
Prickle my skin and catch my breath,
Knew that the death-white curtain meant
but sleep,
Yet I shudder'd and thought like a fool
of the sleep of death.

XV.

So dark a mind within me dwells,
 And I make myself such evil cheer,
 That if I be dear to some one else,
 Then some one else may have much
 to fear ;
 But if I be dear to some one else,
 Then I should be to myself more dear.
 Shall I not take care of all that I think,
 Yea ev'n of wretched meat and drink,
 If I be dear,
 If I be dear to some one else ?

XVI.

I.

THIS lump of earth has left his estate
 The lighter by the loss of his weight ;
 And so that he find what he went to
 seek,
 And fulsome Pleasure clog him, and drown
 His heart in the gross mud-honey of town,
 He may stay for a year who has gone for
 a week :
 But this is the day when I must speak,
 And I see my Oread coming down,
 O this is the day !
 O beautiful creature, what am I
 That I dare to look her way ;
 Think I may hold dominion sweet,
 Lord of the pulse that is lord of her breast,
 And dream of her beauty with tender
 dread,
 From the delicate Arab arch of her feet
 To the grace that, bright and light as
 the crest
 Of a peacock, sits on her shining head,
 And she knows it not : O, if she knew it,
 To know her beauty might half undo it.
 I know it the one bright thing to save
 My yet young life in the wilds of Time,
 Perhaps from madness, perhaps from
 crime,
 Perhaps from a selfish grave.

II.

What, if she be fasten'd to this fool
 lord,
 Dare I bid her abide by her word ?
 Should I love her so well if she
 Had given her word to a thing so low ?
 Shall I love her as well if she
 Can break her word were it even for me ?
 I trust that it is not so

III.

Catch not my breath, O clamorous heart,
 Let not my tongue be a thrall to my eye,
 For I must tell her before we part,
 I must tell her, or die.

XVII.

Go not, happy day,
 From the shining fields,
 Go not, happy day,
 Till the maiden yields.
 Rosy is the West,
 Rosy is the South,
 Roses are her cheeks,
 And a rose her mouth.
 When the happy Yes
 Falts 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.
 Rosy is the West,
 Rosy is the South,
 Roses are her cheeks,
 And a rose her mouth.

XVIII.

I.

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.

II.

None like her, none.
 Just now the dry-tongued laurels' patter-
 ing 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.

III.

There is none like her, none.
Nor will be when our summers have de-
ceased.
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 in-
creased,
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 thornless garden, there
Shadowing the snow-limb'd Eve from
whom she came.

IV.

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 nursed at ease and brought to un-
derstand
A sad astrology, the boundless 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.

V.

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 sim-
ple girl.

VI.

Would die ; for sullen-seeming Death
may give
More life to Love than is or ever was
In our low world, where yet 't is sweet
to live.
Let no one ask me how it came to pass ;
It seems that I am happy, that to me
A livelier emerald twinkles in the grass,
A purer sapphire melts into the sea.

VII.

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 drink-
ing-songs,
Spice his fair banquet with the dust of
death ?
Make answer, Maud my bliss,
Maud made my Maud by that long lover's
kiss,
Life of my life, wilt thou not answer this ?
"The dusky strand of Death inwoven
here
With dear Love's tie, makes Love him-
self more dear."

VIII.

Is that enchanted moan only the swell
Of the long waves that roll in yonder bay ?
And hark the clock within, the silver knell
Of twelve sweet hours that past in bridal
white,
And died to live, long as my pulses play ;
But now by this my love has closed her
sight
And given false death her hand, and
stol'n away
To dreamful wastes where footless fancies
dwell
Among the fragments of the golden day.
May nothing there her maiden grace
affright !
Dear heart, I feel with thee the drowsy
spell.
My bride to be, my evermore delight,
My own heart's heart and ownest own
farewell ;
It is but for a little space I go :
And ye meanwhile far over moor and fell
Beat to the noiseless music of the night !
Has our whole earth gone nearer to the
glow
Of your soft splendors that you look so
bright ?

I have climb'd nearer out of lonely Hell.
 Beat, happy stars, timing with things
 below,
 Beat with my heart more blest than
 heart can tell,
 Blest, but for some dark undercurrent woe
 That seems to draw — but it shall not
 be so :
 Let all be well, be well.

XIX.

I.

HER brother is coming back to-night,
 Breaking up my dream of delight.

II.

My dream? do I dream of bliss?
 I have walk'd awake with Truth.
 O when did a morning shine
 So rich in atonement as this
 For my dark-dawning youth,
 Darken'd watching a mother decline
 And that dead man at her heart and mine:
 For who was left to watch her but I?
 Yet so did I let my freshness die.

III.

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)
 But I trust that I did not talk,
 Not touch on her father's sin :
 I am sure I did but speak
 Of my mother's faded cheek
 When it slowly grew so thin,
 That I felt she was slowly dying
 Vext with lawyers and harass'd with debt:
 For how often I caught her with eyes
 all wet,
 Shaking her head at her son and sighing
 A world of trouble within !

IV.

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 feud,
 The household Fury sprinkled with blood
 By which our houses are torn :
 How strange was what she said,

When only Maud and the brother
 Hung over her dying bed —
 That Maud's dark father and mine
 Had bound us one to the other,
 Betrothed us over their wine,
 On the day when Maud was born ;
 Seal'd her mine from her first sweet breath.
 Mine, mine by a right, from birth till
 death,
 Mine, mine — our fathers have sworn.

V.

But the true blood spilt had in it a heat
 To dissolve the precious seal on a bond,
 That, if left uncancel'd, had been so
 sweet :
 And none of us thought of a something
 beyond,
 A desire that awoke in the heart of the
 child,
 As it were a duty done to the tomb.
 To be friends for hersake, 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 lily, breathing a prayer
 To be friends, to be reconciled !

VI.

But then what a flint is he !
 Abroad, at Florence, at Rome,
 I find whenever she touch'd on me
 This brother had laugh'd her down,
 And at last, when each came home,
 He had darken'd into a frown,
 Chid her, and forbid her to speak
 To me, her friend of the years before ;
 And this was what had reddened her cheek
 When I bow'd to her on the moor.

VII.

Yet Maud, altho' not blind
 To the faults of his heart and mind,
 I see she cannot but love him,
 And says he is rough but kind,
 And wishes me to approve him,
 And tells me, when she lay
 Sick once, with a fear of worse,
 That he left his wine and horses and play,
 Sat with her, read to her, night and day,
 And tended her like a nurse.

VIII.

Kind? but the deathbed desire
 Spurn'd by this heir of the liar —

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?

IX.

For, Maud, so tender and true,
 As long as my life endures
 I feel I shall owe you a debt,
 That I never can hope to pay;
 And if ever I should forget
 That I owe this debt to you
 And for your sweet sake to yours;
 O then, what then shall I say?—
 If ever I *should* forget,
 May God make me more wretched
 Than ever I have been yet!

X.

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.

I.

STRANGE, that I felt so gay,
 Strange that I tried to-day
 To beguile her melancholy;
 The Sultan, as we name him,—
 She did not wish to blame him—
 But he vexed her and perplexed 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 for 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 neater and completer;
 For nothing can be sweeter
 Than maiden Maud in either

II.

But to-morrow, if we live,
 Our ponderous squire will give
 A grand political dinner
 To half the 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.

III.

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

IV.

For I am not invited,
 But, with the Sultan's pardon,
 I am all as well delighted,
 For I know her own rose-garden,
 And mean to linger in it
 Till the dancing will be over;
 And then, O then, come out to me
 For a minute, but for a minute,
 Come out to your own true lover,
 That your true lover may see
 Your glory also, and render
 All homage to his own darling,
 Queen Maud in all her splendor.

XXI.

RIVULET crossing my ground,
 And bringing me down from the Hall
 This garden-rose that I found,
 Forgetful of Maud and me,
 And lost in trouble and moving round
 Here at the head of a tinkling fall,
 And trying to pass to the sea;
 O Rivulet, born at the Hall,
 My Maud has sent it by thee
 (If I read her sweet will right)
 On a blushing mission to me,
 Saying in odor and color, "Ah, be
 Among the roses to-night."

XXII.

I.

COME into the garden, Maud,
 For the black bat, night, has flown,



“Come into the garden, Maud.”

Come into the garden, Maud,
 I am here at the gate alone ;
 And the woodbine spices are wafted
 abroad,
 And the musk of the roses blown.

II.

For a breeze of morning moves,
 And the planet of Love is on high,
 Beginning to faint in the light that she
 loves
 On a bed of daffodil sky,
 To faint in the light of the sun she loves,
 To faint in his light, and to die.

III.

All night have the roses heard
 The flute, violin, bassoon ;
 All night has the casement jessamine
 stir'd
 To the dancers dancing in tune ;
 Till a silence fell with the waking bird,
 And a hush with the setting moon.

IV.

I said to the lily, “There is but one
 With whom she has heart to be gay.
 When will the dancers leave her alone ?
 She is weary of dance and play.”
 Now half to the setting moon are gone,
 And half to the rising day ;
 Low on the sand and loud on the stone
 The last wheel echoes away.

V.

I said to the rose, “The brief night goes
 In babble and revel and wine.
 O young lord-lover, what sighs are those,
 For one that will never be thine ?
 But mine, but mine,” so I swear to the
 rose,
 “For ever and ever, mine.”

VI.

And the soul of the rose went into my
 blood,
 As the music clash'd in the hall ;

And long by the garden lake I stood,
 For I heard your rivulet fall
 From the lake to the meadow and on to
 the wood,
 Our wood, that is dearer than all ;

VII.

From the meadow your walks have left
 so sweet
 That whenever a March-wind sighs
 He sets the jewel-print of your feet
 In violets blue as your eyes,
 To the woody hollows in which we meet
 And the valleys of Paradise.

VIII.

The slender acacia would not shake
 One long milk-bloom on the tree ;
 The white lake-blossom fell into the lake
 As the pimpernel dozed on the lea ;
 But the rose was awake all night for your
 sake,
 Knowing your promise to me ;
 The lilies and roses were all awake,
 They sigh'd for the dawn and thee.

IX.

Queen rose of the rosebud garden of girls,
 Come hither, the dances are done,
 In gloss of satin and glimmer of pearls,
 Queen lily and rose in one ;
 Shine out, little head, sunning over with
 curls,
 To the flowers, and be their sun.

X.

There has fallen a splendid tear
 From the passion-flower at the gate.
 She is coming, my dove, my dear ;
 She is coming, my life, my fate ;
 The red rose cries, "She is near, she is
 near" ;
 And the white rose weeps, "She is
 late" ;
 The larkspur listens, "I hear, I hear" ;
 And the lily whispers, "I wait."

XI.

She is coming, my own, my sweet ;
 Were it ever so airy a tread,
 My heart would hear her and beat,
 Were it earth in an earthy bed ;
 My dust would hear her and beat,
 Had I lain for a century dead ;
 Would start and tremble under her feet,
 And blossom in purple and red.

XXIII.

I.

"THE fault was mine, the fault was
 mine" —

Why am I sitting here so stunn'd and still,
 Plucking the harmless wild-flower on the
 hill ? —

It is this guilty hand ! —

And there rises ever a passionate cry
 From underneath in the darkening land —
 What is it, that has been done ?

O dawn of Eden bright over earth and sky,
 The fires of Hell brake out of thy rising
 sun,

The fires of Hell and of Hate ;
 For she, sweet soul, had hardly spoken a
 word,

When her brother ran in his rage to the
 gate,

He came with the babe-faced lord ;
 Heap'd on her terms of disgrace,

And while she wept, and I strove to be cool,
 He fiercely gave me the lie,

Till I with as fierce an anger spoke,
 And he struck me, madman, over the face,

Struck me before the languid fool,
 Who was gaping and grinning by :

Struck for himself an evil stroke ;
 Wrought for his house an irredeemable
 woe ;

For front to front in an hour we stood,
 And a million horrible bellowing echoes
 broke

From the red-ribb'd hollow behind the
 wood,

And thunder'd up into Heaven the
 Christless code,

That must have life for a blow.
 Ever and ever afresh they seem'd to grow.

Was it he lay there with a fading eye ?
 "The fault was mine," he whisper'd,
 "fly !"

Then glided out of the joyous wood
 The ghastly Wraith of one that I know ;
 And there rang on a sudden a passionate
 cry,

A cry for a brother's blood :

It will ring in my heart and my ears, till
 I die, till I die.

II.

Is it gone ? my pulses beat —
 What was it ? a lying trick of the brain ?
 Yet I thought I saw her stand,
 A shadow there at my feet,

High over the shadowy land,

It is gone ; and the heavens fall in a
gentle rain,
When they should burst and drown with
deluging storms
The feeble vassals of wine and anger and
lust,
The little hearts that know not how to
forgive :
Arise, my God, and strike, for we hold
Thee just,
Strike dead the whole weak race of ven-
omous worms,
That sting each other here in the dust ;
We are not worthy to live.

XXIV.

I.

SEE what a lovely shell,
Small and pure as a pearl,
Lying close to my foot,
Frail, but a work divine,
Made so fairily well
With delicate spire and whorl,
How exquisitely minute,
A miracle of design !

II.

What is it ? a learned man
Could give it a clumsy name.
Let him name it who can,
The beauty would be the same.

III.

The tiny 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 ?

IV.

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's oaken spine
Athwart the ledges of rock,
Here on the Breton strand !

V.

Breton, not Briton ; here
Like a shipwreck'd man on a coast
Of ancient fable and fear —
Plagued with a flitting to and fro,
A disease, a hard mechanic ghost
That never came from on high
Nor ever arose from below,
But only moves with the moving eye,
Flying along the land and the main —
Why should it look like Maud ?
Am I to be overawed
By what I cannot but know
Is a juggle born of the brain ?

VI.

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.

VII.

For years, a measureless ill,
For years, for ever, 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.

VIII.

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.

IX.

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 waking, 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 for ever 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.

I.

O THAT 't were possible
 After long grief and pain
 To find the arms of my true love
 Round me once again !

II.

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.

III.

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.

IV.

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

V.

Half the night I waste in sighs,
 Half in dreams I sorrow after
 The delight of early skies ;
 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.

VI.

'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
 Ripples on in light and shadow
 To the ballad that she sings.

VII.

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 sullen thunder is roll'd ;
 For a tumult shakes the city,
 And I wake, my dream is fled ;
 In the shuddering dawn, behold,
 Without knowledge, without pity,
 By the curtains of my bed
 That abiding phantom cold.

VIII.

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

IX.

Then I rise, the eavedrops 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.

X.

Thro' the hubbub of the market
I steal, a wasted frame,
It crosses here, it crosses there,
Thro' all that crowd confused and loud,
The shadow still the same ;
And on my heavy eyelids
My anguish hangs like shame.

XI.

Alas for her that met me,
That heard me softly call,
Came glimmering thro' the laurels
At the quiet evenfall,
In the garden by the turrets
Of the old manorial hall.

XII.

Would the happy spirit descend,
From the realms of light and song,
In the chamber or the street,
As she looks among the blest,
Should I fear to greet my friend
Or to say "forgive the wrong,"
Or to ask her, "take me, sweet,
To the regions of thy rest" ?

XIII.

But the broad light glares and beats,
And the shadow flits and fleets
And will not let me be ;
And I loathe the squares and streets,
And the faces that one meets,
Hearts with no love for me :
Always I long to creep
Into some still cavern deep,
There to weep, and weep, and weep
My whole soul out to thee.

XXVII.

I.

DEAD, long dead,
Long dead !
And my heart is a handful of dust,
And the wheels go over my head,
And my bones are shaken with pain,
For into a shallow grave they are thrust,
Only a yard beneath the street,
And the hoofs of the horses beat, beat,
The hoofs of the horses beat,
Beat into my scalp and my brain,
With never an end to the stream of
passing feet,
Driving, hurrying, marrying, burying,

Clamor and rumble, and ringing and
clatter,
And here beneath it is all as bad,
For I thought the dead had peace, but
it is not so ;
To have no peace in the grave, is that
not sad ?
But up and down and to and fro,
Ever about me the dead men go ;
And then to hear a dead man chatter
Is enough to drive one mad.

II.

Wretchedest age, since Time began,
They cannot even bury a man ;
And tho' we paid our tithes in the days
that are gone,
Not a bell was rung, not a prayer was read ;
It is that which makes us loud in the
world of the dead ;
There is none that does his work, not
one ;
A touch of their office might have sufficed,
But the churchmen fain would kill their
church,
As the churches have kill'd their Christ.

III.

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 wheedle a world that loves him not,
For it is but a world of the dead.

IV.

Nothing but idiot gabble !
For the prophecy given of old
And then not understood,
Has come to pass as foretold ;
Not let any man think for the public
good,
But babble, merely for babble.
For I never whisper'd a private affair
Within the hearing of cat or mouse,
No, not to myself in the closet alone,
But I heard it shouted at once from the
top of the house ;
Everything came to be known :
Who told *him* we were there ?

V.

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'er-
grown whelp to crack ;
Crack them now for yourself, and howl,
and die.

VI.

Prophet, curse me the blabbing lip,
And curse me the British vermin, the rat ;
I know not whether he came in the
Hanover ship,
But I know that he lies and listens mute
In an ancient mansion's crannies and
holes :
Arsenic, arsenic, sure, would do it,
Except that now we poison our babes,
poor souls !
It is all used up for that.

VII.

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.

VIII.

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 linkt a dead man there to a spectral
bride ;
For he, if he had not been a Sultan of
brutes,
Would he have that hole in his side ?

IX.

But what will the old man say ?
He laid a cruel snare in a pit
To catch a friend of mine one stormy day ;

Yet now I could even weep to think of it ;
For what will the old man say
When he comes to the second corpse in
the pit ?

X.

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 spilt for a private blow —
I swear to you, lawful and lawless war
Are scarcely even akin.

XI.

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.

I.

My life has crept so long on a broken wing
Thro' cells of madness, haunts of horror
and fear,
That I come to be grateful at last for a
little thing :
My mood is changed, for it fell at a time
of year
When the face of night is fair on the
dewy downs,
And the shining daffodil dies, and the
Charioteer
And starry 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.

II.

And it was but a dream, yet it yielded a
 dear delight
 To have look'd, tho' but in a dream, up-
 on 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 tyranny now should bend
 or cease,
 The glory of manhood stand on his an-
 cient height,
 Nor Britain's one sole God be the mil-
 lionnaire :
 No more shall commerce be all in all, and
 Peace
 Pipe on her pastoral hillock 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 can-
 non's throat
 Shall shake its threaded tears in the wind
 no more.

III.

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 cause that I felt to be
 pure and true),
 "It is time, O passionate heart and
 morbid eye,
 That old hysterical mock-disease should
 lie."
 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.

IV.

Let it go or stay, so I wake to the higher
 aims
 Of a land that has lost for a little her
 lust of gold,
 And love of a peace that was full of
 wrongs and shames,
 Horrible, hateful, monstrous, not to be
 told ;

And hail once more to the banner of bat-
 tle 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 splen-
 did 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 Baltic deep,
 And deathful-grinning mouths of the for-
 tress, flames
 The blood-red blossom of war with a heart
 of fire.

V.

Let it flame 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 assign'd.

THE BROOK ;

AN IDYLL.

"HERE, by this brook, we parted ; I to
 the East
 And he for Italy — too late — too late :
 One whom the strong sons of the world
 despise ;
 For lucky rhymes to him were scrip and
 share,
 And mellow metres more than cent for
 cent ;
 Nor could he understand how money
 breeds,
 Thought it a dead thing ; yet himself
 could make
 The thing that is not as the thing that is.

O had he lived! In our schoolbooks
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,

Orev'n the sweet half-English Neilgherry
air

I panted, seems, 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 hern,

I make a sudden sally

And sparkle out among the fern,

To bicker down a valley.

By thirty hills I hurry down,

Or slip between the ridges,

By twenty 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 for ever.

"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 sharps and trebles,

I bubble into eddying bays,

I babble on the pebbles.

With many a curve my banks I fret

By many a field and 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 for ever.

"But Philip chatter'd more than brook
or bird;
Old Philip; all about the fields you caught
His weary daylong chirping, like the dry
High-elbow'd grigs that leap in summer
grass.

I wind about, and in and out,
With here a blossom sailing,
And here and there a lusty trout,
And here and there a grayling,

And here and there a foamy flake
Upon me, as I travel
With many a silvery waterbreak
Above the golden gravel,

And draw them all along, and flow
To join the brimming river,
For men may come and men may go,
But I go on for ever.

"O darling Katie Willows, his one
child!

A maiden of our century, yet most meek;
A daughter of our meadows, yet not coarse;
Straight, but as lissome as a hazel wand;
Her eyes a bashful azure, and her hair
In gloss and hue the chestnut, when the
shell
Divides threefold to show the fruit
within.

"Sweet Katie, once I did her a good turn,
Her and her far-off cousin and be-
trothed,
James Willows, of one name and heart
with her.

For here I came, twenty years back —
the week
Before I parted with poor Edmund; crost
By that old bridge which, half in ruins
then,
Still makes a hoary eyebrow for the gleam
Beyond it, where the waters marry —
crost,

Whistling a random bar of Bonny Doon,
And push'd at Philip's garden-gate. The
gate,



"I come from haunts of coot and hern,
I make a sudden sally
And sparkle out among the fern."

Half-parted from a weak and scolding
hinge,
Stuck; and he clamor'd from a case-
ment, 'run'
To Katie somewhere in the walks below,
'Run, Katie!' Katie never ran: she
moved
To meet me, winding under woodbine
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; nor of those
Who dabbling in the fount of fictive
tears,
And nursed by mealy-mouth'd philan-
thropies,
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 jeal-
ousies
Which anger'd her. Who anger'd James?
I said.
But Katie snatch'd her eyes at once from
mine,
And sketching with her slender pointed
foot
Some figure like a wizard's pentagram
On garden gravel, let my query pass
Unclaim'd, in flushing silence, till I
ask'd
If James were coming. 'Coming every day,'
She answer'd, 'ever longing to explain,
But evermore her father came across

With some long-winded tale, and broke
him short;

And James departed vext with him and
her.'

How could I help her? 'Would I — was
it wrong?'

(Claspt hands and that petitionary grace
Of sweet seventeen subdued me ere she
spoke)

'O would I take her father for one hour,
For one half-hour, and let him talk to
me!'

And even while she spoke, I saw where
James

Made toward us, like a wader in the
surf,

Beyond the brook, waist-deep in meadow-
sweet.

"O Katie, what I suffer'd for yoursake!
For in I went, and call'd old Philip out
To show the farm: full willingly he rose:
He led me thro' the short sweet-smelling
lanes

Of his wheat suburb, babbling as he went.
He praised his land, his horses, his
machines;

He praised his ploughs, his cows, his
hogs, his dogs;

He praised his hens, his geese, his guinea-
hens;

His pigeons, who in session on their roofs
Approved him, bowing at their own des-
serts:

Then from the plaintive mother's teat he
took

Her blind and shuddering puppies, nam-
ing each,

And naming those, his friends, for whom
they were:

Then crost the common into Darnley
chase

To show Sir Arthur's deer. In copse and
fern

Twinkled the innumerable ear and tail.
Then, seated on a serpent-rooted beech,

He pointed out a pasturing colt, and said:
'That was the four-year-old I sold the
Squire.'

And there he told a long long-winded tale
Of how the Squire had seen the colt at
grass,

And how it was the thing his daughter
wish'd,

And how he sent the bailiff to the farm
To learn the price, and what the price
he ask'd,

And how the bailiff swore that he was mad,
But he stood firm; and so the matter
hung;

He gave them line: and five days after
that

He met the bailiff at the Golden Fleece,
Who then and there had offer'd some-
thing more,

But he stood firm; and so the matter
hung;

He knew the man; the colt would fetch
its price;

He gave them line: and how by chance
at last

(It might be May or April, he forgot,
The last of April or the first of May)

He found the bailiff riding by the farm,
And, talking from the point, he drew him
in,

And there he mellow'd all his heart with
ale,

Until they closed a bargain, hand in hand.

'Then, while I breathed in sight of
haven, he,

Poor fellow, could he help it? recom-
menced,

And ran thro' all the co'tish chronicle,
Wild Will, Black Bess, Tantivy, Tallyho,
Reform, White Rose, Bellerophon, the
Jilt,

Arbaees, and Phenomenon, and the rest,
Till, not to die a listener, I arose,

And with me Philip, talking still; and so
We turn'd our foreheads from the falling

sun,
And following our own shadows thrice as
long

As when they follow'd us from Philip's,
door,

Arrived, and found the sun of sweet con-
tent

Re-risen in Katie's eyes, and all things
well.

I steal by lawns and grassy plots,

I slide by hazel covers;

I move the sweet forget-me-nots

That grow for happy lovers.

I slip, I slide, I gloom, I glance,

Among my skinning swallows;

I make the netted sunbeam dance

Against my sandy shallows.

I murmur under moon and stars

In brambly wildernesses;



"I make the netted sunbeam dance
Against my sandy shallows."

I linger by my shingly bars ;
I loiter round my cresses ;

And out again I curve and flow
To join the brimming river,
For men may come and men may go,
But I go on for ever.

Yes, men may come and go ; and these
are gone,

All gone. My dearest brother, Edmund,
sleeps,
Not by the well-known stream and rustic
spire,

But unfamiliar Arno, and the dome
Of Brunelleschi ; sleeps in peace : and he,
Poor Philip, of all his lavish waste of
words

Remains the lean P. W. on his tomb :
I scraped the lichen from it : Katie walks
By the long wash of Australasian seas

Far off, and holds her head to other
stars,
And breathes in converse seasons. All
are gone."

So Lawrence Aylmer, seated on a stile
In the long hedge, and rolling in his mind
Old waifs of rhyme, and bowing o'er the
brook

A toasured head in middle age forlorn,
Mused, and was mute. On a sudden a
low breath

Of tender air made tremble in the hedge
The fragile bindweed-bells and briony
rings ;

And he look'd up. There stood a maiden
near,

Waiting to pass. In much amaze he stared
On eyes a bashful azure, and on hair
In gloss and hue the chestnut, when the
shell

Divides threefold to show the fruit within :
Then, wondering, ask'd her "Are you
from the farm?"

"Yes" answer'd she. "Pray stay a
little: pardon me;

What do they call you?" "Katie."
"That were strange.

What surname?" "Willows." "No!"
"That is my name."

"Indeed!" and here he look'd so self-
perplex'd,

That Katie laugh'd, and laughing blush'd,
till he

Laugh'd also, but as one before he wakes,
Who feels a glimmering 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.

I.

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 cold and bare.

A clog of lead was round my feet;

A band of pain across my brow;

"Cold altar, Heaven and earth shall meet
Before you hear my marriage vow."

II.

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.

Full cold my greeting was and dry;
She faintly smiled, she hardly moved:
I saw with half-unconscious eye
She wore the colors I approved.

III.

She took the little ivory chest,
With half a sigh she turn'd the key,
Then raised her head with lips compress'd,
And gave my letters back to me.

And gave the trinkets and the rings,
My gifts, when gifts of mine could
please;

As looks a father on the things
Of his dead son, I look'd on these.

IV.

She told me all her friends had said;
I raged against the public liar;

She talk'd as if her love were dead,
But in my words were seeds of fire.

"No more of love; your sex is known:
I never will be twice deceived.

Henceforth I trust the man alone,
The woman cannot be believed.

V.

"Thro' slander, meanest spawn of Hell
(And women's slander is the worst),
And you, whom once I loved 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.

VI.

We parted: sweetly gleam'd the stars,
And sweet the vapor-braided blue,

Low breezes fann'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 swells;

"Dark porch," I said, "and silent aisle,
There comes a sound of marriage bells."

ODE ON THE DEATH OF THE DUKE OF WELLINGTON.

I.

BURY the Great Duke
With an empire's lamentation,

Let us bury the Great Duke
To the noise of the mourning of a
mighty nation,

Mourning when their leaders fall,
Warriors carry the warrior's pall,
And sorrow darkens hamlet and hall.

II.

Where shall we lay the man whom we
deplere ?

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.

III.

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.

IV.

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 mute :
Mourn for the man of long-enduring
blood,

The statesman-warrior, moderate, reso-
lute,

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 self-sacrifice of life is o'er.
The great World-victor's victor will be
seen no more.

V.

All is over and done :
Render thanks to the Giver,
England, for thy son.
Let the bell be toll'd.

Render thanks to the Giver,
And render him to the mould.
Under the cross of gold
That shines over city and river,
There he shall rest for ever
Among the wise and the bold.
Let the bell be toll'd :
And a reverent people behold
The towering car, the sable steeds :
Bright let it be with its blazon'd deeds,
Dark in its funeral fold.
Let the bell be toll'd :
And a deeper knell in the heart be knoll'd ;
And the sound of the sorrowing anthem
roll'd

Thro' the dome of the golden cross ;
And the volleying cannon thunder his
loss ;

He knew their voices of old.
For many a time in many a clime
His captain's-ear has heard them boom
Bellowing victory, bellowing doom:
When he with those deep voices wrought,
Guarding realms and kings from shame ;
With those deep voices our dead cap-
tain taught

The tyrant, and asserts his claim
In that dread sound to the great name,
Which he has worn so pure of blame,
In praise and in dispraise the same,
A man of well-temper'd frame.
O civic muse, to such a name,
To such a name for ages long,
To such a name,
Preserve a broad approach of fame,
And ever-echoing avenues of song.

VI.

Who is he that cometh, like an honor'd
guest,

With banner and with music, with sol-
dier and with priest,
With a nation weeping, and breaking
on my rest ?

Mighty Seaman, this is he
Was great by land as thou by sea.
Thine island loves thee well, thou fa-
mous man,

The greatest sailor since our world began-
Now, to the roll of muffled drums,
To thee the greatest soldier comes ;
For this is he

Was great by land as thou by sea ;
His foes were thine ; he kept us free ;
O give him welcome, this is he
Worthy of our gorgeous rites,
And worthy to be laid by thee ;

For this is England's greatest son,
 He that gain'd a hundred fights,
 Nor ever lost an English gun ;
 This is he that far away
 Against the myriads of Assaye
 Clash'd with his fiery few and won ;
 And underneath another sun,
 Warring on a later day,
 Round affrighted 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 vines
 Back to France her banded swarms,
 Back to France with countless blows,
 Till o'er the hills her eagles flew
 Beyond the Pyrenean pines,
 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 despair !
 Dash'd on every rocky square
 Their surging charges foam'd themselves
 away ;
 Last, the Prussian trumpet blew ;
 Thro' the long-tormented air
 Heaven flash'd a sudden jubilant ray,
 And down we swept and charged and
 overthrew.
 So great a soldier taught us there,
 What long-enduring hearts could do
 In that world's-earthquake, Waterloo !
 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 befall
 Touch a spirit among things divine,
 If love of country move thee there at all,
 Be glad, because his bones are laid by
 thine !
 And thro' the centuries let a people's voice
 In full acclaim,
 A people's voice,
 The proof and echo of all human fame,
 A people's voice, when they rejoice

At civic revel and pomp and game,
 Attest their great commander's claim
 With honor, honor, honor, honor to him,
 Eternal honor to his name.

VII.

A people's voice ! we are a people yet.
 Tho' all men else their nobler dreams
 forget,
 Confused by brainless mobs and lawless
 Powers ;
 Thank Him who isled us here, and
 roughly set
 His Briton in blown seas and storming
 showers,
 We have a voice, with which to pay the
 debt
 Of boundless love and reverence and regret
 To those great men who fought, and kept
 it ours,
 And keep it ours, O God, from brute con-
 trol ;
 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 sane and crowns
 be just.
 But wink no more in slothful overtrust.
 Remember him who led your hosts ;
 He bade you guard the sacred coasts.
 Your cannons moulder on the seaward
 wall ;
 His voice is silent in your council-hall
 For ever ; and whatever tempests lower
 For ever silent ; even if they broke
 In thunder, silent ; yet remember all
 He spoke among you, and the Man who
 spoke ;
 Who never sold the truth to serve the hour,
 Nor palter'd with Eternal God for power ;
 Who let the turbid streams of rumor
 flow
 Thro' either babbling world of high and
 low ;
 Whose life was work, whose language rife
 With rugged maxims hewn from life ;
 Who never spoke against a foe ;

Whose eighty winters freeze with one re-
buke

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.

VIII.

Lo, the leader in these glorious wars
Now to glorious burial slowly borne,
Follow'd by the brave of other lands,
He, on whom from both her open hands
Lavish Honor shower'd all her stars,
And affluent Fortune emptied all her horn.
Yea, let all good things await
Him who cares not to be great,
But as he saves or serves the state.
Not once or twice in our rough island-
story,

The path of duty was the way to glory :
He that walks it, only thirsting
For the right, and learns to deaden
Love of self, before his journey closes,
Heshall find the stubborn thistle bursting
Into glossy purples, which outredden
All voluptuous garden-roses.

Not once or twice in our fair island-story,
The path of duty was the way to glory :
He, that ever following her commands,
On with toil of heart and knees and hands,
Thro' the long gorge to the far light has
won

His path upward, and prevail'd,
Shall find the toppling crags of Duty
sealed

Are close upon the shining table-lands
To which our God Himself is moon and
sun.

Such was he : his work is done,
But while the races of mankind endure,
Let his great example stand
Colossal, seen of every land,
And keep the soldier firm, the statesman
pure :

Till in all lands and thro' all human story
The path of duty be the way to glory :
And let the land whose hearths he saved
from shame

For many and many an age proclaim
At civic revel and pomp and game,
And when the long-illuminated cities flame,
Their ever-loyal iron leader's fame,
With honor, honor, honor, honor to him,
Eternal honor to his name.

IX.

Peace, his triumph will be sung
By some yet unmoulded 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, be his the gain !

More than is of man's degree

Must be with us, watching here

At this, our great solemnity.

Whom we see not we revere,

We revere, and we refrain

From talk of battles loud and vain,

And brawling memories all too free

For such a wise humility

As befits a solemn fane :

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 leave 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 wails in the peo-
ple's ears :

The dark crowd moves, and there are
sobs and tears :

The black earth yawns : the mortal dis-
appears ;

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

Being 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.

Speak no more of his renown,

Lay your earthly fancies down,

And in the vast cathedral leave him.

God accept him, Christ receive him.

THE DAISY.

WRITTEN AT EDINBURGH.

OLIVE, what hours were thine and mine
In lands of palm and southern pine ;

In lands of palm, of orange-blossom,
Of olive, aloe, and maize and vine.

What Roman strength Turbia show'd
In ruin, by the mountain road ;

How like a gem, beneath, the city
Of little Monaco, basking, glow'd.

How richly down the rocky dell
The torrent vineyard streaming fell
To meet the sun and sunny waters,
That only heaved with a summer swell.

What slender campanili grew
By bays, the peacock's neck in hue ;
Where, here and there, on sandy beaches
A milky-bell'd amaryllis blew.

How young Columbus seem'd to rove,
Yet present in his natal grove,
Now watching high on mountain
cornice,
And steering, now, from 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.

Nor 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 olives 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 Genovese of old.

At Florence too what golden hours,
In those long galleries, were ours ;
What drives about the fresh Cascinè,
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 crost the Lombard plain
Remember what a plague of rain ;
Of rain at Reggio, rain at Parma ;
At Lodi, rain, Piacenza, rain.

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

O Milan, O the chanting quires,
The giant windows' blazon'd 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 stood among the silent statues,
And statued pinnacles, mute as they.

How faintly-flushed, how phantom-fair,
Was Monte Rosa hanging there
A thousand shadowy-pencill'd valleys
And snowy dellis 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-burden music, kept,
As on The Lariano crept
To that fair port below the castle
Of Queen Theodolind, where we slept ;

Or hardly slept, but watch'd awake
A cypress in the moonlight shake,
The moonlight touching o'er a terrace
One tall Agavè above the lake.

What more ? we took our last adieu,
And up the snowy Splügen drew,
But ere we reach'd the highest summit
I pluck'd a daisy, I gave it you.

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 nursing of another sky

Still in the little book you lent me,
And where you tenderly laid it by :

And I forgot the clouded Forth,
The gloom that saddens Heaven and
Earth,

The bitter east, the misty summer
And gray metropolis of the North.

Perchance, to hull the throbs of pain,
Perchance, to charm a vacant brain,

Perchance, to dream you still beside me,
My fancy fled to the South again.

TO THE REV. F. D. MAURICE.

COME, when no graver cares employ,
God-father, come and see your boy :

Your presence will be sun in winter,
Making the little one leap for joy.

For, being of that honest few,
Who give the Fiend himself his due,
Should eighty-thousand college-coun-
cils

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 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
Tumbles a breaker on chalk and sand ;

Where, if below the milky steep
Some ship of battle slowly creep,

And on thro' zones of light and shadow
Glimmer away to the lonely deep,

We might discuss the Northern sin
Which made a selfish war begin ;
Dispute the claims, arrange the
chances ;

Emperor, Ottoman, which shall win :

Or whether war's avenging rod
Shall lash all Europe into blood ;

Till you should turn to dearer matters,
Dear to the man that is dear to God ;

How best to help the slender store,
How mend the dwellings, of the poor ;

How gain in life, as life advances,
Valor and charity more and more.

Come, Maurice, come : the lawn as yet
Is hoar with rime, or spongy-wet ;

But when the wreath of March has
blossom'd,

Crocus, anemone, violet,

Or later, pay one visit here,
For those are few we hold as dear ;

Nor pay but one, but come for many,
Many and many a happy year.

January, 1854.

WILL.

I.

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 ran-
dom mock,

Nor all Calamity's hugest waves confound,
Who seems a promontory of rock,
That, compass'd round with turbulent
sonnd,

In middle ocean meets the surging shock,
Tempest-buffeted, citadel-crown'd.

II.

But ill for him who, bettering not with
time,

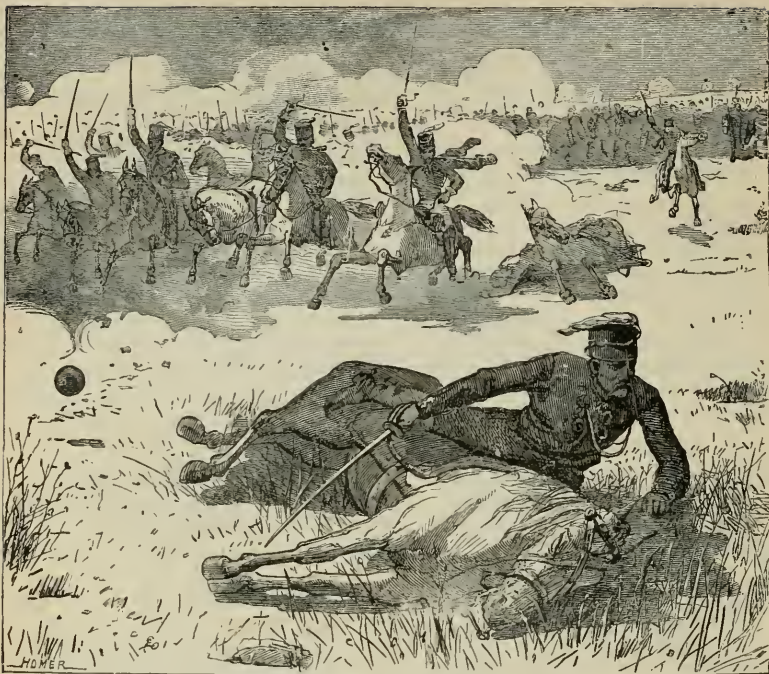
Corrupts the strength of heaven-de-
scended Will,

And ever weaker grows thro' acted crime,
Or seeming-genial venial fault,

Recurring and suggesting still !
He seems as one whose footsteps halt,

Toiling in immeasurable sand,
And o'er a weary, sultry land,

Far beneath a blazing vault,
Sown in a wrinkle of the monstrous hill,
The city sparkles like a grain of salt.



"O the wild charge they made!
All the world wondered.

THE CHARGE OF THE LIGHT BRIGADE.

I.

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.

II.

"Forward, the Light Brigade!"
Was there a man dismay'd?
Not tho' the soldier knew
Some one had blunder'd:
Theirs not to make reply,
Theirs not to reason why,

Theirs but to do and die:
Into the valley of Death
Rode the six hundred.

III.

Cannon to right of them,
Cannon to left of them,
Cannon in front of them
Volley'd and thunder'd;
Storm'd at with shot and shell,
Boldly they rode and well,
Into the jaws of Death,
Into the mouth of Hell
Rode the six hundred.

IV.

Flash'd all their sabres bare,
Flash'd as they turn'd in air
Sabring the gunners there,
Charging an army, while

All the world wonder'd :
 Plunged in the battery-smoke,
 Right thro' the line they broke ;
 Cossack and Russian
 Reel'd from the sabre-stroke
 Shatter'd and sunder'd.
 Then they rode back, but not
 Not the six hundred.

v.

Cannon to right of them,
 Cannon to left of them,
 Cannon behind them
 Volley'd and thunder'd ;
 Storm'd at with shot and shell,

While horse and hero fell,
 They that had fought so well
 Came thro' the jaws of Death
 Back from the mouth of Hell,
 All that was left of them,
 Left of six hundred.

vi.

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

ENOCH ARDEN,

AND OTHER POEMS.

ENOCH ARDEN.

Low lines of cliff breaking have left a
 chasm ;
 And in the chasm are foam and yellow
 sands ;

Beyond, red roofs about a narrow wharf
 In cluster ; then a moulder'd church ;
 and higher

A long street climbs to one tall-tower'd
 mill ;

And high in heaven behind it a gray down
 With Danish barrows ; and a hazelwood ;
 By autumn nutters haunted, flourishes
 Green in a cuplike hollow of the down.

Here on this beach a hundred years ago,
 Three children of three houses, Annie Lee,
 The prettiest little damsel in the port,
 And Philip Ray the miller's only son,
 And Enoch Arden, a rough sailor's lad
 Made orphan by a winter shipwreck,
 play'd

Among the waste and lumber of the shore,
 Hard coils of cordage, swarthy fishing-
 nets,

Anchors of rusty fluke, and boats up-
 drawn ;

And built their castles of dissolving sand
 To watch them overflow'd, or following
 up

And flying the white breaker, daily left
 The little footprint daily wash'd away.

A narrow cave ran in beneath the cliff :
 In this the children play'd at keeping
 house.

Enoch was host one day, Philip the next,
 While Annie still was mistress ; but at
 times

Enoch would hold possession for a week :
 "This is my house and this my little wife."
 "Mine too" said Philip "turn and turn
 about" :

When, if they quarrell'd, Enoch stron-
 ger-made

Was master : then would Philip, his
 blue eyes

All flooded with the helpless wrath of tears,
 Shriek out "I hate you, Enoch," and at
 this

The little wife would weep for company,
 And pray them not to quarrel for her sake,
 And say she would be little wife to both.

But when the dawn of rosy childhood
 past,

And the new warmth of life's ascending
 sun

Was felt by either, either fixt his heart
 On that one girl ; and Enoch spoke his love,
 But Philip loved in silence ; and the girl
 Seem'd kinder unto Philip than to him ;
 But she loved Enoch ; tho' she knew it not,
 And would if ask'd deny it. Enoch set
 A purpose evermore before his eyes,
 To hoard all savings to the uttermost.

To purchase his own boat, and make a home

For Annie : and so prosper'd that at last
A luckier or a bolder fisherman,
A carefuller in peril, did not breathe
For leagues along that breaker-beaten coast

Than Enoch. Likewise had he served a year

On board a merchantman, and made himself

Full sailor ; and he thrice had pluck'd a life

From the dread sweep of the down-streaming seas :

And all men look'd upon him favorably :
And ere he touch'd his one-and-twentieth May

He purchased his own boat, and made a home

For Annie, neat and nestlike, halfway up
The narrow street that clamber'd toward the mill.

Then, on a golden autumn eventide,
The younger people making holiday,
With bag and sack and basket, great and small,

Went nutting to the hazels. Philipstay'd
(His father lying sick and needing him)
An hour behind ; but as he climb'd the hill,

Just where the prone edge of the wood began

To feather toward the hollow, saw the pair,
Enoch and Annie, sitting hand-in-hand,
His large gray eyes and weather-beaten face

All-kindled by a still and sacred fire,
That burn'd as on an altar. Philiplook'd,
And in their eyes and faces read his doom ;
Then, as their faces drew together, groan'd,
And slipt aside, and like a wounded life
Crept down into the hollows of the wood ;
There, while the rest were loud in merry-making,

Had his dark hour unseen, and rose and past

Bearing a lifelong hunger in his heart.

So these were wed, and merrily rang the bells,

And merrily ran the years, seven happy years,

Seven-happy years of health and competence,

And mutual love and honorable toil ;

With children ; first a daughter. In him woke,

With his first babe's first cry, the noble wish

To save all earnings to the uttermost,
And give his child a better bringing-up
Than his had been, or hers ; a wish renewed,

When two years after came a boy to be
The rosy idol of her solitudes,
While Enoch was abroad on wrathful seas,
Or often journeying landward ; for in truth

Enoch's white horse, and Enoch's ocean-spoil

In ocean-smelling osier, and his face,
Rough-redden'd with a thousand winter gales,

Not only to the market-cross were known,
But in the leafy lanes behind the down,
Far as the portal-warding lion-whelp,
And peacock-yewtree of the lonely Hall,
Whose Friday fare was Enoch's ministering.

Then came a change, as all things human change.

Ten miles to northward of the narrow port
Open'd a larger haven : thither used
Enoch at times to go by land or sea ;
And once when there, and clambering on a mast

In harbor, by mischance he slipt and fell :
A limb was broken when they lifted him ;
And while he lay recovering there, his wife
Bore him another son, a sickly one :
Another hand crept too across his trade
Taking her bread and theirs : and on him fell,

Altho' a grave and staid God-fearing man,
Yet lying thus inactive, doubt and gloom.
He seem'd, as in a nightmare of the night,
To see his children leading evermore
Low miserable lives of hand-to-mouth,
And her, he loved, a beggar : then he 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 boatswain. Would he go ?

There yet were many weeks before she
sail'd,
Sail'd from this port. Would Enoch
have the place?
And Enoch all at once assented to it,
Rejoicing at that answer to his prayer.

So now that shadow of mischance ap-
pear'd
No graver than as when some little cloud
Cuts off the fiery highway of the sun,
And isles a light in the oiling: 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 Annie 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 Annie
pale,
Nursing the sickly babe, her latest-born.
Forward she started with a happy cry,
And laid the feeble infant in his arms;
Whom Enoch took, and handled all his
limbs,
Appraised his weight and fondled father-
like,
But had no heart to break his purposes
To Annie, till the morrow, when he spoke.

Then first since Enoch's golden ring
had girt
Her finger, Annie fought against his 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)
Besought him, supplicating, 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 Annie 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 raising, shrill'd
and rang,
Till this was ended, and his careful
hand, —
The space was narrow, — having order'd
all
Almost as neat and close as Nature packs
Her blossom or her seedling, paused;
and he,
Who needs would work for Annie to the
last,
Ascending tired, heavily slept till morn.

And Enoch faced this morning of fare-
well
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 clean hearth and a clear fire for me,
For I'll be back, my girl, before you
know it.”
Then lightly rocking baby's cradle “and
he,
This pretty, puny, weakly little one, —
Nay — for I love him all the better for
it —



"Forward she started with a happy cry,
And laid the feeble infant in his arms."

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 home
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 sailor fashion roughly sermonizing
On providence and trust in Heaven, she
heard,

Heard and not heard him; as the village
girl,
Who sets her picher underneath the
spring,
Musing on him that used to fill it for
her,
Hears and not hears, and lets it overflow."

At length she spoke "O Enoch, you
are wise;
And yet for all your wisdom well know I
That I shall look upon your face no more."

"Well then," said Enoch, "I shall
look on yours.
Annie, the ship I sail in passes here

(He 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 shipshape, for I must go. And fear no more for me; or if you fear Cast all your cares on God; that anchor holds.

Is He not yonder in those uttermost Parts of the morning? if I flee to these Can I go from Him? and the sea is His, The sea is His: He made it."

Enoch rose,

Cast his strong arms about his drooping wife,

And kiss'd his wonder-stricken little ones; But for the third, the sickly one, who slept

After a night of feverous wakefulness, When Annie would have raised him Enoch said

"Wake him not; let him sleep; how should the child

Remember this?" and kiss'd him in his cot.

But Annie from her baby's forehead clipt A 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 throve not in her trade, not being bred To barter, nor compensating the want

By shrewdness, neither capable of lies, Nor asking overmuch and taking less, And still foreboding "what would Enoch say?"

For more than once, in days of difficulty And pressure, had she sold her wares for less

Than what she gave in buying what she sold:

She fail'd and sadden'd knowing it; and thus,

Expectant of that news which never came, Gain'd for her own a scanty sustenance, And lived a life of silent melancholy.

Now the third child was sickly-born and grew

Yet sicklier, tho' the mother cared for it With all a mother's care: nevertheless, Whether her business often call'd her from it,

Or thro' the want of what it needed most, Or means to pay the voice who best could tell

What most it needed — howsoe'er it was, After a lingering, — ere she was aware, — Like the caged bird escaping suddenly, The little innocent soul flitted away.

In that same week when Annie buried it,

Philip's true heart, which hunger'd for her peace

(Since Enoch left he had not look'd upon her),

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 unask'd, His bashfulness and tenderness at war, He set himself beside her, saying to her:

"I came to speak to you of what he wish'd,
 Enoch, your husband : I have ever said
 You chose the best among us -- a strong
 man :

For where he fixt his heart he set his hand
 To do the thing he will'd, and bore it thro'.
 And wherefore did he go this weary way,
 And leave you lonely ? not to see the
 world —

For pleasure ? — nay, but for the where-
 withal

To give his babes a better bringing-up
 Than his had been or yours : that was
 his wish.

And if he come again, vext will he be
 To find the precious morning hours were
 lost.

And it would vex him even in his grave,
 If he could know his babes were running
 wild

Like colts about the waste. So, Annie,
 now —

Have we not known each other all our
 lives ?

I do beseech you by the love you bear
 Him and his children not to say me nay —
 For, if you will, when Enoch comes again
 Why then he shall repay me — if you will,
 Annie — for I am rich and well-to-do.
 Now let me put the boy and girl to school :
 This is the favor that I came to ask."

Then Annie with her brows against the
 wall

Answer'd "I cannot look you in the face ;
 I seem so foolish and so broken down.
 When you came in my sorrow broke me
 down ;

And 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 fixt 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 pas-
 sionately,

And past into the little garth beyond.
 So lifted up in spirit he moved away.

Then Philip put the boy and girl to
 school,

And bought them needful books, and
 everyway,

Like one who does his duty by his own,
 Made himself theirs ; and tho' for Annie's
 sake,

Fearing the lazy gossip of the port,
 He oft denied his heart his dearest wish,
 And seldom crost her threshold, yet he sent
 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 :

Scarcely 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,

Faint as a figure seen in early dawn
 Down at the far end of an avenue,

Going we know not where : and so ten
 years,

Since Enoch left his hearth and native
 land,

Fled forward, and no news of Enoch came.

It chanced one evening Annie's chil-
 dren long'd

To go with others, nutting to the wood,
 And Annie would go with them ; then
 they begg'd

For Father Philip (as they call'd him) too :
 Him, like the working bee in blossom-
 dust,

Blanch'd with his mill, they found ; and
 saying to him

"Come with us Father Philip" he denied ;



Then Philip put the boy and girl to school,
And bought them needful books."

But when the children pluck'd at him
to go,
He laugh'd, 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
Fail'd her; 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 whitening hazels made a
plunge
To the bottom, and dispersed, and bent
or broke
The lithe reluctant boughs to tear away
Their tawny clusters, crying to each other
And calling, here and there, about the
wood.

But Philip sitting at her side forgot
Her presence, and remember'd one dark
hour
Here in this wood, when like a wounded
life
He crept into the shadow: at last he said

Lifting his honest forehead "Listen,
Annie,
How merry they are down yonder in the
wood.
Tired, Annie?" for she did not speak
a word.
"Tired?" but her face had fall'n upon her
hands;
At which, as with a kind of anger in him,
"The ship was lost" he said "the ship
was lost!
No more of that! why should you kill
yourself
And make them orphans quite?" And
Annie said
"I thought not of it: but — I know not
why —
Their voices make me feel so solitary."

Then Philip coming somewhat closer
spoke.

"Annie, there is a thing upon my mind,
And it has been upon my mind so long,
That tho' I know not when it first came
there,

I know that it will 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 you for my wife. I fain would prove
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,
That after all these sad uncertain years,
We might be still as happy as God grants
To any of His creatures. Think upon it:
For I am well-to-do — no kin, no care,
No burden, save my care for you and
yours:

And we have known each other all our
lives,
And I have loved you longer than you
know."

Then answer'd Annie; tenderly she
spoke:

"You have been as God's good angel in
our house.
God bless you for it, God reward you for it,

Philip, with something happier than my-
self.

Can one love twice? can you be ever loved
As Enoch was? what 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 sadly said

"Annie, as I have waited all my life

I well may wait a little." "Nay" she cried

"I am bound: you have my promise —
in a year:

Will you not bide your year as I bide
mine?"

And Philip answer'd "I will bide my
year."

Here both were mute, till Philip glanc-
ing 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 his voice beneath him thro'
the wood.

Up came the children laden with their
spoil;

Then all descended to the port, and there
At Annie's door he paused and gave his
hand,

Saying gently "Annie, when I spoke to
you,

That was your hour of weakness. I was
wrong.

I am always bound to you, but you are
free."

Then Annie weeping answer'd "I am
bound."

She spoke; and in one moment as it
were,

While yet she went about her household
ways,

Ev'n as she dwelt upon his latest words,
That he had loved her longer than she
knew,

That autumn into autumn flash'd again,
And there he stood once more before her
face,

Claiming her promise. "Is it a year?"
she ask'd.

“Yes, if the nuts” he said “be ripe again :
Come out and see.” But she — she put
him off —
So 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 delayingly
With many a scarce-believable excuse,
Trying his truth and his long-sufferance,
Till half-another year had slipt away.

By this the lazy gossips of the port,
Abhorrent of a calculation crost,
Began to chafe as at a personal wrong.
Some thought that Philip did but trifle
with her ;
Some that she but held off to draw him on ;
And others laugh’d at her and Philip too,
As simple folk that knew not their own
minds ;
And one, in whom all evil 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 prest 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 things
fell on her
Sharp as reproach.

At last one night it chanced
That Annie could not sleep, but earnestly
Pray’d for a sign “my Enoch is he gone?”
Then compass’d round by the blind wall
of night
Brook’d not the expectant terror of her
heart,
Started from bed, and struck herself a
light,
Then desperately seized the holy Book,
Suddenly set it wide to find a sign,
Suddenly put her finger on the text,
“Under the palm-tree.” That was noth-
ing 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 strewing cried
‘Hosanna in the highest !’” Here she
woke,
Resolved, sent for him and said wildly
to him
“There is no reason why we should not
wed.”
“Then for God’s sake,” he answer’d,
“both our sakes,
So you will wed me, let it be at once.”

So these were wed and merrily rang
the bells,
Merrily rang the bells and they were wed.
But never merrily beat Annie’s heart.
A footstep seem’d to fall beside her path,
She knew 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 ail’d her then, that ere she enter’d,
often
Her hand dwelt lingeringly on the latch,
Fearing to enter : Philip thought he
knew :
Such doubts and fears were common to
her state,
Being with child : but when her child
was born,
Then her new child was as herself renew’d,
Then the new mother came about her
heart,
Then her good Philip was her all-in-all,
And that mysterious instinct wholly died.

And where was Enoch ? prosperously
sail’d
The ship “Good Fortune,” tho’ at set-
ting forth
The Biscay, roughly ridging eastward,
shook
And almost overwhelm’d her, yet unvest
She slipt across the summer of the world,
Then after a long tumble about the Cape
And frequent interchange of foul and fair,
She passing thro’ the summer world again,
The breath of heaven came continually



“ By this the lazy gossips of the port,
Abhorrent of a calculation crost,
Began to chafe as at a personal wrong.”

And sent her sweetly by the golden isles,
Till silent in her oriental haven.

There Enoch traded for himself, and
bought
Quaint 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-busted figure-
head

Stared o'er the ripple feathering from
her bows :
Then follow'd calms, and then winds
variable,
Then baffling, a long course of them ;
and last
Storm, such as drove her under moon-
less 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, stranding on an isle at
morn
Rich, but the loneliest in a lonely sea.

No want was there of human sustenance
Soft fruitage, mighty nuts, and nourish-
ing roots ;
Nor save for pity was it hard to take
The helpless life so wild that it was tame.
There in a seaward-gazing mountain-
gorge
They built, and thatch'd with leaves of
palm, a hut,
Half hut, half native cavern. So the
three,
Set in this Eden of all plenteousness,
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 five-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-stricken, and that other lived alone.
In those two deaths he read God's warn-
ing "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 insect and of bird,
The lustre of the long convolvuluses
That coil'd around the stately stems,
and ran
Ev'n to the limit of the land, the glows
And glories of the broad belt of the world,
All these he saw ; but what he fain had
seen
He could not see, the kindly human face,
Nor ever hear a kindly voice, but heard
The myriad shriek of wheeling ocean-
fowl,
The league-long roller thundering on the
reef,
The moving whisper of huge trees that
branch'd
And blossom'd in the zenith, 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 ferns and preci-
pices ;
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 them-
selves 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 babble, Annie, the
small house,
The climbing street, the mill, the leafy
lanes,
The peacock-jewtree and the lonely Hall,
The horse he drove, the boat he sold, the
chill
November dawns and dewy-glooming
downs,
The gentle shower, the smell of dying
leaves,
And the low moan of leaden-color'd seas.

Once likewise, in the ringing of his ears,
Tho' faintly, merrily — far and faraway —
He heard the pealing of his parish bells ;
Then, tho' he knew not wherefore, start-
ed up
Shuddering, and when the beauteous
hateful isle
Return'd upon him, had not his poor heart
Spoken with That, which being every-
where
Lets 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 perish'd, when his lonely
 doom
 Came suddenly to an end. Another ship
 (She wanted water) blown by baffling
 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-wreathen 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
 Stept the long-hair'd long-bearded soli-
 tary,
 Brown, looking hardly human, strangely
 clad,
 Muttering and mumbling, idiotlike 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 crew,
 And heard them talking, his long-bounden
 tongue
 Was loosen'd, till he made them under-
 stand ;
 Whom, when their casks were fill'd they
 took aboard :
 And there the tale he utter'd brokenly,
 Scarce-credited at first but more and more,
 Amazed and melted all who listen'd to it :
 And clothes they gave him and free pas-
 sage 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 sea-worthy ; but ever-
 more
 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
 Levied a kindly tax upon themselves,

Pitying the lonely man, and gave him it :
 Then moving up the coast they landed
 him,
 Ev'n in that harbor whence he sail'd be-
 fore.

There Enoch spoke no word to anyone,
 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 haven open'd on the deeps,
 Roll'd a sea-haze and whelm'd the world
 in gray ;
 Cut off the length of highway on before,
 And left but narrow breadth to left and
 right
 Of wither'd holt or tilth 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 :
 Thicker the drizzle grew, deeper the gloom ;
 Last, as it seem'd, a great mist-blotted
 light
 Flared on him, and he came upon the
 place.

Then down the long street having
 slowly stolen,
 His heart foreshadowing all calamity,
 His eyes upon the stoæes, 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 bill of sale gleam'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 propt, worm-eaten, ruinously old,
 He thought it must have gone ; but he
 was gone
 Who kept it ; and his widow, Miriam
 Lane,
 With daily-dwindling profits held the
 house ;

A haunt of brawling seamen once, but now
Still, with yet a bed for wandering men.
There Enoch rested silent many days.

But Miriam Lane was good and gar-
rulous,
Nor let him be, but often breaking in,
Told him, with other annals of the port,
Not knowing — Enoch was so brown, so
bow'd,

So broken — all the story of his house.
His baby's death, her growing poverty,
How Philip put her little ones to school,
And kept them in it, his long wooing her,
Her slow consent, and marriage, and the
birth

Of Philip's child : and o'er his counte-
nance

No shadow past, nor motion : anyone,
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 duller 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 landward ; but behind,
With one small gate that open'd on the
waste,

Flourish'd a little garden square and
wall'd :

And in it throve 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 better might have shunn'd,
if griefs

Like his have worse or better, 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,
Stout, rosy, with his babe across his knees ;
And o'er her second father stoopt a girl,
A later but a loftier 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 creasy
arms,

Caught at and ever miss'd it, and they
laugh'd :

And on the left hand of the hearth he
saw

The mother glancing often toward her
babe,

But turning now and then to speak with
him,

Her son, who stood beside her tall and
strong,

And saying that which pleased him, for
he smiled.

Now when the dead man come to life
beheld

His wife his wife no more, and saw the
babe

Hers, yet not his, upon the father's knee,
And all the warmth, the peace, the hap-
piness,

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, tho' 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
hearth.

He therefore turning softly like a thief,
Lest the harsh shingle should grate underfoot,
And feeling all along the garden-wall,
Lest he should swoon and tumble and be found,
Crept to the gate, and open'd it, and closed,
As lightly as a sick man's chamber-door,
Behind him, and came out upon the waste.

And there he would have knelt, but that his knees
Were feeble, so that falling prone he 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 burden of a song,
“Not to tell her, never to let her know.”

He was not all unhappy. His resolve
Uppore 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 enow!
If you could tell her you had seen him dead,
Why, that would be her comfort”; and he thought

“After the Lord has call'd me she shall know,
I wait His time” and Enoch set himself,
Scorning an alms, to work whereby to live.
Almost to all things could he turn his hand.
Cooper he was and carpenter, and wrought
To make the boatmen fishing-nets, or help'd

At lading and unlading the tall barks,
That brought the stinted 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
Roll'd itself round again to meet the day
When Enoch had return'd, a languor came
Upon him, gentle sickness, gradually
Weakening the man, till he could do no more,
But kept the house, his chair, and last his bed.

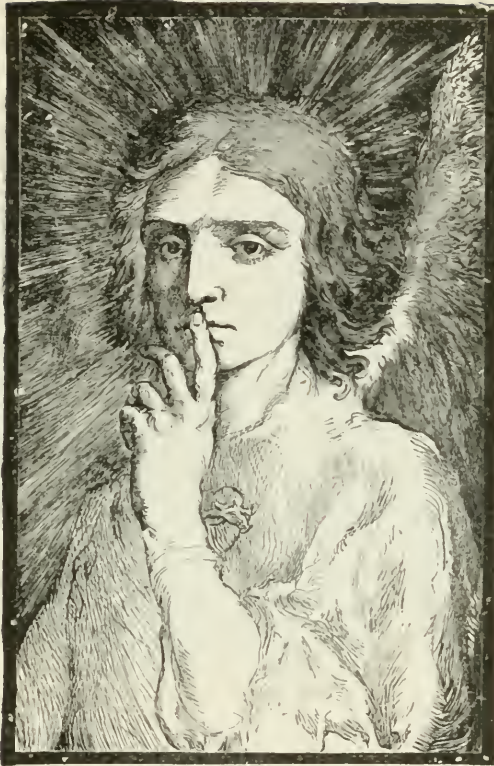
And Enoch bore his weakness cheerfully.
For sure no gladlier does the stranded wreck
See thro' the gray skirts of a lifting squall
The boat that bears the hope of life approach
To save the life despair'd of, than he saw
Death dawning on him, and the close of all.

For thro' that dawning gleam'd a kinder hope
On Enoch thinking “after I am gone,
Then may she learn I loved her to the last.”
He call'd aloud for Miriam Lane and said
“Woman, I have a secret—only swear,
Before I tell you—swear upon the book
Not to reveal it, till you see me dead.”
“Dead” clamor'd the good woman “hear him talk!
I warrant, man, that we shall bring you round.”
“Swear” added Enoch sternly “on the book.”
And on the book, half-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;



"Fast flowed the current of her easy tears." See page 369.

64.



4

"Beating it in upon his weary brain,
As tho' it were the burden of a song,
'Not to tell her, never to let her know.'

Held his head high, and cared for no man, he."

Slowly and sadly Enoch answer'd her ;
"His head is low, and no man cares for him.

I think I have not three days more to live ;
I am the man." At which the woman gave
A half-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 you that I am he

Who married — but that name has twice
been changed —

I married her who married Philip Ray.
Sit, listen." Then he told her of his
voyage,

His wreck, his lonely life, his coming back,
His gazing in on Annie, his resolve,
And how he kept it. As the woman heard,
Fast flow'd the current of her easy tears,
While in her heart she yearn'd incessantly

To rush abroad all round the little haven,
Proclaiming Enoch Arden and his woes ;
But awed and promise-bounden she forbore,

Saying only "See your bairns before you go!

Eh, let me fetch 'em, Arden," and arose Eager to bring them down, for Enoch hung A moment on her words, but then replied.

"Woman, disturb me not now at the last,

But let me hold my purpose till I die.
Sit down again; mark me and understand,
While I have power to speak. I charge
you now,

When you shall see her, tell her that I did

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 bliss : wherefore when I am
gone,

Take, give her this, for it may comfort
her :

It will moreover be a token to her,
That I am he."

He ceased ; and Miriam Lane
Made such a voluble answer promising
all,

That once again he roll'd his eyes upon
her

Repeating all he wish'd, and once again
She promised.

Then the third night after this,
While Enoch slumber'd motionless and
pale,

And Miriam watch'd and dozed at inter-
vals,

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.

AYLMER'S FIELD.

1793.

DUST 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 urns and ornaments,
Which at a touch of light, an air of
heaven,

Slipt into ashes and was found no more.

Here is a story which in rougher shape
Came from a grizzled cripple, whom I saw
Sunning himself in a waste field alone —
Old, and a mine of memories — who had
served,

Long since, a bygone Rector of the place,
And been himself a part of what he told.

SIR AYLMEY AYLMEY that almighty
man,

The county God — in whose capacious
hall,

Hung with a hundred shields, the family
tree

Sprang from the midriff of a prostrate
king —

Whose blazing wyvern weathercock'd the
spire,

Stood from his walls and wing'd his entry-
gates

And 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 heiress and not heir regretfully ?

But "he that marries her marries her
name"



Aylmer Hall.

This fiat somewhat soothed himself and wife,
 His wife a faded beauty of the Baths,
 Insipid as the Queen upon a card ;
 Her all of thought and bearing hardly more
 Than his own shadow in a sickly sun.

A land of hops and poppy-mingled corn,
 Little about it stirring save a brook !
 A sleepy land where under the same wheel
 The same old rut would deepen year by year ;
 Where almost all the village had one name ;
 Where Aylmer follow'd Aylmer at the Hall
 And Averill Averill at the Rectory
 Thrice over ; so that Rectory and Hall,
 Bound in an immemorial intimacy,

Were open to each other ; tho' to dream
 That Love could bind them closer well
 had made
 The hoar hair of the Baronet bristle up
 With horror, worse than had he heard
 his priest
 Preach an inverted scripture, sons of men
 Daughters of God ; so sleepy was the
 land.

And might not Averill, had he will'd
 it so,
 Somewhere beneath his own low range
 of roofs,
 Have also set his many-shielded tree ?
 There was an Aylmer-Averill marriage
 once,
 When the red rose was redder than itself,
 And York's white rose as red as Lancaster's,

With wounded peace which each had
prick'd to death.

"Not proven" Averill said, or laughingly
"Some other race of Averills" — prov'n
or no,

What cared he? what, if other or the
same?

He lean'd not on his fathers but himself.
But Leolin, his brother, living oft
With Averill, and a year or two before
Call'd to the bar, but ever call'd away
By one low voice to one dear neighbor-
hood,

Would often, in his walks with Edith,
claim

A distant kinship to the gracious blood
That shook the heart of Edith hearing him.

Sanguine he was: a but less vivid hue
Than of that islet in the chestnut-bloom
Flamed in his cheek; and eager eyes, that
still

Took joyful note of all things joyful,
beam'd,

Beneath a manlike 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 troublous 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 tost his ball and flown his kite, and
roll'd

His hoop to pleasure Edith, with her dipt
Against the rush of the air in the prone
swing,

Made blossom-ball or daisy-chain, ar-
ranged

Her garden, sow'd her name and kept it
green

In living letters, told her fairy-tales,

Show'd her the fairy footings on the
grass,

The little dells of cowslip, fairy palms,
The petty maretail forest, fairy pines,
Or from the tiny pitted target blew

What look'd a flight of fairy arrows aim'd.
All at one mark, all hitting: make-
believes

For Edith and himself: or else he forged,
But that was later, boyish histories
Of battle, bold adventure, dungeon, wreck,
Flights, terrors, sudden rescues, and true
love

Crown'd after trial; sketches rude and
faint,

But where a passion yet unborn perhaps
Lay hidden as the music of the moon
Sleeps in the plain eggs of the nightin-
gale.

And thus together, save for college-times
Or Temple-eaten terms, a couple, fair
As ever painter painted, poet sang,
Or Heaven in lavish bounty moulded,
grew.

And more and more, the maiden woman-
grown,

He wasted hours with Averill; there,
when first

The tented winter-field was broken up
Into that phalanx of the summer spears
That soon should wear the garland;
there again

When butt 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 loose him at the stables, for he rose
Two-footed at the limit of his chain,
Roaring to make a third: and how should

Love,

Whom the cross-lightnings of four chance-
met eyes
Flash into fiery life from nothing, follow
Such dear familiarities of dawn?
Seldom, but when he does, Master of all.

So these young hearts not knowing
that they loved,
Not she at least, nor conscious of a bar
Between them, nor by plight or broken
ring

Bound, but an immemorial intimacy,
Wander'd at will, but oft accompanied
By Averill: his, a brother's love, that
hung

With wings of brooding shelter o'er her
peace,

Might have been other, save for Leolin's—
Who knows? but so they wander'd, hour
by hour

Gather'd the blossom that rebloom'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 into each other, huts
At random scatter'd, each a nest in bloom.
Her art, her hand, her counsel all had
wrought

About them: here was one that, sum-
mer-blanch'd,

Was parcel-bearded with the traveller's-
joy

In Autumn, parcel ivy-clad; and here
The warm-blue breathings of a hidden
hearth

Broke from a bower of vine and honey-
suckle:

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 milky-way on earth,
Like visions in the Northern dreamer's
heavens,

A lily-avenue climbing to the doors;
One, almost to the martin-haunted eaves
A summer burial deep in hollyhocks;
Each, its own charm; and Edith's
everywhere;

And Edith ever titant with him,
He but less loved than Edith, of her poor:
For she — so lowly-lovely and so loving,

Queenly responsive when the loyal hand
Rose from the clay it work'd in as she past,
Not sowing hedgerow texts and passing
by,

Nor dealing goodly counsel from a height
That makes the lowest hate it, but a voice
Of comfort and an open hand of help,
A splendid presence flattering the poor
roofs

Revered as theirs, but kindlier than
themselves

To ailing wife or wailing infancy
Or old bedridden palsy, — was adored;
He, loved for her and for himself. A grasp
Having the warmth and muscle of the
heart,

A childly way with children, and a laugh
Ringing like proven golden coinage true,
Were no false passport to that easy realm,
Where once with Leolin at her side, the
girl,

Nursing a child, and turning to the
warmth

The tender pink five-beaded baby-soles,
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 ecliptic, was not fair;
Fairer his talk, a tongue that ruled the
hour,

Tho' seeming boastful: 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 rotatory thumbs on silken knees,
Call'd all her vital spirits into each ear.
To listen: unawares they flitted off,
Busying themselves about the flowerage
That stood from out a stiff brocade in
which,

The meteor of a splendid season, she,
Once with this kinsman, ah so long ago,
Stept thro' the stately minuet of those
days:

But Edith's eager fancy hurried with him
Snatch'd thro' the perilous passes of his
life:

Till Leolin ever watchful of her eye
 Hated him with a momentary hate.
 Wife-hunting, as the rumor ran, was he :
 I know not, for he spoke not, only shower'd
 His oriental gifts on every one
 And most on Edith : like a storm he came,
 And shook the house, and like a storm
 he went.

Among the gifts he left her (possibly
 He 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-ferns on January panes
 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 thieves
 He got it ; for their captain after fight,
 His comrades having fought their last
 below,
 Was climbing up the valley ; at whom
 he shot :
 Down from the beetling crag to which
 he clung
 Tumbled the tawny rascal at his feet,
 This dagger with him, which when now
 admired
 By Edith whom his pleasure was to please,
 At once the costly Sahib yielded to her.

And Leolin, coming after he was gone,
 Tost over all her presents petulantly :
 And when she show'd the wealthy scab-
 bard, saying
 "Look what a lovely piece of workman-
 ship !"
 Slight was his answer "Well — I care
 not for it" ;
 Then playing with the blade he prick'd
 his hand,
 "A gracious gift to give a lady, this !"
 "But would it be more gracious" ask'd
 the girl
 "Were I to give this gift of his to one
 That is no lady ?" "Gracious ? No"
 said he.
 "Me ? — but I cared not for it. O par-
 don me,
 I seem to be ungraciousness itself."
 "Take it" she added sweetly "tho' his
 gift ;
 For I am more ungracious ev'n than you,
 I care not for it either" ; and he said

"Why then I love it" : but Sir Aylmer
 past,
 And neither loved nor liked the thing he
 heard.

The next day came a neighbor. Blues
 and reds
 They talk'd of : blues were sure of it, he
 thought :
 Then of the latest fox — where started —
 kill'd
 In such a bottom : "Peter had the brush,
 My Peter, first" : and did Sir Aylmer know
 That great poek-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 Ayl-
 mer heard —
 Nay, but he must — the land was ring-
 ing of it —
 This blacksmith-border marriage — one
 they knew —
 Raw from the nursery — who could trust
 a child ?
 That cursed France with her egalities !
 And did Sir Aylmer (deferentially
 With nearing chair and lower'd accent)
 think —
 For people talk'd — that it was wholly
 wise
 To let that handsome fellow Averill walk
 So freely with his daughter ? people
 talk'd —
 The boy might get a notion into him ;
 The girl might be entangled ere she knew.
 Sir Aylmer Aylmer slowly stiffening
 spoke :
 "The girl and boy, Sir, know their dif-
 ferences !"
 "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.
 Pale, for on her the thunders of the house
 Had fallen first, was Edith that same
 night ;
 Pale as the Jephtha's daughter, a rough
 piece

Of early rigid color, 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,
Turning beheld the Powers of the House
On either side the hearth, indignant; her,
Cooling her false cheek with a featherfan,
Him glaring, by his own stale devil
spur'd,

And, like a beast hard-riden, breathing
hard.

"Ungenerous, dishonorable, base,
Presumptuous! trusted as he was with
her,

The sole succeder to their wealth, their
lands,

The last remaining pillar of their house,
The one transmitter of their ancient name,
Their child." "Our child!" "Our
heirss!" "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 that
this —

Else I withdraw favor and countenance
From you and yours for ever — 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 meted by his measure of himself,
Arguing boundless forbearance: after
which,

And Leolin's horror-stricken answer, "I
So foul a traitor to myself and her,

Never O never," for about as long
As the wind-hover hangs in balance,
paused

Sir Aylmer reddening from the storm
within,

Then broke all bonds of courtesy, and
crying

"Boy, should I find you by my doors
again,

My men shall lash you from them like a
dog:

Hence!" with a sudden execration drove
The footstool from before him, and arose;
So, stammering "scoundrel!" out of
teeth that ground

As in a dreadful dream, while Leolin still
Retreated half-aghast, the fierce old man
Follow'd, and under his own lintel stood
Storming with lifted hands, a hoary face
Meet for the reverence of the hearth,
but now,

Beneath a pale and unimpassion'd moon,
Vext with unworthy madness, and de-
form'd.

Slowly and conscious of the rageful eye
That watch'd him, till he heard the pon-
derous 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 foam'd away his heart at Averill's
car:

Whom Averill solaced as he might,
amazed:

The man was his, had been his father's,
friend:

He must have seen, himself had seen it
long;

He must have known, himself had
known: besides,

He never yet had set his daughter forth
Here in the woman-markets of the west,
Where our Caucasians let themselves be
sold.

Some one, he thought, had slander'd
Leolin to him.

"Brother, for I have loved you more asson
Than brother, let me tell you: I myself —
What is their pretty saying? jilted, is it?
Jilted I was: I say it for your peace.

Pain'd, and, as bearing in myself the shame
The woman should have borne, humili-
ated,

I lived for years a stunted 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 forty blest ones bless him, and him-
self

Be wealthy still, ay wealthier. He be-
lieved

This filthy marriage-hindering 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 pheas-
ant-lords,

These partridge-breeders of a thousand
years,

Who had mildew'd in their thousands,
doing nothing

Since Egbert — why, the greater their
disgrace !

Fall back upon a name ! rest, rot in that !
Not *keep* it noble, make it nobler ? fools,
With such a vantage-ground for noble-
ness !

He had known a man, a quintessence of
man,

The life of all — who madly loved — and
he,

Thwarted by one of these old father-fools,

Had rioted his life out, and made an end,
He would not do it ! her sweet face and
faith

Held him from that : but he had powers,
he knew it :

Back would he to his studies, make a name,
Name, fortune too : the world should ring
of him

To shame these mouldy Aylmers in their
graves :

Chancellor, or what is greatest would he
be —

"O brother, I am grieved to learn your
grief—

Give me my fling, 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

Wept like a storm : and honest Averill
seeing

How low his brother's mood had fallen,
fetch'd

His richest beeswing from a binn reserved
For banquets, praised the waning red,
and told

The vintage — when *this* Aylmer came
of age —

Then drank and past it ; till at length
the two,

Tho' Leolin flamed and fell again, agreed
That much allowance must be made for
men.

After an angry dream this kindlier glow
Faded with morning, but his purpose held.

Yet once by night again the lovers
met,

A perilous meeting under the tall pines
That darken'd all the northward of her
Hall.

Him, to her meek and modest bosom
prest

In agony, she promised that no force,
Persuasion, no, nor death could alter her ;
He, passionately hopefuller, would go,
Labor for his own Edith, and return

In such a sunlight of prosperity
He should not be rejected. "Write to
me !

They loved me, and because I love their
child

They hate me : there is war between us,
dear,

Which breaks all bonds but ours ; we
 must remain
 Sacred to one another." So they talk'd,
 Poor children, for their comfort : the wind
 blew ;
 The rain of heaven, and their own bitter
 tears,
 Tears, and the careless rain of heaven,
 mixt
 Upon their faces, as they kiss'd each other
 In darkness, and above them roar'd the
 pine.

So Leolin went ; and as we task our-
 selves
 To learn a language known but smattering-
 ingly
 In phrases here and there at random, toil'd
 Mastering the lawless 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,
 Lightnings of the hour, the pun, the
 scurrilous tale, —
 Old scandals buried now seven decades
 deep
 In other scandals that have lived and died,
 And left the living scandal that shall
 die —
 Were dead to him already ; bent as he was
 To make disproof of scorn, and strong in
 hopes,
 And prodigal of all brain-labor he,
 Charier of sleep, and wine, and exercise,
 Except when for a breathing-while at eve,
 Some niggard fraction of an hour, he ran
 Beside the river-bank : and then indeed
 Harder the times were, and the hands
 of power
 Were bloodier, and the according hearts
 of men
 Seem'd harder too ; but the soft river-
 breeze,
 Which fann'd the gardens of that rival
 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 flush his blood with air,
 Then to his books again. My lady's
 cousin,
 Half-sickening of his pension'd afternoon,

Drove in upon the student once or twice,
 Ran a Malayan muck against the times,
 Had golden hopes for France and all
 mankind,
 Answer'd all queries touching those at
 home
 With a heaved shoulder and a saucy smile,
 And fain had haled him out into the world,
 And air'd him there : his nearer friend
 would say
 "Screw not the chord too sharply lest it
 snap."
 Then left alone he pluck'd her dagger forth
 From where his worldless heart had kept
 it warm,
 Kissing his vows upon it like a knight.
 And wrinkled benchers often talk'd of
 him
 Approvingly, and prophesied his rise :
 For heart, I think, help'd head : her let-
 ters too,
 Tho' far between, and coming fitfully
 Like broken music, written as she found
 Or made occasion, being strictly watch'd,
 Charm'd him thro' every labyrinth till
 he saw
 An end, a hope, a light breaking upon him.

But they that cast her spirit into flesh,
 Her worldly-wise begetters, plagued them-
 selves
 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 pleasant 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 wirer of their innocent hare
 Falter before he took it. All in vain.
 Sullen, defiant, pitying, wroth, return'd
 Leolin's rejected rivals from their suit
 So often, that the folly taking wings
 Slipt o'er those lazy limits down the wind
 With rumor, and became in other fields
 A mockery to the yeomen over ale,
 And laughter to their lords : but those
 at home,
 As hunters round a hunted creature draw
 The cordon close and closer toward the
 death,
 Narrow'd her goings out and comings 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 barr'd her : yet she bore it : yet
her cheek

Kept color : wondrous ! but, O mystery !
What amulet drew her down to that old
oak,

So old, that twenty years before, a part
Falling had let appear the brand of
John —

Once grovelike, each huge arm a tree,
but now

The broken base of a black tower, a cave
Of touchwood, with a single flourishing
spray.

There the manorial lord too curiously
Raking in that millennial 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 scared with threats of jail and halter
gave

To him that fluster'd his poor parish wits
The letter which he brought, and swore
besides

To play their go-between as heretofore
Nor let them know themselves betray'd ;
and then,

Soul-stricken at their kindness to him,
went

Hating his own lean heart and miserable.

Thenceforward oft from out a despot
dream

The father panting woke, and oft, as dawn
Aroused the black republic on his elms,
Sweeping the frothfly from the fescue
brush'd

Thro' the dim meadow toward his treas-
ure-trove,

Seized it, took home, and to my lady, —
who made

A downward crescent of her minion mouth,
Lictless 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 babyisms, and dear diminutives
Scatter'd all over the vocabulary

Of such a love as like a chidden child,
After much wailing, hush'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 about the place,
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 watcher, and Sir Aylmer watch'd
them all,

Yet bitterer from his readings : once
indeed,

Warm'd with his wines, or taking pride
in her,

She look'd so sweet, he kiss'd her tenderly
Not knowing what possess'd him : that
one kiss

Was Leolin's one strong rival upon earth ;
Seconded, for my lady follow'd suit,
Seem'd hope's returning rose : and there
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 flow'd in shallower acrimo-
nies :

Never one kindly smile, one kindly word :
So that the gentle creature shut from all
Her charitable use, and face to face
With twenty months of silence, slowly
lost

Nor greatly cared to lose, her hold on life.
Last, some low fever ranging round to spy
The weakness of a people or a house,
Like flies that haunt a wound, or deer,
or men,

Or almost all that is, hurting 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
 named his name,
 Did the keen shriek "yes love, yes Edith,
 yes,"
 Shrill, 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 befool'd and idioted
 By the rough amity of the other, sank
 As into sleep again. The second day,
 My lady's Indian kinsman rushing in,
 A breaker of the bitter news from home,
 Found a dead man, a letter edged with
 death
 Beside him, and the dagger which himself
 Gave Edith, redden'd with no bandit's
 blood :
 "From Edith" was engraven on the blade.

Then Averill went and gazed upon his
 death.
 And when he came again, his flock be-
 lieved —
 Beholding how the years which are not
 Time's
 Had blasted him — that many thousand
 days
 Were elipt 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 her child,
 And fixt the Sabbath. Darkly that day
 rose :
 Autumn's mock sunshine of the faded
 woods
 Was all the life of it ; for hard on these,
 A breathless burden of low-folded 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 these,
 and those
 With blots of it about them, ribbon, glove
 Or kerchief ; while the church, — one
 night, except
 For greenish glimmerings thro' the lan-
 cets, — made
 Still paler 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 he pluck'd it forth, and labor'd thro'
 His brief prayer-pledge, gave the verse
 " Behold,
 Your house is left unto you desolate !"
 But lapsed into so long 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 —
 Eight that were left to make a purer
 world —
 When since had flood, fire, earthquake,
 thunder, 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 worshipt their own darkness as the
 Highest ?
 " Gash thyself, priest, and honor thy
 brute Baal,
 And to thy worst self sacrifice thyself,
 For with thy worst self hast thou clothed
 thy God.
 Then came a Lord in no wise like to Baal.
 The babe shall lead the lion. Surely now
 The wilderness shall blossom as the rose.
 Crown thyself, worm, and worship thine
 own lusts ! —
 No coarse and blockish God of acreage
 Stands at thy gate for thee to grovel to —
 Thy God is far diffused in noble groves
 And princely halls, and farms, and flow-
 ing lawns,

And heaps of living gold that daily grow,
 And title-scrolls and gorgeous heraldries.
 In such a shape dost thou behold thy God.
 Thou wilt not gash thy flesh for *him*; for
 thine
 Fares 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 tho' thou numberest with the fol-
 lowers
 Of One who cried 'leave all and follow
 me.'
 Thee therefore with His light about thy
 feet,
 Thee with His message ringing in thine
 ears,
 Thee shall thy brother man, the Lord
 from Heaven,
 Born of a village girl, carpenter's son,
 Wonderful, Prince of peace, the Mighty
 God,
 Count the more base idolater of the two;
 Crueller: as not passing thro' the fire
 Bodies, but souls — thy children's —
 thro' the smoke,
 The blight of low desires — darkening
 thine own
 To thine own likeness; or if one of these,
 Thy better born unhappily from thee,
 Should, as by miracle, grow straight and
 fair —
 Friends, I was bid to speak of such a one
 By those who most have cause to sorrow
 for her —
 Fairer than Rachel by the palmy well,
 Fairer than Ruth among the fields of corn,
 Fair as the Angel that said 'hail' she
 seem'd,
 Who entering fill'd the house with sud-
 den light.
 For so mine own was brighten'd: where
 indeed
 The roof so lowly but that beam of Heaven
 Dawn'd sometime 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

Broke into 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 alms her
hand —

The hand that robed your cottage-walls
with flowers

Has often toil'd to clothe your little ones;
How often placed upon the sick man's brow

Cool'd it, or laid his feverish pillow smooth!
Had you one sorrow and she shared it not?

One burden and she would not lighten it?
One spiritual doubt she did not soothe?

Or when some heat of difference sparkled
out,

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 one — of him I was not bid to speak —

Was always with her, whom you also knew.
Him too you loved, for he was worthy love.

And these had beer together from the first;
They might have been together till the
last.

Friends, this frail bark of ours, when
sorely tried,

May wreck itself without the pilot's guilt,
Without the captain's knowledge: hope
with me.

Whose shame is that, if he went hence
with shame?

Nor mine the fault, if losing both of these
I cry to vacant chairs and widow'd walls,
'My house is left unto me desolate.'

While thus he spoke, his hearers wept;
but some,

Sons of the glebe, with other frowns than
those

That knit themselves for summer shadow,
scowl'd

At their great lord. 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-charm'd from sorrow, soldier-
like,

Erect: but when the preacher's cadence
flow'd

Softening thro' all the gentle attributes

Of his lost child, the wife, who watch'd
his face,
Paled at a sudden twitch of his iron mouth ;
And "O pray God that he hold up" she
thought
"Or surely I shall shame myself and
him."

"Nor yours the blame — for who be-
side your hearths
Can take her place — if echoing me you cry
'Our house is left unto us desolate !'
But thou, O thou that killest, hadst thou
known,
O thou that stonest, hadst thou under-
stood
The things belonging to thy peace and
ours !
Is there no prophet but the voice that calls
Doom upon kings, or in the waste 'Rep-
ent' ?
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 stoning save with flint and
rock ?
Yes, as the dead we weep for testify —
No desolation but by sword and fire ?
Yes, as your moanings witness, and myself
Am lonelier, 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 I that thought myself long-suffering,
meek,
Exceeding 'poor in spirit' — how the
words
Have twisted back upon themselves, and
mean
Vileness, we are grown so proud — I
wish'd my voice
A rushing tempest of the wrath of God
To blow these sacrifices thro' the world —
Sent like the twelve-divided concubine
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 ghastly sack —
The land all shambles — naked marriages
Flash from the bridge, and ever-murder'd
France,

By shores that darken with the gathering
wolf,
Runs in a river of blood to the sick sea.
Is this a time to madden madness then ?
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 !
Doubtless our narrow world must canvass
it :
O rather pray for those and pity them,
Who thro' their own desire accomplish'd
bring
Their own gray hairs with sorrow to the
grave —
Who broke the bond which they desired
to break,
Which else had link'd their race with times
to come —
Who wove coarse webs to snare her purity,
Grossly contriving their dear daughter's
good —
Poor souls, and knew not what they did,
but sat
Ignorant, devising their own daughter's
death !
May not that earthly chastisement suffice ?
Have not our love and reverence left
them bare ?
Will not another take their heritage ?
Will there be children's laughter in their
hall
For ever and for ever, or one stone
Left on another, or is it a light thing
That I their guest, their host, their an-
cient friend,
I made by these the last of all my race
Must cry to these the last of theirs, as cried
Christ ere His agony to those that swore
Not by the temple but the gold, and made
Their own traditions God, and slew the
Lord,
And left their memories a world's curse
— 'Behold,
Your house is left unto you desolate' ?"
Ended he had not, but she brook'd no
more :
Long since her heart had beat remorse-
lessly,
Her cramp'd-up sorrow pain'd her, and a
sense
Of meanness in her unresisting life.

Then their eyes vext her ; for on entering
He had cast the curtains of their seat
aside—

Black velvet of the costliest — she herself
Had seen to that : fain had she closed
them now,

Yet dared not stir to do it, only near'd
Her husband inch by inch, but when she
laid,

Wifelike, her hand in one of his, he veil'd
His face with the other, and at once, as
falls

A creeper when the prop is broken, fell
The woman shrieking at his feet, and
swoon'd.

Then her own people bore along the nave
Her pendent hands, and narrow meagre
face

Seam'd with the shallow cares of fifty
years :

And her the Lord of all the landscape
round

Ev'n to his last horizon, and of all
Who peer'd at him so keenly, follow'd out
Tall and erect, but in the middle aisle

Reel'd, as a footsore ox in crowded ways
Stumbling across the market to his death,
Unpitied ; for he groped as blind, and
seem'd

Always about to fall, grasping the pews
And oaken finials till he touch'd the door ;
Yet to the lychgate, where his chariot
stood,

Strode from the porch, tall and erect again.

But nevermore did either pass the gate
Save under pall with bearers. In one
month,

Thro' weary and yet ever wearier hours,
The childless mother went to seek her
child ;

And when he felt the silence of his house
About him, and the change and not the
change,

And those fixt eyes of painted ancestors
Staring for ever from their gilded walls
On him their last descendant, his own
head

Began to droop, to fall ; the man became
Imbecile ; his one word was " desolate " ;
Dead for two years before his death was
he ;

But when the second Christmas came,
escaped

His keepers, and the silence which he felt,
To find a deeper in the narrow gloom
By wife and child ; nor wanted at his end

The dark retinue reverencing death
At golden thresholds ; nor from tender
hearts,

And those who sorrow'd o'er a vanish'd
race,

Pity, the violet on the tyrant's grave.
Then the great Hall was wholly broken
down,

And the broad woodland parcel'd into
farms ;

And where the two contrived their daugh-
ter's good,

Lies the hawk's cast, the mole has made
his run,

The hedgehog underneath the plantain
bores,

The rabbit fondles his own harmless face,
The slow-worm creeps, and the thin
weasel there

Follows the mouse, and all is open field.

SEA DREAMS.

A CITY clerk, but gently born and bred ;
His wife, an unknown artist's orphan
child —

One babe was theirs, a Margaret, three
years old :

They, thinking that her clear germander
eye

Droopt in the giant-factored city-gloom,
Came, with a month's leave given them,
to the sea :

For which his gains were dock'd, however
small :

Small were his gains, and hard his work ;
besides,

Their slender household fortunes (for the
man

Had risk'd his little) like the little thrift,
Trembled in perilous places o'er a deep :

And oft, when sitting all alone, his face
Would darken, as he curs'd his credu-
lousness,

And that one unctuous mouth which lured
him, rogue,

To buy strange shares in some Peruvian
mine.

Now seaward-bound for health they
gain'd a coast,

All sand and cliff and deep-inrunning
cave,

At close of day ; slept, woke, and went
the next,

The Sabbath, pious variers from the
church,

To chapel ; where a heated pulpiteer,
Not preaching simple Christ to simple
men,

Announced the coming doom, and fulmi-
nated

Against the scarlet woman and her creed :
For sideways up he swung his arms, and
shriek'd

“ Thus, thus with violence,” ev'n as if
he held

The Apocalyptic millstone, and himself
Were that great Angel ; “ Thus with
violence

Shall Babylon be cast into the sea ;
Then comes the close.” The gentle-
hearted wife

Sat shuddering at the ruin of a world ;
Heat 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 sootlake of so many a summer still
Clung to their fancies) that they saw,
the sea.

So now on sand they walk'd, and now
on cliff,

Lingering about the thymy promontories,
Till all the sails were darken'd in the
west,

And rosed in the east : then homeward
and to bed :

Where she, who kept a tender Christian
hope

Haunting a holy text, and still to that
Returning, 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
feuds.

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 scaled in sheets of wasteful foam,
and fell

In vast sea-cataracts — ever and anon

Dead claps of thunder from within the
cliffs

Heard thro' the living roar. At this the
babe,

Their Margaret cradled near them, wail'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, ‘ for-
give,’ and find

A sort of absolution in the sound
To hate a little longer ! No ; the sin

That neither God nor man can well for-
give,

Hypocrisy, I saw it in him at once.
Is it so true that second thoughts are best ?

Not first, and third, which are a riper
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 un-
charity ;

Sat at his table ; drank his costly wines ;
Made more and more allowance for his
talk ;

Went further, 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. Ruin'd ! ruin'd ! the sea

roars

Ruin : a fearful night ! ”

“ Not fearful ; fair,”

Said the good wife, “ if every star in
heaven

Can make it fair : you do but hear the
tide.

Had you ill dreams ? ”

“ O yes,” he said, “ I dream'd
Of such a tide swelling toward the land,
And I from out the boundless outer deep

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,
 Bright with the sun upon the stream be-
 yond :
 And near the light a giant woman sat,
 All over earthy, like a piece of earth,
 A pickaxe in her hand : then out I slipt
 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 pieced
 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' :
 O then to ask her of my shares, I thought ;
 And ask'd ; but not a word ; 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 burrs and
 thorns ;
 But she with her strong feet up the steep
 hill
 Trod out a path : I follow'd ; and at top
 She pointed 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 thunder,
 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-ransack'd world
 Still so much gold was left ; and then I
 fear'd
 Lest 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, clink'd, and clash'd, and van-
 ish'd, 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 com-
 fort 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 ac-
 count.
 '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 bloat himself, and ooze
 All over with the fat affectionate smile
 That makes the widow lean. 'My dear-
 est friend,
 Have faith, have faith ! We live by
 faith,' said he ;
 'And all things work together for the good

Of those' — it makes me sick to quote
him — last

Gript 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,
A loose one in the hard grip of his hand,
A curse in his God-bless-you : then my
eyes

Pursued him down the street, and far
away,

Among the honest shoulders of the crowd,
Read rascal in the motions of his back,
And scoundrel in the supple - sliding
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, rogne, and proved,
forgive.

His gain is loss ; for he that wrongs his
friend

Wrongs himself more, 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 condemn'd :
And that drags down his life : then comes
what comes

Hereafter and he meant, he said he meant,
Perhaps he meant, or partly meant, you
well."

"With all his conscience and one
eye askew' —

Love, let me quote these lines, that you
may learn

A man is likewise counsel for himself,
Too often, in that silent court of yours —

'With all his conscience and one eye
askew,

So false, he partly took himself for true ;
Whose pious talk, when most his heart
was dry,

Made wet the crafty crowsfoot round his
eye ;

Who, never naming God execept for gain,
So never took that useful name in vain ;
Made Him his eatspaw and the Cross
his tool,

And Christ the bait to trap his dupe and
fool ;

Nor deeds of gift, but gifts of grace he
forged,

And snakelike slimed his victim ere he
gorged ;

And oft at Bible meetings, o'er the rest
Arising, did his holy oily 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 breaker issued from the belt, and still
Grew with the growing note, and when
the note

Had reach'd a thunderous fulness, or
those cliffs

Broke, mixt with awful light (the same
as that

Living within the belt) whereby she saw
That all those lines of cliffs were cliffs
no more,

But huge cathedral fronts of every age,
Grave, florid, stern, as far as eye could see,
One after one : and then the great ridge
drew,

Lessening to the lessening music, back,
And past into the belt and swell'd again.

Slowly to music : ever when it broke
The statues, king or saint, or founder fell ;
Then from the gaps and chasms of ruin
left

Came men and women in dark clusters
round,

Some crying, 'Set them up ! they shall
not fall !'

And others 'Let them lie, for they have
fall'n.'

And still they strove and wrangled : and
she grieved

In her strange dream, she knew not
why, to find

Their wildest wailings 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 passionate looks, and swept
 away
 The ræns of flesh and blood, and men of
 stone,
 To the waste deeps together.

“Then I fixt
 My wistful eyes on two fair images,
 Both crown'd with stars and high among
 the stars, —
 The Virgin Mother standing with her
 child
 High up on one of those dark minster-
 fronts —
 Till she began to totter, and the child
 Clung to the mother, and sent out a cry
 Which mixt with little Margaret's, and
 I woke,
 And my dream awed me. — well — but
 what are dreams?
 Yours came but from the breaking of a
 glass,
 And mine but from the crying of a child.”

“Child? No!” said he, “but this
 tide's roar, and his,
 Our Boanerges with his threats of doom,
 And loud-lung'd Ant Babylonianisms
 (Altho' I grant but little music there)
 Went both to make your dream: but if
 there were
 A music harmonizing our wild cries,
 Sphere-music such as that you dream'd
 about,
 Why, that would make our passions far
 too like
 The discords dear to the musician. No —
 One shriek of hate would jar all the
 hymns of heaven:
 True Devils with no ear, they howl in tune
 With nothing but the Devil!”

“‘True’ indeed!
 One of our 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 flounce of the sea-fur below
 flap,
 Good man, to please the child. She
 brought strange news.

Why were you silent when I spoke to-
 night?
 I had set my heart on your forgiving him
 Before you knew. We *must* forgive the
 dead.”

“Dead! who is dead?”

“The man your eye pursued.
 A little after you had parted with him,
 He suddenly dropt dead of heart-disease.”

“Dead? he? of heart-disease? what
 heart had he
 To die of? dead!”

“Ah, dearest, if there be
 A devil in man, there is an angel too,
 And if he did that wrong you charge
 him with,
 His angel broke his heart. But your
 rough voice
 (You spoke so loud) has roused the child
 again.
 Sleep, little birdie, sleep! will she not sleep
 Without her ‘little birdie’? well then,
 sleep,
 And I will sing you ‘birdie.’”

Saying this,
 The woman half turn'd round from him
 she loved,
 Left him one hand, and reaching thro'
 the night
 Her other, found (for it was close beside)
 And half embraced the basket cradle-head
 With one soft arm, which, like the pliant
 bough
 That moving moves the nest and nest-
 ling, sway'd
 The cradle, while she sang this baby song

What does little birdie say
 In her nest at peep of day?
 Let me fly, says little birdie,
 Mother, let me fly away.
 Birdie, rest a little longer,
 Till the little wings are stronger.
 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 are 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.

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 babe 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 soiling another, Annie, will never
make one's self clean.



The Grandmother.

X.

And I cried myself wellnigh blind, and
 all of an evening late
 I climb'd to the top of the garth, and
 stood by the road at the gate.
 The moon like a rick on fire was rising
 over the dale,
 And whit, whit, whit, in the bush beside
 me chirrupt the nightingale.

XI.

All of a sudden he stopt : there past by
 the gate of the farm,
 Willy, — he did n't see me, — and Jenny
 hung on his arm.
 Out into the road I started, and spoke I
 scarce knew how ;
 Ah, there's no fool like the old one —
 it makes me angry now.

XII.

Willy stood up like a man, and look'd
 the thing that he meant ;
 Jenny, the viper, made me a mocking
 courtesy and went.
 And I said, "Let us part : in a hundred
 years it'll all be the same,

You cannot love me at all, if you love
 not my good name."

XIII.

And he turn'd, and I saw his eyes all
 wet, in the sweet moonshine :
 "Sweetheart, I love you so well that
 your good name is mine.
 And what do I care for Jane, let her
 speak of you well or ill ;
 But marry me out of hand : we too shall
 be happy still."

XIV.

"Marry you, Willy !" said I, "but I
 needs must speak my mind,
 And I fear you'll listen to tales, be jeal-
 ous 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 Anne, not since I
had been a wife ;
But I wept like a child that day, for the
babe had fought for his life.

XVII.

His dear little face was troubled, as if
with anger or pain :
I look'd at the still little body — his
trouble had all been in vain.
For Willy I cannot weep, I shall see him
another morn :
But I wept like a child for the child that
was dead before he was born.

XVIII.

But he cheer'd me, my good man, for he
seldom said me nay :
Kind, like a man, was he ; like a man,
too, would have his way ;
Never jealous — not he : we had many a
happy year ;
And he died, and I could not weep —
my own time seem'd so near.

XIX.

But I wish'd it had been God's will that
I, too, then could have died :
I began to be tired a little, and fain had
slept at his side.
And that was ten years back, or more,
if I don't forget :
But as to the children, Annie, they're all
about me yet.

XX.

Pattering over the boards, my Annie who
left me at two,
Patter she goes, my own little Annie, an
Annie like you :
Pattering over the boards, she comes and
goes at her will,
While Harry is in the five-acre and Char-
lie 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 fa-
ther'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 mes-
sage is one of Peace.

XXV.

And age is a time of peace, so it be free
from pain,
And happy has been my life ; but I would
not live it again.
I seem to be tired a little, that's all, and
long for rest ;
Only at your age, Annie, I could have
wept with the best.

XXVI.

So Willy has gone, my beauty, my eldest-
born, my flower ;
But how can I weep for Willy, he has
but gone for an hour, —

Gone for a minute, my son, from this
room into the next ;
I, too, shall go in a minute. What time
have I to be vext ?

XXVII.

And Willy's wife has written, she never
was over-wise.

Get me my glasses, Annie : thank God
that I keep my eyes.

There is but a trifle left you, when I shall
have past away.

But stay with the old woman now : you
cannot have long to stay.

NORTHERN FARMER.

OLD STYLE.

I.

WHEER 'asta beän saw long and meä lig-
gin' 'ere aloän ?

Noorse ? thoort nowt o' a noorse : whoy,
Doctor's abeän an' agoän :

Says that I moänt 'a naw moor aäle : but
I beänt a fool :

Git ma my aäle, for I beänt a-gooïn' to
break my rule.

II.

Doctors, they knaws nowt, for a says
what 's nawways true :

Naw soort o' koind o' use to saäy the
things that a do.

I've 'ed my point o' aäle ivry noight
sin' I beän 'ere,

An' I've 'ed my quart ivry market-noight
for foorty year.

III.

Parson's a beän loikewise, an' a sittin
'ere o' my bed.

"Theamoighty 'sa taäkin o' you to 'issén,
my friend," a said,

An' a towd ma my sins, an' 's toithe were
due, an' I gied it in hond ;

I done my duty by 'm, as I 'a done by
the lond.

IV.

Larn'd a ma' beä. I reckons I 'annot sa
mooch to larn.

But a cast oop, thot a did, 'boot Bessy
Marris's bairn.

Thaw a knaws I hallus voätet wi' Squoire
an' choorch an staäte,

An' i' the woost o' toimes I wur niver
agïn the raäte.

V.

An' I hallusoomed to 'schoorch afoormoy
Sally wur deäd,

An' 'eerd un a bummin' awaäy loike a
buzzard-clock * ower my 'eäd,

An' I niver knaw'd whot a meän'd but I
thowt a 'ad summut to saäy,

An' I thowt a said whot a owt to 'a said
an' I coom'd awaäy.

VI.

Bessy Marris's bairn ! tha knaws she laäid
it to meä.

Mowt 'a beän, mayhap, for she wur a bad
un, sheä.

'Siver, I kep 'm, I kep 'm, my lass, tha
mun understand ;

I done my duty by 'm as I 'a done by
the lond.

VII.

But Parson a comes an' a goos, an' a says
it eäsy an' freeä

"Theamoighty 's a taäkin o' you to 'issén,
my friend," says 'eä.

I weänt saäy men be loiars, thaw summun
said it in 'aäste :

But a reäds wonn sarmin a weeäk, an' I 'a
stubb'd Thurnaby waäste.

VIII.

D'ya moind the waäste, my lass ? naw,
naw, tha was not born then ;

Theer wur a boggle in it, I often 'eerd 'm
mysen ;

Moäst loike a butter-bump, † for I 'eerd
'm about an' about,

But I stubb'd 'm oop wi' the lot, an'
raäved an' rembled 'm oot.

IX.

Keäper's it wur ; fo' they fun 'm theer
a-laäid on 'is faäce

Doon i' the woild 'enemies ‡ afoor I
coomed to the plaäce.

Noäks or Thimbleby — toaner 'ed shot
'm as deäd as a naäil.

Noäks wur 'ang'd for it oop at 'soize — but
git ma my 'aäle.

X.

Dubbut look at the waäste : theer warn't
not feeäd for a cow ;

Nowt at all but bracken an' fuzz, an'
look at it now —

* Cockchafer.

† Bittern.

‡ Anemones.

Warn't worth nowt a haäcre, an' now
theer's lots o' feead,
Fourscoor yows upon it an' some on it
doon in seeäd.

XI.

Nobbut a bit on it's left, an' I meän'd
to 'a stubb'd it at fall,
Done it ta-year I meän'd, an' runn'd
plough thruff it an' all,
ff godamoighty an' parson 'ud nobbut let
ma aloän,
Meä, wi' haäte oonderd haäcre o' Squire's,
an' lond o' my oän.

XII.

Do godamoighty knaw what a's doing
a-taäkin' o' meä ?
I beänt wonn as saws 'ere a beän an'
yonder a peä ;
An' Squire 'ull be sa mad an' all — a'
dear a' dear !
And I 'a managed for Squire come Mich-
aelmas thutty year.

XIII.

A mowt 'a taäen owd Joänes, as 'ant nor a
'aäpoth o' sense,
Or a mowt 'a taäen young Robins — a
niver mended a fence :
But godamoighty a moost taäke meä an'
taäke ma now
Wi' 'aäf the cows to cauve an' Thurnaby
hoalms to plough !

XIV.

Look 'ow quoloty smoles when they
seeäs ma a passin' by,
Says to thessén naw doubt " what a man
a beä sewer-ly !"
For they knaws what I beän to Squire
sin just a comed to the 'All ;
I done my duty by Squire an' I done
my duty by hall.

XV.

Squire's in Lunnon, an' summun I reck-
ons 'ull 'a to wroite,
For whoä's to howd the lond ater meä
thot muddles ma quoit ;
Sartin-sewer I beä, thot a weänt niver
give it to Joänes,
Naw nor a moänt to Robins — a niver
rembles the stoäns.

XVI.

But summun 'ull come ater mea mayhaç
wi' 'is kittle o' steäm
Huzzin' an' maäzin' the blessed feälds
wi' the Devil's oän teäm.
If I mun doy I mun doy, an' loife they
says is sweet,
But if I mun doy I mun doy, for I
couldn abeär to see it.

XVII.

What atta stannin' theer for, an' doesn
bring ma the 'aale ?
Doctor's a toätler, lass, an' a's hallus i'
the owd taäle ;
I weänt break rules for Doctor, a knaws
naw moor nor a floy ;
Git ma my 'aäle I tell tha, an' if I
mun doy I mun doy.

TITHONUS.

THE woods decay, the woods decay and
fall,
The vapors weep their burden to the
ground,
Man comes and tills the field and lies
beneath,
And after many a summer dies the swan.
Me only eruel 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 didst 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 marr'd 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,
And bosom beating with a heart renew'd.
Thy cheek begins to redden thro' the
gloom,
Thy sweet eyes brighten slowly close to
mine,
Ere yet they blind the stars, and the wild
team
Which love thee, yearning for thy yoke,
arise,
And shake the darkness from their loosen'd
manes,
And beat the twilight into flakes of fire.

Lo! ever thus thou growest beautiful
In silence, then before thine answer given
Departest, and thy tears are on my cheek.

Why wilt thou ever scare me with thy
tears,
And make me tremble lest a saying learnt,
In days far-off, on that dark earth, be
true?
"The Gods themselves cannot recall their
gifts."

Ayme! ayme! with what another heart
In days far-off, and with what other
eyes
I used to watch—if I be he that
watch'd—
The lucid outline forming round thee;
saw
The dim curls kindle into sunny rings;
Changed with thy mystic change, and felt
my blood

Glow with the glow that slowly crimson'd
all

Thy presence and thy portals, while I lay,
Mouth, forehead, eyelids, growing dewy-
warm

With kisses balmier than half-opening
buds

Of April, and could hear the lips that
kiss'd

Whispering I knew not what of wild and
sweet,

Like that strange song I heard Apollo sing,
While Ilion like a mist rose into towers.

Yet hold me not for ever in thine East:
How can my nature longer mix with thine?
Coldly thy rosy shadows bathe me, cold
Are all thy lights, and cold my wrinkled
feet

Upon thy glimmering thresholds, when
the steam

Floats up from those dim fields about the
homes

Of happy men that have the power to die,
And grassy barrows of the happier dead.
Release me, and restore me to the ground;
Thou seest all things, thou wilt see my
grave:

Thou wilt renew thy beauty morn by
morn;

I earth in earth forget these empty courts,
And thee returning on thy silver wheels.

THE VOYAGE.

I.

We left behind the painted buoy
That tosses at the harbor-mouth;
And madly danced our hearts with joy,
As fast we fled to the South:
How fresh was every sight and sound
On open main or winding shore!
We knew the merry world was round,
And we might sail for evermore.

II.

Warm broke the breeze against the brow,
Dry sang the tackle, sang the sail:
The Lady's-head upon the prow
Caught the shrill salt, and sheer'd the
gale.
The broad seas swell'd to meet the keel,
And swept behind: so quick the run,
We felt the good ship shake and reel,
We seem'd to sail into the Sun!

III.

How oft we saw the Sun retire,
 And burn the threshold of the night,
 Fall from his Ocean-lane of fire,
 And sleep beneath his pillar'd light !
 How oft the purple-skirted robe
 Of twilight slowly downward drawn,
 As thro' the slumber of the globe
 Again we dash'd into the dawn !

IV.

New stars all night above the brim
 Of waters lighteu'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,
 High towns on hills were dimly seen,
 We past long lines of Northern capes
 And dewy Northern meadows green.
 We came to warmer waves, and deep
 Across the boundless east we drove,
 Where those long swells of breaker sweep
 The nutmeg rocks and isles of clove.

VI.

By peaks that flamed, or, all in shade,
 Gloom'd the low coast and quivering
 brine
 With ashy rains, that spreading made
 Fantastic plume or sable pine ;
 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 climes,
 Hew swiftly stream'd ye by the bark !
 At times the whole sea burn'd, at times
 With wakes of fire we tore the dark ;
 At times a carven craft would shoot
 From havens hid in fairy bowers,
 With naked limbs and flowers and fruit,
 But we nor paused for fruit nor flowers.

VIII.

For one fair Vision ever fled
 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 murmur'd, "O my Queen,
 I follow till I make thee mine."

IX.

And now we lost her, now she glean'd
 Like Fancy made of golden air,
 Now nearer to the prow she seem'd
 Like Virtue firm, like Knowledge fair,
 Now high on waves that idly 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 pleas'd not — he was seldom
 pleas'd :
 He saw not far : his eyes were dim :
 But ours he swore were all diseased.
 "A ship of fools," he shriek'd in spite,
 "A ship of fools," he sneer'd and wept.
 And overboard one stormy night
 He cast his body, and on we swept.

XI.

And never sail of ours was fur'd,
 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 whirlwind's heart of peace,
 And to and thro' the counter-gale ?

XII.

Again to colder climes we came,
 For still we follow'd where she led :
 Now mate is blind and captain lame,
 And half the crew are sick or dead.
 But blind or lame or sick or sound
 We follow that which flies before :
 We know the merry world is round,
 And we may sail for evermore.

IN THE VALLEY OF CAUTERETZ.

ALL along the valley, stream that flash-
 est white,
 Deepening thy voice with the deepening
 of the night,
 All along the valley, where thy waters flow,

I walk'd with one I loved two and thirty
 years ago.
 All along the valley while I walk'd to-day,
 The two and thirty years were a mist
 that rolls away ;
 For all along the valley, down thy rocky
 bed
 Thy living voice to me was as the voice
 of the dead,
 And all along the valley, by rock and
 cave and tree,
 The voice of the dead was a living voice
 to me.

THE FLOWER.

ONCE in a golden hour
 I cast to earth a seed.
 Up there came a flower,
 The people said, a weed.

To and fro they went
 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.

REQUIESCAT.

FAIR is her cottage in its place,
 Where yon broad water sweetly slow-
 ly glides.
 It sees itself from thatch to base
 Dream in the sliding tides.

And fairer she, but ah now soon to die !
 Her quiet dream of life this hour may
 cease.
 Her peaceful being slowly passes by
 To some more perfect peace.

THE SAILOR-BOY.

HE rose at dawn and, fired with hope,
 Shot o'er the seething harbor-bar,
 And reach'd the ship and caught the
 rope,
 And whistled to the morning star.

And while he whistled long and loud
 He heard a fierce mermaid cry,
 "O boy, tho' thou art young and proud,
 I see the place where thou wilt lie.

"The sands and yeasty surges mix
 In caves about the dreary bay,
 And on thy ribs the limpet sticks,
 And in thy heart the scrawl shall play."

"Fool," he answer'd, "death is sure
 To those that stay and those that roam,
 But I will nevermore endure
 To sit with empty hands at home.

"My mother clings about my neck,
 My sisters crying 'Stay for shame' ;
 My father raves of death and wreck,
 They are all to blame, they are all to
 blame.

"God help me ! save I take my part
 Of danger on the roaring sea,
 A devil rises in my heart,
 Far worse than any death to me."

THE 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 curly head
 Turn'd as he sat, and struck the keys
 There at his right with a sudden crash,
 Singing, "And shall it be over the seas
 With a crew that is neither rude nor rash,
 But a bevy of Eroses apple-cheek'd,
 In a shallop 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 clad with vine,
 And overstream'd and silvery-streak'd
 With many a rivulet high against the Sun
 The facets of the glorious mountain flash
 Above the valleys of palm and pine."

" Thither, O thither, love, let us go."

" No, no, no !

For in all that exquisite isle, my dear,
 There is but one bird with a musical
 throat,

And his compass is but of a single note,
 That it makes one weary to hear."

" Mock me not ! mock me not ! love, let
 us go."

" No, love, no.

For the bud ever breaks into bloom on
 the tree,

And a storm never wakes in the lonely sea,
 And a worm is there in the lonely wood,
 That pierces the liver and blackens the
 blood,

And makes it a sorrow to be."

LITERARY SQUABBLES.

Ah God ! the petty fools of rhyme
 That shriek and sweat in pygmy wars
 Before the stony face of Time,
 And look'd at by the silent stars :

Who hate each other for a song,
 And do their little best to bite
 And pinch their brethren in the throng,
 And scratch the very dead for spite :

And strain to make an inch of room
 For their sweet selves, and cannot hear
 The sullen Lethe rolling doom
 On them and theirs and all things here :

When one small touch of Charity
 Could lift them nearer God-like state
 Than if the crowded Orb should cry
 Like those who cried Diana great :

And I too, talk, and lose the touch
 I talk of. Surely, after all,
 The noblest answer unto such
 Is perfect stillness when they brawl.

THE RINGLET.

" Your ringlets, your ringlets,
 That look so golden-gay,
 If you will give me one, but one,
 To kiss it night 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 her 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-gay,
 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 amiss,
 And I swear henceforth by 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."

II.

O Ringlet, O Ringlet,
 I kiss'd you night and day,
 And Ringlet, O Ringlet,
 You still are golden-gay,
 But 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.

2.

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 fie, you golden nothing, fie
 You golden lie.

3.

O Ringlet, O Ringlet,
 I count you much to blame,

For Ringlet, O Ringlet,
 You put me much to shame,
 So 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-budded
 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 !
 Utter your jubilee, steeple and spire !
 Clash, ye bells, in the merry March air !
 Flash, ye cities, in rivers of fire !
 Rush to the roof, sudden rocket, and
 higher
 Melt into stars for the land's desire !
 Roll and rejoice, jubilant voice,
 Roll as a ground-swell dash'd on the strand,
 Roaras the sea when he welcomes the land,
 And welcome her, welcome the land's de-
 sire,
 The sea-kings' daughter as happy as fair,
 Blissful bride of a blissful heir,
 Bride of the heir of the kings of the sea—
 O joy to the people, and joy to the throne,
 Come to us, love us and make us your
 own :
 For Saxon or Dane or Norman we,
 Tenton 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 EXHI-
 BITION.

UPLIFT a thousand voices full and sweet,
 In this wide hall with earth's inven-
 tion 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 horns of plenty at our
 feet.

O silent father of our Kings to be
 Mourn'd in this golden hour of jubilee,
 For this, for all, we weep our thanks to
 thee !

The world-compelling plan was thine,
 And, lo ! the long laborious miles
 Of Palace ; lo ! the giant aisles,
 Rich in model and design ;
 Harvest-tool and husbandry,
 Loom and wheel and engin'ry,
 Secrets of the sullen mine,
 Steel and gold, and corn and wine,)
 Fabric rough, or Fairy fine,
 Sunny tokens of the Line,
 Polar marvels, and a feast
 Of wonder, out of West and East,
 And shapes and hues of Art divine !
 All of beauty, all of use,
 That one fair planet can produce.
 Brought from under every star,
 Blown from over every main,
 And mixt, as life is mixt with pain,
 The works of peace with works of war.

O ye, the wise who think, the wise who
 reign,
 From growing commerce loose her latest
 chain,
 And let the fair white-winged peace-
 maker 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 mailed 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.

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
 Shoots to the fall — take this, and pray
 that he,
 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 seeming-leasless days —
 Draw toward the long frost and longest
 night,
 Wearing his wisdom lightly, like the
 fruit
 Which in our winter woodland looks a
 flower.*

* The fruit of the Spindle-tree (*Euonymus Europæus*.)

EXPERIMENTS.

BOÄDICEA.

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 Boädiceá, standing loftily
 charioted,
 Mad and maddening all that heard her
 in her fierce volubility,
 Girt by half the tribes of Britain, near
 the colony Cámulodúne,
 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 supplicated?
 Hear Icenian, Catiuchlanian, hear Cori-
 tanian, Trinobant!
 Must their ever-ravens eagle's beak
 and talon annihilate us?
 Tear the noble heart of Britain, leave it
 gorily quivering?
 Bark an answer, Britain's raven! bark
 and blacken innumerable,
 Blacken round the Roman carrion, make
 the carcass a skeleton,
 Kite and kestrel, wolf and wolfkin, from
 the wilderness, wallow in it,
 Till the face of Bel be brighten'd, Tara-
 nis be propitiated.
 Lo their colony half-defended! lo their
 colony, Cámulodúne!

There the horde of Roman robbers mock
 at a barbarous adversary.
 There the hive of Roman liars worship a
 gluttonous emperor-idiot.
 Such is Rome, and this her deity: hear
 it, Spirit of Cássivelaún!

“Hear it, Gods! the Gods have heard
 it, O Icenian, O Coritanian!
 Doubt not ye the Gods have answer'd,
 Catiuchlanian, Trinobant.
 These have told us all their anger in
 miraculous utterances,
 Thunder, a flying fire in heaven, a mur-
 mur heard aërially,
 Phantom sound of blows descending,
 moan of an enemy massacred,
 Phantom wail of women and children,
 multitudinous agonies.
 Bloodily flow'd the Tamesa rolling phan-
 tom bodies of horses and men;
 Then a phantom colony smoulder'd on
 the reflux estuary;
 Lastly yonder yester-even, suddenly gid-
 dily tottering —
 There was one who watch'd and told me
 — down their statue of Victory fell.
 Lo their precious Roman bantling, lo
 the colony Cámulodúne,
 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 Icenian, Catiuchlanian, hear
 Coritanian, Trinobant!

While I roved about the forest, long
and bitterly meditating,
There I heard them in the darkness, at
the mystical ceremony,
Loosely robed in flying raiment, sang
the terrible prophetesses.
‘Fear not, isle of blowing woodland, isle
of silvery parapets !
Tho’ the Roman eagle shadow thee, tho’
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 lastingsummer, many-
blossoming Paradises,
Thine the North and thine the South and
thine the battle-thunder of God.’
So they chanted : how shall Britain light
upon auguries happier ?
So they chanted in the darkness, and
there cometh a victory now.

“Hear Icenian, Catiuechlanian, hear
Coritanian, Trinobant !
Me the wife of rich Prasutagus, me the
lover of liberty,
Me they seized and me they tortured,
me they lash’d and humiliated,
Me the sport of ribald Veterans, mine
of ruffian violators !
See they sit, they hide their faces, mis-
erable in ignominy !
Wherefore in me burns an anger, not by
blood to be satiated.
Lo the palaces and the temple, lo the col-
ony C  mulod  ne !
There they ruled, and thence they wasted
all the flourishing territory,
Thither at their will they haled the yel-
low-ringed Britoness —
Bloodily, bloodily fall the battle-axe,
unexhausted, inexorable.
Shout Icenian, Catiuechlanian, shout
Coritanian, 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 C  nobel  ne !
There they drank in cups of emerald,
there at tables of ebony lay,
Rolling on their purple couches in their
tender effeminacy.

There they dwelt and there they rioted ;
there—there—they dwell no more.
Burst the gates, and burn the palaces,
break the works of the statuary.
Take the hoary Roman head and shatter
it, hold it abominable,
Cut the Roman boy to pieces in his lust
and voluptuousness,
Lash the maiden into swooning, me they
lash’d and humiliated,
Chop the breasts from off the mother, dash
the brains of the little one out,
Up my Britons, on my chariot, on my
chargers, trample them under us.”

So the Queen Boadicea, standing loftily
charioted,
Brandishing in her hand a dart and roll-
ing glances lioness-like,
Yell’d and shriek’d between her daughters
in her fierce volatility.
Till her people all around the royal
chariot agitated,
Madly dash’d the darts together, writhing
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 tumul-
tuous adversaries
Clash the darts and on the buckler beat
with rapid unanimous hand,
Thought on all her evil tyrannies, all
her pitiless avarice,
Till she felt the heart within her fall and
flutter tremulously,
Then her pulses at the clamoring of her
enemy fainted away.
Out of evil evil flourishes, out of tyranny
tyranny buds.
Ran the land with Roman slaughter,
multitudinous agonies.
Perish’d many a maid and matron, many
a valorous legionary.
Fell the colony, city, and citadel, London,
Verulam, C  mulod  ne.

IN QUANTITY.

MILTON.

Alcaics.

O MIGHTY-MOUTH’D inventor of harmo-
nies,
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,
Starr'd from Jehovah's gorgeous armo-
ries,

Tower, as the deep-domed empyrean
Rings to the roar of an angel on-
set —

Me rather all that bowery loneliness,
The brooks of Eden mazyly murmuring,
And bloom profuse and cedar arches
Charm, as a wanderer out in ocean,
Where some refulgent sunset of India
Streams o'er a rich ambrosial ocean isle,
And crimson-hued the stately palm-
woods
Whisper in odorous heights of even.

Heptasyllabics.

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 bears
him,

Lest I fall unawares before the people,
Waking laughter in indolent reviewers.
Should I flounder awhile without a tum-
ble

Thro' 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 tum-
ble,

So fantastical is the dainty metre.
Wherefore slight me not wholly, nor
believe me

Too presumptuous, indolent reviewers.
O blatant Magazines, regard me rather —
Since I blush to belaud myself a moment —
As some rare little rose, a piece of in-
most

Horticultural art, or half coquette-like
Maiden not to be greeted unbenignly.

SPECIMEN OF A TRANSLATION
OF THE ILLIAD IN BLANK
VERSE.

So Hector said, and sea-like roar'd his
host ;

Then loosed their sweating horses from
the yoke,

And each beside his chariot bound his own ;
And oxen from the city, and goodly sheep
In haste they drove, and honey-hearted
wine

And bread from out the houses brought,
and heap'd

Their firewood, and the winds from off
the plain

Roll'd the rich vapor far into the heaven.
And these all night upon the bridge* of
war

Sat glorying ; many a fire before them
blazed :

As when in heaven the stars about the
moon

Look beautiful, when all the winds are laid,
And every height comes out, and jutting
peak

And valley, and the immeasurable heav-
ens

Break open to their highest, and all the
stars

Shine, and the Shepherd gladdens in his
heart :

So many a fire between the ships and
stream

Of Xanthus blazed before the towers of
Troy,

A thousand on the plain ; and close by each
Sat fifty in the blaze of burning fire ;

And champing golden grain, the horses
stood

Hard by their chariots, waiting for the
dawn. †

Iliad VIII. 542-561.

* Or, ridge

† Or more literally, —

And eating hoary grain and pulse the steeds
Stood by their cars, waiting the throned morn.

ADDITIONAL POEMS.

NOTE. — The Poems which follow include all those which have been omitted by the author from his latest revised editions, or never acknowledged by him. They are here printed, because, although unsanctioned by Mr. Tennyson, they have recently been collected from various sources, and printed *in America*.

TIMBUCTOO.*

"Deep in that lion-haunted inland lies
A mystic city, goal of high emprise."
CHAPMAN.

I stood upon the Mountain which o'er-looks
The narrow seas, whose rapid interval
Parts Afric from green Europe, when
The Sun
Had fall'n below th' Atlantic, and above
The silent heavens were blench'd with
faery light,
Uncertain whether faery 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 infix'd
The limits of his prowess, pillars high
Long time erased from earth: even as
the Sea
When weary of wild inroad buildeth up
Huge mounds whereby to stay his yeasty
waves.
And much I mused on legends quaint
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 centred glory-circled memory,
Divinest Atalantis, whom the waves
Have buried deep, and thou of later name,
Imperial Eldorado, roof'd with gold:
Shadows to which, despite all shocks of
change,
All on-set of capricious accident,
Men clung with yearning hope which
would not die.

As when in some great city where the walls
Shake, and the streets with ghastly faces
thronged,

Do utter forth a subterranean voice,
Among the inner columns far retired
At midnight, in the lone Acropolis,
Before the awful genius of the place
Kneels the pale Priestess in deep faith,
the while

Above her head the weak lamp dips and
winks

Unto the fearful summoning without:
Nathless she ever clasps the marble knees,
Bathes the cold hand with tears, and
gazeth on

Those eyes which wear no light but that
wherewith

Her fantasy informs them.

Where are ye,
Thrones of the Western wave, fair Isl-
ands 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 soli-
tudes,

Whose lowest deeps were, as with visible
love,

Filled with Divine effulgence, circum-
fused,

Flowing between the clear and polished
stems,

And ever circling round their emerald
cones

In coronals and glories, such as gird
The unfading foreheads of the Saints in
Heaven?

For nothing visible, they say, had birth
In that blest ground, but it was played
about

* A Poem which obtained the Chancellor's Medal at the Cambridge Commencement, MDCCCXXIX. By A. TENNYSON, of Trinity College.

With its peculiar glory. Then I raised
My voice and cried, "Wide Afric, doth
thy Sun

Lighten, thy hills enfold a city as fair
As those which starred the night o' the
elder world?

Or is the rumor of thy Timbuctoo
A dream as frail 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 be-
fore 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 you here
alone

Upon the Mountain, on the dreams of old
Which filled the earth with passing love-
liness,

Which flung strange music on the howl-
ing winds,

And odors rapt from remote Paradise?
Thy sense is clogged with dull mortality:
Open thine eyes and see."

I looked, but not
Upon his face, for it was wonderful
With its exceeding brightness, and the
light

Of the great Angel Mind which looked
from out

The stary 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 failing sense,
As with a momentary flash of light,
Grew thrillingly distinct and keen. I saw
The smallest grain that dappled 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 vagrant cloud,
And the unsounded, undescended depth
Of her black hollows. The clear galaxy
Shorn of its hoary lustre, wonderful,
Distinct and vivid with sharp points of
light,

Blaze within blaze, an unimagined depth
And harmony of planet-girded 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 anxious ear.

A maze of piercing, trackless, thrilling
thoughts,

Involving and embracing each with each,
Rapid as fire, inextricably linked,

Expanding momentarily with every sight
And sound which struck the palpitating
sense,

The issue of strong impulse, hurried
through

The riven rapt brain; as when in some
large lake

From pressure of descendent crags, which
lapse

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

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 similitude
From visible objects, for but dimly now,
Less vivid than a half-forgotten dream,
The memory of that mental excellence
Comes o'er me, and it may be I entwine
The indecision of my present mind
With its past clearness, yet it seems to me
As even then the torrent of quick thought

Absorbed me from the nature of itself
With its own fleetness. Where is he,
that borne

Adown the sloping of an arrowy stream,
Could link his hallop to the fleeting edge,
And muse midway with philosophic calm
Upon the wondrous laws which regulate
The fierceness 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
Winnow the purple, bearing on both
sides

Double display of star-lit wings, which
burn

Fan-like and fibred with intensest bloom ;
Even so my thoughts erewhile so low,
now felt

Unutterable buoyancy and strength
To bear them upward through the track-
less fields

Of undefined existence far and free.

Then first within the South methought
I saw

A wilderness of spires, and crystal pile
Of rampart upon rampart, dome on dome,
Illimitable range of battlement
On battlement, and the Imperial height
Of canopy o'er canopied.

Behind

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 pillared front of burnished
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 it — if I saw

These things distinctly, for my human
brain

Staggered beneath the vision, and thick
night

Came down upon my eyelids, and I fell.

With ministering hand he raised me up :
Then with a mournful and ineffable smile,
Which but to look on for a moment filled
My eyes with irresistible sweet tears,
In accents of majestic melody,
Like a swollen river's gushings in still night
Mingled with floating music, thus he
spake :

“ There is no mightier Spirit than I to
sway

The heart of man ; and teach him to attain
By shadowing forth the Unattainable ;
And step by step to scale that mighty stair
Whose landing-place is wrapt about with
clouds

Of glory of heaven.* With earliest light
of Spring,

And in the glow of fallow Summertime,
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 kisses of the wind —
And win him unto me : and few there be
So gross of heart who have not felt and
known

A higher than they see : they with dim eyes
Behold me darkling. Lo ! I have given
thee

To understand my presence, and to feel
My fulness : I have filled thy lips with
power.

I have raised thee nigher 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, out-
spread

* “ Be ye perfect, even as your Father in heaven is perfect.”

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 cool impeachéd twilights. Child of
 man,
 Seest thou yon river, whose translucent
 wave,
 Forth issuing from the darkness, windeth
 through
 The argent streets o' the city, imaging
 The soft inversion of her tremulous domes,
 Her gardens frequent with the stately
 palm,
 Her pagods hung with music of sweet bells,
 Her obelisks of rangéd chrysolite,
 Minarets and towers ? Lo ! how he pass-
 eth by,
 And gulfs himself in sands, as not en-
 during

To carry through the world those waves,
 which bore
 The reflex of my city in their depth.
 O city ! O latest throne ! where I was
 raised
 To be a mystery of loveliness
 Unto all eyes, the time is wellnigh come
 When I must render up this glorious home
 To keen Discovery ; soon yon brilliant
 towers
 Shall darken with the waving of her wand ;
 Darken and shiver and shiver into luts,
 Black specks amid a waste of dreary sand,
 Low-built, mud-walled, barbarian settle-
 ments.
 How changed from this fair city !"
 Thus far the Spirit :
 Then parted heavenward on the wing :
 and I
 Was left alone on Calpe, and the moon
 Had fallen from the night, and all was
 dark !

POEMS PUBLISHED IN THE EDITION OF 1830,
 AND OMITTED IN LATER EDITIONS.

ELEGIACS.

LOW-FLOWING breezes are roaming the
 broad valley dimmed in the gloam-
 ing :
 Thro' the black-stemmed pines only the
 far river shines.
 Creeping through blossomy rushes and
 bowers of rose-blowing bushes,
 Down by the poplar tall rivulets babble
 and fall.
 Barketh the shepherd-dog cheerly ; the
 grasshopper carolleteth clearly ;
 Deeply the turtle cooes ; shrilly the owlet
 halloos ;
 Winds creep ; dews fall chilly : in her first
 sleep earth breathes stilly :
 Over the pools in the burn watergnats
 murmur and mourn.
 Sadly the far kine loweth : the glimmer-
 ing water outfloweth :
 Twin peaks shadowed with pine slope to
 the dark hyaline.
 Low-thronéd Hesper is stayéd between
 the two peaks ; but the Naiad
 Throbbing in wild unrest holds him be-
 neath in her breast.

The ancient poetess singeth that Hesper-
 rus all things bringeth,
 Smoothing the wearied mind : bring me
 my love, Rosalind.
 Thou comest morning and even ; she com-
 eth not morning or even.
 False-eyed Hesper, unkind, where is my
 sweet Rosalind ?

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 some-
 how:
 But what is the meaning of *then* and *now*?
 I feel there is something; but how
 and what?
 I know there is somewhat: but what and
 why?
 I cannot tell if that somewhat be I.
 The little bird pipeth — “why? why?”
 In the summer woods when the sun falls
 low,
 And the great bird sits on the opposite
 bough,
 And stares in his face, and shouts “how?
 how?”
 And the black owl scuds down the mel-
 low twilight,
 And chants “how? how?” the whole
 of the night.

Why the life goes when the blood is spilt?
 What the life is? where the soul may lie?
 Why a church is with a steeple built:
 And a house with a chimney-pot?
 Who will riddle me the how and the what?
 Who will riddle me the what and the
 why?

SUSPOSED CONFESSIONS

OF A SECOND-RATE SENSITIVE MIND NOT
 IN UNITY WITH ITSELF.

O 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 extremest misery
 Of ignorance, I should require
 A sign! and if a bolt of fire
 Would rive the slumberous summer noon

While I do pray to thee alone,
 Think my belief would stronger grow!
 Is not my human pride brought low?
 The boastings of my spirit still?
 The joy I had in my free will
 All cold, and dead, and corpse-like grown?
 And what is left to me, but thou,
 And faith in thee? Men pass me by;
 Christians with happy countenances —
 And children all seem full of thee!
 And women smile with saintlike glances
 Like thine own mother's when she bowed
 Above thee, on that happy morn
 When angels spake to men aloud,
 And thou and peace to earth were born.
 Goodwill to me as well as all —
 — I one of them: my brothers they:
 Brothers in Christ — a world of peace
 And confidence, day after day;
 And trust and hope till things should
 cease,
 And then one Heaven receive us all.

How sweet to have a common faith!
 To hold a common scorn of death!
 And at a burial to hear
 The creaking cords which wound and eat
 Into my human heart, when'er
 Earth goes to earth, with grief, not fear,
 With hopeful grief, were passings sweet!
 A grief not uninformed, and dull,
 Hearted with hope, of hope as full
 As is the blood with life, or night
 And a dark cloud with rich moonlight.
 To stand beside a grave, and see
 The red small atoms wherewith we
 Are built, and smile in calm, and say —
 “These little motes and grains shall be
 Clothed on with immortality
 More glorious than the noon of day.
 All that is pass'd into the flowers,
 And into beasts and other men,
 And all the Norland whirlwind showers
 From open vaults, and all the sea
 O'erwashes with sharp salts, again
 Shall fleet together all, and be
 Indued with immortality.”

Thrice happy state again to be
 The trustful infant on the knee!
 Who lets his waxen fingers play
 About his mother's neck, and knows
 Nothing beyond his mother's eyes.
 They comfort him by night and day,
 They light his little life away;
 He hath no thought of coming woes;
 He hath no care of life or death,

Scarce outward signs of joy arise,
 Because the Spirit of happiness
 And perfect rest so inward is ;
 And loveth so his innocent heart,
 Her temple and her place of birth,
 Where she would ever wish to dwell,
 Life of the fountain there, beneath
 Its salient springs, and far apart,
 Hating to wander out on earth,
 Or breathe into the hollow air,
 Whose chillness would make visible
 Her subtle, warm, and golden breath,
 Which mixing with the infant's blood,
 Full fills him with beatitude.
 Oh ! sure it is 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
 The mild deep eyes upraised, that knew
 The beauty and repose of faith,
 And the clear spirit shining through.
 Oh ! wherefore do we grow awry
 From roots which strike so deep ? why dare
 Paths in the desert ? Could not I
 Bow myself down, where thou hast 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
 Prevailed not thy pure prayers ? Why pray
 To one who heeds not, who can save
 But will not ? Great in faith, and strong
 Against the grief of circumstance
 Wert thou, and yet unheard ? What if
 Thou pleadest still, and seest me drive
 Through utter dark a full-sailed skiff,
 Unpiloted i' the echoing dance
 Of reboant whirlwinds, stooping low
 Unto the death, not sunk ! I know
 At matins and at evensong,
 That thou, if thou wert yet alive,
 In deep and daily prayers wouldst strive
 To reconcile me with thy God.
 Albeit, my hope is gray, and cold
 At heart, thou wouldst murmur still —

“ Bring this lamb back into thy fold,
 My Lord, if so it be thy will.”
 Wouldst tell me I must brook the rod,
 And chastisement of human pride ;
 That pride, the sin of devils, stood
 Betwixt me and the light of God !
 That hitherto I had defied,
 And had rejected God — that Grace
 Would drop from his o'erbrimming love,
 As manna on my wilderness,
 If I would pray — that God would move
 And strike the hard, hard rock, and
 thence,
 Sweet in their utmost bitterness,
 Would issue tears of penitence
 Which would keep green hope's life.
 Alas !

I think that pride hath now no place
 Or sojourn in me. I am void,
 Dark, formless, utterly destroyed.

Why not believe then ? Why not yet
 Anchor thy 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 broad-imbased beach, why he
 Slumbers not like a mountain tarn ?
 Wherefore his ridges are not curls
 And ripples of an inland meer ?
 Wherefore he moaneth thus, nor can
 Draw down into his vexed pools
 All that blue heaven which hues and paves
 The other ? I am too forlorn,
 Too shaken : my own weakness fools
 My judgment, and my spirit whirls,
 Moved from beneath with doubt and fear.

“ Yet,” said I, in my morn of youth,
 The unsunned freshness of my strength
 When I went forth in quest of truth,
 “ It is man's privilege to doubt,
 If so be that from doubt at length,
 Truth may stand forth unmoved of change
 An image with profulgent 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 herb, and sleeps, or fills
 The hornéd valleys all about,
 And hollows of the fringed hills
 In summerheats, with placid lows
 Unfearing, till his own blood flows
 About his hoof. And in the flocks
 The lamb rejoiceth in the year,

And raceth freely with his fere,
 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,
 Floats from his sick and filmed eyes,
 And something in the darkness draws
 His forehead earthward, and he dies.
 Shall men live thus, in joy and hope
 As a young lamb, who cannot dream,
 Living, but that he shall live on ?
 Shall we not look into the 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 ? " Ay me ! I fear
 All may not doubt, but everywhere
 Some must clasp Idols. Yet, my God,
 Whom call I Idol ? Let thy dove
 Shadow me over, and my sins
 Be unremembered, and thy love
 Enlighten me. O teach me yet
 Somewhat before the heavy clod
 Weighs on me, and the busy fret
 Of that sharp-headed worm begins
 In the gross blackness underneath.

O weary life ! O weary death !
 O spirit and heart made desolate !
 O damnéd vacillating state !

THE BURIAL OF LOVE.

His eyes in eclipse,
 Pale-cold his lips,
 The light of his hopes unfed,
 Mute his tongue,
 His bow unstrung
 With the tears he hath shed,
 Backward drooping his graceful head,
 Love is dead :
 His last arrow is sped ;
 He hath not another dart ;
 Go — carry him to his dark deathbed ;
 Bury him in the cold, cold heart —
 Love is dead.

O truest love ! art thou forlorn,
 And unrevenged ? thy pleasant wiles
 Forgotten, and thine innocent joy ?
 Shall hollow-hearted apathy,

The cruellest form of perfect scorn,
 With languor of most hateful smiles,
 For ever write,
 In the withered light
 Of the tearless eye,
 An epitaph that all may spy ?
 No ! sooner she herself shall die.

For her the showers shall not fall,
 Nor the round sunshine that shineth to all ;
 Her light shall into darkness change ;
 For her the green grass shall not spring,
 Nor the rivers flow, nor the sweet birds
 sing,
 Till Love have his full revenge.

TO ———.

SAINTED Juliet ! dearest name !
 If to love be life alone,
 Divinest Juliet,
 I love thee, and live ; and yet
 Love 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.

'T THE glooming light
 Of middle night
 So cold and white,
 Worn Sorrow sits by the moaning wave,
 Beside her are laid
 Her mattock and spade,
 For she hath half delved her own deep
 grave.
 Alone she is there :
 The white clouds drizzle : her hair falls
 loose :
 Her shoulders are bare ;
 Her tears are mixed with the beaded
 dews.

II.

Death standeth by ;
 She will not die ;
 With glazed eye
 She looks at her grave : she cannot sleep ;
 Ever alone
 She maketh her moan :
 She cannot speak : she can only weep.

For she will not hope.
The thick snow falls on her flake by
flake,
The dull wave mourns down
the slope,
The world will not change, and her heart
will not break.

SONG.

I.

THE lintwhite and the throstlecock
Have voices sweet and clear ;
All in the blooméd May.
They from the blosmy brere
Call to the fleeting year,
If that he would them hear
And stay.
Alas ! that one so beautiful
Should have so dull an ear !

II.

Fair year, fair year, thy children call,
But thou art deaf as death ;
All in the blooméd May.
When thy light perisheth
That from thee issueth,
Our life evanisheth :
O, 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 blooméd May.
Thy golden largess fling,
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 blooméd May.
We pri'thee pass not on ;
If thou dost leave the sun,
Delight is with thee gone.
O, stay !
Thou art the fairest of thy feres,
We pri'thee pass not on.

* " His crispè hair in ringis was yronne."
CHAUCER, *Knights Tale*.

SONG.

I.

EVERY day hath its night :
Every night its morn :
Thorough dark and bright
Wingéd hours are borne ;
Ah ! welaway !
Seasons flower and fade ;
Golden calm and storm
Mingle day by day.
There is no bright form
Doth not cast a shade —
Ah ! welaway !

II.

When we laugh, and our mirth
Apes the happy vein,
We're so kin to earth,
Pleasaunce fathers pain —
Ah ! welaway !
Madness laugheth loud :
Laughter bringeth tears :
Eyes are worn away
Till the end of fears
Cometh in the shroud,
Ah ! welaway !

III.

All is change, woe or weal ;
Joy is Sorrow's brother ;
Grief and gladness steal
Symbols of each other :
Ah ! welaway !
Larks in heaven's cope
Sing : the culvers mourn
All the livelong day.
Be not all forlorn :
Let us weep in hope —
Ah ! welaway !

NOTHING WILL DIE.

WHEN will the stream be weary of flowing
Under my eye ?
When will the wind be weary of blowing
Over the sky ?
When will the clouds be weary of fleeting ?
When will the heart be weary of beating ?
And nature die ?
Never, O never ! nothing will die ;
The stream flows,
The wind blows,
The cloud fleets,
The heart beats,
Nothing will die.

Nothing will die ;
 All things will change
 Through eternity.
 'T is the world's winter ;
 Autumn and summer
 Are gone long ago.
 Earth is dry to the centre,
 But spring a new comer —
 A spring rich and strange,
 Shall make the 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 flow-
 ing
 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 May morning in joyance
 is beating
 Full merrily ;
 Yet all things must die.
 The stream will cease to flow ;
 The wind will cease to blow ;
 The clouds will cease to fleet ;
 The heart will cease to beat ;
 For all things must die.

All things must die.
 Spring will come nevermore.
 O, 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.
 O, misery !
 Hark ! death is calling
 While I speak to ye,
 The jaw is falling,
 The red cheek paling,
 The strong limbs failing ;
 Ice with the warm blood mixing ;
 The 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 nevermore,
 For all things must die.

HERO TO LEANDER.

O 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.
 O, kiss me, kiss me, once again,
 Lest thy kiss should be the last !
 O 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 stir ;
 Thine eye in drops of gladness swims.
 I have bathed thee with the pleasant
 myrrh ;
 Thy locks are dripping balm ;
 Thou shalt not wander hence to-night,
 I 'll stay thee with my kisses.
 To-night the roaring 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 odors wander
 On the black and moaning sea,
 And when thou art dead, Leander,
 My soul must follow thee !
 O go not yet, my love !
 Thy voice is sweet and low ;
 The deep salt wave breaks in above
 Those marble steps below.
 The turret-stairs are wet
 That lead into the sea.
 Leander ! go not yet.
 The pleasant stars have set :
 O, 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 linkéd woes of many a fiery change
 Had purified, and chastened, and made
 free.
 Always there stood before him, night and
 day,
 Of wayward vary-colored circumstance
 The imperishable presences serene,
 Colossal, without form, or sense, or sound,
 Dim shadows but unwaning presences
 Fourfacéd to four corners of the sky :
 And yet again, three shadows, fronting
 one,
 One forward, one respectant, three but
 one ;
 And yet again, again and evermore,
 For the two first were not, but only seemed,
 One shadow in the midst of a great light,
 One reflex from eternity on time,
 One mighty countenance of perfect calm,
 Awful with most invariable eyes.
 For him the silent congregated hours,
 Daughters of time, divinely tall, beneath
 Severe and youthful brows, with shining
 eyes

Smiling a godlike smile (the innocent light
 Of earliest youth pierced through and
 through with all
 Keen knowledges of low-embowéd eld)
 Upheld, and ever hold aloft the cloud
 Which droops low-hung 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 well nigh
 reached
 The last, which with a region of white
 flame,
 Pure without heat, into a larger air
 Upburning, and an ether of black blue,
 Investeth and ingirds all other lives.

THE GRASSHOPPER.

I.

VOICE of the summer wind,
 Joy of the summer plain,
 Life of the summer hours,
 Carol clearly, bound along.
 No Tithon thou as poets feign
 (Shame fall 'em they are deaf and blind),
 But an insect lithe and strong,
 Bowing the seeded summer flowers.
 Prove their falsehood and thy quarrel,
 Vaulting on thine airy feet.
 Clap thy shielded sides and carol,
 Carol clearly, chirrup sweet.
 Thou art a mailéd warrior in youth and
 strength complete ;
 Armed cap-a-pie
 Full fair to see ;
 Unknowing fear,
 Undreading loss,
 A gallant cavalier,
Sans peur et sans reproche,
 In sunlight and in shadow,
 The Bayard of the meadow.

II.

I would dwell with thee,
 Merry grasshopper,
 Thou art so glad and free,

And as light as air ;
 Thou hast no sorrow or tears,
 Thou hast no compt of years,
 No withered immortality,
 But a short youth sunny and free.
 Carol clearly, bound along,

Soon thy joy is over,
 A summer of loud song,
 And slumbers 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 floweréd grasses,
 That brush thee with their silken
 tresses ?

What hast thou to do with evil,
 Shooting, singing, ever springing
 In and out the emerald glooms,
 Ever leaping, ever singing,
 Lighting on the golden blooms ?

LOVE, PRIDE, AND FORGETFUL- NESS.

ERE yet my heart was sweet Love's
 tomb,
 Love labored honey busily.
 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 vapors went through all,
 Sweet Love was withered in his cell :
 Pride took Love's sweets, and by a spell
 Did change them into gall ;
 And Memory, though fed by Pride,
 Did wax so thin on gall,
 Awhile she scarcely lived at all.
 What marvel that she died ?

CHORUS

IN AN UNPUBLISHED DRAMA, WRITTEN
 VERY EARLY.

THE varied earth, the moving heaven,
 The rapid waste of roving sea,
 The fountain-pregnant 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 griding might,
 The herald lightning's starry bound,
 The vocal spring of bursting bloom,
 The naked summer's glowing birth,
 The troublous autumn's sallow gloom,
 The hoarhead winter paving earth
 With sheeny white, are full of strange
 Astonishment and boundless change.

Each sun which from the centre flings
 Grand music and redundant fire,
 The burning belts, the mighty rings,
 The murm'rous planets' rolling choir,
 The globe-filled arch that, cleaving air,
 Lost in its own effulgence sleeps,
 The lawless comets as they glare,
 And thunder through the sapphire deeps
 In wayward strength, and full of
 strange
 Astonishment and boundless change.

LOST HOPE.

YOU cast to ground the hope which once
 was mine :
 But did the while your harsh decree
 deplore,
 Embalming with sweet tears the vacant
 shrine,
 My heart, where Hope had been and
 was no more.

So on an oaken 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 light-
 some day,
 Smiles on the earth's worn brow to win
 her if she may.

LOVE AND SORROW.

O MAIDEN, fresher than the first green leaf
 With which the fearful springtide flecks
 the lea,
 Weep not, Almeida, that I said to thee
 That thou hast half my heart, for bitter
 grief
 Doth hold the other half in sovranly.
 Thou art my heart's sun in love's crys-
 talline :
 Yet on both sides at once thou canst not
 shine :
 Thine is the bright side of my heart,
 and thine
 My heart's day, but the shadow of my
 heart,
 Issue of its own substance, my heart's night
 Thou canst not lighten even with thy light,
 All-powerful in beauty as thou art.
 Almeida, if my heart were substanceless,
 Then might thy rays pass through to
 the other side,
 So swiftly, that they nowhere would abide,
 But lose themselves in utter emptiness.
 Half-light, half-shadow, let my spirit
 sleep ;
 They never learned to love who never
 knew to weep.

TO A LADY SLEEPING.

O THOU whose fringed lids I gaze upon,
 Through whose dim brain the winged
 dreams are borne,
 Unroof the shrines of clearest vision,
 In honor of the silver-flecked 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 poised lark,
 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 indue i' 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 thus hope my lost delight's re-
 newing,
 I straightly would command the tears to
 creep
 From my charged lids ; but inwardly I
 weep,
 Some vital heat as yet my heart is wooing :
 That to itself hath drawn the frozen rain
 From my cold eyes, and melted it again.

SONNET.

THOUGH Night hath climbed her peak
 of highest noon,
 And bitter blasts the screaming autumn
 whirl,
 All night through archways of the bridged
 pearl,
 And portals of pure silver, walks the moon.
 Walk on, my soul, nor crouch to agony,
 Turn cloud to light, and bitterness to joy,
 And dross to gold with glorious alchemy,
 Basing thy throne above the world's an-
 noy.
 Reign thou above the storms of sorrow
 and ruth
 That roar beneath ; unshaken peace hath
 won thee ;
 So shalt thou pierce the woven glooms
 of truth ;
 So shall the blessing of the meek be on
 thee ;
 So in thine hour of dawn, the body's youth,
 An honorable eld 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 cheeks, a withered
 brood,
 Though hourly pastured on the salient
 blood ?
 O 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
 throats, and slake

With points of blast-borne hail 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 thunder-stricken 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 robe
 The understream. The wise, could he
 behold
 Cathedraled caverns of thick-ribbéd gold
 And branching silvers of the central globe,
 Would marvel from so beautiful a sight
 How scorn and ruin, pain and hate could
 flow :
 But Hatred in a gold cave sits below ;
 Pleached with her hair, in mail of argent
 light
 Shot into gold, a snake her forehead clips,
 And skins the color from her trembling
 lips.

LOVE.

I.

THOU, from the first, unborn, undying
 love,
 Albeit we gaze not on thy glories near,
 Before the face of God didst breathe and
 move,
 Though night and pain and ruin and
 death reign here.
 Thou foldest, like a golden atmosphere,
 The very throne of the eternal God :
 Passing through thee the edicts of his fear
 Are mellowed into music, borne abroad
 By the loud winds, though they uprend
 the sea,
 Even from its central deeps : thine empery
 Is over all ; thou wilt not brook eclipse ;
 Thou goest and returnest to His lips
 Like lightning ; thou dost ever brood above
 The silence of all hearts, unutterable Love.

II.

To know thee is all wisdom, and old age
 Is but to know thee : dimly we behold thee

Athwart the veils of evils which infold
 thee.

We beat upon our aching hearts in rage ;
 We cry for thee ; we deem the world
 thy tomb.

As dwellers in lone planets look upon
 The mighty disk of their majestic sun,
 Hollowed in awful chasms of wheeling
 gloom,

Making their day dim, so we gaze on thee.
 Come, thou of many crowns, white-robéd
 love,

Oh ! rend the veil in twain : all men
 adore thee ;

Heaven crieth after thee ; earth waiteth
 for thee ;

Breathe on thy wingéd 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 agonies
 Awe-stricken Indians ; what time laid low
 And crushing the thick fragrant reeds
 he lies,

When the new year warm-breathéd on
 the Earth,

Waiting to light him with her purple
 skies,

Calls to him by the fountain to uprise.
 Already with the pangs of a new birth
 Strain the hot spheres of his convulséd
 eyes,

And in his writhings awful hues begin
 To wander down his sable-sheeny sides,
 Like light on troubled waters : from
 within

Anon he rusheth forth with merry din,
 And in him light and joy and strength
 abides ;

And from his brows a crown of living light
 Looks through the thick-stemmed woods
 by day and night.

THE KRAKEN.

BELOW the thunders of the upper deep ;
 Far, far beneath in the abysmal sea,
 His ancient, dreamless, uninvaded sleep,
 The Kraken sleepeth : faintest sunlights
 flee

About his shadowy sides : above him swell
 Huge sponges of millennial growth and
 height ;

And far away into the sickly light,
From many a wondrous grot and secret
cell

Unnumbered and enormous polypi
Winnow with giant fins the slumbering
green.

There hath he lain for ages and will lie
Battening upon huge seaworms in his
sleep,

Until the latter fire shall heat the deep ;
Then once by man and angels to be seen,
In roaring he shall rise and on the sur-
face die.

ENGLISH WAR-SONG.

WHO fears to die ? Who fears to die ?
Is there any here who fears to die ?
He shall find what he fears ; and none
shall grieve
For the man who fears to die ;
But the withering scorn of the many
shall cleave
To the man who fears to die.

CHORUS.

Shout for England !
Ho ! for England !
George for England !
Merry England !
England for aye !

The hollow at heart shall crouch forlorn,
He shall eat the bread of common
scorn ;

It shall be steeped in the salt, salt tear,
Shall be steeped in his own salt tear :
Far better, far better he never were born
Than to shame merry England here.

CHO. — Shout for England ! etc.

There standeth our ancient enemy ;
Hark ! he shouteth — the ancient ene-
my !

On the ridge of the hill his banners rise ;
They stream like fire in the skies ;
Hold up the Lion of England on high
Till it dazzle and blind his eyes.

CHO. — 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.

CHO. — Shout for England ! etc.

There standeth our ancient enemy ;
Will he dare to battle with the free ?
Spur along ! spur amain ! charge to the
fight :

Charge ! charge to the fight !

Hold up the Lion of England on high !

Shout for God and our right !

CHO. — Shout for England ! etc.

NATIONAL SONG.

THERE is no land like England
Where'er the light of day be ;
There are no hearts like English hearts,
Such hearts of oak as they be.
There is no land like England
Where'er the light of day be ;
There are no men like Englishmen,
So tall and bold as they be.

CHORUS.

For the French the Pope may shrive 'em,
For the devil a whit we heed 'em :
As for the French, God speed 'em
Unto their heart's desire,
And the merry devil drive 'em
Through the water and the fire.

FULL CHORUS.

Our glory is our freedom,
We lord it o'er the sea ;
We are the sons of freedom,
We are free.

There is no land like England,
Where'er the light of day be ;
There are no wives like English wives,
So fair and chaste as they be.
There is no land like England,
Where'er the light of day be ;
There are no maids like English maids,
So beautiful as they be.

CHO. — For the French, etc.

DUALISMS.

Two bees within a crystal flowerbell
rockéd,
Hum a lovelay to the west-wind 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 un-
 shockéd
 Lays itself calm and wide.
 Over a stream two birds of glancing
 feather
 Doo each other, carolling together.
 Both alike, they glide together,
 Side by side ;
 Both alike, they sing together,
 Arching blue-glosséd necks beneath the
 purple weather.

Two children lovelier than Love adown
 the lea are singing,
 As they gambol, lily-garlands ever string-
 ing :
 Both in blosmwhite silk are
 frockéd :
 Like, unlike, they roam together
 Under a summer vault of golden
 weather :
 Like, unlike, they sing together
 Side by side,
 MidMay's darling golden lock-
 éd,
 Summer's stanlingdiamond eyed.

WE ARE FREE.

THE winds, as at their hour of birth,
 Leaning upon the wingéd sea,
 Breathed low around the rolling earth
 With mellow preludes, "We are free."
 The streams through many a lilyéd row
 Down-carolling to the crispéd sea,
 Low-tinkled with a bell-like flow
 Atween the blossoms, "We are free."

THE SEA FAIRIES.*

SLOW sailed the weary mariners, and
 saw
 Between the green brink and the run-
 ning foam
 White limbs unrobéd in a crystal air,
 Sweet faces, rounded arms, and bosoms
 prest
 To little harps of gold : and while they
 mused,
 Whispering to each other half in fear,
 Shrill music reached them on the mid-
 dle sea.

* Original form.

SONG.

Whither away, whither away, whither
 away ? Fly no more :
 Whither away wi' the singing sail ?
 whither away wi' the oar ?
 Whither away from the high green field
 and the happy blossoming shore ?
 Weary mariners, hither away,
 One and all, one and all,
 Weary mariners, come and play ;
 We will sing to you all the day ;
 Furl the sail and the foam will fall
 From the prow ! One and all
 Furl the sail ! Drop the oar !
 Leap ashore,
 Know danger and trouble and toil no
 more,
 Whither away wi' the sail and the oar ?
 Drop the oar,
 Leap ashore,
 Fly no more !
 Whither away wi' the sail ? whither away
 wi' the oar ?
 Day and night to the billow the foun-
 tain calls :
 Down shower the gambolling water-
 falls
 From wandering over the lea ;
 They freshen the silvery-crimson shells,
 And thick with white bells the clover-
 hill swells
 High over the full-toned sea.
 Merrily carol the revelling gales
 Over the islands free :
 From the green seabanks the rose
 down trails
 To the happy brimméd sea.
 Come 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 glis-
 ten
 With pleasure and love and revelry ;
 O listen, listen, your eyes shall glis-
 ten,
 When the sharp clear twang of the gold-
 en chords
 Runs up the ridgéd sea.
 Ye will not find so happy a shore,
 Weary mariners ! all the world o'er ;
 O, fly no more !
 Harken ye, hearken ye, sorrow shall
 darken ye,
 Danger and trouble and toil no more ;

Whither away ?
Drop the oar ;
Hither away
Leap ashore ;

O fly no more — no more :
Whither away, whither away, whither
away with the sail and the oar ?

Οἱ ρέοντες.

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.

II.

There is no rest, no calm, no pause,
Nor good nor ill, nor light nor shade,
Nor essence nor eternal laws :
For nothing is, but all is made.
But if I dream that all these are,
They are to me for that I dream ;
For all things are as they seem to all,
And all things flow like a stream.

Argal — this very opinion is only true
relatively to the flowing philosophers.

POEMS PUBLISHED IN THE EDITION OF 1833,
AND OMITTED IN LATER EDITIONS.

SONNET.

MINE be the strength of spirit fierce and
free,

Like some broad river rushing down alone,
With the selfsame impulse wherewith
he was thrown

From his loud fount upon the echoing
lea : —

Which with increasing might doth for-
ward flee

By town, and tower, and hill, and cape,
and isle,

And in the middle of the green salt sea
Keeps his blue waters fresh for many a
mile.

Mine be the Power which ever to its sway
Will win the wise at once, and by degrees
May into uncongenial spirits flow ;
Even as the great gulfstream of Florida
Floats far away into the Northern seas
The lavish growths of southern Mexico.

TO ———.

I.

ALL good things have not kept aloof,
Nor wandered into other ways ;
I have not lacked thy mild reproof,
Nor golden largess of thy praise,
But life is full of weary days.

II.

Shake hands, my friend, across the brink
Of that deep grave to which I go.
Shake hands once more : I cannot sink
So far — far down, but I shall know
Thy voice, and answer from below.

III.

When, in the darkness over me,
The four-handed mole shall scrape,
Plant thou no dusky cypress-tree,
Nor wreathe thy cap with doleful crape,
But pledge me in the flowing grape.

IV.

And when the sappy field and wood
Grow green beneath the showery gray,
And rugged barks begin to bud,
And through damp holts, new flushed
with May,
Ring sudden laughters of the Jay ;

V.

Then let wise Nature work her will,
And on my clay the darnels grow.
Come only when the days are still,
And at my headstone whisper low,
And tell me if the woodbines blow,

VI.

If thou art blest, my mother's smile
Undimmed, if bees are on the wing :

Then cease, my friend, a little while,
That I may hear the throistle sing
His bridal song, the boast of spring.

VII.

Sweet as the noise in parchéd plains
Of bubbling wells that fret the stones
(If any sense in me remains),
Thy words will be ; thy cheerful tones
As welcome to my crumbling bones.

BONAPARTE.

HE thought to quell the stubborn hearts
of oak,
Madman ! — to chain with chains, and
bind with bands
That island queen that sways the floods
and lands
From Ind to Ind, but in fair daylight
woke,
When from her wooden walls, lit by sure
hands,
With thunders, and with lightnings, and
with smoke,
Peal after peal, the British battle broke,
Lulling the brine against the Coptic sands.
We taught him lowlier moods, when
Elsinore
Heard the war moan along the distant sea,
Rocking with shattered spars, with sudden
fires
Flamed over : at Trafalgar yet once more
We taught him : late he learned humility
Perforce, like those whom Gideon schooled
with briers.

SONNETS.

1.

O BEAUTY, passing beauty ! sweetest
Sweet !
How canst thou let me waste my youth
in sighs ?
I only ask to sit beside thy feet.
Thou knowest I dare not look into
thine eyes.
Might I but kiss thy hand ! I dare not
fold
My arms about thee — scarcely dare to
speak.
And nothing seems to me so wild and bold,
As with one kiss to touch thy blesséd
cheek.

Methinks if I should kiss thee, no control
Within the thrilling brain could keep
afloat

The subtle spirit. Even while I spoke,
The bare word KISS hath made my inner
soul

To tremble like a lutestring, ere the
note

Hath melted in the silence that it broke.

11.

But were I loved, as I desire to be,
What is there in the great sphere of the
earth,

And range of evil between death and birth,
That I should fear, — if I were loved by
thee ?

All the inner, all the outer world of pain
Clear Love would pierce and cleave, if
thou wert mine,

As I have heard that, somewhere in the
main,

Fresh-water springs come up through
bitter brine.

'T were joy, not fear, clasped hand-in-
hand with thee,

To wait for death — mute — careless of
all ills,

Apart upon a mountain, though the surge
Of some new deluge from a thousand
hills

Flung leagues of roaring foam into the
gorge

Below us, as far on as eye could see.

THE HESPERIDES.

"Hesperus and his daughters three,
That sing about the golden tree."
Comus.

THE North-wind fall'n, in the new-starréd
night

Zidonian Hanno, voyaging beyond

The hoary promontory of Soloë

Past Thymiatèrion, in calméd bays,

Between the southern and the western
Horn,

Heard neither warbling of the nightingale,
Nor melody of the Libyan lotus flute

Blown seaward from the shore ; but from
a slope

That ran bloom-bright into the Atlantic
blue,

Beneath a highland leaning down a weight
Of cliffs, and zoned below with cedar shade,

Came voices, like the voices in a dream,
Continuous, till he reached the outer sea.

SONG.

I.

The golden apple, the golden apple, the
 hallowed fruit,
 Guard it well, guard it warily,
 Singing airily,
 Standing about the charmed root.
 Round about all is mute,
 As the snow-field on the mountain-peaks,
 As the sand-field at the mountain-foot.
 Crocodiles in briny creeks
 Sleep and stir not : all is mute.
 If ye sing not, if ye make false measure,
 We shall lose eternal pleasure,
 Worth eternal want of rest.
 Laugh not loudly : watch the treasure
 Of the wisdom of the West.
 In a corner wisdom whispers. Five and
 three
 (Let it not be preached abroad) make an
 awful mystery.
 For the blossom unto threefold music
 bloweth ;
 Evermore it is born anew ;
 And the sap to threefold music floweth,
 From the root
 Drawn in the dark,
 Up to the fruit,
 Creeping under the fragrant bark,
 Liquid gold, honeysweet, thro' and thro'.
 Keen-eyed Sisters, singing airily,
 Looking warily
 Every way,
 Guard the apple night and day,
 Lest one from the East come and take it
 away.

II.

Father Hesper, Father Hesper, watch,
 watch, ever and aye,
 Looking under silver hair with a silver
 eye.
 Father, twinkle not thy steadfast sight ;
 Kingdoms lapse, and climates change,
 and races die ;
 Honor comes with mystery ;
 Hoarded wisdom brings delight.
 Number, tell them over and number
 How many the mystic fruit-tree holds
 Lest the red-combed dragon slumber
 Rolled together in purple folds.
 Look to him, father, lest he wink, and
 the golden apple be stol'n away,
 For his ancient heart is drunk with over-
 watchings night and day,

Round about the hallowed fruit-tree
 curled —
 Sing away, sing aloud evermore in the
 wind, without stop,
 Lest his scaled eyelid drop,
 For he is older than the world.
 If he waken, we waken,
 Rapidly levelling eager eyes.
 If he sleep, we sleep,
 Dropping the eyelid over the eyes.
 If the golden apple be taken,
 The world will be overwise.
 Five links, a golden chain, are we,
 Hesper, the dragon, and sisters three,
 Bound about the golden tree.

III.

Father Hesper, Father Hesper, watch,
 watch, night and day,
 Lest the old wound of the world be healed,
 The glory unsealed,
 The golden apple stolen away,
 And the ancient secret revealed.
 Look from west to east along :
 Father, old Himala weakens, Caucasus
 is bold and strong.
 Wandering waters unto wandering waters
 call ;
 Let them clash together, foam and fall.
 Out of watchings, out of wiles,
 Comes the bliss of secret smiles.
 All things are not told to all.
 Half-round the mantling night is drawn,
 Purple fringed with even and dawn,
 Hesper hateth Phosphor, evening hateth
 morn.

IV.

Every flower and every fruit the redolent
 breath
 Of this warm sea-wind ripeneth,
 Arching the billow in his sleep ;
 But the land-wind wandereth,
 Broken by the highland-steeep,
 Two streams upon the violet deep ;
 For the western sun and the western star,
 And the low west-wind, breathing afar,
 The end of day and beginning of night
 Make the apple holy and bright ;
 Holy and bright, round and full, bright
 and blest,
 Mellowed in a land of rest ;
 Watch it warily day and night ;
 All good things are in the west.
 Till mid noon the cool east light
 Is shut out by the tall hillbrow ;

But when the full-faced sunset yellowly
 Stays on the flowering arch of the bough,
 The luscious fruitage clustereth mellowly,
 Golden-kernelled, golden-cored,
 Sunset-ripened above on the tree.
 The world is wasted with fire and sword,
 But the apple of gold hangs over the sea.
 Five links, a golden chain are we,
 Hesper, the dragon, and sisters three,
 Daughters three,
 Bound about
 The gnarléd bole of the charmed tree.
 The golden apple, the golden apple, the
 hallowed fruit,
 Guard it well, guard it warily,
 Watch it warily,
 Singing airily,
 Standing about the charmed root.

ROSALIND.

I.

My Rosalind, my Rosalind,
 My frolic falcon, with bright eyes,
 Whose free delight, from any height of
 rapid flight,
 Stoops at all game that wing the skies,
 My Rosalind, my Rosalind,
 My bright-eyed, wild-eyed falcon, whith-
 er,
 Careless both of wind and weather,
 Whither fly ye, what game spy ye,
 Up or down the streaming wind?

II.

The quick lark's closest-carolled strains,
 The shadow rushing up the sea,
 The lightning flash between the rains,
 The sunlight driving down the lea,
 The leaping stream, the very wind,
 That will not stay, upon his way,
 To stoop the cowslip to the plains,
 Is not so clear and bold and free
 As you, my falcon Rosalind.
 You care not for another's pains,
 Because you are the soul of joy,
 Bright metal all without alloy.
 Life shoots and glances thro' your veins,
 And flashes off a thousand ways
 Through lips and eyes in subtle rays.
 Your hawkeyes are keen and bright,
 Keen with triumph, watching still
 To pierce me through with pointed light ;
 But oftentimes they flash and glitter
 Like sunshine on a dancing rill,

And your words are seeming-bitter,
 Sharp and few, but seeming-bitter
 From excess of swift delight.

III.

Come down, come home, my Rosalind,
 My gay young hawk, my Rosalind :
 Too long you keep the upper skies ;
 Too long you roam and wheel at will ;
 But we must hood your random eyes,
 That care not whom they kill,
 And your cheek, whose brilliant hue
 Is so sparkling-fresh to view,
 Some red heath-flower in the dew,
 Touched with sunrise. We must bind
 And keep you fast, my Rosalind,
 Fast, fast, my wild-eyed Rosalind,
 And clip your wings, and make you love :
 When we have lured you from above,
 And that delight of frolic flight, by day
 or night,
 From north to south ;
 Will bind you fast in silken cords,
 And kiss away the bitter words
 From off your rosy month.*

SONG.

Who can say
 Why To-day
 To-morrow will be yesterday ?
 Who can tell

* AUTHOR'S NOTE. — Perhaps the following lines may be allowed to stand as a separate poem; originally they made part of the text, where they were manifestly superfluous.

My Rosalind, my Rosalind,
 Bold, subtle, careless Rosalind,
 Is one of those who know no strife
 Of inward woe or outward fear ;
 To whom the slope and stream of Life,
 The life before, the life behind,
 In the ear, from far and near,
 Chimeth unscissally clear.
 My falcon-hearted Rosalind,
 Full-sailed before a vigorous wind,
 Is one of those who cannot weep
 For others' woes, but overleap
 All the petty shocks and fears
 That trouble life in early years,
 With a flash of frolic scorn
 And keen delight, that never falls
 Away from freshness, self-upborne
 With such gladness as, whenever
 The fresh-fushing springtime calls
 To the flooding waters cool,
 Young fishes, on an April morn,
 Up and down a rapid river,
 Leap the little waterfalls
 That sing into the pebbled pool,
 My happy falcon, Rosalind,
 Hath daring fancies of her own,
 Fresh as the dawn before the day.
 Fresh as the early sea-smell blown
 Through vineyards from an inland bay.
 My Rosalind, my Rosalind,
 Because no shadow on you falls,
 Think you hearts are tennisballs
 To play with, wanton Rosalind ?

Why to smell
The violet recalls the dewy prime
Of youth and buried time?
The cause is nowhere found in rhyme.

KATE.

I KNOW her by her angry air,
Her bright black eyes, her bright black
hair,

Her rapid laughers wild and shrill,
As laughers of the woodpecker
From the bosom of a hill.

'Tis Kate — she sayeth what she will :
For Kate hath an unbridled tongue,
Clear as the twanging of a harp.

Her heart is like a throbbing star.
Kate hath a spirit ever strung
Like a new bow, and bright and sharp,
As edges of the scymitar.

Whence shall she take a fitting mate ?
For Kate no common love will feel ;
My woman-soldier, gallant Kate,
As pure and true as blades of steel.

Kate saith " the world 's void of might."

Kate saith " the men are gilded lies."

Kate snaps her fingers at my vows ;

Kate will not hear of lovers' sighs.

I would I were an arméd knight,
Far famed for well-won enterprise,
And wearing on my swarthy brows
The garland of new-wreathed emprise :

For in a moment I would pierce
The blackest files of clanging fight,
And strongly strike to left and right,
In dreaming of my lady's eyes.

Oh ! Kate loves well the bold and
fierce ;

But none are bold enough for Kate,
She cannot find a fitting mate.

SONNET

WRITTEN ON HEARING OF THE OUT-
BREAK OF THE POLISH INSURREC-
TION.

Blow ye the trumpet, gather from afar
The hosts to battle : be not bought and
sold.

Arise, brave Poles, the boldest of the bold ;
Break through your iron shackles — fling
them far.

O for those days of Piast, ere the Czar

Grew to his strength among his deserts
cold ;

When even to Moscow's cupolas were
rolled

The growing murmurs of the Polish war !
Now must your noble anger blaze out
more

Than when from Sobieski, clan by clan,
The Moslem myriads fell, and fled before—
Than when Zamoysky smote the Tartar
Khan ;

Than earlier, when on the Baltic shore
Boleslas drove the Pomeranian.

SONNET

ON THE RESULT OF THE LATE RUSSIAN
INVASION OF POLAND.

How long, O God, shall men be ridden
down,

And trampled under by the last and least
Of men ? The heart of Poland hath not
ceased

To quiver, though her sacred blood doth
drown

The fields ; and out of every mouldering
town

Cries to Thee, lest brute Power be in-
creased,

Till that o'ergrown Barbarian in the East
Transgress his ample bound to some
new crown : —

Cries to Thee, " Lord, how long shall
these things be ?

How long shall the icy-hearted Muscovite
Oppress the region ? " Us, O Just and
Good,

Forgive, who smiled when she was torn
in three ;

Us, who stand *now*, when we should aid
the right —

A matter to be wept with tears of blood !

SONNET.

As when with downcast eyes we muse and
brood,

And ebb into a former life, or seem
To lapse far back in a confused dream
To states of mystical similitude ;

If one but speaks or heims or stirs his
chair,

Ever the wonder waxeth more and more,
So that we say, " All this hath been before,

All this *hath* been, I know not when or where."

So, friend, when first I looked upon your face,

Our thought gave answer, each to each,
so true,

Opposed mirrors each reflecting each —
Altho' I knew not in what time or place,
Methought that I had often met with you,
And each had lived in the other's mind
and speech.

O DARLING ROOM.

I.

O DARLING room, my heart's delight
Dear room, the apple of my sight,
With thy two couches soft and white,
There is no room so exquisite,
No little room so warm and bright,
Wherein to read, wherein to write.

II.

For I the Nonnenwerth have seen,
And Oberwinter's vineyards green,

Musical Lurlei; and between
The hills to Bingen have I been,
Bingen in Darmstadt, where the Rhene
Curves toward Mentz, a woody scene.

III.

Yet never did there meet my sight,
In any town to left or right,
A little room so exquisite,
With two such couches soft and white;
Not any room so warm and bright,
Wherein to read, wherein to write.

TO CHRISTOPHER NORTH.

You did late review my lays,
Crusty Christopher;
You did mingle blame and praise,
Rusty Christopher.
When I learnt from whom it came,
I forgave you all the blame,
Musty Christopher;
I could *not* forgive the praise,
Fusty Christopher.

FUGITIVE POEMS.

NO MORE.*

O SAD *No More!* O sweet *No More!*

O strange *No More!*

By a mossed brookbank on a stone
I smelt a wildweed flower alone;
There was a ringing in my ears,
And both my eyes gushed out with tears.

Surely all pleasant things had gone before,
Low-buried fathom deep beneath with thee,
No MORE!

ANACREONTICS.*

WITH roses musky-breathed,
And drooping daffodilly,
And silver-leaved lily,
And ivy darkly-wreathed,
I wove a crown before her,
For her I love so dearly,

A garland for Lenora.
With a silken cord I bound it.
Lenora, laughing clearly
A light and thrilling laughter,
About her forehead wound it,
And loved me ever after.

A FRAGMENT.*

WHERE is the Giant of the Sun, which
stood
In the midnight the glory of old Rhodes,
A perfect Idol with profulgent brows
Far-sheening down the purple seas to
those
Who sailed from Mizraim underneath
the star
Named of the Dragon — and between
whose limbs
Of brassy vastness broad-blown Argosies
Drave into haven? Yet endure unscathed
Of changeful cycles the great Pyramids

* From the Gem, a literary annual, for 1831.

* From the Gem, a literary annual, for 1831.

Broad-based amid the fleeting sands, and
 sloped
 Into the slumberous summer noon ; but
 where,
 Mysterious Egypt, are thine obelisks
 Graven with gorgeous emblems undis-
 cerned ?
 Thy placid Sphinxes brooding o'er the
 Nile ?
 Thy shadowing Idols in the solitudes,
 Awful Memnonian countenances calm
 Looking athwart the burning flats, far off
 Seen by the high-necked camel on the verge
 Journeying southward ? Where are thy
 monuments
 Piled by the strong and sunborn Anakin
 Over their crowned brethren Ox and Orn ?
 Thy Memnon when his peaceful lips are
 kist
 With earliest rays, that from his mother's
 eyes
 Flow over the Arabian bay, no more
 Breathes low into the charmed ears of
 morn
 Clear melody flattering the crisped Nile
 By columned Thebes. Old Memphis hath
 gone down :
 The Pharaohs are no more : somewhere
 in death
 They sleep with staring eyes and gilded
 lips,
 Wrapped round with spiced cerements
 in old grots
 Rock-hewn and sealed for ever.

SONNET.*

ME my own fate to lasting sorrow
 doometh :
 Thy woes are birds of passage, transi-
 tory :
 Thy spirit, circled with a living glory,
 In summer still a summer joy resumeth.
 Alone my hopeless melancholy gloometh,
 Like a lone cypress, through the twi-
 light hoary,
 From an old garden where no flower
 bloometh,
 One cypress on an island promontory.
 But yet my lonely spirit follows thine,
 As round the rolling earth night follows
 day :
 But yet thy lights on my horizon shine
 Into my night, when thou art far away.

* Friendship's Offering, 1833.

I am so dark, alas ! and thou so bright,
 When we two meet there 's never perfect
 light.

SONNET.*

CHECK every outflash, every ruder sally
 Of thought and speech ; speak lov
 and give up wholly
 Thy spirit to mild-minded melancholy ;
 This is the place. Through yonder pop-
 lar valley
 Below the blue-green river windeth
 slowly ;
 But in the middle of the sombre valley
 The crisped waters whisper musically,
 And all the haunted place is dark and
 holy.
 The nightingale, with long and low pre-
 amble,
 Warbled from yonder knoll of solemn
 larches,
 And in and out the woodbine's flowery
 arches
 The summer midges wove their wanton
 gambol,
 And all the white-stemmed pinewood
 slept above —
 When in this valley first I told my love.

THE SKIPPING-ROPE.†

SURE never yet was Antelope
 Could skip so lightly by.
 Stand off, or else my skipping-rope
 Will hit you in the eye.
 How lightly whirls the skipping-rope !
 How fairy-like you fly !
 Go, get you gone, you muse 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-rope,
 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.

* Friendship's Offering, 1833.

† Omitted from the edition of 1842.

‡ Published in Punch, Feb. 1846, signed "Alcibiades."

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 shook a mane *en papillotes*.

And once you tried the Muses too ;
 You failed, Sir : therefore now you turn,
 To fall on those who are to you
 As Captain is to Subaltern.

But men of long-enduring hopes,
 And careless what this hour may bring,
 Can pardon little would-be POPES
 And BRUMMELS, when they try to sting.

An Artist, Sir, should rest in Art,
 And waive a little of his claim ;
 To have the deep Poetic heart
 Is more than all poetic fame.

But you, Sir, you are hard to please ;
 You never look but half content ;
 Nor like a gentleman at ease,
 With moral breadth of temperament.

And what with spites and what with fears,
 You cannot let a body be :
 It 's always ringing in your ears,
 " They call this man as good as *me*."

What profits now to understand
 The merits of a spotless shirt —
 A dapper boot — a little hand —
 If half the little soul is dirt ?

You talk of tinsel ! why, we see
 The old mark of rouge upon your cheeks.
 You prate of Nature ! you are he
 That spilt his life about the cliques.

A TIMON you ! Nay, nay, for shame :
 It looks too arrogant a jest —
 The fierce old man — to take his name,
 You bandbox. Off, and let him rest.

STANZAS.*

WHAT time I wasted youthful hours,
 One of the shining wingéd powers,
 Show'd me vast cliffs with crown of towers.

* The Keepsake. 1851.

As towards the gracious light I bow'd,
 They seem'd high palaces and proud,
 Hid now and then with sliding cloud.

He said, " The labor is not small ;
 Yet winds the pathway free to all : —
 Take care thou dost not fear to fall !"

SONNET

TO WILLIAM CHARLES MACREADY.*

FAREWELL, Macready, since to-night we
 part.

Full-handed thunders often have con-
 fess't

Thy power, well-used to move the pub-
 lic 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,

Garriek, 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 panto-
 mime,

And those gilt gauds men-children
 swarm to see.

Farewell, Macready ; moral, grave, sub-
 lime.

Our Shakespeare's bland and universal eye
 Dwells pleas'd, thro' twice a hundred
 years, on thee.

BRITONS, GUARD YOUR OWN.†

RISE, Britons, rise, if manhood be not
 dead ;

The world's last tempest darkens over-
 head ;

The Pope has bless'd him ;
 The Church caress'd him ;

He triumphs ; maybe we shall stand alone.
 Britons, guard your own.

His ruthless host is bought with plunder'd
 gold,

By lying priests the peasants' votes con-
 troll'd.

* Read by Mr. John Forster at a dinner given to Mr. Macready, March 1. 1851, on his retirement from the stage.

† The Examiner, 1852.

All freedom vanish'd,
The true men banish'd,
He triumphs ; maybe we shall stand alone.
Britons, guard your own.

Peace-lovers we — sweet Peace we all
desire —

Peace-lovers we — but who can trust a
liar? —

Peace-lovers, haters
Of shameless traitors,

We hate not France, but this man's heart
of stone,
Britons, guard your own.

We hate not France, but France has lost
her voice.

This man is France, the man they call
her choice.

By tricks and spying,
By craft and lying,

And murder was her freedom overthrown.
Britons, guard your own.

“Vive l'Empereur” may follow by and
by ;

“God save the Queen” is here a truer cry.
God save the Nation,

The toleration,

And the free speech that makes a Briton
known.

Britons, guard your own.

Rome's dearest daughter now is captive
France,

The Jesuit laughs, and reckoning on his
chance,

Would unrelenting,
Kill all dissenting,

Till we were left to fight for truth alone.
Britons, guard your own.

Call home your ships across Biscayan
tides,

To blow the battle from their oaken sides.
Why waste they yonder
Their idle thunder?

Why stay they there to guard a foreign
throne?

Seamen, guard your own.

We were the best of marksmen long ago,
We won old battles with our strength,
the bow.

Now practice, yeomen,
Like those bowmen,

Till your balls fly as their shafts have
flown.

Yeomen, guard your own.

His soldier-ridden Highness might in-
cline

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 brawl,
Not sting the fiery Frenchman into
war.

It was an ancient privilege, my lords,
To fling whate'er we felt, not fearing, in-
to words.

We love not this French God, this child
of Hell,

Wild War, who breaks the converse of
the wise ;

But though we love kind Peace so well,
We dare not, e'en by silence, sanction
lies.

It might 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 Europe on us
break ;

No little German state are we,
But the one voice in Europe ; we *must*
speak ;

That if to-night our greatness were
struck dead,

There might remain some record of the
things we said.

If you be fearful, then must we be bold.
Our Britain cannot salve a tyrant o'er.

• The Examiner, 1852, and signed “Morlin.”

Better the waste Atlantic roll'd

On her and us and ours for evermore.
What ! have we fought for freedom from
our prime,
At last to dodge and palter with a public
crime ?

Shall we fear him ? our own we never
feared.

From our first Charles by force we
wrung our claims,
Prick'd by the Papal spur, we rear'd,
And flung the burden 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 Barons' breed—
Were those your sires who fought at
Lewes ?

Is this the manly strain of Runnymede ?
O fall'n nobility, that, overawed,
Would lisp 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 throats 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 Thermopylæ shall stand,
And hold against the world the honor of
the land.

HANDS ALL ROUND. *

FIRST drink a health, this solemn night,
A health to England, every guest ;

* The Examiner, 1852, and signed "Merlin."

That man 's the best cosmopolite

Who loves his native country best.
May freedom's oak for ever live
With stronger life from day to day ;
That man 's the best Conservative
Who lops the moldered 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 Poerio's noisome den,
From iron limbs and tortured nails !
We curse the crimes of southern kings,
The Russian whips and Austrian rods—
We likewise have our evil things ;
Too much we make our Ledgers, Gods.
Yet hands all round !

God the tyrant's cause confound !
To Europe's better health we drink, my
friends,
And the great name of England, round
and round !

What health to France, if France be she,
Whom martial progress only charms ?

Yet tell her—better to be free
Than vanquish all the world in arms.

Her frantic city's flashing heats
But fire, to blast, the hopes of men.

Why change the titles of your streets ?
You fools, you 'll want them all again.

Hands all round !
God the tyrant's cause confound !

To France, the wiser France, we drink,
my friends,

And the great name of England, round
and round.

Gigantic daughter of the West,
We drink to thee across the flood,

We know thee and we love thee best,
For art thou not of British blood ?

Should war's mad blast again be blown,
Permit not thou the tyrant powers

To fight thy mother here alone,
But let thy broadsides roar with ours.

Hands all round !
God the tyrant's cause confound !

To our dear 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 kinsman 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, be 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, be 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, be 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, be ready to meet the storm !
 Riflemen, riflemen, riflemen form !

T.

* London Times, May 9, 1859.

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, is n'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, is n't fame as brief ?
 What room is here for a hater ?
 Yet the yellow leaf hates the greener leaf,
 For it hangs one moment later.

Greater than I—is n'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, is n'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.

1865—1866.†

I STOOD 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 know-
 ing ?

Science enough and exploring,
 Wanderers coming and going,
 Matter enough for deploring,
 But aught that is worth the knowing ?”
 Seas at my feet were flowing,
 Waves on the shingle pouring,
 Old Year roaring and blowing,
 And New Year blowing and roaring.

* Once a Week, January 4, 1868.

† Good Words, March, 1868.

THE WINDOW

OR, THE SONGS OF THE WRENS.

WORDS WRITTEN FOR MUSIC.

THE MUSIC BY ARTHUR SULLIVAN.

FOUR years ago Mr. Sullivan requested me to write a little song-cycle, German fashion, for him to exercise his art upon. He had been very successful in setting such old songs as "Orpheus with his lute," and I dressed up for him, partly in the old style, a puppet whose almost only merit is, perhaps, that it can dance to Mr. Sullivan's instrument. I am sorry that my four-year-old puppet should have to dance at all in the dark shadow of these days; but the music is now completed, and I am bound by my promise.

A. TENNYSON.

December, 1870.

I.

ON THE HILL.

THE lights and shadows fly!
Yonder it brightens and darkens down
on the plain.

A jewel, a jewel dear to a lover's eye!
O is it the brook, or a pool, or her win-
dow-pane,

When the winds are up in the morn-
ing?

Clouds that are racing above,
And winds and lights and shadows that
cannot be still,

All running on one way to the home
of my love,

You are all running on, and I stand on
the slope of the hill,

And the winds are up in the morning!

Follow, follow the chase!

And my thoughts are as quick and as
quick, ever on, on, on.

O lights, are you flying over her sweet
little face?

And my heart is there before you are
come and gone,

When the winds are up in the morn-
ing!

Follow them down the slope!

And I follow them down to the window-
pane of my dear,

And it brightens and darkens and
brightens like my hope,
And it darkens and brightens and dark-
ens like my fear,
And the winds are up in the morn-
ing.

II.

AT THE WINDOW.

VINE, vine and eglantine,
Clasp her window, trail and twine!
Rose, rose and clematis,
Trail and twine and clasp and kiss,
Kiss, kiss; and make her a bower
All of flowers, and drop me a flower,
Drop me a flower.

Vine, vine and eglantine,
Cannot a flower, a flower, be mine?
Rose, rose and clematis,
Drop me a flower, a flower, to kiss,
Kiss, kiss-- And out of her bower
All of flowers, a flower, a flower,
Drop, a flower.

III.

GONE!

GONE!
Gone till the end of the year,
Gone, and the light gone with her and
left me in shadow here!

Gone — flitted away,
 Taken the stars from the night and the
 sun from the day !
 Gone, and a cloud in my heart, and a
 storm in the air !
 Flown to the east or the west, flitted I
 know not where !
 Down in the south is a flash and a groan :
 she is there ! she is there !

IV.

WINTER.

THE frost is here,
 And fuel is dear,
 And woods are sear,
 And fires burn clear,
 And frost is here
 And has bitten the heel of the going year.

Bite, frost, bite !
 You roll up away from the light
 The blue woodlouse, and the plump dor-
 mouse,
 And the bees are still'd, and the flies are
 kill'd,
 And you bite far into the heart of the
 house,
 But not into mine.

Bite, frost, bite !
 The woods are all the searer,
 The fuel is all the dearer,
 The fires are all the clearer,
 My spring is all the nearer,
 You have bitten into the heart of the
 earth,
 But not into mine.

V.

SPRING.

BIRDS' love and birds' song
 Flying here and there,
 Birds' song and birds' love,
 And you with gold for hair !
 Birds' song and birds' love,
 Passing with the weather,
 Men's song and men's love,
 To love once and forever.

Men's love and birds' love,
 And women's love and men's !
 And you my wren with a crown of gold,
 You my Queen of the wrens !

You the Queen of the wrens —
 We'll be birds of a feather,
 I'll be King of the Queen of the wrens,
 And all in a nest together.

VI.

THE LETTER.

WHERE is another sweet as my sweet,
 Fine of the fine, and shy of the shy ?
 Fine little hands, fine little feet —
 Dewy blue eye.

Shall I write to her ? shall I go ?
 Ask her to marry me by and by ?
 Somebody said that she'd say no ;
 Somebody knows that she'll say ay !

Ay or no, if ask'd to her face ?
 Ay or no, from shy of the shy ?
 Go, little letter, apace, apace,

Fly !
 Fly to the light in the valley below —
 Tell my wish to her dewy blue eye :
 Somebody said that she'd say no ;
 Somebody knows that she'll say ay !

VII.

NO ANSWER.

THE mist and the rain, the mist and the
 rain !

Is it ay or no ? is it ay or no ?
 And never a glimpse of her window-pane !
 And I may die but the grass will grow,
 And the grass will grow when I am gone,
 And the wet west wind and the world
 will go on.

Ay is the song of the wedded spheres,
 No is trouble and cloud and storm,
 Ay is life for a hundred years,
 No will push me down to the worm,
 And when I am there and dead and gone,
 The wet west wind and the world will
 go on.

The wind and the wet, the wind and the
 wet !

Wet west wind, how you blow, you
 blow !

And never a line from my lady yet !
 Is it ay or no ? is it ay or no ?
 Blow then, blow, and when I am gone,
 The wet west wind and the world may
 go on.

VIII.

NO ANSWER.

WINDS are loud and you are dumb :
 Take my love, for love will come,
 Love will come but once a life.
 Winds are loud and winds will pass !
 Spring is here with leaf and grass :
 Take my love and be my wife.
 After-loves of maids and men
 Are but dainties drest again :
 Love me now, you 'll love me then :
 Love can love but once a life.

IX.

THE ANSWER.

Two little hands that meet,
 Claspt on her seal, my sweet !
 Must I take you and break you,
 Two little hands that meet ?
 I must take you, and break you,
 And loving hands must part —
 Take, take — break, break —
 Break — you may break my heart.
 Faint heart never won —
 Break, break, and all 's done.

IX^b.

AY !

BE merry, all birds, to-day,
 Be merry on earth as you never were
 merry before,
 Be merry in heaven, O larks, and far
 away,
 And merry forever and ever, and one
 day more.

Why ?

For it 's easy to find a rhyme.

Look, look, how he flits,
 The fire-crown'd king of the wrens,
 from out of the pine !
 Look how they tumble the blossom, the
 mad little tits !
 "Cuck-oo ! Cuck-oo !" was ever a
 May so fine ?

Why ?

For it 's easy to find a rhyme.

O merry the linnet and dove,
 And swallow and sparrow and throstle,
 and have your desire !

O merry my heart, you have gotten the
 wings of love,
 And flit like the king of the wrens
 with a crown of fire.

Why ?

For it 's ay ay ay, ay ay.

X.

WHEN ?

SUN comes, moon comes,
 Time slips away.
 Sun sets, moon sets,
 Love, fix a day.

"A year hence, a year hence."

"We shall both be gray"

"A month hence, a month hence."

"Far, far away."

"A week hence, a week hence."

"Ah, the long delay."

"Wait a little, wait a little,
 You shall fix a day."

"To-morrow, love, to-morrow,
 And that 's an age away."

Blaze upon her window, sun,
 And honor all the day.

XI.

MARRIAGE MORNING.

LIGHT, so low upon earth,
 You send a flash to the sun.
 Here is the golden close of love,
 All my wooing is done.
 O the woods and the meadows,
 Woods where we hid from the wet,
 Stiles where we stay'd to be kind,
 Meadows in which we met !
 Light, so low in the vale,
 You flash and lighten afar :
 For this is the golden morning of love,
 And you are his morning star.
 Flash, I am coming, I come,
 By meadow and stile and wood :
 O lighten into my eyes and my heart,
 Into my heart and my blood !
 Heart, are you great enough
 For a love that never tires ?
 O heart, are you great enough for love ?
 I have heard of thorns and briars.
 Over the thorns and briars,
 Over the meadows and stiles,
 Over the world to the end of it
 Flash for a million miles.

THE LAST TOURNAMENT.

DAGONET, the fool, whom Gawain in his
moods
Had made mock-knight of Arthur's Table
Round,
At Camelot, high above the yellowing
woods,
Danced like a wither'd leaf before the Hall.
And toward him from the Hall, with
harp in hand,
And from the crown thereof a carcanet
Of ruby swaying to and fro, the prize
Of Tristram in the jousts of yesterday,
Came Tristram, saying, "Why skip ye
so, Sir Fool?"

For Arthur and Sir Lancelot riding once
Far down beneath a winding wall of rock
Heard a child wail. A stump of oak
half-dead,
From roots like some black coil of carven
snakes
Clutch'd at the crag, and started thro'
mid-air
Bearing an eagle's nest: and thro' the tree
Rush'd ever a rainy wind, and thro' the
wind
Pierced ever a child's cry: and crag and
tree
Scaling, Sir Lancelot from the perilous
nest,
This ruby necklace thrice around her neck,
And all unscarr'd from beak or talon,
brought
A maiden babe; which Arthur pitying
took,
Then gave it to his Queen to rear: the
Queen
But coldly acquiescing, in her white arms
Received, and after loved it tenderly,
And named it Nestling; so forgot her-
self
A moment, and her cares; till that young
life
Being smitten in mid-heaven with mortal
cold
Past from her; and in time the carcanet
Vext her with plaintive memories of the
child:
So she, delivering it to Arthur, said,
"Take thou the jewels of this dead
innocence,
And make them, an thou wilt, a tourney-
prize."

To whom the King, "Peace to thine
eagle-borne
Dead nestling, and this honor after
death,
Following thy will! but, O my Queen, I
muse
Why ye not wear on arm, or neck, or
zone,
Those diamonds that I rescued from the
tarn,
And Lancelot won, methought, for thee
to wear."

"Would rather ye had let them fall,"
she cried,
"Plunge and be lost — ill-fated as they
were,
A bitterness to me! — ye look amazed,
Not knowing they were lost as soon as
given —
Slid from my hands, when I was leaning
out
Above the river — that unhappy child
Past in her barge: but rosier luck will go
With these rich jewels, seeing that they
came
Not from the skeleton of a brother-slayer,
But the sweet body of a maiden babe.
Perchance — who knows? — the purest
of thy knights
May win them for the purest of my maids."

She ended, and the cry of a great
jousts
With trumpet-blowings ran on all the
ways
From Camelot in among the faded fields
To furthest towers; and everywhere the
knights
Arm'd for a day of glory before the King.

But on the hither side of that loud
morn
Into the hall stagger'd, his visage ribb'd
From ear to ear with dogwhip-weals, his
nose
Bridge-broken, one eye out, and one
hand off,
And one with shatter'd fingers dangling
lame,
A churl, to whom indignantly the King,
"My churl, for whom Christ died,
what evil beast

Hath drawn his claws athwart thy face ?
or fiend ?
Man was it who marr'd Heaven's image
in thee thus ?”

Then, sputtering thro' the hedge of
splinter'd teeth,
Yet strangers to the tongue, and with
blunt stump
Pitch-blacken'd sawing the air, said the
maim'd churl,

“ He took them and he drave them to
his tower —
Some hold he was a table-knight of
thine—

A hundred goodly ones—the Red Knight
he —

Lord, I was tending swine, and the Red
Knight

Brake in upon me and drave them to his
tower ;

And when I call'd upon thy name as one
That doest right by gentle and by churl,
Maim'd me and maul'd, and would out-
right have slain,

Save that he sware me to a message,
saying—

‘ Tell thou the King and all his liars,
that I

Have founded my Round Table in the
North,

And whatsoever his own knights have
sworn

My knights have sworn the counter to
it — and say

My tower is full of harlots, like his court,
But mine are worthier, seeing they profess
To be none other than themselves — and
say

My knights are all adulterers like his own,
But mine are truer, seeing they profess
To be none other ; and say his hour is
come,

The heathen are upon him, his long lance
Broken, and his Excalibur a straw.’ ”

Then Arthur turn'd to Kay the senes-
chal,

“ Take thou my churl, and tend him
curiously

Like a king's heir, till all his hurts be
whole.

The heathen — but that ever-climbing
wave,

Hurl'd back again so often in empty foam,
Hath lain for years at rest — and rene-
gades,

Thieves, bandits, leavings of confusion,
whom

The wholesome realm is purged of other-
where, —

Friends, thro' your manhood and your
fidelity, — now

Make their last head like Satan in the
North.

My younger knights, new-made, in whom
your flower

Waits to be solid fruit of golden deeds,
Move with me toward their quelling,
which achieved,

The loneliest ways are safe from shore to
shore.

But thou, Sir Lancelot, sitting in my place
Enchair'd to-morrow, arbitrate the field ;
For wherefore shouldst thou care to
mingle with it,

Only to yield my Queen her own again ?
Speak, Lancelot, thou art silent : is it
well ?”

Thereto Sir Lancelot answer'd, “ It is
well :

Yet better if the King abide, and leave
The leading of his younger knights to me.
Else, for the King has will'd it, it is well.”

Then Arthur rose and Lancelot follow'd
him,

And while they stood without the doors,
the King

Turn'd to him saying, “ Is it then so
well ?

Or mine the blame that oft I seem as he
Of whom was written, ‘ a sound is in his
ears ’ —

The foot that loiters, bidden go, — the
glance

That only seems half-loyal to command, —
A manner somewhat fall'n from rever-
ence —

Or have I dream'd the bearing of our
knights

Tells of a manhood ever less and lower ?
Or whence the fear lest this my realm,
uprear'd,

By noble deeds at one with noble vows,
From flat confusion and brute violences,
Reel back into the beast, and be no
more ?”

He spoke, and taking all his younger
knights,

Down the slope city rode, and sharply
turn'd

North by the gate. In her high bower
 the Queen,
 Working a tapestry, lifted up her head,
 Watch'd her lord pass, and knew not
 that she sigh'd.
 Then ran across her memory the strange
 rhyme
 Of bygone Merlin, "Where is he who
 knows?
 From the great deep to the great deep
 he goes."

But when the morning of a tournament,
 By these in earnest, those in mockery,
 call'd
 The Tournament of the Dead Innocence,
 Brake with a wet wind blowing, Lance-
 lot,
 Round whose sick head all night, like
 birds of prey,
 The words of Arthur flying shriek'd, arose,
 And down a streetway hung with folds
 of pure
 White samite, and by fountains running
 wine,
 Where children sat in white with cups
 of gold,
 Moved to the lists, and there, with slow
 sad steps
 Ascending, fill'd his double-dragon'd
 chair.

He glanced and saw the stately galleries,
 Dame, damsel, each thro' worship of their
 Queen
 White-robed in honor of the stainless
 child,
 And some with scatter'd jewels, like a
 bank
 Of maiden snow mingled with sparks of
 fire.
 He lookt but once, and veil'd his eyes
 again.

The sudden trumpet sounded as in a
 dream
 Fears but half-awaked, then one low roll
 Of Autumn thunder, and the jousts
 began:
 And ever the wind blew, and yellowing
 leaf
 And gloom and gleam, and shower and
 shorn plume
 Went down it. Sighing wearily, as one
 Who sits and gazes on a faded fire,
 When all the goodlier guests are past
 away,

Sat their great umpire, looking o'er the
 lists.

He saw the laws that ruled the tournament
 Broken, but spake not; once, a knight
 cast down

Before his throne of arbitration cursed
 The dead babe and the follies of the King;
 And once the laces of a helmet crack'd,
 And show'd him, like a vermin in its hole,
 Modred, a narrow face: anon he heard
 The voice that billow'd round the bar-
 riers roar

An ocean-sounding welcome to one
 knight,

But newly-enter'd, taller than the rest,
 And armor'd all in forest green, whereon
 There tript a hundred tiny silver deer,
 And wearing but a holly-spray for crest,
 With ever-scattering berries, and on
 shield

A spear, a harp, a bugle — Tristram —
 late

From overseas in Brittany return'd,
 And marriage with a princess of that
 realm,

Isolt the White — Sir Tristram of the
 Woods —

Whom Lancelot knew, had held sometime
 with pain

His own against him, and now yearn'd
 to shake

The burthen off his heart in one full shock
 With Tristram ev'n to death: his strong
 hands gript

And dinted the gilt dragons right and left,
 Until he groan'd for wrath — so many
 of those,

That ware their ladies' colors on the
 casque,

Drew from before Sir Tristram to the
 bounds,

And there with gibes and flickering
 mockeries

Stood, while he mutter'd, "Craven
 crests! O shame!

What faith have these in whom they
 swear to love?

The glory of our Round Table is no more.'

So Tristram won, and Lancelot gave,
 the gems,

Not speaking other word than "Hast
 thou won?"

Art thou the purest, brother? See, the
 hand

Wherewith thou takest this is red!" to
 whom

Tristram, half plagued by Lancelot's
 languorous mood,
 Made answer, "Ay, but wherefore toss
 me this
 Like a dry bonc cast to some hungry
 hound ?
 Let be thy fair Queen's fantasy. Strength
 of heart
 And might of limb, but mainly use and
 skill,
 Are winners in this pastime of our King.
 My hand — belike the lance hath dript
 upon it —
 No blood of mine, I trow ; but O chief
 knight,
 Right arm of Arthur in the battlefield,
 Great brother, thou nor I have made the
 world ;
 Be happy in thy fair Queen as I in mine."

And Tristram round the gallery made
 his horse
 Caracole ; then bow'd his homage, bluntly
 saying,
 "Fair damsels, each to him who worships
 each
 Sole Queen of Beauty and of love, behold
 This day my Queen of Beauty is not
 here."
 Then most of these were mute, some
 anger'd, one
 Murmuring "All courtesy is dead," and
 one,
 "The glory of our Round Table is no
 more."

Then fell thick rain, plume droopt
 and mantle clung,
 And pettish cries awoke, and the wan day
 Went glooming down in wet and wear-
 ness :
 But under her black brows a swarthy
 dame
 Laught shrilly, crying "Praise the patient
 saints,
 Our one white day of Innocence hath
 past,
 Tho' somewhat dragged at the skirt.
 So be it.
 The snowdrop only, flow'ring thro' the
 year,
 Would make the world as blank as
 wintertide.
 Come — let us comfort their sad eyes,
 our Queen's
 And Lancelot's, at this night's solemnity
 With all the kindlier colors of the field."

So dame and damsel glitter'd at the
 feast
 Variously gay : for he that tells the tale
 Liken'd them, saying "as when an hour
 of cold
 Falls on the mountain in midsummer
 snows,
 And all the purple slopes of mountain
 flowers
 Pass under white, till the warm hour
 returns
 With veer of wind, and all are flowers
 again" ;
 So dame and damsel cast the simple white,
 And glowing in all colors, the live grass,
 Rose-campion, bluebell, kingcup, poppy,
 glanced
 About the revels, and with mirth so loud
 Beyond all use, that, half-amazed, the
 Queen,
 And wroth at Tristram and the lawless
 jousts,
 Brake up their sports, then slowly to her
 bower
 Parted, and in her bosom pain was lord.

And little Dagonet on the morrow
 morn,
 High over all the yellowing Autumn-tide,
 Danced like a wither'd leaf before the
 hall.
 Then Tristram saying, "Why skip ye
 so, Sir Fool ?"
 Wheel'd round on either heel, Dagonet
 replied,
 "Belike for lack of wiser company ;
 Or being fool, and seeing too much wit
 Makes the world rotten, why, belike I
 skip
 To know myself the wisest knight of all."
 "Ay, fool," said Tristram, "but 't is
 eating dry
 To dance without a catch, a roundelay
 To dance to." Then he twangled on
 his harp,
 And while he twangled little Dagonet
 stood,
 Quiet as any water-sodden log
 Stay'd in the wandering warble of a
 brook ;
 But when the twangling ended, skipt
 again ;
 Then being ask'd, "Why skipt ye not,
 Sir Fool ?"
 Made answer, "I had liefer twenty years
 Skip to the broken music of my brains
 Than any broken music ye can make."

Then Tristram, waiting for the quip to come,

“ Good now, what music have I broken, fool ? ”

And little Dagonet, skipping, “ Arthur, the king’s ;

For when thou playest that air with Queen Isolt,

Thou makest broken music with thy bride, Her daintier namesake down in Brit-tany —

And so thou breakest Arthur’s music too.”

“ Save for that broken music in thy brains, Sir Fool,” said Tristram, “ I would break thy head.

Fool, I came late, the heathen wars were o’er,

The life had flown, we sware but by the shell —

I am but a fool to reason with a fool. Come, thou art crabb’d and sour : but lean me down,

Sir Dagonet, one of thy long asses’ ears, And hearken if my music be not true.

“ ‘ Free love — free field — we love but while we may :

The woods are hush’d, their music is no more :

The leaf is dead, the yearning past away : New leaf, new life — the days of frost are o’er :

New life new love to suit the newer day : New loves are sweet as those that went before :

Free love — free field — we love but while we may.’ ”

“ Ye might have moved slow-measure to my tune,

Not stood stockstill. I made it in the woods,

And found it ring as true as tested gold.”

But Dagonet with one foot poised in his hand,

“ Friend, did ye mark that fountain yesterday

Made to run wine ? — but this had run itself

All out like a long life to a sour end — And them that round it sat with golden cups

To hand the wine to whomsoever came — The twelve small damosels white as In-nocence,

In honor of poor Innocence the babe,

Who left the gems which Innocence the Queen

Lent to the King, and Innocence the King Gave for a prize — and one of those

white slips

Handed her cup and piped, the pretty one, ‘ Drink, drink, Sir Fool,’ and thereupon

I drank, Spat — pish — the cup was gold, the draught was mud.”

And Tristram, “ Was it muddier than thy gibes ?

Is all the laughter gone dead out of thee ? —

Not marking how the knighthood mock thee, fool —

‘ Fear God : honor the king — his one true knight —

Sole follower of the vows ’ — for here be they

Who knew thee swine enow before I came, Smuttier than blasted grain : but when the King

Had made thee fool, thy vanity so shot up It frightened all free fool from out thy heart ;

Which left thee less than fool, and less than swine,

A naked aught — yet swine I hold thee still,

For I have flung thee pearls, and find thee swine.”

And little Dagonet mincing with his feet,

“ Knight, an ye fling those rubies round my neck

In lieu of hers, I’ll hold thou hast some touch

Of music, since I care not for thy pearls. Swine ? I have wallow’d, I have wash’d

— the world

Is flesh and shadow — I have had my day. The dirty nurse, Experience, in her kind

Hath foul’d me — an I wallow’d, then I wash’d —

I have had my day and my philosophies — And thank the Lord I am King Arthur’s fool.

Swine, say ye ? swine, goats, asses, rams, and geese

Troop’d round a Paynim harper once, who thrumm’d

On such a wire as musically as thou

Some such fine song — but never a king’s fool.”

And Tristram, "Then were swine,
goats, asses, geese
The wiser fools, seeing thy Paynim bard
Had such a mastery of his mystery
That he could harp his wife up out of Hell."

Then Dagonet, turning on the ball of
his foot,
"And whither harp'st thou thine? down!
and thyself
Down! and two more: a helpful harper
thou,
That harpest downward! Dost thou
know the star
We call the harp of Arthur up in heav-
en?"

And Tristram, "Ay, Sir Fool, for
when our King
Was victor wellnigh day by day, the
knights,
Glorying in each new glory, set his name
High on all hills, and in the signs of
heaven."

And Dagonet answer'd, "Ay, and
when the land
Was freed, and the Queen false, ye set
yourself
To babble about him, all to show your
wit —
And whether he were king by courtesy,
Or king by right — and so went harping
down
The black king's highway, got so far,
and grew
So witty, that ye play'd at ducks and
drakes
With Arthur's vows on the great lake of
fire.
Tuwhoo! do ye see it? do ye see the
star?"

"Nay, fool," said Tristram, "not in
open day."

And Dagonet, "Nay, nor will: I see it
and hear.

It makes a silent music up in heaven,
And I, and Arthur and the angels hear,
And then we skip." "Lo, fool," he
said, "ye talk
Fool's treason: is the king thy brother
fool?"

Then little Dagonet clapt his hands and
shrill'd,

"Ay, ay, my brother fool, the king
of fools!

Conceits himself as God that he can make

Figs out of thistles, silk from bristles,
milk

From burning spurge, honey from hornet-
combs,

And men from beasts. Long live the
king of fools!"

And down the city Dagonet danced
away.

But thro' the slowly-mellowing avenues
And solitary passes of the wood

Rode Tristram toward Lyonesse and the
west.

Before him fled the face of Queen Isolt
With ruby-circled neck, but evermore
Past, as a rustle or twitter in the wood
Made dull his inner, keen his outer eye
For all that walk'd, or crept, or perched,
or flew.

Anon the face, as, when a gust hath blown,
Unruffling waters re-collect the shape
Of one that in them sees himself, return'd;
But at the slot or fewmets of a deer,
Or ev'n a fall'n feather, vanish'd again.

So on for all that day from lawn to lawn
Thro' many a league-long bower he rode.

At length

A lodge of intertwined beechen-boughs
Furze-cramm'd, and bracken-rooft, the
which himself

Built for a summer day with Queen Isolt
Against a shower, dark in the golden
grove

Appearing, sent his fancy back to where
She lived a moon in that low lodge with
him:

Till Mark her lord had past, the Cornish
king,

With six or seven, when Tristram was
away,

And snatch'd her thence; yet dreading
worse than shame

Her warrior Tristram, spake not any
word,

But bode his hour, devising wretched-
ness.

And now that desert lodge to Tristram
lookt

So sweet, that, halting, in he past, and
sank

Down on a drift of foliage random-blown;
But could not rest for musing how to
smooth

And sleek his marriage over to the Queen,
Perchance in lone Tintagil far from all

The tonguesters of the court she had not heard.

But then what folly had sent him overseas
After she left him lonely here? a name?
Was it the name of one in Brittany,
Isolt, the daughter of the King? "Isolt
Of the white hands" they call'd her: the
sweet name

Allured him first, and then the maid
herself,

Who served him well with those white
hands of hers,

And loved him well, until himself had
thought

He loved her also, wedded easily,
But left her all as easily, and return'd.
The black-blue Irish hair and Irish eyes
Had drawn him home — what marvel?
then he laid

His brows upon the drifted leaf and
dream'd.

He seem'd to pace the strand of Brittany
Between Isolt of Britain and his bride,
And show'd them both the ruby-chain,
and both

Began to struggle for it, till his Queen
Graspt it so hard, that all her hand was
red.

Then cried the Breton, "Look, her hand
is red!

These be no rubies, this is frozen blood,
And melts within her hand — her hand
is hot

With ill desires, but this I gave thee, look,
Is all as cool and white as any flower."
Follow'd a rush of eagle's wings and then
A whimpering of the spirit of the child,
Because the twain had spoil'd her carenet.

He dream'd; but Arthur with a hun-
dred spears

Rode far, till o'er the illimitable reed,
And many a glancing plash and sallowy
isle,

The wide-wing'd sunset of the misty
marsh

Glared on a huge machicolated tower
That stood with open doors, whereout
was roll'd

A roar of riot, as from men secure
Amid their marshes, ruffians at their ease
Among their harlot-brides, an evil song.
"Lo there," said one of Arthur's youth,
for there,

High on a grim dead tree before the tower,
A goodly brother of The Table Round

Swung by the neck: and on the boughs
a shield

Showing a shower of blood in a field noir,
And therebeside a horn, inflamed the
knights

At that dishonor done the gilded spur,
Till each would clash the shield, and
blow the horn.

But Arthur waved them back: alone he
rode.

Then at the dry harsh roar of the great
horn,

That sent the face of all the marsh aloft
An ever upward-rushing storm and cloud
Of shriek and plume, the Red Knight
heard, and all,

Even to tipmost lance and topmost helm,
In blood-red armor sallying, how'd to
the King,

"The teeth of Hell flay bare and gnash
thee flat! —

Lo! art thou not that eunuch-hearted
King

Who fain had elipt free manhood from
the world —

The woman-worshipper? Yea, God's
curse, and I!

Slain was the brother of my paramour
By a knight of thine, and I that heard
her whine

And snivel, being eunuch-hearted too,
Sware by the scorpion-worm that twists
in hell,

And stings itself to everlasting death,
To hang whatever knight of thine I fought
And tumbled. Art thou King? — Look
to thy life!"

He ended: Arthur knew the voice;
the face

Wellnigh was helmet-hidden, and the
name

Went wandering somewhere darkling in
his mind.

And Arthur deign'd not use of word or
sword,

But let the drunkard, as he stretch'd
from horse

To strike him, overbalancing his bulk,
Down from the causeway heavily to the
swamp

Fall, as the crest of some slow-arching
wave

Heard in dead night along that table-
shore

Drops flat, and after the great waters
break

Whitening for half a league, and thin
 themselves
 Far over sands marbled with moon and
 cloud,
 From less and less to nothing; thus he fell
 Head-heavy, while the knights, who
 watch'd him, roar'd
 And shouted and leapt down upon the
 fall'n;
 There trampled out his face from being
 known,
 And sank his head in mire, and slimed
 themselves:
 Nor heard the King for their own cries,
 but sprang
 Thro' open doors, and swording right
 and left
 Men, women, on their sodden faces, hurl'd
 The tables over and the wines, and slew
 Till all the rafters rang with woman-yells,
 And all the pavement stream'd with
 massacre:
 Then, yell with yell echoing, they fired
 the tower,
 Which half that autumn night, like the
 live North,
 Red-pulsing up thro' Alioth and Alcor,
 Made all above it, and a hundred meres
 About it, as the water Moab saw
 Come round by the East, and out beyond
 them flush'd
 The long low dune, and lazy-plunging sea.

So all the ways were safe from shore
 to shore,
 But in the heart of Arthur pain was lord.
 Then out of Tristram waking the red
 dream
 Fled with a shout, and that low lodge
 return'd,
 Mid-forest, and the wind among the
 boughs.
 He whistled his good warhorse left to graze
 Among the forest greens, vaulted upon
 him,
 And rode beneath an ever-showering leaf,
 Till one lone woman, weeping near a cross,
 Stay'd him, "Why weep ye?" "Lord,"
 she said, "my man
 Hath left me or is dead"; whereon he
 thought —
 "What an she hate me now? I would
 not this.
 What an she love me still? I would not
 that.
 I know not what I would" — but said
 to her, —

"Yet weep not thou, lest, if thy mate
 return,
 He find thy favor changed and love thee
 not" —
 Then pressing day by day thro' Lyonesse
 Last in a roky hollow, belling, heard
 The hounds of Mark, and felt the goodly
 hounds
 Yelp at his heart, but, turning, past and
 gain'd
 Tintagil, half in sea, and high on land,
 A crown of towers.

Down in a casement sat,
 A low sea-sunset glorying round her hair
 And glossy-throated grace, Isolt the
 Queen.
 And when she heard the feet of Tristram
 grind
 The spiring stone that scaled about her
 tower,
 Flush'd, started, met him at the doors,
 and there
 Belted his body with her white embrace,
 Crying aloud, "Not Mark — not Mark,
 my soul!
 The footstep flutter'd me at first: not he:
 Catlike thro' his own castle steals my
 Mark,
 But warrior-wise thou stridest through his
 halls
 Who hates thee, as I him — ev'n to the
 death.
 My soul, I felt my hatred for my Mark
 Quicken within me, and knew that thou
 wert nigh."
 To whom Sir Tristram smiling, "I am
 here.
 Let be thy Mark, seeing he is not thine."

And drawing somewhat backward she
 replied,
 "Can he be wrong'd who is not ev'n his
 own,
 But save for dread of thee had beaten
 me,
 Scratch'd, bitten, blinded, marr'd me
 somehow — Mark?
 What rights are his that dare not strike
 for them?
 Not lift a hand — not, tho' he found me
 thus!
 But hearken, have ye met him? hence he
 went
 To-day for three days' hunting — as he
 said —
 And so returns belike within an hour.

Mark's way, my soul! — but eat not thou
with him,
Because he hates thee even more than fears;
Nor drink: and when thou passest any
wood
Close visor, lest an arrow from the bush
Should leave me all alone with Mark and
hell.
My God, the measure of my hate for Mark
Is as the measure of my love for thee."

So, pluck'd one way by hate and one
by love,
Drain'd of her force, again she sat, and
spake
To Tristram, as he knelt before her, saying,
"O hunter, and O blower of the horn,
Harper, and thou hast been a rover too,
For, ere I mated with my shambling king,
Ye twain had fallen out about the bride
Of one — his name is out of me — the prize,
If prize she were — (what marvel — she
could see) —
Thine, friend; and ever since my craven
seeks
To wreck thee villanously: but, O Sir
Knight,
What dame or damsel have ye kneeled
to last?"

And Tristram, "Last to my Queen
Paramount,
Here now to my Queen Paramount of love,
And loveliness, ay, lovelier than when
first
Her light feet fell on our rough Lyonesse,
Sailing from Ireland."

Softly laugh'd Isolt,
"Flatter me not, for hath not our great
Queen
My dole of beauty trebled?" and he said,
"Her beauty is her beauty, and thine
thine,
And thine is more to me — soft, gracious,
kind —
Save when thy Mark is kindled on thy lips
Most gracious; but she, haughty, ev'n to
him,
Lancelot; for I have seen him wan enow
To make one doubt if ever the great
Queen
Have yielded him her love."

To whom Isolt,
"Ah then, false hunter and false harper,
thou

Who brakest thro' the scruple of my
bond,
Calling me thy white hind, and saying to
me
That Guinevere had sinned against the
highest,
And I — misyoked with such a want of
man —
That I could hardly sin against the low-
est."

He answered, "O my soul, be com-
forted!
If this be sweet, to sin in leading-strings,
If here be comfort, and if ours be sin,
Crown'd warrant had we for the crowning
sin
That made us happy: but how ye greet
me — fear
And fault and doubt — no word of that
fond tale —
Thy deep heart-yearnings, thy sweet
memories
Of Tristram in that year he was away."

And, saddening on the sudden, spake
Isolt,
"I had forgotten all in my strong joy
To see thee — yearnings? — ay! for, hour
by hour,
Here in the never-ended afternoon,
O sweeter than all memories of thee,
Deeper than any yearnings after thee
Seem'd those far-rolling, westward-smil-
ing seas,
Watched from this tower. Isolt of Britain
dash'd
Before Isolt of Brittany on the strand,
Would that have chill'd her bride-kiss?
Wedded her?
Fought in her father's battles? wounded
there?
The King was all fulfill'd with gratefulness,
And she, my namesake of the hands,
that heal'd
Thy hurt and heart with unguent and
caress —
Well — can I wish her any huger wrong
Than having known thee? her too hast
thou left
To pine and waste in those sweet memo-
ries?
O were I not my Mark's, by whom all
men
Are noble, I should hate thee more than
love."

And Tristram, fondling her light hands, replied,
 "Grace, Queen, for being loved : she loved me well.
 Did I love her? the name at least I loved.
 Isolt? — I fought his battles, for Isolt!
 The night was dark; the true star set.
 Isolt!
 The name was ruler of the dark — Isolt?
 Care not for her! patient, and prayerful,
 meek,
 Pale-blooded, she will yield herself to God."

And Isolt answer'd, "Yea, and why not I?
 Mine is the larger need, who am not meek,
 Pale-blooded, prayerful. Let me tell thee now.
 Here one black, mute midsummer night I sat
 Lonely, but musing on thee, wondering where,
 Murmuring a light song I had heard thee sing,
 And once or twice I spake thy name aloud.
 Then flash'd a levin-brand; and near me stood,
 In fuming sulphur blue and green, a fiend —
 Mark's way to steal behind one in the dark —
 For there was Mark: 'He has wedded her,' he said,
 Not said, but hissed it: then this crown of towers
 So shook to such a roar of all the sky,
 That here in utter dark I swoon'd away,
 And woke again in utter dark, and cried,
 'I will flee hence and give myself to God' —
 And thou wert lying in thy new leman's arms."

Then Tristram, ever dallying with her hand,
 "May God be with thee, sweet, when old and gray,
 And past desire!" a saying that anger'd her.
 "'May God be with thee, sweet, when thou art old,
 And sweet no more to me!' I need Him now.
 For when had Lancelot utter'd aught so gross

Ev'n to the swineherd's malkin in the mast?
 The greater man, the greater courtesy.
 But thou, thro' ever harrying thy wild beasts —
 Save that to touch a harp, tilt with a lance
 Becomes thee well — art grown wild beast thyself.
 How darest thou, if lover, push me even
 In fancy from thy side, and set me far
 In the gray distance, half a life away,
 Her to be loved no more? Unsay it, unswear!
 Flatter me rather, seeing me so weak,
 Broken with Mark and hate and solitude,
 Thy marriage and mine own, that I should suck
 Lies like sweet wines: lie to me: I believe.
 Will ye not lie? not swear, as there ye kneel,
 And solemnly as when ye swear to him,
 The man of men, our King — My God, the power
 Was once in vows when men believed the King!
 They lied not then, who swear, and thro' their vows
 The King prevailing made his realm: — I say,
 Swear to me thou wilt love me ev'n when old,
 Gray-haired, and past desire, and in despair."

Then Tristram, pacing moodily up and down,
 "Vows! did ye keep the vow ye made to Mark
 More than I mine? Lied, say ye? Nay, but learnt,
 The vow that binds too strictly snaps itself —
 My knighthood taught me this — ay, being snapt —
 We run more counter to the soul thereof
 Than had we never sworn. I swear no more.
 I swore to the great King, and am forsworn.
 For once — ev'n to the height — I honor'd him.
 'Man, is he man at all?' methought, when first
 I rode from our rough Lyonesse, and beheld

That victor of the Pagan throned in
hall —

His hair, a sun that ray'd from off a brow
Like hillsnow high in heaven, the steel-
blue eyes,

The golden beard that clothed his lips
with light —

Moreover, that weird legend of his birth,
With Merlin's mystic babble about his
end,

Amazed me ; then, his foot was on a stool
Shaped as a dragon ; he seem'd to me no
man,

But Michael trampling Satan ; so I swear,
Being amazed : but this went by — the
vows !

O ay — the wholesome madness of an
hour —

They served their use, their time ; for
every knight

Believed himself a greater than himself,
And every follower eyed him as a God ;
Till he, being lifted up beyond himself,
Did mightier deeds than elsewhere he had
done,

And so the realm was made ; but then
their vows —

First mainly thro' that sullying of our
Queen —

Began to gall the knighthood, asking
whence

Had Arthur right to bind them to him-
self ?

Dropt down from heaven ? wash'd up
from out the deep ?

They fail'd to trace him thro' the flesh
and blood

Of our old Kings : whence then ? a
doubtful lord

To bind them by inviolable vows,
Which flesh and blood perforce would
violate :

For feel this arm of mine — the tide
within

Red with free chase and heather-scented
air,

Pulsing full man ; can Arthur make me
pure

As any maiden child ? lock up my tongue
From uttering freely what I freely hear ?

Bind me to one ? The great world laughs
at it.

And worldling of the world am I, and
know

The ptarmigan that whitens ere his hour
Wooes his own end ; we are not angels
here

Nor shall be : vows — I am woodman of
the woods,

And hear the garnet-headed yaffingale
Mock them : my soul, we love but while
we may ;

And therefore is my love so large for thee,
Seeing it is not bounded save by love."

Here ending, he moved toward her,
and she said,

" Good : an I turn'd away my love for thee
To some one thrice as courteous as thy-
self —

For courtesy wins woman all as well
As valor may — but he that closes both
Is perfect, he is Lancelot — taller indeed,
Rosier, and comelier, thou — but say I
loved

This knightliest of all knights, and cast
thee back

Thine own small saw ' We love but while
we may,'

Well then, what answer ? "

He that while she spake,
Mindful of what he brought to adorn her
with,

The jewels, had let one finger lightly touch
The warm white apple of her throat, re-
plied,

" Press this a little closer, sweet, until —
Come, I am hunger'd and half-anger'd —
meat,

Wine, wine — and I will love thee to the
death,

And out beyond into the dream to come."

So then, when both were brought to
full accord,

She rose, and set before him all he will'd ;
And after these had comforted the blood
With meats and wines, and satiated their
hearts —

Now talking of their woodland paradise,
The deer, the dews, the fern, the founts,
the lawns ;

Now mocking at the much ungainliness,
And craven shifts, and long crane legs
of Mark —

Then Tristram laughing caught the harp,
and sang :

" Ay, ay, O ay — the winds that bend the
brier !

A star in heaven, a star within the mere !
Ay, ay, O ay — a star was my desire,

And one was far apart, and one was near :

Ay, ay, O ay — the winds that bow the
grass!

And one was water and one star was fire,
And one will ever shine and one will pass.

Ay, ay, O ay — the winds that move the
mere."

Then in the light's last glimmer Tris-
tram show'd

And swung the ruby carcanet. She cried,
"The collar of some order, which our King
Hath newly founded, all for thee, my soul,
For thee, to yield thee grace beyond thy
peers."

"Not so, my Queen," he said, "but
the red fruit

Grown on a magic oak-tree in mid-heaven,
And won by Tristram as a tourney-prize,
And hither brought by Tristram for his
last

Love-offering and peace-offering unto
thee."

He rose, he turn'd, and flinging round
her neck,

Claspt it; but while he bow'd himself to
lay

Warm kisses in the hollow of her
throat,

Out of the dark, just as the lips had
touch'd,

Behind him rose a shadow and a shriek —
"Mark's way," said Mark, and clove him
thro' the brain.

That night came Arthur home, and
while he climb'd,

All in a death-dumb autumn-dripping
gloom,

The stairway to the hall, and look'd and
saw

The great Queen's bower was dark, —
about his feet

A voice clung sobbing till he question'd
it,

"What art thou?" and the voice about
his feet

Sent up an answer, sobbing, "I am thy
fool,

And I shall never make thee smile
again."

GARETH AND LYNETTE.*

With this poem the Author concludes THE IDYLS OF THE KING.

THE last tall son of Lot and Belli-
cent,

And tallest, Gareth, in a showerful
spring

Stared at the spate. A slender-shafted
Pine

Lost footing, fell, and so was whirl'd
away.

"How he went down," said Gareth,
"as a false knight

Or evil king before my lance if lance
Were mine to use — O senseless cat-
aract,

Bearing all down in thy precipitancy —
And yet thou art but swollen with cold
snows,

And mine is living blood: thou dost
His will,

The Maker's, and not knowest, and I
that know,

Have strength and wit, in my good
mother's hall

Linger with vacillating obedience,
Prison'd, and kept and coax'd and
whistled to —

Since the good mother holds me still a
child —

Good mother is bad mother unto me!
A worse were better; yet no worse
would I.

Heaven yield her for it, but in me put
force

To weary her ears with one continuous
prayer,

Until she let me fly discased to sweep
In ever-highering eagle-circles up

To the great Sun of Glory, and thence
swoop

Down upon all things base, and dash
them dead,

* GARETH follows THE COMING OF ARTHUR, and THE LAST TOURNAMENT precedes GUINEVERE.

A knight of Arthur, working out his will,
 To cleanse the world. Why, Gawain, when he came
 With Modred hither in the summer-time,
 Ask'd me to tilt with him, the proven knight.
 Modred for want of worthier was the judge.
 Then I so shook him in the saddle, he said,
 'Thou hast half prevail'd against me,' said so — he —
 Tho' Modred biting his thin lips was mute,
 For he is alway sullen : what care I ?

And Gareth went, and hovering round her chair
 Ask'd, "Mother, tho' ye count me still the child,
 Sweet mother, do ye love the child ?" She laugh'd,
 "Thou art but a wild-goose to question it."
 "Then, mother, an ye love the child," he said,
 "Being a goose and rather tame than wild,
 Hear the child's story." "Yea, my well-beloved,
 An 't were but of the goose and golden eggs."

And Gareth answer'd her with kindling eyes,
 "Nay, nay, good mother, but this egg of mine
 Was finer gold than any goose can lay ;
 For this an Eagle, a royal Eagle, laid
 Almost beyond eye-reach, on such a palm
 As glitters gilded in thy Book of Hours.
 And there was ever haunting round the palm
 A lusty youth, but poor, who often saw
 The splendor sparkling from aloft, and thought
 'An I could climb and lay my hand upon it,
 Then were I wealthier than a leash of kings.'
 But ever when he reach'd a hand to climb,
 One, that had loved him from his childhood, caught

And stay'd him, 'Climb not lest thou break thy neck,
 I charge thee by my love,' and so the boy,
 Sweet mother, neither clomb, nor brake his neck,
 But brake his very heart in pining for it,
 And past away."

To whom the mother said,
 "True love, sweet son, had risk'd himself and climb'd,
 And handed down the golden treasure to him."

And Gareth answer'd her with kindling eyes,
 "Gold ? said I gold ? — ay then, why he, or she,
 Or whose'er it was, or half the world
 Had ventured — had the thing I spake of been
 Mere gold — but this was all of that true steel,
 Whereof they forged the brand Excalibur,
 And lightnings play'd about it in the storm,
 And all the little fowl were flurried at it,
 And there were cries and clashings in the nest,
 That sent him from his senses : let me go."

Then Bellicent bemoan'd herself and said,
 "Hast thou no pity upon my loneliness ?
 Lo, where thy father Lot beside the hearth
 Lies like a log, and all but smoulder'd out !
 For ever since when traitor to the King
 He fought against him in the Barons' war,
 And Arthur gave him back his territory,
 His age hath slowly droopt, and now lies there
 A yet-warm corpse, and yet unburiable,
 No more ; nor sees, nor hears, nor speaks,
 nor knows.
 And both thy brethren are in Arthur's hall,
 Albeit neither loved with that full love
 I feel for thee, nor worthy such a love :
 Stay therefore thou ; red berries charm the bird,
 And thee, mine innocent, the jousts, the wars,

Who never knewest finger-ache, nor pang
 Of wrench'd or broken limb — an often
 chance
 In those brain-stunning shocks, and
 tourney-falls,
 Frights to my heart ; but stay : follow
 the deer
 By these tall firs and our fast-falling
 burns ;
 So make thy manhood mightier day by
 day ;
 Sweet is the chase : and I will seek thee
 out
 Some comfortable bride and fair, to grace
 Thy climbing life, and cherish my prone
 year,
 Till falling into Lot's forgetfulness
 I know not thee, myself, nor anything.
 Stay, my best son ! ye are yet more boy
 than man."

Then Gareth, "An ye hold me yet for
 child,
 Hear yet once more the story of the child.
 For, mother, there was once a King, like
 ours ;
 The prince his heir, when tall and mar-
 riageable,
 Ask'd for a bride ; and thereupon the
 King
 Set two before him. One was fair, strong,
 arm'd —
 But to be won by force — and many men
 Desired her ; one, good lack, no man de-
 sired.
 And these were the conditions of the
 King :
 That save he won the first by force, he
 needs
 Must wed that other, whom no man de-
 sired,
 A red-faced bride who knew herself so
 vile,
 That evermore she long'd to hide herself,
 Nor fronted man or woman, eye to eye —
 Yea — some she cleaved to, but they died
 of her.
 And one — they call'd her Fame ; and
 one, O Mother,
 How can ye keep me tether'd to you —
 Shame !
 Man am I grown, a man's work must I do.
 Follow the deer ? follow the Christ, the
 King,
 Live pure, speak true, right wrong, fol-
 low the King —
 Else, wherefore born ?"

To whom the mother said,
 "Sweet son, for there be many who deem
 him not,
 Or will not deem him, wholly proven
 King —
 Albeit in mine own heart I knew him
 King,
 When I was frequent with him in my
 youth,
 And heard him Kingly speak, and doubted
 him
 No more than he, himself ; but felt him
 mine,
 Of closest kin to me : yet — wilt thou
 leave
 Thine easeful biding here, and risk thine
 all,
 Life, limbs, for one that is not proven
 King ?
 Stay, till the cloud that settles round his
 birth
 Hath lifted but a little. Stay, sweet
 son."

And Gareth answer'd quickly, "Not
 an hour,
 So that ye yield me — I will walk thro'
 fire,
 Mother, to gain it — your full leave to
 go.
 Not proven, who swept the dust of ruin'd
 Rome
 From off the threshold of the realm, and
 crush'd
 The Idolaters, and made the people free ?
 Who should be King save him who makes
 us free ?"

So when the Queen, who long had
 sought in vain
 To break him from the intent to which he
 grew,
 Found her son's will unwaveringly one,
 She answer'd craftily, "Will ye walk thro'
 fire ?
 Who walks thro' fire will hardly heed the
 smoke.
 Ay, go then, an ye must : only one proof,
 Before thou ask the King to make thee
 knight,
 Of thine obedience and thy love to me,
 Thy mother, — I demand."

And Gareth cried,
 "A hard one, or a hundred, so I go.
 Nay — quick ! the proof to prove me to
 the quick !"

But slowly spake the mother, looking
at him,
"Prince, thou shalt go disguised to Ar-
thur's hall,
And hire thyself to serve for meats and
drinks
Among the scullions and the kitchen-
knaves,
And those that hand the dish across the
bar.
Nor shalt thou tell thy name to any one.
And thou shalt serve a twelvemonth and
a day."

For so the Queen believed that when
her son
Beheld his only way to glory lead
Low down thro' villain kitchen-vassalage,
Her own true Gareth was too princely-
proud
To pass thereby ; so should he rest with
her,
Closed in her castle from the sound of
arms.

Silent awhile was Gareth, then replied,
"The thrall in person may be free in
soul,
And I shall see the jousts. Thyson am I,
And since thou art my mother, must
obey.
I therefore yield me freely to thy will ;
For hence will I, disguised, and hire my-
self
To serve with scullions and with kitchen-
knaves ;
Nor tell my name to any — no, not the
King."

Gareth awhile linger'd. The mother's
eye,
Full of the wistful fear that he would
go,
And turning toward him wheresoe'er he
turn'd,
Perplext his outward purpose, till an
hour,
When waken'd by the wind which with
full voice
Swept bellowing thro' the darkness on to
dawn,
He rose, and out of slumber calling two
That still had tended on him from his
birth,
Before the wakeful mother heard him,
went.

The three were clad like tillers of the
soil.
Southward they set their faces. The birds
made
Melody on branch, and melody in mid
air.
The damp hill-slopes were quicken'd into
green,
And the live green had kindied into
flowers,
For it was past the time of Easterday.

So, when their feet were planted on
the plain
That broaden'd toward the base of Came-
lot,
Far off they saw the silver-misty morn
Rolling her smoke about the Royal mount,
That rose between the forest and the
field.



At times the summit of the high city
flash'd ;
At times the spires and turrets half-way
down
Prick'd thro' the mist ; at times the great
gate shone
Only, that open'd on the field below :
Anon, the whole fair city had disappear'd.

Then those who went with Gareth were
amazed,
One crying, " Let us go no farther, lord.
Here is a city of Enchanters, built
By fairy Kings." The second echo'd him,
" Lord, we have heard from our wise men
at home
To Northward, that this King is not the
King,
But only changeling out of Fairyland,
Who drave the heathen hence by sorcery
And Merlin's glamour." Then the first
again,
" Lord, there is no such city anywhere,
But all a vision."

Gareth answer'd them
With laughter, swearing he had glamour
enow
In his own blood, his pryncedom, youth
and hopes,
To plunge old Merlin in the Arabian sea ;
So push'd them all unwilling toward the
gate.
And there was no gate like it under
heaven ;
For barefoot on the keystone, which was
lined
And rippled like an ever-fleeting wave,
The Lady of the Lake stood : all her dress
Wept from her sides as water flowing
away ;
But like the cross her great and goodly
arms
Stretch'd under all the cornice and up-
held :
And drops of water fell from either hand ;
And down from one a sword was hung,
from one
A censer, either worn with wind and
storm ;
And o'er her breast floated the sacred fish ;
And in the space to left of her, and right,
Were Arthur's wars in weird devices done,
New things and old co-twisted, as if
Time
Were nothing, so inveterately, that men
Were giddy gazing there ; and over all

High on the top were those three Queens,
the friends
Of Arthur, who should help him at his
need.

Then those with Gareth for so long a
space
Stared at the figures, that at last it
seem'd
The dragon-boughts and elvish emblem-
ings
Began to move, seethe, twine and eurl :
they call'd
To Gareth, " Lord, the gateway is alive."

And Gareth likewise on them fixt his
eyes
So long, that ev'n to him they seem'd to
move.
Out of the city a blast of music peal'd.
Back from the gate started the three, to
whom
From out thereunder came an ancient
man,
Long-bearded, saying, " Who be ye, my
sons ?"

Then Gareth, " We be tillers of the
soil,
Who leaving share in furrow come to see
The glories of our King : but these, my
men,
(Your city moved so weirdly in the mist,)
Doubt if the King be King at all, or
come
From fairyland ; and whether this be
built
By magic, and by fairy Kings and Queens ;
Or whether there be any city at all,
Or all a vision : and this music now
Hath scared them both, but tell thou
these the truth."

Then that old Seer made answer play-
ing on him
And saying, " Son, I have seen the good
ship sail
Keel upward and mast downward in the
heavens,
And solid turrets topsy-turvy in air :
And here is truth ; but an it please thee
not,
Take thou the truth as thou hast told it
me.
For truly, as thou sayest, a Fairy King
And Fairy Queens have built the city,
son ;

They came from out a sacred mountain-cleft
 Toward the sunrise, each with harp in hand,
 And built it to the music of their harps.
 And as thou sayest it is enchanted, son,
 For there is nothing in it as it seems
 Saving the King; tho' some there be
 that hold
 The King a shadow, and the city real:
 Yet take thou heed of him, for, so thou
 pass
 Beneath this archway, then wilt thou
 become
 A thrall to his enchantments, for the
 King
 Will bind thee by such vows, as is a
 shame
 A man should not be bound by, yet the
 which
 No man can keep; but, so thou dread to
 swear,
 Pass not beneath this gateway, but abide
 Without, among the cattle of the field.
 For, an ye heard a music, like enow
 They are building still, seeing the city is
 built
 To music, therefore never built at all,
 And therefore built forever."

Gareth spake

Anger'd, "Old Master, reverence thine
 own beard
 That looks as white as utter truth, and
 seems
 Wellnigh as long as thou art statured tall!
 Why mockest thou the stranger that hath
 been
 To thee fair-spoken?"

But the Seer replied,

"Know ye not then the Riddling of the
 Bards?
 'Confusion, and illusion, and relation,
 Elusion, and occasion, and evasion'?
 I mock thee not but as thou mockest me,
 And all that see thee, for thou art not who
 Thou seemest, but I know thee who thou
 art.
 And now thou goest up to mock the
 King,
 Who cannot brook the shadow of any
 lie."

Unmockingly the mocker ending here
 Turn'd to the right, and past along the
 plain;

Whom Gareth looking after said, "My
 men,
 Our one white lie sits like a little ghost
 Here on the threshold of our enterprise.
 Let love be blamed for it, not she, nor I:
 Well, we will make amends."

With all good cheer

He spake and laugh'd, then enter'd with
 his twain
 Camelot, a city of shadowy palaces,
 And stately, rich in emblem and the
 work
 Of ancient kings who did their days in
 stone;
 Which Merlin's hand, the Mage at Ar-
 thur's court,
 Knowing all arts, had touch'd, and every-
 where
 At Arthur's ordinance, tipt with lessen-
 ing peak
 And pinnacle, and had made it spire to
 heaven.
 And ever and anon a knight would pass
 Outward, or inward to the hall: his arms
 Clash'd; and the sound was good to
 Gareth's ear.
 And out of bower and casement shyly
 glanced
 Eyes of pure women, wholesome stars of
 love;
 And all about a healthful people slept
 As in the presence of a gracious king.

Then into hall Gareth ascending heard
 A voice, the voice of Arthur, and beheld
 Far over heads in that long-vaulted hall
 The splendor of the presence of the King
 Throned, and delivering doom — and
 look'd no more —
 But felt his young heart hammering in
 his ears,
 And thought, "For this half-shadow of
 a lie
 The truthful King will doom me when I
 speak."
 Yet pressing on, tho' all in fear to
 find
 Sir Gawain or Sir Modred, saw nor one
 Nor other, but in all the listening eyes
 Of those tall knights, that ranged about
 the throne,
 Clear honor shining like the dewy star
 Of dawn, and faith in their great King,
 with pure
 Affection, and the light of victory,
 And glory gain'd, and evermore to gain.

Then came a widow crying to the King,
 "A boon, Sir King! Thy father, Uther,
 reft
 From my dead lord a field with violence :
 For howsoe'er at first he proffer'd gold,
 Yet, for the field was pleasant in our
 eyes,
 We yielded not ; and then he reft us of
 it
 Perforce, and left us neither gold nor
 field."

Said Arthur, "Whether would ye?
 gold or field?"
 To whom the woman weeping, "Nay,
 my lord,
 The field was pleasant in my husband's
 eye."

And Arthur, "Have thy pleasant field
 again,
 And thrice the gold for Uther's use
 thereof,
 According to the years. No boon is here,
 But justice, so thy say be proven true.
 Accursed, who from the wrongs his father
 did
 Would shape himself a right!"

And while she past,
 Came yet another widow crying to him,
 "A boon, Sir King! Thine enemy,
 King, am I.
 With thine own hand thou slewest my
 dear lord,
 A knight of Uther, in the Barons' war,
 When Lot and many another rose and
 fought
 Against thee, saying thou wert basely
 born.
 I held with these, and loathe to ask thee
 aught.
 Yet lo! my husband's brother had my
 son
 Thrall'd in his castle, and hath starved
 him dead ;
 And standeth seized of that inheritance
 Which thou that slewest the sire hast
 left the son.
 So tho' I scarce can ask it thee for hate,
 Grant me some knight to do the battle
 for me,
 Kill the foul thief, and wreak me for my
 son."

Then strode a good knight forward,
 crying to him,

"A boon, Sir King! I am her kins-
 man, I.
 Give me to right her wrong, and slay the
 man."

Then came Sir Kay, the seneschal, and
 cried,
 "A boon, Sir King! ev'n that thou
 grant her none,
 This railer, that hath mock'd thee in
 full hall —
 None ; or the wholesome boon of gyve
 and gad."

But Arthur, "We sit, King, to help
 the wrong'd
 Thro' all our realm. The woman loves
 her lord.
 Peace to thee, woman, with thy loves
 and hates !
 The kings of old had doom'd thee to the
 flames,
 Aurelius Emrys would have scourged thee
 dead,
 And Uther slit thy tongue : but get the
 hence —
 Lest that rough humor of the kings of old
 Return upon me ! Thou that art her kin,
 Go likewise ; lay him low and slay him
 not,
 But bring him here, that I may judge
 the right,
 According to the justice of the King :
 Then, be he guilty, by that deathless
 King
 Who lived and died for men, the man
 shall die."

Then came in hall the messenger of
 Mark,
 A name of evil savor in the land,
 The Cornish king. In either hand he
 bore
 What dazzled all, and shone far-off as
 shines
 A field of charlock in the sudden sun
 Between two showers, a cloth of palest
 gold,
 Which down he laid before the throne,
 and knelt,
 Delivering, that his Lord, the vassal
 king,
 Was ev'n upon his way to Camelot ;
 For having heard that Arthur of his grace
 Had made his goodly cousin, Tristram,
 knight,
 And, for himself was of the greater state,

Being a king, he trusted his liege-lord
 Would yield him this large honor all the
 more ;
 So pray'd him well to accept this cloth
 of gold,
 In token of true heart and fealty.

Then Arthur cried to rend the cloth,
 to rend
 In pieces, and so cast it on the hearth.
 An oak-tree smoulder'd there. "The
 goodly knight !
 What ! shall the shield of Mark stand
 among these ?"
 For, midway down the side of that long
 hall
 A stately pile, — whereof along the front,
 Some blazon'd, some but carven, and
 some blank,
 There ran a treble range of stony shields, —
 Rose, and high-arching overbrow'd the
 hearth.
 And under every shield a knight was
 named :
 For this was Arthur's custom in his hall ;
 When some good knight had done one
 noble deed,
 His arms were carven only ; but if twain
 His arms were blazon'd also ; but if none
 The shield was blank and bare without a
 sign
 Saving the name beneath ; and Gareth
 saw
 The shield of Gawain blazon'd rich and
 bright,
 And Modred's blank as death ; and Ar-
 thur cried
 To rend the cloth and cast it on the
 hearth.

"More like are we to reave him of his
 crown
 Than make him knight because men call
 him king.
 The kings we found, ye know we stay'd
 their hands
 From war among themselves, but left
 them kings ;
 Of whom were any bounteous, merciful,
 Truth-speaking, brave, good livers, them
 we enroll'd
 Among us, and they sit within our
 hall.
 But Mark hath tarnish'd the great name
 of king,
 As Mark would sully the low state of
 churl :

And, seeing he hath sent us cloth of
 gold,
 Return, and meet, and hold him from
 our eyes,
 Lest we should lap him up in cloth of
 lead,
 Silenced forever — craven — a man of
 plots,
 Craft, poisonous counsels, wayside am-
 bushings —
 No fault of thine : let Kay, the seneschal,
 Look to thy wants, and send thee satis-
 fied —
 Accursed, who strikes nor lets the hand
 be seen !"

And many another suppliant crying
 came
 With noise of ravage wrought by beast
 and man,
 And evermore a knight would ride away.

Last Gareth leaning both hands heavily
 Down on the shoulders of the twain, his
 men,
 Approach'd between them toward the
 King, and ask'd,
 "A boon, Sir King (his voice was all
 ashamed),
 For see ye not how weak and hunger-
 worn
 I seem — leaning on these ? grant me to
 serve
 For meat and drink among thy kitchen-
 knives
 A twelvemonth and a day, nor seek my
 name.
 Hereafter I will fight."

To him the King,
 "A goodly youth and worth a goodlier
 boon !
 But an thou wilt no goodlier, then must
 Kay,
 The master of the meats and drinks, be
 thine."

He rose and past ; then Kay, a man
 of mien
 Wan-sallow as the plant that feels itself
 Root-bitten by white lichen,

"Lo ye now !
 This fellow hath broken from some Ab-
 bey, where,
 God wot, he had not beef and brewis
 enow,

However that might chance ! but an he
work,
Like any pigeon will I cram his crop,
And sleeker shall he shine than any hog."

Then Lancelot standing near, "Sir
Seneschal,
Sleuth-hound thou knowest, and gray,
and all the hounds ;
A horse thou knowest, a man thou dost
not know :
Broad brows and fair, a fluent hair and
fine,
High nose, a nostril large and fine, and
hands
Large, fair and fine ! — Some young lad's
mystery —
But, or from sheepcot or king's hall, the
boy
Is noble-natured. Treat him with all
grace,
Lest he should come to shame thy judg-
ing of him."

Then Kay, "What murmurest thou
of mystery ?
Think ye this fellow will poison the
King's dish ?
Nay, for he spake too fool-like : mystery !
Tut, an the lad were noble, he had ask'd
For horse and armor : fair and fine, for-
sooth !
Sir Fine-face, Sir Fair-hands ? but see
thou to it
That thine own fineness, Lancelot, some
fine day
Undo thee not — and leave my man to
me."

So Gareth all for glory underwent
The sooty yoke of kitchen vassalage ;
Ate with young lads his portion by the
door,
And couch'd at night with grimy kitchen-
knaves.
And Lancelot ever spake him pleasantly,
But Kay the seneschal who loved him not
Would hustle and harry him, and labor
him
Beyond his comrade of the hearth, and
set
To turn the i. s. ach, draw water, or hew
wood,
Or grosser tasks ; and Gareth bow'd him-
self
With all obedience to the King, and
wrought

All kind of service with a noble ease
That graced the lowliest act in doing it.
And when the thralls had talk among
themselves,
And one would praise the love that linkt
the King
And Lancelot — how the King had saved
his life
In battle twice, and Lancelot once the
King's —
For Lancelot was the first in Tournament,
But Arthur mightiest on the battle-
field —
Gareth was glad. Or if some other told,
How once the wandering forester at
dawn,
Far over the blue tarns and hazy seas,
On Caer-Eryri's highest found the King,
A naked babe, of whom the Prophet
spake,
"He passes to the Isle Avilion,
He passes and is heal'd and cannot
die" —
Gareth was glad. But if their talk were
foul,
Then would he whistle rapid as any lark,
Or carol some old roundelay, and so
loud
That first they mock'd, but, after, rev-
erenced him.
Or Gareth telling some prodigious tale
Of knights, who sliced a red life-bubbling
way
Thro' twenty folds of twisted dragon,
held
All in a gap-mouth'd circle his good
mates
Lying or sitting round him, idle hands,
Charm'd ; till Sir Kay, the seneschal,
would come
Blustering upon them, like a sudden
wind
Among dead leaves, and drive them all
apart.
Or when the thralls had sport among
themselves,
So there were any trial of mastery,
He, by two yards in casting bar or stone,
Was counted best ; and if there chanced
a joust,
So that Sir Kay nodded him leave to go,
Would hurry thither, and when he saw
the knights
Clash like the coming and retiring wave,
And the spear spring, and good horse
reel, the boy
Was half beyond himself for ecstasy.

So for a month he wrought among the thralls ;
 But in the weeks that follow'd, the good Queen,
 Repentant of the word she made him swear,
 And saddening in her childless castle, sent,
 Between the increscent and decreescent moon,
 Arms for her son, and loosed him from his vow.

This, Gareth hearing from a squire of Lot
 With whom he used to play at tourney once,
 When both were children, and in lonely haunts
 Would scratch a ragged oval on the sand,
 And each at either dash from either end —
 Shame never made girl redder than Gareth joy.
 He laugh'd ; he sprang. " Out of the smoke, at once
 I leap from Satan's foot to Peter's knee —
 These news be mine, none other's — nay, the King's —
 Descend into the city " : whereon he sought
 The King alone, and found, and told him all.

" I have stagger'd thy strong Gawain in a tilt
 For pastime ; yea, he said it : joust can I.
 Make me thy knight — in secret ! let my name
 Be hidd'n, and give me the first quest, I spring
 Like flame from ashes."

Here the King's calm eye
 Fell on, and check'd, and made him flush, and bow
 Lowly, to kiss his hand, who answer'd him,
 " Son, the good mother let me know thee here,
 And sent her wish that I would yield thee thine.
 Make thee my knight ? my knights are sworn to vows

Of utter hardihood, utter gentleness,
 And, loving, utter faithfulness in love,
 And uttermost obedience to the King."

Then Gareth, lightly springing from his knees,
 " My King, for hardihood I can promise thee.
 For uttermost obedience make demand
 Of whom ye gave me to, the Seneschal,
 No mellow master of the meats and drinks !
 And as for love, God wot, I love not yet,
 But love I shall, God willing."

And the King —
 " Make thee my knight in secret ? yea, but he,
 Our noblest brother, and our truest man,
 And one with me in all, he needs must know."

" Let Lancelot know, my King, let Lancelot know,
 Thy noblest and thy truest !"

And the King —
 " But wherefore would ye men should wonder at you ?
 Nay, rather for the sake of me, their King,
 And the deed's sake my knighthood do the deed,
 Than to be noised of."

Merrily Gareth ask'd,
 " Have I not earn'd my cake in baking of it ?

Let be my name until I make my name !
 My deeds will speak : it is but for a day."
 So with a kindly hand on Gareth's arm
 Smiled the great King, and half-unwillingly
 Loving his lusty youthhood yielded to him.
 Then, after summoning Lancelot privily,
 " I have given him the first quest : he is not proven.

Look therefore when he calls for this in hall,
 Thou get to horse and follow him far away.
 Cover the lions on thy shield, and see
 Far as thou mayest, he be nor ta'en nor slain."

Then that same day there past into the hall
 A damsel of high lineage, and a brow

May-blossom, and a cheek of apple-blossom,
Hawk-eyes; and lightly was her slender
nose
Tip-tilted like the petal of a flower;
She into hall past with her page and
cried,

“O King, for thou hast driven the foe
without,
See to the foe within! bridge, ford, be-
set

By bandits, every one that owns a tower
The Lord for half a league. Why sit ye
there?
Rest would I not, Sir King, an I were
king,
Till ev'n the lonest hold were all as free
From cursed bloodshed, as thine altar-
cloth
From that blest blood it is a sin to spill.”

“Comfort thyself,” said Arthur, “I
nor mine
Rest: so my knighthood keep the vows
they swore,
The wastest moorland of our realm shall
be
Safe, damsel, as the centre of this hall.
What is thy name? thy need?”

“My name?” she said —
“Lynette my name; noble; my need,
a knight
To combat for my sister, Lyonors,
A lady of high lineage, of great lands,
And comely, yea, and comelier than my-
self.
She lives in Castle Perilous: a river
Runs in three loops about her living-
place;
And o'er it are three passings, and three
knights
Defend the passings, brethren, and a
fourth
And of that four the mightiest, holds
her stay'd
In her own castle and so besieges her
To break her will, and make her wed
with him:
And but delays his purport till thou send
To do the battle with him, thy chief
man
Sir Lancelot whom he trusts to over-
throw,
Then wed, with glory; but she will not
wed

Save whom she loveth, or a holy life.
Now therefore have I come for Lancelot.”

Then Arthur mindful of Sir Gareth
ask'd,
“Damsel, ye know this Order lives to
crush
All wrongers of the Realm. But say,
these four,
Who be they? What the fashion of the
men?”

“They be of foolish fashion, O Sir
King,
The fashion of that old knight-errantry
Who ride abroad and do but what they
will;
Courteous or bestial from the moment,
Such as have nor law nor king; and three
of these
Proud in their fantasy call themselves
the Day,
Morning-Star, and Noon-Sun, and Even-
ing-Star,
Being strong fools; and never a whit
more wise
The fourth, who alway rideth arm'd in
black,
A huge man-beast of boundless savagery.
He names himself the Night and oftener
Death,
And wears a helmet mounted with a skull
And bears a skeleton figured on his arms,
To show that who may slay or scape the
three
Slain by himself shall enter endless night.
And all these four be fools, but mighty
men,
And therefore am I come for Lancelot.”

Hereat Sir Gareth call'd from where
he rose,
A head with kindling eyes above the
throng,
“A boon, Sir King — this quest!” then
— for he mark'd
Kay near him groaning like a wounded
bull —
“Yea, King, thou knowest thy kitchen-
knave am I,
And mighty thro' thy meats and drinks
am I,
And I can topple over a hundred such.
Thy promise, King,” and Arthur glanc-
ing at him,
Brought down a momentary brow.
“Rough, sudden,

And pardonable, worthy to be knight —
Go therefore," and all hearers were
amazed.

But on the damsel's forehead shame,
pride, wrath,
Slew the May-white: she lifted either arm,
"Fie on thee, King! I ask'd for thy
chief knight,
And thou hast given me but a kitchen-
knave."
Then ere a man in hall could stay her,
turn'd,
Fled down the lane of access to the King,
Took horse, descended the slope street,
and past
The weird white gate, and paused with-
out, beside
The field of tourney, murmuring "kitch-
en-knave."

Now two great entries open'd from the
hall,
At one end one, that gave upon a range
Of level pavement where the King would
pace
At sunrise, gazing over plain and wood.
And down from this a lordly stairway
sloped
Till lost in blowing trees and tops of
towers.
And out by this main doorway past the
King.
But one was counter to the hearth, and
rose
High that the highest-crested helm could
ride
Therethro' nor graze: and by this entry
fled
The damsel in her wrath, and on to this

Sir Gareth strode, and saw without the
door
King Arthur's gift, the worth of half a
town,
A warhorse of the best, and near it stood
The two that out of north had follow'd
him:
This bare a maiden shield, a casque; that
held
The horse, the spear; whereat Sir Ga-
reth loosed
A cloak that dropt from collar-bone to
heel,
A cloth of roughest web, and cast it down,
And from it like a fuel-smother'd fire,
That lookt half-dead, brake bright, and
flash'd as those
Dull-coated things, that making slide
apart
Their dusk wing-cases, all beneath there
burns
A jewel'd harness, ere they pass and fly.
So Gareth ere he parted flash'd in arms.
Then while he donn'd the helm, and took
the shield
And mounted horse and graspt a spear,
of grain
Storm-strengthen'd on a windy site, and
tipt
With trenchant steel, around him slowly
prest
The people, and from out of kitchen came
The thralls in throng, and seeing who
had work'd
Lustier than any, and whom they could
but love,
Mounted in arms, threw up their caps
and cried,
"God bless the King, and all his fellow-
ship!"



And on thro' lanes of shouting Gareth
rode
Down the slope street, and past without
the gate.

So Gareth past with joy ; but as the
cur
Pluckt from the cur he fights with, ere
his cause
Be cool'd by fighting, follows, being
named,
His owner, but remembers all, and growls
Remembering, so Sir Kay beside the door
Mutter'd in scorn of Gareth whom he used
To harry and hustle.

“ Bound upon a quest
With horse and arms — the King hath
past his time —
My scullion knave ! Thralls to your
work again,
For an your fire be low ye kindle mine !
Will there be dawn in West and eve in
East ?
Begone ! — my knave ! — belike and like
enow
Some old head-blow not heeded in his
youth
So shook his wits they wander in his
prime —
Crazed ! How the villain lifted up his
voice,
Nor shamed to bawl himself a kitchen-
knave.
Tut : he was tame and meek enow with
me,
Till peacock'd up with Lancelot's no-
ticing,
Well — I will after my loud knave, and
learn
Whether he know me for his master yet.
Out of the smoke he came, and so my
lance
Hold, by God's grace, he shall into the
mire —
Thence, if the King awaken from his
craze,
Into the smoke again.”

But Lancelot said,
“ Kay, wherefore will ye go against the
King,
For that did never he whereon ye rail,
But ever meekly served the King in thee ?
Abide : take counsel ; for this lad is great
And listy, and knowing both of lance
and sword.”

“ Tut, tell not me,” said Kay, “ ye are
overfine
To mar stout knaves with foolish cour-
tesies.”

Then mounted, on thro' silent faces rode
Down the slope city, and out beyond the
gate.

But by the field of tourney lingering yet
Mutter'd the damsel, “ Wherefore did
the King

Scorn me ? for, were Sir Lancelot lackt,
at least

He might have yielded to me one of those
Who tilt for lady's love and glory here,
Rather than — O sweet heaven ! O fie
upon him —

His kitchen-knave.”

To whom Sir Gareth drew
(And there were none but few goodlier
than he)
Shining in arms, “ Damsel, the quest is
mine.

Lead, and I follow.” She thereat, as one
That smells a foul-flesh'd agaric in the
holt,

And deems it carrion of some woodland
thing,

Or shrew, or weasel, nipt her slender nose
With petulant thumb and finger shrill-
ing, “ Hence !

Avoid, thou smell'st all of kitchen-grease.
And look who comes behind,” for there
was Kay.

“ Knowest thou not me ? thy master ?
I am Kay.

We lack thee by the hearth.”

And Gareth to him,
“ Master no more ! too well I know thee,
ay —

The most ungentle knight in Arthur's
hall.”

“ Have at thee then,” said Kay : they
shock'd, and Kay

Fell shoulder-slipt, and Gareth cried
again,

“ Lead, and I follow,” and fast away she
fled.

But after sod and shingle ceased to fly
Behind her, and the heart of her good
horse

Was nigh to burst with violence of the
beat,

Forforce she stay'd, and overtaken spoke.

“What doest thou, scullion, in my fellowship?
Deem'st thou that I accept thee aught
the more
Or love thee better, that by some device
Full cowardly, or by mere unhappiness,
Thou hast overthrown and slain thy master — thou! —
Dish-washer and broach-turner, loon! —
to me
Thou smell'st all of kitchen as before.”

“Damsel,” Sir Gareth answer'd gently,
“say
Whate'er ye will, but whatsoe'er ye say,
I leave not till I finish this fair quest,
Or die therefor.”

“Ay, wilt thou finish it?
Sweet lord, how like a noble knight he
talks!
The listening rogue hath caught the manner
of it.
But, knave, anon thou shalt be met with,
knave,
And then by such a one that thou for all
The kitchen brewis that was ever supt
Shall not once dare to look him in the
face.”

“I shall assay,” said Gareth with a
smile
That madden'd her, and away she flash'd
again
Down the long avenues of a boundless
wood,
And Gareth following was again be-
knaved.

“Sir Kitchen-knave, I have miss'd the
only way
Where Arthur's men are set along the
wood;
The wood is nigh as full of thieves as
leaves:
If both be slain, I am rid of thee; but
yet,
Sir Scullion, canst thou use that spit of
thine?
Fight, an thou canst: I have miss'd the
only way.”

So till the dusk that follow'd evensong
Rode on the two, reviler and reviled:
Then after one long slope was mounted,
saw,
Bowl-shaped, thro' tops of many thousand
pines

A gloomy-gladed hollow slowly sink
To westward — in the deeps whercof a
mere,
Round as the red eye of an Eagle-owl,
Under the half-dead sunset glared; and
cries
Ascended, and there brake a servingman
Flying from out of the black wood, and
crying,
“They have bound my lord to cast him
in the mere.”
Then Gareth, “Bound am I to right the
wroug'd,
But straitlier bound am I to bide with
thee.”
And when the damsel spake contemptu-
ously,
“Lead and I follow,” Gareth cried again,
“Follow, I lead!” so down among the
pines
He plunged; and there, blackshadow'd
nigh the mere,
And mid-thigh-deep in bulrushes and
reed,
Saw six tall men haling a seventh along,
A stone about his neck to drown him in
it.
Three with good blows he quieted, but
three
Fled thro' the pines; and Gareth loosed
the stone
From off his neck, then in the mere be-
side
Tumbled to; oilily bubbled up the mere.
Last, Gareth loosed his bonds and on free
feet
Set him, a stalwart Baron, Arthur's friend.

“Well that ye came, or else these cai-
tiff rogues
Had wreak'd themselves on me; good
cause is theirs
To hate me, for my wont hath ever been
To catch my thief, and then like vermin
here
Drown him, and with a stone about his
neck;
And under this wan water many of them
Lie rotting, but at night let go the stone,
And rise, and flickering in a grimly light
Dance on the mere. Good now, ye have
saved a life
Worth somewhat as the cleanser of this
wood.
And fain would I reward thee worship-
fully.
What guerdon will ye?”

Gareth sharply spake,
 "None! for the deed's sake have I done
 the deed,
 In uttermost obedience to the King.
 But will ye yield this damsel harbor-
 age?"

Whereat the Baron saying, "I well
 believe
 Ye be of Arthur's Table," a light laugh
 Broke from Lynette, "Ay, truly of a
 truth,
 And in a sort, being Arthur's kitchen-
 knave!—
 But deem not I accept thee aught the
 more,
 Scullion, for running sharply with thy
 spit
 Down on a rout of craven foresters.
 A thresher with his flail had scatter'd
 them.
 Nay—for thou smellest of the kitchen
 still.
 But an this lord will yield us harborage,
 Well."

So she spake. A league beyond the
 wood,
 All in a full-fair manor and a rich,
 His towers where that day a feast had
 been
 Held in high hall, and many a viand left,
 And many a costly cate, received the
 three.
 And there they placed a peacock in his
 pride
 Before the damsel, and the Baron set
 Gareth beside her, but at once she rose.

"Mescems, that here is much discour-
 tesy,
 Setting this knave, Lord Baron, at my
 side.
 Hear me — this morn I stood in Arthur's
 hall,
 And pray'd the King would grant me
 Lancelot
 To fight the brotherhood of Day and
 Night —
 The last a monster unsubduable
 Of any save of him for whom I call'd —
 Suddenly bawls this frontless kitchen-
 knave,
 'The quest is mine; thy kitchen-knave
 am I,
 And mighty thro' thy meats and drinks
 am I.'

Then Arthur all at once gone mad replies
 'Go therefore,' and so gives the quest to
 him —
 Him — here — a villain fitter to stick
 swine
 Than ride abroad redressing women's
 wrong,
 Or sit beside a noble gentlewoman."

Then half-ashamed and part-amazed,
 the lord
 Now look'd at one and now at other,
 left
 The damsel by the peacock in his pride.
 And, seating Gareth at another board,
 Sat down beside him, ate and then began.

"Friend, whether ye be kitchen-knave,
 or not,
 Or whether it be the maiden's fantasy,
 And whether she be mad, or else the
 King,
 Or both or neither, or thyself be mad,
 I ask not: but thou strikest a strong
 stroke,
 For strong thou art and goodly there-
 withal,
 And savor of my life; and therefore now,
 For here be mighty men to joust with,
 weigh
 Whether thou wilt not with thy damsel
 back
 To crave again Sir Lancelot of the King.
 Thy pardon; I but speak for thine avail,
 The savor of my life."

And Gareth said,
 "Full pardon, but I follow up the quest,
 Despite of Day and Night and Death and
 Hell."

So when, next morn, the lord whose
 life he saved
 Had, some brief space, convey'd them on
 their way
 And left them with God-speed, Sir Ga-
 reth spake,
 "Lead and I follow." Haughtily she
 replied,

"I fly no more: I allow thee for an
 hour.
 Lion and stoat have isled together, knave,
 In time of flood. Nay, furthermore,
 methinks
 Some ruth is mine for thee. Back wilt
 thou, fool?"

For hard by here is one will overthrow
And slay thee : then will I to court again,
And shame the King for only yielding
me
My champion from the ashes of his
hearth."

To whom Sir Gareth answer'd cour-
teously,
"Say thou thy say, and I will do my
deed.
Allow me for mine hour, and thou wilt
find
My fortunes all as fair as hers, who lay
Among the ashes and wedded the King's
son."

Then to the shore of one of those long
loops
Wherethro' the serpent river coil'd, they
came.
Rough-thicketed were the banks and
steep ; the stream
Full, narrow ; this a bridge of single are
Took at a leap ; and on the further side
Arose a silk pavilion, gay with gold
In streaks and rays, and all Lent-lily in
hue,
Save that the dome was purple, and
above,
Crimson, a slender banneret fluttering.
And therefore the lawless warrior paced
Unarm'd, and calling, "Damsel, is this
he,
The champion ye have brought from Ar-
thur's hall ?
For whom we let thee pass." "Nay,
nay," she said,
"Sir Morning-Star. The King in utter
scorn
Of thee and thy much folly hath sent
thee here
His kitchen-knave : and look thou to
thyself :
See that he fall not on thee suddenly,
And slay thee unarm'd : he is not knight
but knave."

Then at his call, "O daughters of the
Dawn,
And servants of the Morning-Star, ap-
proach,
Arm me," from out the silken curtain-
folds
Barefooted and bareheaded three fair
girls
In gilt and rosy raiment came : their feet

In dewy grasses glisten'd ; and the hair
All over glanced with dewdrop or with
gem
Like sparkles in the stone Avanturine.
These arm'd him in blue arms, and gave
a shield
Blue also, and thereon the morning star.
And Gareth silent gazed upon the knight,
Who stood a moment, ere his horse was
brought,
Glorying ; and in the stream beneath
him, shone,
Immingled with Heaven's azure waver-
ingly,
The gay pavilion and the naked feet,
His arms, the rosy raiment, and the star.

Then she that watch'd him, "Where-
fore stare ye so ?
Thou shakest in thy fear : there yet is
time :
Flee down the valley before he get to
horse.
Who will cry shame ? Thou art not
knight but knave."

Said Gareth, "Damsel, whether knave
or knight,
Far liefer had I fight a score of times
Than hear thee so missay me and revile.
Fair words were best for him who fights
for thee ;
But truly foul are better, for they send
That strength of anger thro' mine arms-
I know
That I shall overthrow him."

And he that bore
The star, being mounted, cried from o'er
the bridge,
"A kitchen-knave, and sent in scorn of
me !
Such fight not I, but answer scorn with
scorn.
For this were shame to do him further
wrong
Than set him on his feet, and take his
horse
And arms, and so return him to the King.
Come, therefore, leave thy lady lightly,
knave.
Avoid : for it beseemeth not a knave
To ride with such a lady."

"Dog, thou liest.
I spring from loftier lineage than thine
own."

He spake ; and all at fiery speed the two
 Shock'd on the central bridge, and either
 spear
 Bent but not brake, and either knight
 at once,
 Hurl'd as a stone from out of a catapult
 Beyond his horse's crupper and the
 bridge,
 Fell, as if dead ; but quickly rose and
 drew,
 And Gareth lash'd so fiercely with his
 brand
 He drove his enemy backward down the
 bridge,
 The damsel crying, "Well-stricken,
 kitchen-knave!"
 Till Gareth's shield was cloven ; but one
 stroke
 Laid him that clove it grovelling on the
 ground.

Then cried the fall'n, "Take not my
 life : I yield."
 And Gareth, "So this damsel ask it of
 me
 Good — I accord it easily as a grace."
 She reddening, "Insolent scullion : I of
 thee ?
 I bound to thee for any favor ask'd !"
 "Then shall he die." And Gareth there
 unlaced
 His helmet as to slay him, but she
 shriek'd,
 "Be not so hardy, scullion, as to slay
 One nobler than thyself." "Damsel,
 thy charge
 Is an abounding pleasure to me. Knight,
 Thy life is thine at her command. Arise
 And quickly pass to Arthur's hall, and
 say
 His kitchen-knave hath sent thee. See
 thou crave
 His pardon for thy breaking of his laws.
 Myself, when I return, will plead for
 thee.
 Thy shield is mine — farewell ; and,
 damsel, thou
 Lead, and I follow."

And fast away she fled.
 Then when he came upon her, spake,
 "Method thought,
 Knave, when I watch'd thee striking on
 the bridge
 The savor of thy kitchen came upon me
 A little faintlier : but the wind hath
 changed :

I scent it twentyfold." And then she
 sang,
 "'O morning star' (not that tall felou
 there
 Whom thou by sorcery or unhappiness
 Or some device, hast foully overthrown),
 'O morning star that smilest in the blue,
 O star, my morning dream hath proven
 true,
 Smile sweetly, thou ! my love hath
 smiled on me.'

"But thou begene, take counsel, and
 away,
 For hard by here is one that guards a
 ford —
 The second brother in their fool's para-
 ble —
 Will pay thee all thy wages, and to
 boot.
 Care not for shame : thou art not knight
 but knave."

To whom Sir Gareth answer'd, laugh-
 ingly,
 "Parables ? Hear a parable of the
 knave.
 When I was kitchen-knave among the
 rest
 Fierce was the hearth, and one of my co-
 mates
 Own'd a rough dog, to whom he cast his
 coat,
 'Guard it,' and there was none to med-
 dle with it.
 And such a coat art thou, and thee the
 King
 Gave me to guard, and such a dog am I,
 To worry, and not to flee — and — knight
 or knave —
 The knave that doth thee service as full
 knight
 Is all as good, meseems, as any knight
 Toward thy sister's freeing."

"Ay, Sir Knave !
 Ay, knave, because thou strikest as a
 knight
 Being but knave, I hate thee all the
 more."

"Fair damsel, ye should worship me
 the more,
 That, being but knave, I throw thine
 enemies."

"Ay, ay," she said, "but thou shalt
 meet thy match."

So when they touch'd the second river-
loop,
Huge on a huge red horse, and all in
mail
Burnish'd to blinding, shone the Noon-
day Sun
Beyond a raging shallow. As if the
flower,
That blows a globe of after arrowlets,
Ten thousand-fold had grown, flash'd the
fierce shield,
All sun ; and Gareth's eyes had flying
blots
Before them when he turn'd from watch-
ing him.
He from beyond the roaring shallow
roar'd,
"What doest thou, brother, in my
marches here ?"
And she athwart the shallow shrill'd
again,
"Here is a kitchen-knave from Arthur's
hall
Hath overthrown thy brother, and hath
his arms."
"Ugh !" cried the Sun, and vizing up
a red
And eiper face of rounded foolishness,
Push'd horse across the foamings of the
ford,
Whom Gareth met midstream : no room
was there
For lance or tourney-skill : four strokes
they struck
With sword, and these were mighty ;
the new knight
Had fear he might be shamed ; but as
the Sun
Heaved up a ponderous arm to strike the
fifth,
The hoof of his horse slipt in the stream,
the stream
Descended, and the Sun was wash'd
away.

Then Gareth laid his lance athwart
the ford ;
So drew him home ; but he that would
not fight,
As being all bone-battered on the rock,
Yielded ; and Gareth sent him to the
King.
"Myself when I return will plead for
thee.
Lead, and I follow." Quietly she led.
"Hath not the good wind, damsel,
changed again ?"

"Nay, not a point : nor art thou victor
here.

There lies a ridge of slate across the ford ;
His horse thereon stumbled — ay, for I
saw it.

" 'O Sun' (not this strong fool whom
thou, Sir Knave,
Hast overthrown thro' mere unhappiness),
'O Sun, that wakenest all to bliss or
pain,
O moon, that layest all to sleep again,
Shine sweetly : twice my love hath
smiled on me.'

"What knowest thou of lovesong or
of love ?

Nay, nay, God wot, so thou wert nobly
born,

Thou hast a pleasant presence. Yea,
perchance, —

" 'O dewy flowers that open to the
sun,
O dewy flowers that close when day is
done,
Blow sweetly : twice my love hath smiled
on me.'

"What knowest thou of flowers, ex-
cept, belike,
To garnish meats with ? hath not our
good King
Who lent me thee, the flower of kitchen-
dom,
A foolish love for flowers ? what stick ye
round
The pasty ? wherewithal deck the boar's
head ?
Flowers ? nay, the boar hath rosemaries
and bay.

" 'O birds, that warble to the morn-
ing sky,
O birds that warble as the day goes by,
Sing sweetly : twice my love hath smiled
on me.'

"What knowest thou of birds, lark,
mavis, merle,
Linnet ? what dream ye when they utter
forth

May-music growing with the growing
light,

Their sweet sun-worship ? these be for
the snare

(So runs thy fancy) these be for the spit,

Larding and basting. See thou have
not now

Larded thy last, except thou turn and
fly.

There stands the third fool of their alle-
gory."

For there beyond a bridge of treble
bow,

All in a rose-red from the west, and all
Naked it seem'd, and glowing in the
broad

Deep-dimpled current underneath, the
knight,

That named himself the Star of Evening,
stood.

And Gareth, "Wherefore waits the
madman there

Naked in open dayshine?" "Nay,"
she cried,

"Not naked, only wrapt in harden'd
skins

That fit him like his own; and so ye
cleave

His armor off him, these will turn the
blade."

Then the third brother shouted o'er
the bridge,

"O brother-star, why shine ye here so
low?

Thy ward is higher up: but have ye
slain

The damsel's champion?" and the dam-
sel cried,

"No star of thine, but shot from Ar-
thur's heaven

With all disaster unto thine and thee!
For both thy younger brethren have
gone down

Before this youth; and so wilt thou, Sir
Star;

Art thou not old?"

"Old, damsel, old and hard,

Old, with the might and breath of
twenty boys."

Said Gareth, "Old, and over-bold in
brag!

But that same strength which threw the
Morning-Star

Can throw the Evening."

Then that other blew

A hard and deadly note upon the horn.

"Approach and arm me!" With slow
steps from out

An old storm-beaten, russet, many-stain'd
Pavilion, forth a grizzled damsel came,
And arm'd him in old arms, and brought
helm

With but a drying evergreen for crest,
And gave a shield whereon the Star of
Even

Half-tarnish'd and half-bright, his em-
blem, shone.

But when it glitter'd o'er the saddle-bow,
They madly hurl'd together on the
bridge,

And Gareth overthrew him, lighted,
drew,

There met him drawn, and overthrew
him again,

But up like fire he started: and as oft
As Gareth brought him grovelling on
his knees,

So many a time he vaulted up again;
Till Gareth panted hard, and his great
heart,

Foredooming all his trouble was in vain,
Labor'd within him, for he seem'd as
one

That all in later, sadder age begins

To war against ill uses of a life,
But these from all his life arise, and cry,
"Thou hast made us lords, and canst
not put us down!"

He half despairs; so Gareth seem'd to
strike

Vainly, the damsel clamoring all the
while,

"Well done, knave-knight, well strick-
en, O good knight-knave—

O knave, as noble as any of all the
knights—

Shame me not, shame me not. I have
prophesied—

Strike, thou art worthy of the Table
Round—

His arms are old, he trusts the harden'd
skin—

Strike—strike—the wind will never
change again."

And Gareth hearing ever stronglier smote,
And hew'd great pieces of his armor off
him,

But lash'd in vain against the harden'd
skin,

And could not wholly bring him under,
more

Than loud Southwesterns, rolling ridge
on ridge,

The buoy that rides at sea, and dips and springs
Forever ; till at length Sir Gareth's brand
Clash'd his, and brake it utterly to the hilt.

"I have thee now" ; but forth that other sprang,
And, all unknightlike, writhed his wiry arms

Around him, till he felt, despite his mail,
Strangled, but straining ev'n his uttermost

Cast, and so hurl'd him headlong o'er the bridge

Down to the river, sink or swim, and cried,

"Lead, and I follow."

But the damsel said,
"I lead no longer ; ride thou at my side ;
Thou art the kingliest of all kitchen-knaves.

"O trefoil, sparkling on the rainy plain,
O rainbow with three colors after rain,
Shine sweetly : thrice my love hath smiled on me."

"Sir, — and, good faith, I fain had added — Knight,
But that I heard thee call thyself a knave, —
Shamed am I that I so rebuked, reviled,
Missaid thee ; noble I am ; and thought the King
Scorn'd me and mine ; and now thy pardon, friend,

For thou hast ever answer'd courteously,
And wholly bold thou art, and meek withal

As any of Arthur's best, but, being knave,
Hast mazed my wit : I marvel what thou art."

"Damsel," he said, "ye be not all to blame,
Saving that ye mistrusted our good King
Would handle scorn, or yield thee, asking, one

Not fit to cope thy quest. Ye said your say ;

Mine answer was my deed. Good sooth !
I hold

He scarce is knight, yea but half-man,
nor meet

To fight for gentle damsel, he, who lets

His heart be stirr'd with any foolish heat
At any gentle damsel's waywardness.

Shamed? care not! thy foul sayings
fought for me :

And seeing now thy words are fair, methinks,

There rides no knight, not Lancelot, his great self,

Hath force to quell me."

Nigh upon that hour
When the lone hern forgets his melancholy,

Lets down his other leg, and stretching dreams

Of goodly supper in the distant pool,
Then turn'd the noble damsel smiling at him,

And told him of a cavern hard at hand,
Where bread and baken meats and good red wine

Of Southland, which the Lady Lyonors
Had sent her coming champion, waited him.

Anon they past a narrow comb wherein
Were slabs of rock with figures, knights
on horse
Sculptured, and deckt in slowly waning hues.

"Sir Knave, my knight, a hermit once was here,

Whose holy hand hath fashion'd on the rock

The war of Time against the soul of man.
And yon four fools have suck'd their allegory

From these damp walls, and taken but the form.

Know ye not these?" and Gareth lookt and read —

In letters like to those the vexillary
Hath left crag-carven o'er the streaming Gelt —

"PHOSPHORUS," then "MERIDIES" —
"HESPERUS" —

"NOX" — "MORS," beneath five figures,
armed men,

Slab after slab, their faces forward all,
And running down the Soul, a Shape that fled

With broken wings, torn raiment and loose hair,

For help and shelter to the hermit's cave.

'Follow the faces, and we find it. Look,
Who comes behind?'

For one — delay'd at first
Thro' helping back the dislocated Kay
To Camelot, then by what thereafter
chanced,
The damsel's headlong error thro' the
wood —
Sir Lancelot, having swum the river-
loops —
His blue shield-lions cover'd — softly
drew
Behind the twain, and when he saw the
star
Gleam, on Sir Gareth's turning to him,
cried,
"Stay, felon knight, I avenge me for
my friend."
And Gareth crying prick'd against the
cry ;
But when they closed — in a moment —
at one touch
Of that skill'd spear, the wonder of the
world —
Went sliding down so easily, and fell,
That when he found the grass within his
hands
He laugh'd ; the laughter jarr'd upon
Lynette :
Harshly she ask'd him, "Shamed and
overthrown,
And tumbled back into the kitchen-
knave,
Why laugh ye ? that ye blew your boast
in vain ?"
"Nay, noble damsel, but that I, the son
Of old King Lot and good Queen Belli-
cent,
And victor of the bridges and the ford,
And knight of Arthur, here lie thrown
by whom
I know not, all thro' mere unhappiness —
Device and sorcery and unhappiness —
Out, sword ; we are thrown !" and Lan-
celot answer'd, "Prince,
O Gareth — thro' the mere unhappiness
Of one who came to help thee not to
harm,
Lancelot, and all as glad to find thee
whole,
As on the day when Arthur knighted
him."

Then Gareth, "Thou — Lancelot ! —
thine the hand
That threw me ? An some chance to
mar the boast
Thy brethren of thee make — which
could not chance —

Had sent thee down before a lesser spear
Shamed had I been and sad — O Lancelot
— thou !"

Whereat the maiden, petulant, "Lan-
celot,
Why came ye not, when call'd ? and
wherefore now
Come ye, not call'd ? I gloried in my
knave,
Who being still rebuked, would answer
still
Courteous as any knight — but now, if
knight,
The marvel dies, and leaves me fool'd
and trick'd,
And only wondering wherefore play'd
upon :
And doubtful whether I and mine be
scorn'd.
Where should be truth if not in Arthur's
hall,
In Arthur's presence ? Knight, knave,
prince and fool,
I hate thee and forever."

And Lancelot said,
"Blessed be thou, Sir Gareth ! knight
art thou
To the King's best wish. O damsel, be
ye wise
To call him shamed, who is but over-
thrown ?
Thrown have I been, nor once, but many
a time.
Victor from vanquish'd issues at the
last,
And overthrower from being overthrown.
With sword we have not striven ; and
thy good horse
And thou art weary ; yet not less I felt
Thy manhood thro' that wearied lance
of thine.
Well hast thou done ; for all the stream
is freed,
And thou hast wreak'd his justice on his
foes,
And when reviled, hast answer'd gra-
ciously,
And makest merry, when overthrown.
Prince, Knight,
Hail, Knight and Prince, and of our
Table Round !"

And then when turning to Lynette he
told
The tale of Gareth, petulantly she said,



“ Sound sleep be thine ! sound cause to sleep hast thou.”

“ Ay well — ay well — for worse than
being fool'd
Of others, is to fool one's self. A cave,
Sir Lancelot, is hard by, with meats and
drinks
And forage for the horse, and flint for fire.
But all about it flies a honeysuckle.
Seek, till we find.” And when they
sought and found,
Sir Gareth drank and ate, and all his life
Past into sleep ; on whom the maiden
gazed.

“ Sound sleep be thine ! sound cause to
sleep hast thou.
Wake lusty ! Seem I not as tender to
him
As any mother ? Ay, but such a one
As all day long hath rated at her child,
And vext his day, but blesses him asleep —
Good lord, how sweetly smells the honey-
suckle
In the hush'd night, as if the world were
one
Of utter peace, and love, and gentleness !

O Lancelot, Lancelot" — and she clapt
her hands —
"Full merry am I to find my goodly
knave
Is knight and noble. See now, sworn
have I,
Else yon black felon had not let me
pass,
To bring thee back to do the battle with
him.
Thus an thou goest, he will fight thee
first ;
Who doubts thee victor? so will my
knight-knave
Miss the full flower of this accomplish-
ment."

Said Lancelot, "Peradventure he, ye
name,
May know my shield. Let Gareth, an
he will,
Change his for mine, and take my char-
ger, fresh,
Not to be spurr'd, loving the battle as
well
As he that rides him." "Lancelot-like,"
she said,
"Courteous in this, Lord Lancelot, as
in all."

And Gareth, wakening, fiercely
clutch'd the shield ;
"Ramp, ye lance-splintering lions, on
whom all spears
Are rotten sticks ! ye seem agape to roar !
Yea, ramp and roar at leaving of your
lord ! —
Care not, good beasts, so well I care for
you.
O noble Lancelot, from my hold on these
Streams virtue — fire — thro' one that
will not shame
Even the shadow of Lancelot under
shield.
Hence : let us go."

Silent the silent field
They traversed. Arthur's harp tho'
summer-wan,
In connter motion to the clouds, allured
The glance of Gareth dreaming on his
liege.
A star shot : "Lo," said Gareth, "the
foe falls !"
An owl whoopt : "Hark the victor peal-
ing there !"
Suddenly she that rode upon his left

Clung to the shield that Lancelot lent
him, crying,
"Yield, yield him this again : 'tis he
must fight :
I curse the tongue that all thro' yester-
day
Reviled thee, and hath wrought on
Lancelot now
To lend thee horse and shield : wonders
ye have done ;
Miracles ye cannot : here is glory enow
In having flung the three : I see thee
main'd,
Mangled : I swear thou canst not fling
the fourth."

"And wherefore, damsel? tell me all
ye know.
Ye cannot scare me ; nor rough face, or
voice,
Brute bulk of limb, or boundless savagery
Appall me from the quest."

"Nay, Prince," she cried,
"God wot, I never look'd upon the
face,
Seeing he never rides abroad by day ;
But watch'd him have I like a phantom
pass
Chilling the night : nor have I heard the
voice.
Always he made his mouthpiece of a
page
Who came and went, and still reported
him
As closing in himself the strength of ten,
And when his anger tare him, massacring
Man, woman, lad and girl — yea, the
soft babe —
Some hold that he hath swallow'd infant
flesh,
Monster ! O prince, I went for Lance-
lot first,
The quest is Lancelot's : give him back
the shield."

Said Gareth laughing, "An he fight
for this,
Belike he wins it as the better man :
Thus — and not else ?"

But Lancelot on him urged
All the devisings of their chivalry
Where one might meet a mightier than
himself ;
How best to manage horse, lance, sword
and shield,

And so fill up the gap where force might
fail
With skill and fineness. Instant were
his words.

Then Gareth, "Here be rules. I
know but one —
To dash against mine enemy and to
win.
Yet have I watch'd thee victor in the
joust,
And seen thy way." "Heaven help
thee, ' sigh'd Lynette.

Then for a space, and under cloud that
grew
To thunder-gloom palling all stars, they
rode

In converse till she made her palfry halt,
Lifted an arm, and softly whisper'd,
"There."

And all the three were silent seeing,
pitch'd

Beside the Castle Perilous on flat field,
A huge pavilion like a mountain peak
Sunder the glooming crimson on the
marge,

Black, with black banner, and a long
black horn

Beside it hanging; which Sir Gareth
graspt,

And so, before the two could hinder him,
Sent all his heart and breath thro' all
the horn.

Echo'd the walls; a light twinkled; anon
Came lights and lights, and once again
he blew;

Whereon were hollow trappings up and
down

And muffled voices heard, and shadows
past;

Till high above him, circled with her
maids,

The Lady Lyonors at a window stood,
Beautiful among lights, and waving to
him

White hands, and courtesy; but when
the Prince

Three times had blown — after long
hush — at last —

The huge pavilion slowly yielded up,
Thro' those black foldings, that which
housed therein.

High on a nightblack horse, in night-
black arms,

With white breast-bone, and barren ribs
of Death,

And crown'd with fleshless laughter —
some ten steps —
In the half-light — thro' the dim dawn —
advanced

The monster, and then paused, and
spake no word.

But Gareth spake and all indignantly,
"Fool, for thou hast, men say, the
strength of ten,
Canst thou not trust the limbs thy God
hath given,
But must, to make the terror of thee
more,

Trick thyself out in ghastly imageries
Of that which Life hath done with, and
the clod,

Less dull than thou, will hide with
mantling flowers

As if for pity?" But he spake no word;
Which set the horror higher: a maiden
swoon'd;

The Lady Lyonors wrung her hands and
wept,

As doom'd to be the bride of Night and
Death;

Sir Gareth's head prickled beneath his
helm;

And ev'n Sir Lancelot thro' his warm
blood felt

Ice strike, and all that mark'd him were
aghast.

At once Sir Lancelot's charger fiercely
neigh'd —

At once the black horse bounded forward
with him.

Then those that did not blink the terror,
saw

That Death was cast to ground, and
slowly rose.

But with one stroke Sir Gareth split the
skull.

Half fell to right and half to left and lay.
Then with a stronger buffet he clove the
helm

As thoroughly as the skull; and out
from this

Issued the bright face of a blooming boy
Fresh as a flower new-born, and crying,

"Knight,
Slay me not: my three brethren bad me
do it,

To make a horror all about the house,
And stay the world from Lady Lyonors.

They never dream'd the passes would be
past."

Answer'd Sir Gareth graciously to one
 Not many a moon his younger, "My fair
 child,
 What madness made thee challenge the
 chief knight
 Of Arthur's hall?" "Fair Sir, they bad
 me do it.
 They hate the King, and Lancelot, the
 King's friend,
 They hoped to slay him somewhere on
 the stream,
 They never dream'd the passes could be
 past."

Then sprang the happier day from un-
 derground ;

And Lady Lyonors and her house, with
 dance
 And revel and song, made merry over
 Death,
 As being after all their foolish fears
 And horrors only prov'n a blooming
 boy.
 So large mirth lived and Gareth won the
 quest.

And he that told the tale in older
 times
 Says that Sir Gareth wedded Lyo-
 nors,
 But he, that told it later, says Ly-
 nette.



TO THE QUEEN.

EPILOGUE TO THE IDYLS.

O LOYAL to the royal in thyself,
 And loyal to thy land, as this to thee—
 Bear witness, that rememberable day,
 When, pale as yet, and fever-worn, the
 Prince
 Who scarce had pluck'd his flickering
 life again
 From half-way down the shadow of the
 grave,
 Past with thee thro' thy people and their
 love,
 And London roll'd one tide of joy thro' all
 Her trebled millions, and loud leagues
 of man

And welcome ! witness, too, the silent
 cry,
 The prayer of many a race and creed, and
 clime—
 Thunderless lightnings striking under
 sea
 From sunset and sunrise of all thy realm,
 And that true North, whereof we lately
 heard
 A strain to shame us "keep you to your-
 selves ;
 So loyal is too costly ! friends— your love
 Is but a burthen : loose the bond, and go."
 Is this the tone of empire ? here the faith

That made us rulers ? this, indeed, her
 voice
 And meaning, whom the roar of Hou-
 goumont
 Left mightiest of all peoples under heaven ?
 What shock has fool'd her since, that she
 should speak
 So feebly ? wealthier — hour
 by hour !
 The voice of Britain, or a sinking land,
 Some third-rate isle half-lost among her
 seas ?
There rang her voice, when the full city
 peal'd
 Thee and thy Prince ! The loyal to their
 crown
 Are loyal to their own far sons, who love
 Our ocean-empire with her boundless
 homes
 For ever-broadening England, and her
 throne
 In our vast Orient, and one isle, one
 isle,
 That knows not her own greatness : if she
 knows
 And dreads it we are fall'n. — But thou,
 my Queen,
 Not for itself, but thro' thy living love
 For one to whom I made it o'er his grave
 Sacred, accept this old imperfect tale,
 New-old, and shadowing Sense at war
 with Soul
 Rather than that gray king, whose name,
 a ghost,
 Streams like a cloud, man-shaped, from
 mountain peak,
 And cleaves to cairn and cromlech still ;
 or him
 Of Geoffrey's book, or him of Malleor's,
 one
 Touch'd by the adulterous finger of a time
 That hover'd between war and wanton-
 ness,
 And crownings and dethronements : take
 withal
 Thy poet's blessing, and his trust that
 Heaven
 Will blow the tempest in the distance back
 From thine and ours : for some are scared,
 who mark,
 Or wisely or unwisely, signs of storm,
 Waverings of every vane with every wind,
 And wordy trucklings to the transient
 hour,
 And fierce or careless looseners of the
 faith,
 And Softness breeding scorn of simple
 life,
 Or Cowardice, the child of lust for gold,
 Or Labor, with a groan and not a voice,
 Or Art, with poisonous honey stol'n from
 France,
 And that which knows, but careful for
 itself,
 And that which knows not, ruling that
 which knows
 To its own harm : the goal of this great
 world
 Lies beyond sight : yet — if our slowly-
 grown
 And crown'd Republic's crowning com-
 mon sense,
 That saved her many times, not fail —
 their fears
 Are morning shadows huger than the
 shapes
 That cast them, not those gloomier which
 forego
 The darkness of that battle in the West,
 Where all of high and holy dies away.

A WELCOME TO THE DUKE AND DUCHESS OF EDINBURGH.

MARCH, 1874.

I.

THE Son of him with whom we strove
for power —
Whose will is lord thro' all his world-
domain —
Who made the serf a man, and burst
his chain —
Has given our Prince his own Imperial
Flower,

Alexandrovna.

And welcome, Russian flower, a people's
pride,
To Britain, when her flowers begin to
blow !
From love to love, from home to home
you go,
From mother unto mother, stately bride,
Marie-Alexandrovna.

II.

The golden news along the steppes is
blown,
And at thy name the Tartar tents are
stirred ;
Elburz and all the Caucasus have
heard ;
And all the sultry palms of India known,
Alexandrovna.

The voices of our universal sea,
On capes of Afric as on cliffs of
Kent,
The Maoris and that Isle of Conti-
nent,
And loyal pines of Canada murmur thee,
Marie-Alexandrovna !

III.

Fair Empires branching, both, in lusty
life ! —
Yet Harold's England fell to Norman
swords ;
Yet thine own land has bow'd to Tar-
tar hordes
Since English Harold gave its throne a
wife,

Alexandrovna !

For thrones and peoples are as waifs that
swing,
And float or fall, in endless ebb and
flow ;
But who love best have best the grace
to know
That Love by right divine is deathless
king,

Marie-Alexandrovna !

IV.

And Love has led thee to the stranger
land,
Where men are bold and strongly say
their say ; —
See, empire upon empire smiles to-day,
As thou with thy young lover hand in
hand,

Alexandrovna !

So now thy fuller life is in the West,
Whose hand at home was gracious to
thy poor :
Thy name was blest within the narrow
door ;
Here also, Marie, shall thy name be blest,
Marie-Alexandrovna !

V.

Shall fears and jealous hatreds flame
again ?
Or at thy coming, Princess, every-
where,
The blue heaven break, and some di-
viner air
Breathe thro' the world and change the
hearts of men,

Alexandrovna !

But hearts that change not, love that
cannot cease,
And peace be yours, the peace of soul
in soul !
And howsoever this wild world may
roll,
Between your peoples truth and manful
peace,

Alfred — Alexandrovna !



“Hast thou no voice, O Peak?” See page 467.

MISCELLANEOUS.

IN THE GARDEN AT SWAIN-
STON.

NIGHTINGALES warbled without,
Within was weeping for thee :
Shadows of three dead men
Walk'd in the walks with me,
Shadows of three dead men, and thou
wast one of the three.

Nightingales sang in his woods :
The Master was far away :
Nightingales warbled and sang
Of a passion that lasts but a day ;
Still in the house in his coffin the Prince
of courtesy lay.

Two dead men have I known
In courtesy like to thee :
Two dead men have I loved
With a love that ever will be :
Three dead men have I loved, and thou
art last of the three.

THE VOICE AND THE PEAK.

THE voice and the Peak
Far over summit and lawn,
The lone glow and long roar
Green-rushing from the rosy thrones of
dawn !

All night have I heard the voice
Rave over the rocky bar,
But thou wert silent in heaven,
Above thee glided the star.

Hast thou no voice, O Peak,
That standest high above all ?

" I am the voice of the Peak,
I roar and rave for I fall.

" A thousand voices go
To North, South, East, and West ;
They leave the heights and are troubled,
And moan and sink to their rest.

" The fields are fair beside them,
The chestnut towers in his bloom ;
But they — they feel the desire of the
deep —
Fall, and follow their doom.

" The deep has power on the height,
And the height has power on the deep ;
They are raised for ever and ever,
And sink again into sleep."

Not raised for ever and ever,
But when their cycle is o'er,
The valley, the voice, the peak, the star,
Pass, and are found no more.

The Peak is high and flush'd
At his highest with sunrise fire ;
The peak is high, and the stars are high,
And the thought of a man is higher.

A voice below the voice,
And a height beyond the height !
Our hearing is not hearing,
And our seeing is not sight.

The voice and the Peak
Far into heaven withdrawn,
The lone glow and the long roar
Green-rushing from the rosy thrones of
dawn !

QUEEN MARY.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

QUEEN MARY.

PHILIP (*King of Naples and Sicily, afterwards King of Spain*).

THE PRINCESS ELIZABETH.

REGINALD POLE (*Cardinal and Papal Legate*).

SIMON RENARD (*Spanish Ambassador*).

LE SIEUR DE NOAILLES (*French Ambassador*).

THOMAS CRANMER (*Archbishop of Canterbury*).

SIR NICHOLAS HEATH (*Archbishop of York; Lord Chancellor after Gardiner*).

EDWARD COURTENAY (*Earl of Devon*).

LORD WILLIAM HOWARD (*afterwards Lord Howard and Lord High Admiral*).

LORD WILLIAMS OF THAME.

LORD PAGET.

LORD PETRE.

STEPHEN GARDINER (*Bishop of Winchester and Lord Chancellor*).

EDMUND BONNER (*Bishop of London*).

THOMAS THIRLBY (*Bishop of Ely*).

SIR THOMAS WYATT } (*Insurrectionary Leaders*).

SIR THOMAS STAFFORD }

SIR RALPH BAGENHALL.

SIR ROBERT SOUTHWELL.

SIR HENRY BLEDINGFIELD.

SIR WILLIAM CECIL.

SIR THOMAS WHITE (*Lord Mayor of London*).

THE DUKE OF ALVA } (*attending on Philip*).

THE COUNT DE FERIA }

PETER MARTYR.

FATHER COLE.

FATHER BOURNE.

VILLA GARCIA.

SOTO.

CAPTAIN BRETT, ANTONY KNYVETT (*Adherents of Wyatt*).

PETERS (*Gentleman of Lord Howard*).

ROGER (*Servant to Noailles*). WILLIAM (*Servant to Wyatt*).

STEWARD OF HOUSEHOLD to the Princess Elizabeth.

OLD NOKES and NOKES.

MARCHIONESS OF EXETER (*Mother of Courtenay*).

LADY CLARENCE

LADY MAGDALEN DACRES } (*Ladies in Waiting to the Queen*).

ALICE

MAID OF HONOR to the Princess Elizabeth.

JOAN, TIB (*Two Country Wives*).

Lords and other Attendants, Members of the Privy Council, Members of Parliament, two Gentlemen, Aldermen, Citizens, Peasants, Ushers, Messengers, Guards, Pages, etc.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—ALDGATE RICHLY DECORATED.

CROWD. MARSHALMEN.

Marshalman. Stand back, keep a clear lane. When will her Majesty pass, sayst thou? why now, even now; wherefore draw back your heads and your horns before I break them, and make what noise you will with your tongues, so it be not treason. Long live Queen Mary, the lawful and legitimate daughter of Harry the Eighth. Shout, knaves!

Citizens. Long live Queen Mary!

First Citizen. That's a hard word, legitimate; what does it mean?

Second Citizen. It means a bastard.

Third Citizen. Nay, it means true-born.

First Citizen. Why, didn't the Parliament make her a bastard?

Second Citizen. No; it was the Lady Elizabeth.

Third Citizen. That was after, man, that was after.

First Citizen. Then which is the bastard?

Second Citizen. Troth, they be both bastards by Act of Parliament and Council.

Third Citizen. Ay, the Parliament can make every true-born man of us a bastard. Old Nokes, can't it make thee a bastard? thou shouldst know, for thou art as white as three Christmasses.

Old Nokes (dreamily). Who's a-passing? King Edward or King Richard?

Third Citizen. No, old Nokes.

Old Nokes. It's Harry!

Third Citizen. It's Queen Mary.

Old Nokes. The blessed Mary's a-passing! [*Falls on his knees.*]

Nokes. Let father alone, my masters! he's past your questioning.

Third Citizen. Answer thou for him, then! thou art no such cockerel thyself, for thou was born i' the tail end of old Harry the Seventh.

Nokes. Eh! that was afore bastard-making began. I was born true man at five in the forenoon i' the tail of old Harry, and so they can't make me a bastard.

Third Citizen. But if Parliament can make the Queen a bastard, why, it follows all the more that they can make thee one, who art fray'd i' the knees, and out at elbow, and bald o' the back, and bursten at the toes, and down at heels.

Nokes. I was born of a true man and a ring'd wife, and I can't argue upon it; but I and my old woman 'ud burn upon it, that would we.

Marshalman. What are you cackling of bastardy under the Queen's own nose? I'll have you flogg'd and burnt too, by the Rood I will.

First Citizen. He swears by the Rood. Whew!

Second Citizen. Hark! the trumpets.

[*The Procession passes, MARY and ELIZABETH riding side by side, and disappears under the gate.*]

Citizens. Long Live Queen Mary! down with all traitors! God save Her Grace; and death to Northumberland!

[*Exeunt.*]

Manent TWO GENTLEMEN.

First Gentleman. By God's light a noble creature, right royal.

Second Gentleman. She looks comelier than ordinary to-day; but to my mind the Lady Elizabeth is the more noble and royal.

First Gentleman. I mean the Lady

Elizabeth. Did you hear (I have a daughter in her service who reported it) that she met the Queen at Wanstead with five hundred horse, and the Queen (tho' some say they be much divided) took her hand, call'd her sweet sister, and kiss'd not her alone, but all the ladies of her following.

Second Gentleman. Ay, that was in her hour of joy, there will be plenty to sunder and unsister them again; this Gardiuer for one, who is to be made Lord Chancellor, and will pounce like a wild beast out of his cage to worry Cranmer.

First Gentleman. And furthermore, my daughter said that when there rose a talk of the late rebellion, she spoke even of Northumberland pitifully, and of the good Lady Jane as a poor innocent child who had but obeyed her father; and furthermore, she said that no one in her time should be burnt for heresy.

Second Gentleman. Well, sir, I look for happy times.

First Gentleman. There is but one thing against them. I know not if you know.

Second Gentleman. I suppose you touch upon the rumor that Charles, the master of the world, has offer'd her his son Philip, the Pope and the Devil. I trust it is but a rumor.

First Gentleman. She is going now to the Tower to loose the prisoners there, and among them Courtenay, to be made Earl of Devon, of royal blood, of splendid feature, whom the council and all her people wish her to marry. May it be so, for we are many of us Catholics, but few Papists, and the Hot Gospellers will go mad upon it.

Second Gentleman. Was she not betroth'd in her babyhood to the Great Emperor himself?

First Gentleman. Ay, but he's too old.

Second Gentleman. And again to her cousin Reginald Pole, now Cardinal, but I hear that he too is full of aches and broken before his day.

First Gentleman. O, the Pope could dispense with his Cardinalate, and his achage, and his breakage, if that were all: but will you not follow the procession?

Second Gentleman. No; I have seen enough for this day.

First Gentleman. Well, I shall follow; if I can get near enough I shall judge with my own eyes whether Her Grace incline to this splendid scion of Plantagenet. [Exeunt.]

SCENE II. — A ROOM IN LAMBETH PALACE.

Cranmer. To Strasburg, Antwerp, Frankfort, Zurich, Worms, Geneva, Basle — our Bishops from their sees
Or fled, they say, or flying — Poinet, Barlow, Bale, Scory, Coverdale; besides the Deans, Of Christchurch, Durham, Exeter, and Wells — Ailmer and Bullingham, and hundreds more;
So they report: I shall be left alone.
No: Hooper, Ridley, Latimer will not fly.

Enter PETER MARTYR.

Peter Martyr. Fly, Cranmer! were there nothing else, your name stands first of those who sign'd the Letters Patent

That gave her royal crown to Lady Jane.

Cranmer. Stand first it may, but it was written last:
Those that are now her Privy Council, sign'd

Before me: nay, the Judges had pronounced

That our young Edward might bequeath the crown

Of England, putting by his father's will. Yet I stood out, till Edward sent for me.

The wan boy-king, with his fast-fading eyes

Fixt hard on mine, his frail transparent hand,

Damp with the sweat of death, and gripping mine,

Whisper'd me, if I loved him, not to yield

His Church of England to the Papal wolf

And Mary; then I could no more — I sign'd.

Nay, for bare shame of inconsistency, She cannot pass her traitor council by, To make me headless.

Peter Martyr. That might be forgiven.

I tell you, fly, my Lord. You do not own

The bodily presence in the Eucharist, Their wafer and perpetual sacrifice: Your creed will be your death.

Cranmer. Step after step, Thro' many voices crying right and left, Have I climb'd back into the primal church, And stand within the porch, and Christ with me:

My flight were such a scandal to the faith,

The downfall of so many simple souls, I dare not leave my post.

Peter Martyr. But you divorced Queen Catharine and her father; hence, her hate

Will burn till you are burn'd.

Cranmer. I cannot help it. The Canonists and Schoolmen were with me.

“Thou shalt not wed thy brother's wife.” — ‘T is written,

“They shall be childless.” True, Mary was born,

But France would not accept her for a bride

As being born from incest; and this wrought

Upon the king; and child by child, you know,

Were momentary sparkles out as quick Almost as kindled; and he brought his doubts

And fears to me. Peter, I'll swear for him

He *did* believe the bond incestuous.

But wherefore am I trenching on the time

That should already have seen your steps a mile

From me and Lambeth? God be with you! — Go.

Peter Martyr. Ah, but how fierce a letter you wrote against

Their superstition when they slander'd you

For setting up a mass at Canterbury To please the Queen.

Cranmer. It was a wheedling monk Set up the mass.

Peter Martyr. I know it, my good Lord.

But you so bubbled over with hot terms

Of Satan, liars, blasphemy. Antichrist,
She never will forgive you. Fly, my
Lord, fly!

Crammer. I wrote it, and God grant
me power to burn!

Peter Martyr. They have given me a
safe conduct: for all that

I dare not stay. I fear, I fear, I see
you,

Dear friend, for the last time; farewell,
and fly.

Crammer. Fly and farewell, and let
me die the death.

[*Exit* PETER MARTYR.]

Enter OLD SERVANT.

Old Servant. O, kind and gentle
master, the Queen's Officers
Are here in force to take you to the
Tower.

Crammer. Ay, gentle friend, admit
them. I will go.

I thank my God it is too late to fly.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE III. — ST. PAUL'S CROSS.

FATHER BOURNE *in the pulpit.* *A crowd.*
MARCHIONESS OF EXETER, COURTENAY.
The SIEUR DE NOAILLES and his man
ROGER in front of the stage. *Hubbub.*

Noailles. Hast thou let fall those
papers in the palace?

Roger. Ay, sir.

Noailles. "There will be no peace for
Mary till Elizabeth lose her head."

Roger. Ay, sir.

Noailles. And the other. "Long
live Elizabeth the Queen."

Roger. Ay, sir; she needs must tread
upon them.

Noailles. Well.

These beastly swine make such a grunt-
ing here,

I cannot catch what father Bourne is
saying.

Roger. Quiet a moment, my masters;
hear what the shaveling has to say for
himself.

Crowd. Hush — hear.

Bourne. — and so this unhappy land,
long divided in itself, and sever'd from
the faith, will return into the one true
fold, seeing that our gracious Virgin
Queen hath —

Crowd. No pope! no pope!

Roger (to those about him, mimicking
BOURNE). — hath sent for the holy legate

of the holy father the Pope, Cardinal
Pole, to give us all that holy absolution
which —

First Citizen. Old Bourne to the life!

Second Citizen. Holy absolution! holy
Inquisition!

Third Citizen. Down with the Papist.

[*Hubbub.*]

Bourne. — and now that your good
bishop, Bonner, who hath lain so long
under bonds for the faith — [*Hubbub.*]

Noailles. Friend Roger, steal thou in
among the crowd,

And get the swine to shout Elizabeth.

Yon gray old Gospeller, sour as mid-
winter,

Begin with him.

Roger (goes). By the mass, old friend,
we'll have no pope here while the Lady
Elizabeth lives.

Gospeller. Art thou of the true faith,
fellow, that swearest by the mass?

Roger. Ay, that am I, new converted,
but the old leaven sticks to my tongue
yet.

First Citizen. He says right; by the
mass we'll have no mass here.

Voices of the Crowd. Peace! hear
him; let his own words damn the Pa-
pist.

From thine own mouth I judge thee
— tear him down.

Bourne. — and since our Gracious
Queen, let me call her our second Virgin
Mary, hath begun to re-edify the true
temple —

First Citizen. Virgin Mary! we'll
have no virgins here — we'll have the
Lady Elizabeth!

[*Swords are drawn, a knife is hurled,
and sticks in the pulpit. The mob
throng to the pulpit stairs.*]

Marchioness of Exeter. Son Courte-
nay, wilt thou see the holy father
Murder'd before thy face? up, son, and
save him!

They love thee, and thou canst not come
to harm.

Courtenay (in the pulpit). Shame,
shame, my masters! are you Eng-
lish-born,

And set yourself by hundreds against
one?

Crowd. A Courtenay! a Courtenay!

[*A train of Spanish servants crosses
at the back of the stage.*]

Noailles. These birds of passage come before their time :
Stave off the crowd upon the Spaniard there.

Roger. My masters, yonder's fatter game for you
Than this old gaping gurgoyle : look you there —
The Prince of Spain coming to wed our Queen !
After him, boys ! and pelt him from the city.

[*They seize stones and follow the Spaniards. Exeunt on the other side MARCHIONESS OF EXETER and Attendants.*]

Noailles (to ROGER). Stand from me.
If Elizabeth lose her head —
That makes for France.
And if her people, anger'd thereupon,
Arise against her and dethrone the Queen —
That makes for France.
And if I breed confusion anyway —
That makes for France.

Good-day, my Lord of Devon ;
A bold heart yours to beard that raging mob !

Courtenay. My mother said, Go up ;
and up I went.
I knew they would not do me any wrong,
For I am mighty popular with them,
Noailles.

You look'd a king.
Courtenay. Why not ? I am king's blood.

Noailles. And in the whirl of change
may come to be one.

Courtenay. Ah !

Noailles. But does your gracious
Queen entreat you king-like ?

Courtenay. 'Fore God, I think she
entreats me like a child.

Noailles. You've but a dull life in
this maiden court,
I fear, my Lord.

Courtenay. A life of nods and yawns.

Noailles. So you would honor my
poor house to-night,
We might enliven you. Divers honest
fellows,
The Duke of Suffolk lately freed from
prison,

Sir Peter Carew and Sir Thomas Wyatt,
Sir Thomas Stafford, and some more —
we play.

Courtenay. At what ?

Noailles. The Game of Chess.
Courtenay. The Game of Chess !
I can play well, and I shall beat you
there.

Noailles. Ay, but we play with
Henry, King of France,
And certain of his court.
His Highness makes his moves across
the channel,
We answer him with ours, and there
are messengers
That go between us.

Courtenay. Why, such a game, sir,
were whole years a playing.

Noailles. Nay ; not so long I trust.
That all depends
Upon the skill and swiftness of the
players.

Courtenay. The King is skilful at it ?
Noailles. Very, my Lord.

Courtenay. And the stakes high ?

Noailles. But not beyond your means.

Courtenay. Well, I'm the first of
players. I shall win.

Noailles. With our advice and in our
company,
And so you well attend to the king's
moves,
I think you may.

Courtenay. When do you meet ?

Noailles. To-night.

Courtenay (aside). I will be there ;
the fellow's at his tricks —
Deep — I shall fathom him. (*Aloud.*)
Good-morning, *Noailles.*

[*Exit* COURTENAY.
Noailles. Good-day, my Lord.
Strange game of chess ! a King
That with her own pawns plays against
a Queen,

Whose play is all to find herself a King.
Ay ; but this fine blue-blooded Courte-
nay seems

Too princely for a pawn. Call him a
Knight,

That, with an ass's not an horse's head,
Skips every way, from levity or from
fear.

Well, we shall use him somehow, so
that Gardiner

And Simon Renard spy not out our game
Too early. Roger, thinkest thou that
any one

Suspected thee to be my man ?

Roger. Not one, sir.

Noailles. No ! the disguise was per-
fect. Let's away ! [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE IV. — LONDON. A ROOM IN THE PALACE.

ELIZABETH. *Enter* COURTENAY.

Courtenay. So yet am I,
Unless my friends and mirrors lie to me,
A goodlier-looking fellow than this Philip.

Pah!
The Queen is ill advised; shall I turn traitor?

They've almost talk'd me into: yet the word

Affrights me somewhat; to be such a one
As Harry Bolingbroke hath a lure in it.
Good now, my Lady Queen, tho' by your age,

And by your looks you are not worth the having,

Yet by your crown you are.
[*Seeing* ELIZABETH.
The Princess there?

If I tried her and la — she's amorous.
Have we not heard of her in Edward's time,

Her freaks and frolics with the late Lord Admiral?

I do believe she'd yield. I should be still

A party in the state; and then, who knows —

Elizabeth. What are you musing on, my Lord of Devon?

Courtenay. Has not the Queen —

Elizabeth. Done what, Sir?

Courtenay. — Made you follow The Lady Suffolk and the Lady Lennox.

You, The heir presumptive.
Elizabeth. Why do you ask? you know it.

Courtenay. You needs must bear it hardly.

Elizabeth. No, indeed!
I am utterly submissive to the Queen.

Courtenay. Well, I was musing upon that; the Queen

Is both my foe and yours: we should be friends.

Elizabeth. My Lord, the hatred of another to us

Is no true bond of friendship.
Courtenay. Might it not

Be the rough preface of some closer bond?

Elizabeth. My Lord, you late were loosed from out the Tower,
Where, like a butterfly in a chrysalis,

You spent your life; that broken, out you flutter

Thro' the new world, go zigzag, now would settle

Upon this flower, now that; but all things here

At court are known; you have solicited The Queen, and been rejected.

Courtenay. Flower, she! Half faded! but you, cousin, are fresh and sweet

As the first flower no bee has ever tried.
Elizabeth. Are you the bee to try me? why, but now

I called you butterfly.

Courtenay. You did me wrong, I love not to be called a butterfly?

Why do you call me butterfly?
Elizabeth. Why do you go so gay then?

Courtenay. Velvet and gold.
This dress was made me as the Earl of Devon

To take my seat in; looks it not right royal?

Elizabeth. So royal that the Queen forbade you wearing it.

Courtenay. I wear it then to spite her.

Elizabeth. My Lord, my Lord;

I see you in the Tower again. Her Majesty

Hears you affect the Prince — prelates kneel to you. —

Courtenay. I am the noblest blood in Europe, Madam,

A Courtenay of Devon, and her cousin.

Elizabeth. She hears you make your boast that after all

She means to wed you. Folly, my good Lord.

Courtenay. How folly? a great party in the state

Wills me to wed her?
Elizabeth. Failing her, my Lord,

Doth not as great a party in the state Will you to wed me?

Courtenay. Even so, fair lady.
Elizabeth. You know to flatter ladies.

Courtenay. Nay, I meant True matters of the heart.

Elizabeth. My heart, my Lord, Is no great party in the state as yet.

Courtenay. Great, said you? nay, you shall be great. I love you,

Lay my life in your hands. Can you be close?

Elizabeth. Can you, my Lord?
Courtenay. Close as a miser's casket.

Listen :

The King of France, Noailles the Ambassador,

The Duke of Suffolk and Sir Peter Carew,
Sir Thomas Wyatt, I myself, some others,

Have sworn this Spanish marriage shall not be.

If Mary will not hear us — well — conjecture —

Were I in Devon with my wedded bride,
The people there so worship me — Your ear ;

You shall be Queen.

Elizabeth. You speak too low, my Lord ;

I cannot hear you.

Courtenay. I'll repeat it.

Elizabeth. No !
Stand farther off, or you may lose your head.

Courtenay. I have a head to lose for your sweet sake.

Elizabeth. Have you, my Lord ? Best keep it for your own.

Nay, pout not, cousin.

Not many friends are mine, except indeed
Among the many. I believe you mine ;

And so you may continue mine, farewell,

And that at once.

Enter MARY, behind.

Mary. Whisping — leagued together
To bar me from my Philip.

Courtenay. Pray — consider —
Elizabeth (seeing the QUEEN). Well,

that's a noble horse of yours, my Lord.

I trust that he will carry you well to-day,
And heal your headache.

Courtenay. You are wild ; what headache ?

Heartache, perchance ; not headache.

Elizabeth (aside to COURTENAY). Are you blind ?

[COURTENAY sees the QUEEN and exit.
Exit MARY.

Enter LORD WILLIAM HOWARD.

Howard. Was that my Lord of Devon ? do not you

Be seen in corners with my Lord of Devon.

He hath fallen out of favor with the Queen.

She fears the Lords may side with you and him

Against her marriage ; therefore is he dangerous.

And if this Prince of fluff and feather come

To woo you, niece, he is dangerous every way.

Elizabeth. Not very dangerous that way, my good uncle.

Howard. But your own state is full of danger here.

The disaffected, heretics, reformers,
Look to you as the one to crown their ends.

Mix not yourself with any plot I pray you ;

Nay, if by chance you hear of any such,
Speak not thereof — no, not to your best friend,

Lest you should be confounded with it. Still —

Perinde ac cadaver — as the priest says,
You know your Latin — quiet as a dead body.

What was my Lord of Devon telling you ?

Elizabeth. Whether he told me anything or not,

I follow your good counsel, gracious uncle.

Quiet as a dead body.

Howard. You do right well. I do not care to know ; but this I charge you,

Tell Courtenay nothing. The Lord Chancellor

(I count it as a kind of virtue in him,
He hath not many), as a mastiff dog

May love a puppy cur for no more reason
Than that the twain have been tied up

together,
Thus Gardiner — for the two were fellow-prisoners

So many years in yon accursed Tower —
Hath taken to this Courtenay. Look to

it, niece,
He hath no fence when Gardiner questions him ;

All oozes out ; yet him — because they know him

The last White Rose, the last Plantagenet

(Nay, there is Cardinal Pole, too), the people

Claim as their natural leader — ay, some say,

That you shall marry him, make him
King belike.

Elizabeth. Do they say so, good
uncle ?

Howard. Ay, good niece !
You should be plain and open with me,
niece.

You should not play upon me.

Elizabeth. No, good uncle.

Enter GARDINER.

Gardiner. The Queen would see your
Grace upon the moment.

Elizabeth. Why, my lord Bishop ?

Gardiner. I think she means to coun-
sel your withdrawing
To Ashridge, or some other country
house.

Elizabeth. Why, my lord Bishop ?

Gardiner. I do but bring the message,
know no more.

Your Grace will hear her reasons from
herself.

Elizabeth. 'T is mine own wish ful-
fill'd before the word
Was spoken, for in truth I had meant
to crave
Permission of her Highness to retire
To Ashridge, and pursue my studies
there.

Gardiner. Madam, to have the wish
before the word
Is man's good Fairy — and the Queen is
yours.

I left her with rich jewels in her hand,
Whereof 't is like enough she means to
make
A farewell present to your Grace.

Elizabeth. My Lord,
I have the jewel of a loyal heart.

Gardiner. I doubt it not, Madam,
most loyal. [*Bows low and exit.*]

Howard. See,
This comes of parleying with my Lord
of Devon.

Well, well, you must obey ; and I my-
self
Believe it will be better for your welfare.
Your time will come.

Elizabeth. I think my time will come.
Uncle,
I am of sovereign nature, that I know,
Not to be quell'd ; and I have felt
within me
Stirrings of some great doom when God's
just hour
Peals — but this fierce old Gardiner —
his big baldness,

That irritable forelock which he rubs,
His buzzard beak and deep-incavern'd
eyes
Half fright me.

Howard. You 've a bold heart ; keep
it so.

He cannot touch you save that you turn
traitor ;
And so take heed I pray you — you are
one
Who love that men should smile upon
you, niece.

They'd smile you into treason — some
of them.

Elizabeth. I spy the rock beneath the
smiling sea.

But if this Philip, the proud Catholic
prince,
And this bald priest, and she that hates
me, seek
In that lone house, to practise on my
life,
By poison, fire, shot, stab —

Howard. They will not, niece.
Mine is the fleet and all the power at
sea —
Or will be in a moment. If they dared
To harm you, I would blow this Philip
and all
Your trouble to the dogstar and the
devil.

Elizabeth. To the Pleiads, uncle ;
they have lost a sister.

Howard. But why say that ? what
have you done to lose her ?
Come, come, I will go with you to the
Queen. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE V. — A ROOM IN THE
PALACE.

MARY with PHILIP'S miniature. ALICE.

Mary (kissing the miniature). Most
goodly, Kinglike, and an emper-
or's son, —

A king to be, — is he not noble, girl ?

Alice. Goodly enough, your Grace,
and yet, methinks,

I have seen goodlier.

Mary. Ay ; some waxen doll
Thy baby eyes have rested on, belike ;
All red and white, the fashion of our
land.

But my good mother came (God rest her
soul)

Of Spain, and I am Spanish in myself,
and in my likings.

Alice. By your Grace's leave
Your royal mother came of Spain, but
took

To the English red and white. Your
royal father
(For so they say) was all pure lily and
rose

In his youth, and like a lady.

Mary. O, just God !
Sweet mother, you had time and cause
enough

To sicken of his lilies and his roses.

Cast off, betray'd, defamed, divorced,
forlorn !

And then the king — that traitor past
forgiveness,

The false archbishop fawning on him,
married

The mother of Elizabeth — a heretic
Ev'n as *she* is ; but God hath sent me
here

To take such order with all heretics
That it shall be, before I die, as tho'
My father and my brother had not lived.
What wast thou saying of this Lady
Jane,

Now in the Tower ?

Alice. Why, Madam, she was passing
Some chapel down in Essex, and with
her

Lady Anne Wharton, and the Lady
Anne

Bow'd to the Pyx ; but Lady Jane
stood up

Stiff as the very backbone of heresy.

And wherefore bow ye not, says Lady
Anne,

To him within there who made Heaven
and Earth ?

I cannot and I dare not, tell your Grace
What Lady Jane replied.

Mary. But I will have it.

Alice. She said — pray pardon me,
and pity her —

She hath hearken'd evil counsel — ah !
she said,

The baker made him.

Mary. Monstrous ! blasphemous !
She ought to burn. Hence, thou (*Exit*

ALICE). No — being traitor
Her head will fall : shall it ? she is but
a child.

We do not kill the child for doing that
His father whipt him into doing — a
head

So full of grace and beauty ! would that
mine

Were half as gracious ! O, my lord
to be,

My love, for thy sake only.

I am eleven years older than he is.

But will he care for that ?

No, by the holy Virgin, being noble,

But love me only : then the bastard
sprout,

My sister, is far fairer than myself.

Will he be drawn to her ?

No, being of the true faith with myself.

Paget is for him — for to wed with
Spain

Would treble England — Gardiner is
against him ;

The Council, people, Parliament against
him ;

But I will have him ! My hard father
hated me ;

My brother rather hated me than loved ;
My sister cowers and hates me. Holy

Virgin,
Plead with thy blessed Son ; grant me
my prayer ;

Give me my Philip ; and we two will lead
The living waters of the Faith again

Back thro' their widow'd channel here,
and watch

The parch'd banks rolling incense, as of
old,

To heaven, and kindled with the palms
of Christ !

Enter USHER.

Who waits, sir ?

Usher. Madam, the Lord Chancellor.

Mary. Bid him come in. (*Enter GAR-*
DINER.) Good morning, my good
Lord. [*Exit USHER*

Gardiner. That every morning of
your Majesty

May be most good, is every morning's
prayer

Of your most loyal subject, Stephen
Gardiner.

Mary. Come you to tell me this, my
Lord ?

Gardiner. And more.

Your people have begun to learn your
worth.

Your pious wish to pay King Edward's
debts,

Your lavish household curb'd, and the
remission

Of half that subsidy levied on the people,
Make all tongues praise and all hearts
beat for you.

I'd have you yet more loved : the realm
is poor,
The exchequer at neap-ebb : we might
withdraw
Part of our garrison at Calais.

Mary. Calais !
Our one point on the main, the gate of
France !

I am Queen of England ; take mine eyes,
mine heart,
But do not lose me Calais.

Gardiner. Do not fear it.
Of that hereafter. I say your Grace is
loved.

That I may keep you thus, who am your
friend
And ever faithful counsellor, might I
speak ?

Mary. I can forespeak your speaking.
Would I marry
Prince Philip, if all England hate him ?
That is

Your question, and I front it with an-
other :
Is it England, or a party ? Now, your
answer.

Gardiner. My answer is, I wear be-
neath my dress
A shirt of mail : my house hath been
assaulted,

And when I walk abroad, the populace,
With fingers pointed like so many dag-
gers,
Stab me in fancy, hissing Spain and
Philip ;

And when I sleep, a hundred men-at-
arms

Guard my poor dreams for England.
Men would murder me,
Because they think me favorer of this
marriage.

Mary. And that were hard upon you,
my Lord Chancellor.

Gardiner. But our young Earl of
Devon —

Mary. Earl of Devon ?
I freed him from the Tower, placed him
at Court ;
I made him Earl of Devon, and — the
fool —

He wrecks his health and wealth on
courtesans,
And rolls himself in carrion like a dog.

Gardiner. More like a school-boy that
hath broken bounds,
Sickenning himself with sweets.

Mary. I will not hear of him.

Good, then, they will revolt : but I am
Tudor,
And shall control them.

Gardiner. I will help you, Madam,
Even to the utmost. All the church is
grateful.

You have ousted the mock priest, repul-
pited
The shepherd of St. Peter, raised the
rood again,
And brought us back the mass. I am
all thanks

To God and to your Grace : yet I know
well,

Your people, and I go with them so far,
Will brook nor Pope nor Spaniard here
to play

The tyrant, or in commonwealth or
church.

Mary (showing the picture). Is this the
face of one who plays the tyrant ?
Peruse it ; is it not goodly, ay, and
gentle ?

Gardiner. Madam, methinks a cold
face and a haughty.
And when your Highness talks of
Courtenay —

Ay, true — a goodly one. I would his
life
Were half as goodly (*aside*).

Mary. What is that you mutter ?
Gardiner. Oh, Madam, take it blunt-
ly ; marry Philip,

And be stepmother of a score of sons !
The prince is known in Spain, in Flan-
ders, ha !

For Philip —
Mary. You offend us ; you may leave
us.

You see thro' warping glasses.
Gardiner. If your Majesty —
Mary. I have sworn upon the body
and blood of Christ

I'll none but Philip.
Gardiner. Hath your Grace so sworn ?
Mary. Ay, Simon Renard knows it.

Gardiner. News to me !
It then remains for your poor Gardiner,
So you still care to trust him somewhat
less

Than Simon Renard, to compose the
event
In some such form as least may harm
your Grace.

Mary. I'll have the scandal sounded
to the mud.
I know it a scandal.

Gardiner. All my hope is now
It may be found a scandal.

Mary. You offend us.

Gardiner (aside). These princes are
like children, must be physick'd,
The bitter in the sweet. I have lost
mine office,
It may be, thro' mine honesty, like a
fool. [Exit.

Enter USHER.

Mary. Who waits?

Usher. The Ambassador from France,
your Grace.

Mary. Bid him come in. Good-morn-
ing, Sir de Noailles.

[Exit USHER.

Noailles (entering). A happy morning
to your Majesty.

Mary. And I should some time have
a happy morning;
I have had none yet. What says the
King your master?

Noailles. Madam, my master hears
with much alarm,
That you may marry Philip, Prince of
Spain —

Foreseeing, with whate'er unwillingness,
That if this Philip be the titular king
Of England, and at war with him, your
Grace

And kingdom will be suck'd into the
war,

Ay, tho' you long for peace; wherefore,
my master,

If but to prove your Majesty's good
will,

Would fain have some fresh treaty drawn
between you.

Mary. Why some fresh treaty? where-
fore should I do it?

Sir, if we marry, we shall still maintain
All former treaties with his Majesty.

Our royal word for that! and your good
master,

Pray God he do not be the first to break
them,

Must be content with that; and so, fare-
well.

Noailles (going, returns). I would
your answer had been other,
Madam,

For I foresee dark days.

Mary. And so do I, sir;
Your master works against me in the
dark.

I do believe he help Northumberland
Against me.

Noailles. Nay, pure fantasy, your
Grace.

Why should he move against you?

Mary. Will you hear why?
Mary of Scotland, — for I have not
own'd

My sister, and I will not, — after me
Is heir of England; and my royal father,
To make the crown of Scotland one with
ours,

Had mark'd her for my brother Edward's
bride;

Ay, but your king stole her a babe from
Scotland

In order to betroth her to your Dauphin.
See then:

Mary of Scotland, married to your Dau-
phin,

Would make our England, France;

Mary of England, joining hands with
Spain,

Would be too strong for France.

Yea, were there issue born to her, Spain
and we,

One crown, might rule the world. There
lies your fear.

That is your drift. You play at hide
and seek.

Show me your faces!

Noailles. Madam, I am amazed:
French, I must needs wish all good
things for France.

That must be pardon'd me; but I protest

Your Grace's policy hath a farther flight
Than mine into the future. We but
seek

Some settled ground for peace to stand
upon.

Mary. Well, we will leave all this,
sir, to our council.

Have you seen Philip ever?

Noailles. Only once.

Mary. Is this like Philip?

Noailles. Ay, but nobler-looking.

Mary. Hath he the large ability of
the Emperor?

Noailles. No, surely.

Mary. I can make allowance for thee,
Thou speakest of the enemy of thy king.

Noailles. Make no allowance for the
naked truth.

He is every way a lesser man than
Charles;

Stone-hard, ice-cold — no dash of daring
in him.

Mary. If cold, his life is pure.

Noailles. Why, (*smiling*), no, indeed.

Mary. Sayst thou?

Noailles. A very wanton life indeed (*smiling*).

Mary. Your audience is concluded, sir. [*Exit NOAILLES.*]

You cannot

Learn a man's nature from his natural foe.

Enter USHER.

Who waits?

Usher. The ambassador of Spain, your Grace. [*Exit.*]

Enter SIMON RENARD.

Mary. Thou art ever welcome, Simon Renard. Hast thou

Brought me the letter which thine Emperor promised

Long since, a formal offer of the hand Of Philip?

Renard. Nay, your Grace, it hath not reach'd me.

I know not wherefore — some mischance of flood,

And broken bridge, or spavin'd horse, or wave

And wind at their old battle; he must have written.

Mary. But Philip never writes me one poor word,

Which in his absence had been all my wealth.

Strange in a wooer!

Renard. Yet I know the Prince, So your king-parliament suffer him to land,

Years to set foot upon your island shore.

Mary. God change the pebble which his kingly foot

First presses into some more costly stone Than ever blinded eye. I'll have one mark it

And bring it me. I'll have it burnish'd firelike;

I'll set it round with gold, with pearl, with diamond.

Let the great angel of the church come with him;

Stand on the deck and spread his wings for sail!

God lay the waves and strew the storms at sea,

And here at land among the people. O Renard,

I am much beset, I am almost in despair.

Paget is ours. Gardiner perchance is ours;

But for our heretic Parliament —

Renard. O Madam,

You fly your thoughts like kites. My master, Charles,

Bade you go softly with your heretics here,

Until your throne had ceased to tremble. Then

Spit them like larks for aught I care. Besides,

When Henry broke the carcass of your church

To pieces, there were many wolves among you

Who dragg'd the scatter'd limbs into their den.

The Pope would have you make them render these;

So would your cousin, Cardinal Pole; ill counsel!

These let them keep at present; stir not yet

This matter of the Church lands. At his coming

Your star will rise.

Mary. My star! a baleful one.

I see but the black night, and hear the wolf.

What star?

Renard. Your star will be your princely son,

Heir of this England and the Netherlands!

And if your wolf the while should howl for more

We'll dust him from a bag of Spanish gold.

I do believe, I have dusted some already, That, soon or late, your parliament is ours.

Mary. Why do they talk so foully of your Prince,

Renard?

Renard. The lot of Princes. To sit high

Is to be lied about.

Mary. They call him cold, Haughty, ay, worse.

Renard. Why, doubtless, Philip shows Some of the bearing of your blue blood — still

All within measure — nay, it well becomes him.

Mary. Hath he the large ability of his father?

Renard. Nay, some believe that he will go beyond him.

Mary. Is this like him?

Renard. Ay, somewhat; but your Philip
Is the most princelike Prince beneath the sun.

This is a daub to Philip.

Mary. Of a pure life?

Renard. As an angel among angels.

Yea, by Heaven,
The text—Your Highness knows it,
"Whosoever

Looketh after a woman," would not graze
The Prince of Spain. You are happy
in him there,

Chaste as your grace!

Mary. I am happy in him there.

Renard. And would be altogether
happy, Madam,
So that your sister were but look'd to
closer.

You have sent her from the court, but
then she goes,

I warrant, not to hear the nightingales,
But hatch you some new treason in the
woods.

Mary. We have our spies abroad to
catch her tripping,
And then if caught, to the Tower.

Renard. The Tower! the block.
The word has turn'd your Highness
pale; the thing

Was no such scarecrow in your father's
time.

I have heard, the tongue yet quiver'd
with the jest

When the head leapt—so common! I
do think

To save your crown that it must come
to this.

Mary. I love her not, but all the
people love her,

And would not have her even to the
Tower.

Renard. Not yet; but your old Trai-
tors of the Tower—

Why, when you put Northumberland
to death,

The sentence having past upon them
all,

Spared you the Duke of Suffolk, Guild-
ford Dudley,

Ev'n that young girl who dared to wear
your crown?

Mary. Dared, no, not that; the child
obey'd her father.

Spite of her tears her father forced it on
her.

Renard. Good Madam, when the Ro-
man wish'd to reign,
He slew not him alone who wore the
purple,

But his assessor in the throne, perchance
A child more innocent than Lady Jane.

Mary. I am English Queen, not Ro-
man Emperor.

Renard. Yet too much mercy is a
want of mercy,

And wastes more life. Stamp out the
fire, or this

Will smoulder and re-flame, and burn
the throne

Where you should sit with Philip: he
will not come

Till she be gone.

Mary. Indeed, if that were true—
But I must say farewell. I am some-
what faint

With our long talk. Tho' Queen, I am
not Queen

Of mine own heart, which every now
and then

Beats me half dead: yet stay, this
golden chain—

My father on a birthday gave it me,
And I have broken with my father—
take

And wear it as memorial of a morning
Which found me full of foolish doubts,
and leaves me

As hopeful.

Renard (aside). Whew—the folly of
all follies

Is to be love-sick for a shadow. (*Aloud.*)
Madam,

This chains me to your service, not with
gold,

But dearest links of love. Farewell,
and trust me,

Philip is yours. [*Exit.*]

Mary. Mine—but not yet all mine.

Enter USHER.

Usher. Your Council is in Session,
please your Majesty.

Mary. Sir, let them sit. I must have
time to breathe.

No, say I come. (*Exit USHER.*) I won
by boldness once.

The Emperor counsell'd me to fly to
Flanders.

I would not; but a hundred miles I
rode,

Sent out my letters, call'd my friends
together,
Struck home and won.
And when the Council would not crown
me — thought
To bind me first by oaths I could not
keep,
And keep with Christ and conscience —
was it boldness
Or weakness that won there? when I
their Queen,
Cast myself down upon my knees before
them,
And those hard men brake into woman
tears,
Ev'n Gardiner, all amazed, and in that
passion
Gave me my Crown.

Enter ALICE.

Girl; hast thou ever heard
Slanders against Prince Philip in our
Court?

Alice. What slanders? I, your
Grace; no, never.

Mary. Nothing?

Alice. Never, your Grace.

Mary. See that you neither hear them
nor repeat!

Alice (aside). Good Lord! but I have
heard a thousand such.

Ay, and repeated them as often — mum!
Why comes that old fox-Fleming back
again?

Enter RENARD.

Renard. Madam, I scarce had left
your Grace's presence
Before I chanced upon the messenger
Who brings that letter which we waited
for —

The formal offer of Prince Philip's hand.
It craves an instant answer, Ay or No?

Mary. An instant, Ay or No! the
Council sits.

Give it me quick.

Alice (stepping before her). Your High-
ness is all trembling.

Mary. Make way.

[*Exit into the Council Chamber.*]

Alice. O, Master Renard, Master Renard,
If you have falsely painted your fine
Prince;
Praised, where you should have blamed
him, I pray God
No woman ever love you, Master Renard.

It breaks my heart to hear her moan at
night

As tho' the nightmare never left her bed.

Renard. My pretty maiden, tell me
did you ever

Sigh for a beard?

Alice. That's not a pretty question.

Renard. Not prettily put? I mean
my pretty maiden,

A pretty man for such a pretty maiden.

Alice. My Lord of Devon is a pretty
man.

I hate him. Well, but if I have, what
then?

Renard. Then, pretty maiden, you
should know that whether

A wind be warm or cold, it serves to fan
A kindled fire.

Alice. According to the song.

"His friends would praise him, I believed 'em,
His foes would blame him, and I scorned 'em,
His friends — as Angels I received 'em,
His foes — The Devil had suborn'd 'em."

Renard. Peace, pretty maiden.

I hear them stirring in the Council
Chamber.

Lord Paget's "Ay" is sure — who else?
and yet,

They are all too much at odds to close at
once

In one full throated No! Her Highness
comes.

Enter MARY.

Alice. How deathly pale! — a chair,
your Highness.

[*Bringing one to the QUEEN.*]

Renard. Madam,

The Council?

Mary. Ay! My Philip is all mine.

[*Sinks into chair, half fainting*]

ACT II.

SCENE I. — ALLINGTON CASTLE.

Sir Thomas Wyatt. I do not hear
from Carew or the Duke
Of Suffolk, and till then I should not
move.

The Duke hath gone to Leicester; Ca-
rew stirs

In Devon: that fine porcelain Courte-
nay,

Save that he fears he might be crack'd
in using,
(I have known a semi-madman in my
time

So fancy-ridd'n) should be in Devon too.

Enter WILLIAM.

News abroad, William ?

William. None so new, Sir Thomas,
and none so old, Sir Thomas. No new
news that Philip comes to wed Mary,
no old news that all men hate it. Old
Sir Thomas would have hated it. The
bells are ringing at Maidstone. Does n't
your worship hear ?

Wyatt. Ay, for the Saints are come
to reign again.

Most like it is a Saint's-day. There's
no call

As yet for me ; so in this pause, before
The mine be fired, it were a pious work
To string my father's sonnets, left about
Like loosely-scatter'd jewels, in fair or-
der,

And head them with a lamer rhyme of
mine,

To grace his memory.

William. Ay, why not, Sir Thomas ?
He was a fine courtier, he ; Queen Anne
loved him. All the women loved him.
I loved him, I was in Spain with him.
I could n't eat in Spain, I could n't sleep
in Spain. I hate Spain, Sir Thomas.

Wyatt. But thou couldst drink in
Spain if I remember.

William. Sir Thomas, we may grant
the wine. Old Sir Thomas always
granted the wine.

Wyatt. Hand me the casket with my
father's sonnets.

William. Ay—sonnets—a fine court-
ier of the old Court, old Sir Thomas.

[*Exit.*

Wyatt. Courtier of many courts, he
loved the more

His own gray towers, plain life and let-
ter'd peace,

To read and rhyme in solitary fields,
The lark above, the nightingale below,
And answer them in song. The sire
begets

Not half his likeness in the son. I fail
Where he was fullest : yet — to write it
down. [*He writes.*

Re-enter WILLIAM.

William. There is news, there is
news, and no call for sonnet-sorting now,

nor for sonnet-making either, but ten
thousand men on Penenden Heath all
calling after your worship, and your
worship's name heard into Maidstone
market, and your worship the first man
in Kent and Christendom, for the world's
up, and your worship a-top of it.

Wyatt. Inverted Æsop — mountain
out of mouse.

Say for ten thousand ten — and pot-
house knaves,

Brain-dizzied with a draught of morn-
ing ale.

Enter ANTONY KNYVETT.

William. Here's Antony Knyvett.

Knyvett. Look you, Master Wyatt,
Tear up that woman's work there.

Wyatt. No ; not these,
Dumb children of my father, that will
speak

When I and thou and all rebellions lie
Dead bodies without voice. Song flies
you know

For ages.

Knyvett. Tut, your sonnet's a flying
ant,

Wing'd for a moment.

Wyatt. Well, for mine own work
[*tearing the paper,*

It lies there in six pieces at your feet ;
For all that I can carry it in my head.

Knyvett. If you carry your head upon
your shoulders.

Wyatt. I fear you come to carry it off
my shoulders,

And sonnet-making's safer.

Knyvett. Why, good Lord,
Write you as many sonnets as you
will.

Ay, but not now ; what, have you eyes,
ears, brains ?

This Philip and the black-faced swarms
of Spain,

The hardest, cruellest people in the
world,

Come locusting upon us, eat us up,
Confiscate lands, goods, money — Wyatt,

Wyatt,
Wake, or the stout old island will be-
come

A rotten limb of Spain. They roar for
you

On Penenden Heath, a thousand of them
— more —

All arm'd, waiting a leader ; there's no
glory

Like his who saves his country : and
 you sit
 Sing-singing here ; but, if I 'm any
 judge,
 By God, you are as poor a poet, Wyatt,
 As a good soldier.

Wyatt. You as poor a critic
 As an honest friend : you stroke me on
 one cheek,
 Buffet the other. Come, you bluster,
 Antony !

You know I know all this. I must not
 move

Until I hear from Carew and the Duke.
 I fear the mine is fired before the time.

Knyvett (showing a paper). But here's
 some Hebrew. Faith, I half for-
 got it.

Look ; can you make it English ? A
 strange youth

Suddenly thrust it on me, whisper'd,
 "Wyatt,"

And whisking round a corner, show'd his
 back

Before I read his face.

Wyatt. Ha ! Courtenay's eipher.
 [*Reads.*]

"Sir Peter Carew fled to France : it is
 thought the Duke will be taken. I am
 with you still ; but, for appearance'
 sake, stay with the Queen. Gardiner
 knows, but the Council are all at odds,
 and the Queen hath no force for resist-
 ance. Move, if you move, at once."

Is Peter Carew fled ? Is the Duke
 taken ?

Down scabbard, and out sword ! and let
 Rebellion

Roar till throne rock, and crown fall.
 No ; not that ;

But we will teach Queen Mary how to
 reign.

Who are those that shout below there ?

Knyvett. Why, some fifty
 That follow'd me from Penenden Heath
 in hope

To hear you speak.

Wyatt. Open the window, Knyvett :
 The mine is fired, and I will speak to
 them.

Men of Kent ; England of England ; you
 that have kept your old customs upright,
 while all the rest of England bow'd
 theirs to the Norman, the cause that
 hath brought us together is not the
 cause of a county or a shire, but of this

England, in whose crown our Kent is
 the fairest jewel. Philip shall not wed
 Mary ; and ye have called me to be your
 leader. I know Spain. I have been
 there with my father ; I have seen them
 in their own land ; have marked the
 haughtiness of their nobles ; the cruelty
 of their priests. If this man marry our
 Queen, however the Council and the
 Commons may fence round his power
 with restriction, he will be King, King
 of England, my masters ; and the Queen,
 and the laws, and the people, his slaves.
 What ? shall we have Spain on the
 throne and in the parliament ; Spain in
 the pulpit and on the law-bench ; Spain
 in all the great offices of state ; Spain
 in our ships, in our forts, in our houses,
 in our beds ?

Crowd. No ! no ! no Spain.

William. No Spain in our beds—
 that were worse than all. I have been
 there with old Sir Thomas, and the beds
 I know. I hate Spain.

A Peasant. But, Sir Thomas, must
 we levy war against the Queen's Grace ?

Wyatt. No, my friend ; war for the
 Queen's Grace—to save her from her-
 self and Philip—war against Spain.

And think not we shall be alone—thous-
 sands will flock to us. The Council, the
 Court itself, is on our side. The Lord
 Chancellor himself is on our side. The
 King of France is with us ; the King of
 Denmark is with us ; the world is with
 us—war against Spain ! And if we
 move not now, yet it will be known
 that we have moved ; and if Philip
 come to be King, O, my God ! the rope,
 the rack, the thumb-screw, the stake,
 the fire. If we move not now, Spain
 moves, bribes our nobles with her gold,
 and creeps, creeps snake-like about our
 legs till we cannot move at all ; and ye
 know, my masters, that wherever Spain
 hath ruled she hath wither'd all beneath
 her. Look at the New World—a para-
 dise made hell ; the red man, that
 good helpless creature, starved, maim'd,
 flogg'd, flay'd, burn'd, boil'd, buried
 alive, worried by dogs ; and here, near-
 er home, the Netherlands, Sicily, Na-
 ples, Lombardy. I say no more—only
 this, their lot is yours. Forward to
 London with me ! forward to London !
 If ye love your liberties or your skins,
 forward to London !

Crowd. Forward to London ! A Wyatt ! a Wyatt !

Wyatt. But first to Rochester, to take the guns
From out the vessels lying in the river.
Then on.

A Peasant. Ay, but I fear we be too few, Sir Thomas.

Wyatt. Not many yet. The world as yet, my friend,
is not half-waked ; but every parish tower

Shall clang and clash alarm as we pass,
And pour along the land, and swoll'n and fed

With indraughts and side-currents, in full force

Roll upon London.

Crowd. A Wyatt ! a Wyatt ! Forward !

Knyvett. Wyatt, shall we proclaim Elizabeth ?

Wyatt. I'll think upon it, Knyvett.
Knyvett. Or Lady Jane ?

Wyatt. No, poor soul ; no.
Ah, gray old castle of Allington, green field

Beside the brimming Medway, it may chance

That I shall never look upon you more.

Knyvett. Come, now, you're sonnetting again.

Wyatt. Not I.
I'll have my head set higher in the state ;

Or — if the Lord God will it — on the stake. [Exeunt.]

SCENE II. — GUILDHALL.

SIR THOMAS WHITE (*The Lord Mayor*),
LORD WILLIAM HOWARD, SIR RALPH
BAGENHALL, ALDERMEN and CITIZENS.

White. I trust the Queen comes hither with her guards.

Howard. Ay, all in arms.

[Several of the citizens move hastily out of the hall.]

Why do they hurry out there ?

White. My Lord, cut out the rotten from your apple,
Your apple eats the better. Let them go.
They go like those old Pharisees in John
Convicted by their conscience, arrant cowards,

Or tamperers with that treason out of Kent.

When will her Grace be here ?

Howard. In some few minutes.
She will address your guilds and companies.

I have striven in vain to raise a man for her.

But help her in this exigency, make Your city loyal, and be the mightiest man

This day in England.

White. I am Thomas White.
Few things have fail'd to which I set my will.

I do my most and best.

Howard. You know that after The Captain Brett, who went with your train bands

To fight with Wyatt, had gone over to him

With all his men, the Queen in that distress

Sent Cornwallis and Hastings to the traitor,

Feigning to treat with him about her marriage —

Know too what Wyatt said.

White. He'd sooner be, While this same marriage question was being argued,

Trusted than trust — the scoundrel — and demanded

Possession of her person and the Tower.

Howard. And four of her poor Council too, my Lord,

As hostages.

White. I know it. What do and say Your Council at this hour ?

Howard. I will trust you.
We fling ourselves on you, my Lord.

The Council,
The parliament as well, are troubled waters ;

And yet like waters of the fen they know not

Which way to flow. All hangs on her address,

And upon you, Lord Mayor.

White. How look'd the city When now you past it ? Quiet ?

Howard. Like our Council,
Your city is divided. As we past,
Some hail'd, some hiss'd us. There were citizens

Stood each before his shut-up booth, and look'd

As grim and grave as from a funeral.
 And here a knot of ruffians all in rags,
 With execrating execrable eyes,
 Glared at the citizen. Here was a young
 mother,
 Her face on flame, her red hair all blown
 back,
 She shrilling "Wyatt," while the boy
 she held
 Mimick'd and piped her "Wyatt," as
 red as she
 In hair and cheek; and almost elbowing
 her,
 So close they stood, another, mute as
 death,
 And white as her own milk; her babe
 in arms
 Had felt the faltering of his mother's
 heart,
 And look'd as bloodless. Here a pious
 Catholic,
 Mumbling and mixing up in his scared
 prayers
 Heaven and earth's Maries; over his
 bow'd shoulder
 Scowl'd that world-hated and world-
 hating beast,
 A haggard Anabaptist. Many such
 groups.
 The names of Wyatt, Elizabeth, Courte-
 nay,
 Nay the Queen's right to reign — 'fore
 God, the rogues —
 Were freely buzz'd among them. So I
 say
 Your city is divided, and I fear
 One scruple, this or that way, of success
 Would turn it thither. Wherefore now
 the Queen
 In this low pulse and palsy of the state,
 Bade me to tell you that she counts on
 you
 And on myself as her two hands; on
 you,
 In your own city, as her right, my Lord,
 For you are loyal.

White. Am I Thomas White?

One word before she comes. Elizabeth —
 Her name is much abused among these
 traitors.

Where is she? She is loved by all of us.
 I scarce have heart to mingle in this
 matter.

If she should be mishandled?

Howard. No; she shall not.

The Queen had written her word to come
 to court.

Methought I smelt out Renard in the
 letter,
 And fearing for her, sent a secret missive,
 Which told her to be sick. Happily or
 not,
 It found her sick indeed.

White. God send her well;
 Here comes her Royal Grace.

*Enter Guards, MARY, and GARDINER. SIR
 THOMAS WHITE leads her to a raised seat
 on the dais.*

White. I, the Lord Mayor, and these
 our companies
 And guilds of London, gathered here,
 beseech

Your Highness to accept our lowliest
 thanks

For your most princely presence; and
 we pray

That we, your true and loyal citizens,
 From your own royal lips, at once may
 know

The wherefore of this coming, and so
 learn

Your Royal will, and do it. — I, Lord
 Mayor

Of London, and our Guilds and Compa-
 nies.

Mary. In mine own person am I come
 to you,

To tell you what indeed ye see and
 know,

How traitorously these rebels out of
 Kent

Have made strong head against ourselves
 and you.

They would not have me wed the Prince
 of Spain;

That was their pretext — so they spake
 at first —

But we sent divers of our Council to
 them,

And by their answers to the question
 ask'd,

It doth appear this marriage is the least
 Of all their quarrel.

They have betrayed the treason of their
 hearts:

Seek to possess our person, hold our
 Tower,

Place and displace our councillors, and use
 Both us and them according as they will.

Now what am I ye know right well —
 your Queen;

To whom, when I was wedded to the
 realm

And the realm's laws (the spousal ring
whereof,

Not ever to be laid aside, I wear
Upon this finger), ye did promise full
Allegiance and obedience to the death.
Ye know my father was the rightful heir
Of England, and his right came down to
me,

Corroborate by your acts of Parliament :
And as ye were most loving unto him,
So doubtless will ye show yourselves to
me.

Wherefore, ye will not brook that any
one
Should seize our person, occupy our
state,

More especially a traitor so presumptuous
As this same Wyatt, who hath tamper'd
with

A public ignorance, and, under color
Of such a cause as hath no color, seeks
To bend the laws to his own will, and
yield

Full scope to persons rascal and forlorn,
To make free spoil and havoc of your
goods.

Now as your Prince, I say,
I, that was never mother, cannot tell
How mothers love their children ; yet,
methinks,

A prince as naturally may love his peo-
ple

As these their children ; and be sure
your Queen

So loves you, and so loving, needs must
deem

This love by you return'd as heartily ;
And thro' this common knot and bond
of love,

Doubt not they will be speedily over-
thrown.

As to this marriage, ye shall understand
We made thereto no treaty of ourselves,
And set no foot theretoward unadvised
Of all our Privy Council ; furthermore,
This marriage had the assent of those to
whom

The king, my father, did commit his
trust ;

Who not alone esteem'd it honorable,
But for the wealth and glory of our
realm,

And all our loving subjects, most expe-
dient.

As to myself,
I am not so set on wedlock as to choose
But where I list, nor yet so amorous

That I must needs be husbanded ; I thank
God,

I have lived a virgin, and I noway doubt
But that with God's grace, I can live so
still.

Yet if it might please God that I should
leave

Some fruit of mine own body after me,
To be your king, ye would rejoice there-
at,

And it would be your comfort, as I trust ;
And truly, if I either thought or knew
This marriage should bring loss or dan-
ger to you,

My subjects, or impair in any way
This royal state of England, I would
never

Consent thereto, nor marry while I live ;
Moreover, if this marriage should not
seem,

Before our own high Court of Parlia-
ment,

To be of rich advantage to our realm,
We will refrain, and not alone from this,
Likewise from any other, out of which
Looms the least chance of peril to our
realm.

Wherefore be bold, and with your law-
ful Prince

Stand fast against our enemies and yours,
And fear them not. I fear them not. My
Lord,

I leave Lord William Howard in your
city,

To guard and keep you whole and safe
from all

The spoil and sackage aim'd at by these
rebels,

Who mouth and foam against the Prince
of Spain.

Voices. Long live Queen Mary !

Down with Wyatt !

The Queen !

White. Three voices from our guilds
and companies !

You are shy and proud like Englishmen,
my masters,

And will not trust your voices. Under-
stand :

Your lawful Prince hath come to cast
herself

On loyal hearts and bosoms, hoped to
fall

Into the wide-spread arms of fealty,
And finds you statues. Speak at once
— and all !

For whom !

Our sovereign Lady by King Harry's will;

The Queen of England — or the Kentish Squire?

I know you loyal. Speak! in the name of God!

The Queen of England or the rabble of Kent?

The reeking dungfork master of the mace?

Your havings wasted by the scythe and spade —

Your rights and charters hobnail'd into slush —

Your houses fired — your gutters bubbling blood —

Acclamation. No! No! The Queen! the Queen!

White. Your Highness hears This burst and bass of loyal harmony, And how we each and all of us abhor The venomous, bestial, devilish revolt Of Thomas Wyatt. Hear us now make oath

To raise your Highness thirty thousand men,

And arm and strike as with one hand, and brush

This Wyatt from our shoulders, like a flea

That might have leapt upon us unawares, Swear with me, noble fellow-citizens, all, With all your trades, and guilds, and companies,

Citizens. We swear!

Mary. We thank your Lordship and your loyal city.

[*Exit MARY attended.*]

White. I trust this day, thro' God, I have saved the crown.

First Alderman. Ay, so my Lord of Pembroke in command

Of all her force be safe; but there are doubts.

Second Alderman. I hear that Gardiner, coming with the Queen, And meeting Pembroke, bent to his saddle-bow,

As if to win the man by flattering him. Is he so safe to fight upon her side?

First Alderman. If not, there's no man safe.

White. Yes, Thomas White. I am safe enough; no man need flatter me.

Second Alderman. Nay, no man need; but did you mark our Queen?

The color freely play'd into her face, And the half sight which makes her look so stern,

Seem'd thro' that dim dilated world of hers,

To read our faces; I have never seen her So queenly or so goodly.

White. Courage, sir,

That makes or man or woman look their goodliest.

Die like the torn fox dumb, but never whine

Like that poor heart, Northumberland, at the block.

Bagenhall. The man had children, and he whined for those.

Methinks most men are but poor-hearted, else

Should we so doat on courage, were it commoner?

The Queen stands up, and speaks for her own self;

And all men cry, she is queenly, she is goodly.

Yet she's no goodlier; tho' my Lord Mayor here,

By his own rule, he hath been so bold to-day,

Should look more goodly than the rest of us.

White. Goodly? I feel most goodly heart and hand,

And strong to throw ten Wyatts and all Kent.

Ha! ha! sir; but you jest; I love it: a jest

In time of danger shows the pulses even. Be merry! yet, Sir Ralph, you look but sad.

I dare avouch you'd stand up for yourself,

Tho' all the world should bay like winter wolves.

Bagenhall. Who knows? the man is proven by the hour.

White. The man should make the hour, not this the man;

And Thomas White will prove this Thomas Wyatt,

And he will prove an Iden to this Cade,

And he will play the Walworth to this Wat;

Come, sirs, we prate; hence all — gather your men —

Myself must bustle. Wyatt comes to Southwark;

I'll have the drawbridge hewn into the Thames,
And see the citizen arm'd. Good day ;
good day. [Exit WHITE.

Bagenhall. One of much outdoor bluster.

Howard. For all that,
Most honest, brave, and skilful ; and his wealth

A fountain of perennial alms — his fault
So thoroughly to believe in his own self.

Bagenhall. Yet thoroughly to believe
in one's own self,

So one's own self be thorough, were to do
Great things, my lord.

Howard. It may be

Bagenhall. I have heard

One of your council fleer and jeer at him.

Howard. The nursery-cocker'd child
will jeer at aught

That may seem strange beyond his nursery.

The statesman that shall jeer and fleer at
men,

Makes enemies for himself and for his
king ;

And if he jeer not seeing the true man
Behind his folly, he is thrice the fool ;
And if he see the man and still will jeer,
He is child and fool, and traitor to the
State.

Who is he ? Let me shun him.

Eugenhall. Nay, my Lord,

He is damn'd enough already.

Howard. I must set

The guard at Ludgate. Fare you well,
Sir Ralph.

Bagenhall. "Who knows ?" I am for
England. But who knows,

That knows the Queen, the Spaniard,
and the Pope,

Whether I be for Wyatt, or the Queen ?
[*Exeunt.*

SCENE III. — LONDON BRIDGE.

Enter SIR THOMAS WYATT *and* BRETT.

Wyatt. Brett, when the Duke of Norfolk
moved against us

Thou criestst "a Wyatt," and flying to
our side

Left his all bare, for which I love thee,
Brett.

Have for thine asking aught that I can
give,

For thro' thine help we are come to London
Bridge ;

But how to cross it balks me. I fear we
cannot.

Brett. Nay, hardly, save by boat,
swimming, or wings.

Wyatt. Last night I climb'd into the
gate-house, Brett,

And scared the gray old porter and his
wife.

And then I crept along the gloom and
saw

They had hewn the drawbridge down
into the river.

It roll'd as black as death ; and that
same tide

Which, coming with our coming, seem'd
to smile

And sparkle like our fortune as thou
saidest,

Ran sunless down, and moan'd against
the piers.

But o'er the chasm I saw Lord William
Howard

By torchlight, and his guard ; four guns
gaped at me,

Black, silent mouths : had Howard spied
me there

And made them speak, as well he might
have done,

Their voice had left me none to tell you
this.

What shall we do ?

Brett. On somehow. To go back
Were to lose all.

Wyatt. On over London Bridge
We cannot : stay we cannot ; there is
ordnance

On the White Tower and on the Devil's
Tower,

And pointed full at Southwark ; we must
round

By Kingston Bridge.

Brett. Ten miles about.

Wyatt. Ev'n so.

But I have notice from our partisans
Within the city that they will stand
by us

If Ludgate can be reach'd by dawn to-
morrow.

Enter one of WYATT'S *men.*

Man. Sir Thomas, I've found this
paper, pray your worship read it ; I
know not my letters ; the old priests
taught me nothing.

Wyatt (reads). "Whosoever will ap-
prehend the traitor Thomas Wyatt shall
have a hundred pounds for reward."

Man. Is that it? That's a big lot of money.

Wyatt. Ay, ay, my friend; not read it? 't is not written

Half plain enough. Give me a piece of paper!

[*Writes* "THOMAS WYATT" *large*. There, any man can read that.

Brett. [Sticks it in his cap. But that's foolhardy.

Wyatt. No! boldness, which will give my followers boldness.

Enter MAX *with a prisoner.*

Man. We found him, your worship, a plundering o' Bishop Winchester's house; he says he's a poor gentleman.

Wyatt. Gentleman, a thief! Go hang him. Shall we make Those that we come to serve our sharpest foes?

Brett. Sir Thomas—

Wyatt. Hang him, I say.

Brett. Wyatt, but now you promised me a boon.

Wyatt. Ay, and I warrant this fine fellow's life.

Brett. Ev'n so; he was my neighbor once in Kent.

He's poor enough, has drunk and gambled out

All that he had, and gentleman he was. We have been glad together; let him live.

Wyatt. He has gambled for his life, and lost, he hangs.

No, no, my word's my word. Take thy poor gentleman!

Gamble thyself at once out of my sight, Or I will dig thee with my dagger.

Away!

Women and children!

Enter a Crowd of WOMEN *and* CHILDREN.

First Woman. O Sir Thomas, Sir Thomas, pray you go away, Sir Thomas, or you'll make the White Tower a black 'un for us this blessed day. He'll be the death on us; and you'll set the Devil's Tower a-spitting, and he'll smash all our bits o' things worse than Philip o' Spain.

Second Woman. Don't ye now go to think that we be for Philip o' Spain.

Third Woman. No, we know that ye be come to kill the Queen, and we'll pray for you all on our bended knees. But

o' God's mercy don't ye kill the Queen here, Sir Thomas; look ye, here's little Dickon, and little Robin, and little Jenny—though she's but a side-cousin:—and all on our knees, we pray you to kill the Queen farther off, Sir Thomas.

Wyatt. My friends, I have not come to kill the Queen

Or here or there: I come to save you all, And I'll go farther off.

Crowd. Thanks, Sir Thomas, we be beholden to you, and we'll pray for you on our bended knees till our lives' end.

Wyatt. Be happy, I am your friend. To Kingston, forward!

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE IV. — ROOM IN THE GATEHOUSE OF WESTMINSTER PALACE.

MARY, ALICE, GARDINER, RENARD, LADIES.

Alice. O madam, if Lord Pembroke should be false?

Mary. No, girl; most brave and loyal, brave and loyal.

His breaking with Northumberland broke Northumberland.

At the park gate he hovers with our guards.

These Kentish ploughmen cannot break the guards.

Enter MESSENGER.

Messenger. Wyatt, your Grace, hath broken thro' the guards

And gone to Ludgate.

Gardiner. Madam, I much fear That all is lost; but we can save your Grace.

The river still is free. I do beseech you, There yet is time, take boat and pass to Windsor.

Mary. I pass to Windsor and I lose my crown.

Gardiner. Pass, then, I pray your Highness, to the Tower.

Mary. I shall but be their prisoner in the Tower.

Cries (without). The traitor! treason! Pembroke!

Ladies. Treason! treason!

Mary. Peace. False to Northumberland, is he false to me?

Bear witness, Renard, that I live and die

The true and faithful bride of Philip —
A sound
Of feet and voices thickening hither —
blows —

Hark, there is battle at the palace gates,
And I will out upon the gallery.

Ladies. No, no, your Grace; see there
the arrows flying.

Mary. I am Harry's daughter, Tudor,
and not fear.

[*Goes out on the gallery.*]

The guards are all driven in, skulk into
corners

Like rabbits to their holes. A gracious
guard

Truly; shame on them they have shut
the gates!

Enter SIR ROBERT SOUTHWELL.

Southwell. The porter, please your
Grace, hath shut the gates
On friend and foe. Your gentlemen-at-
arms,

If this be not your Grace's order, cry
To have the gates set wide again, and
they

With their good battle-axes will do you
right

Against all traitors.

Mary. They are the flower of England;
set the gates wide.

[*Exit SOUTHWELL.*]

Enter COURTENAY.

Courtenay. All lost, all lost, all yield-
ed; a barge, a barge,
The Queen must to the Tower.

Mary. Whence come you, sir?

Courtenay. From Charing Cross; the
rebels broke us there,
And I sped hither with what haste I
might

To save my royal cousin.

Mary. Where is Pembroke?

Courtenay. I left him somewhere in
the thick of it.

Mary. Left him and fled; and thou
that wouldst be King,
And hast nor heart nor honor. I my-
self

Will down into the battle and there
bide

The upshot of my quarrel, or die with
those

That are no cowards and no Courtenays.

Courtenay. I do not love your Grace
should call me coward.

Enter another MESSENGER.

Messenger. Over, your Grace, all
crush'd; the brave Lord William
Thrust him from Ludgate, and the trait-
or flying

To Temple Bar, there by Sir Maurice
Berkeley

Was taken prisoner.

Mary. To the Tower with *him.*

Messenger. 'T is said he told Sir
Maurice there was one

Cognizant of this, and party thereunto,
My Lord of Devon.

Mary. To the Tower with *him!*

Courtenay. O la, the Tower, the Tow-
er, always the Tower,

I shall grow into it — I shall be the
Tower.

Mary. Your Lordship may not have
so long to wait.

Remove him!

Courtenay. La, to whistle out my life,
And carve my coat upon the walls again!

[*Exit COURTENAY guarded.*]

Messenger. Also this Wyatt did con-
fess the Princess

Cognizant thereof, and party thereunto.

Mary. What, whom — whom did you
say?

Messenger. Elizabeth,

Your Royal sister.

Mary. To the Tower with *her!*

My foes are at my feet and I am Queen.

[*GARDINER and her LADIES kneel to
her.*]

Gardiner (rising). There let them lie,
your footstool! (*Aside.*) Can I
strike

Elizabeth? — not now and save the life
Of Devon: if I save him, he and his

Are bound to me — may strike hereafter.
(*Aloud.*) Madam,

What Wyatt said, or what they said he
said,

Cries of the moment and the street —

Mary. He said it.

Gardiner. Your courts of justice will
determine that.

Renard (advancing). I trust by this
your Highness will allow

Some spice of wisdom in my telling
you,

When last we talk'd, that Philip would
not come

Till Guildford Dudley and the Duke of
Suffolk

And Lady Jane had left us.

Mary. They shall die.
Renard. And your so loving sister?
Mary. She shall die.
 My foes are at my feet, and Philip King.
 [Exeunt.]

ACT III.

SCENE I.—THE CONDUIT IN
 GRACE CHURCH.

Painted with the Nine Worthies, among them King Henry VIII. holding a book, on it inscribed "Verbum Dei."

Enter SIR RALPH BAGENHALL and SIR THOMAS STAFFORD.

Bagenhall. A hundred here and hundreds hang'd in Kent.
 The tigress had unsheath'd her nails at last,
 And Renard and the Chancellorsharpen'd them.

In every London street a gibbet stood.
 They are down to-day. Here by this house was one;

The traitor husband dangled at the door,
 And when the traitor wife came out for bread

To still the petty treason there within,
 Her cap would brush his heels.

Stafford. It is Sir Ralph,
 And muttering to himself as heretofore.

Sir, see you aught up yonder?

Bagenhall. I miss something.
 The tree that only bears dead fruit is gone.

Stafford. What tree, sir?

Bagenhall. Well, the tree in Virgil, sir,

That bears not its own apples.

Stafford. What! the gallows?

Bagenhall. Sir, this dead fruit was ripening overmuch,
 And had to be removed lest living Spain
 Should sicken at dead England.

Stafford. Not so dead,
 But that a shock may rouse her.

Bagenhall. I believe
 Sir Thomas Stafford?

Stafford. I am ill disguised.

Bagenhall. Well, are you not in peril here?

Stafford. I think so.
 I came to feel the pulse of England,
 whether

It beats hard at this marriage. Did you see it?

Bagenhall. Stafford, I am a sad man and a serious.

Far liefer had I in my country hall
 Been reading some old book, with mine old hound

Couch'd at my hearth, and mine old flask of wine

Beside me, than have seen it, yet I saw it.

Stafford. Good, was it splendid?

Bagenhall. Ay, if Dukes, and Earls, And Counts, and sixty Spanish cavaliers,
 Some six or seven Bishops, diamonds, pearls,

That royal commonplace too, cloth of gold,

Could make it so.

Stafford. And what was Mary's dress?

Bagenhall. Good faith, I was too sorry for the woman

To mark the dress. She wore red shoes!

Stafford. Red shoes!

Bagenhall. Scarlet, as if her feet were wash'd in blood,

As if she had waded in it.

Stafford. Were your eyes So bashful that you look'd no higher?

Bagenhall. A diamond,
 And Philip's gift, as proof of Philip's love,

Who hath not any for any, — tho' a true one,

Blazed false upon her heart.

Stafford. But this prond Prince —

Bagenhall. Nay, he is King, you know, the King of Naples.

The father ceded Naples, that the son
 Being a King, might wed a Queen — O he

Flamed in brocade — white satin his trunk hose,

Inwrought with silver, — on his neck a collar,

Gold, thick with diamonds; hanging down from this

The Golden Fleece — and round his knee, misplaced,

Our English Garter, studded with great emeralds,

Rubies, I know not what. Have you had enough

Of all this gear?

Stafford. Ay, since you hate the telling it.

How look'd the Queen?

Bagenhall. No fairer for her jewels.
And I could see that as the new-made
couple

Came from the Minster, moving side by
side

Beneath one canopy, ever and anon
She cast on him a vassal smile of love,
Which Philip with a glance of some dis-
taste,

Or so methought, return'd. I may be
wrong, sir.

This marriage will not hold.

Stafford. I think with you.
The King of France will help to break it.

Bagenhall. France!
We once had half of France, and hurl'd
our battles

Into the heart of Spain; but England
now

Is but a ball chuck'd between France
and Spain

His in whose hand she drops; Harry of
Bolingbroke

Had holpen Richard's tottering throne
to stand,

Could Harry have foreseen that all our
nobles

Would perish on the civil slaughter-field,
And leave the people naked to the
crown,

And the crown naked to the people; the
crown

Female, too! Sir, no woman's regimen
Can save us. We are fallen, and as I
think,

Never to rise again.

Stafford. You are too black-blooded.
I'd make a move myself to hinder that:
I know some lusty fellows there in
France.

Bagenhall. You would but make us
weaker, Thomas Stafford.

Wyatt was a good soldier, yet he fail'd,
And strengthen'd Philip.

Stafford. Did not his last breath
Clear Courtenay and the Princess from
the charge

Of being his co-rebels?

Bagenhall. Ay, but then
What such a one as Wyatt says is noth-
ing:

We have no men among us. The new
Lords

Are quieted with their sop of Abbey-
lands,

And ev'n before the Queen's face Gardi-
ner buys them

With Philip's gold. All greed, no faith,
no courage!

Why, ev'n the haughty prince, Nor-
thumberland,

The leader of our Reformation, knelt
And blubber'd like a lad, and on the
scaffold

Recanted, and resold himself to Rome.

Stafford. I swear you do your country
wrong, Sir Ralph.

I know a set of exiles over there,
Dare-devils, that would eat fire and spit
it out

At Philip's beard: they pillage Spain
already.

The French king winks at it. An hour
will come

When they will sweep her from the seas.
No men?

Did not Lord Suffolk die like a true
man?

Is not Lord William Howard a true
man?

Yea, you yourself, altho' you are black-
blooded:

And I, by God, believe myself a man.

Ay, even in the church there is a man —
Cranmer.

Fly, would he not, when all men bade
him fly.

And what a letter he wrote against the
Pope!

There's a brave man, if any.

Bagenhall. Ay; if it hold.
Crowd (coming on). God save their
Graces!

Stafford. Bagenhall, I see
The Tudor green and white. (*Trumpets.*)
They are coming now.

And here's a crowd as thick as herring-
shoals.

Bagenhall. Be limpets to this pillar,
or we are torn

Down the strong wave of brawlers.

Crowd. God save their Graces.

[*Procession of Trumpeters, Javelin-
men, etc.; then Spanish and Flem-
ish Nobles intermingled.*]

Stafford. Worth seeing, Bagenhall!
These black dog-Dons

Garb themselves bravely. Who's the
long-face there,

Looks very Spain of very Spain?

Bagenhall. The Duke
Of Alva, an iron soldier.

Stafford. And the Dutchman,
Now laughing at some jest?

Bagenhall. William of Orange,
William the Silent.

Stafford. Why do they call him so?

Bagenhall. He keeps, they say, some
secret that may cost

Philip his life.

Stafford. But then he looks so merry.

Bagenhall. I cannot tell you why
they call him so.

[*The KING and QUEEN pass, attended
by Peers of the Realm, Officers of
State, etc. Cannon shot off.*

Crowd. Philip and Mary, Philip and
Mary.

Long live the King and Queen, Philip
and Mary.

Stafford. They smile as if content
with one another.

Bagenhall. A smile abroad is oft a
scowl at home.

[*KING and QUEEN passon. Procession.*

First Citizen. I thought this Philip had
been one of those black devils of Spain,
but he hath a yellow beard.

Second Citizen. Not red like Iscariot's.

First Citizen. Like a carrot's, as thou
sayst, and English carrot's better than
Spanish licorice; but I thought he was
a beast.

Third Citizen. Certain I had heard
that every Spaniard carries a tail like a
devil under his trunk hose.

Tailor. Ay, but see what trunk hoses!
Lord! they be fine; I never stitch'd
none such. They make amends for the
tails.

Fourth Citizen. Tut! every Spanish
priest will tell you that all English her-
etics have tails.

Fifth Citizen. Death and the Devil —
if he find I have one —

Fourth Citizen. Lo! thou hast call'd
them up! here they come — a pale horse
for Death and Gardiner for the Devil.

*Enter GARDINER (turning back from the
procession).*

Gardiner. Knave, wilt thou wear thy
cap before the Queen?

Man. My Lord, I stand so squeezed
among the crowd

I cannot lift my hands unto my head.

Gardiner. Knock off his cap there,
some of you about him!

See there be others that can use their
hands.

Thou art one of Wyatt's men?

Man. No, my Lord, no

Gardiner. Thy name, thou knave?

Man. I am nobody, my Lord.

Gardiner (shouting). God's passion!
knave, thy name?

Man. I have ears to hear.

Gardiner. Ay, rascal, if I leave thee
ears to hear.

Find out his name and bring it me (*to
Attendant*).

Attendant. Ay, my Lord.

Gardiner. Knave, thou shalt lose
thine ears and find thy tongue,
And shalt be thankful if I leave thee that.

[*Coming before the Conduit.*
The conduit painted — the nine worthies
— ay!

But then what's here? King Harry
with a scroll.

Ha — Verbum Dei — verbum — word of
God!

God's passion! do you know the knave
that painted it?

Attendant. I do, my Lord.

Gardiner. Tell him to paint it out,
And put some fresh device in lieu of
it —

A pair of gloves, a pair of gloves, sir;
ha?

There is no heresy there.

Attendant. I will, my Lord.

The man shall paint a pair of gloves.
I am sure

(Knowing the man) he wrought it igno-
rantly,

And not from any malice.

Gardiner. Word of God
In English! over this the brainless loons
That cannot spell Esaias from St. Paul,
Make themselves drunk and mad, fly
out and flare

Into rebellions. I'll have their Bibles
burnt.

The Bible is the priest's. Ay! fellow,
what!

Stand staring at me! shout, you gaping
rogue.

Man. I have, my Lord, shouted till
I am hoarse.

Gardiner. What hast thou shouted,
knave?

Man. Long live Queen Mary.

Gardiner. Knave, there be two.
There be both King and Queen,
Philip and Mary. Shout.

Man. Nay, but, my Lord,
The Queen comes first, Mary and Philip.

Gardiner. Shout, then,
Mary and Philip.

Man. Mary and Philip!

Gardiner. Now,
Thou hast shouted for thy pleasure,
shout for mine!

Philip and Mary!

Man. Must it be so, my Lord?

Gardiner. Ay, knave.

Man. Philip and Mary.

Gardiner. I distrust thee.
Thine is a half voice and a lean assent.
What is thy name?

Man. Sanders.

Gardiner. What else?

Man. Zerubbabel.

Gardiner. Where dost thou live?

Man. In Cornhill.

Gardiner. Where, knave, where?

Man. Sign of the Talbot.

Gardiner. Come to me to-morrow. —
Rascal! — this land is like a hill of fire,
One crater opens when another shuts.
But so I get the laws against the heretic,
Spite of Lord Paget and Lord William
Howard,

And others of our Parliament, revived,
I will show fire on my side — stake and
fire —

Sharp work and short. The knaves are
easily cow'd.

Follow their Majesties.

[*Exit. The crowd following.*]

Bagenhall. As proud as Becket.

Stafford. You would not have him
murder'd as Becket was?

Bagenhall. No — murder fathers murder:
but I say

There is no man — there was one woman
with us —

It was a sin to love her married, dead
I cannot choose but love her.

Stafford. Lady Jane?

Crowd (going off). God save their
Graces.

Stafford. Did you see her die?

Bagenhall. No, no; her innocent
blood had blinded me.

You call me too black-blooded — true
enough

Her dark dead blood is in my heart with
mine.

If ever I cry out against the Pope

Her dark dead blood that ever moves
with mine

Will stir the living tongue and make
the cry.

Stafford. Yet doubtless you can tell
me how she died?

Bagenhall. Seventeen — and knew
eight languages — in music
Peerless — her needle perfect, and her
learning

Beyond the churchmen; yet so meek,
so modest,

So wife-like humble to the trivial boy
Mismatch'd with her for policy! I have
heard

She would not take a last farewell of
him,

She fear'd it might unman him for his
end.

She could not be unmann'd — no, nor
outwoman'd —

Seventeen — a rose of grace!

Girl never breathed to rival such a rose;
Rose never blew that equal'd such a
bud.

Stafford. Pray you go on.

Bagenhall. She came upon the scaf-
fold,

And said she was condemn'd to die for
treason;

She had but follow'd the device of those
Her nearest kin: she thought they knew
the laws.

But for herself, she knew but little law,
And nothing of the titles to the crown;

She had no desire for that, and wrung
her hands,

And trusted God would save her thro'
the blood

Of Jesus Christ alone.

Stafford. Pray you go on.

Bagenhall. Then knelt and said the
Miserere Mei —

But all in English, mark you; rose
again,

And, when the headsman pray'd to be
forgiven,

Said, "You will give me my true crown
at last,

But do it quickly"; then all wept but
she,

Who changed not color when she saw
the block,

But ask'd him, childlike: "Will you
take it off

Before I lay me down"? "No, mad-
am," he said,

Gasping; and when her innocent eyes
were bound,

She, with her poor blind hands feeling
— "where is it?"

Where is it?" — You must fancy that
which follow'd,

If you have heart to-do it!

Crowd (in the distance). God save
their Graces!

Stafford. Their-Graces, our disgraces!
God confound them!

Why, she's grown bloodier! when I
last was here,

This was against her conscience — would
be murder!

Bagenhall. The "Thou shalt do no
murder," which God's hand

Wrote on her conscience, Mary rubb'd
out pale —

She could not make it white — and over
that,

Traced in the blackest text of Hell —
"Thou shalt!"

And sign'd it — Mary!

Stafford. Philip and the Pope
Must have sign'd too. I hear this Leg-
ate's coming

To bring us absolution from the Pope.
The Lords and Commons will bow down
before him —

You are of the house? what will you
do, Sir Ralph?

Bagenhall. And why should I be
bolder than the rest,

Or honest than all?

Stafford. But, sir, if I —
And over sea they say this state of yours
Hath no more mortise than a tower of
cards;

And that a puff would do it — then if I
And others made that move I touch'd
upon,

Back'd by the power of France, and
landing here,

Came with a sudden splendor, shout,
and show,

And dazzled men and deafen'd by some
bright

Loud venture, and the people so un-
quiet —

And I the race of murder'd Bucking-
ham —

Not for myself, but for the kingdom —
Sir,

I trust that you would fight along with
us.

Bagenhall. No; you would fling your
lives into the gulf.

Stafford. But if this Philip, as he's
like to do,

Left Mary a wife-widow here alone,

Set up a viceroy, sent his myriads hither
To seize upon the forts and fleet, and
make us

A Spanish province; would you not
fight then?

Bagenhall. I think I should fight
then.

Stafford. I am sure of it.
Hist! there's the face coming on here
of one

Who knows me. I must leave you.
Fare you well,

You'll hear of me again.

Bagenhall. Upon the scaffold.
[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II. — ROOM IN WHITEHALL
PALACE.

MARY. *Enter* PHILIP and CARDINAL
POLE.

Pole. Ave Maria, gratia plena, Bene-
dicta tu in mulieribus.

Mary. Loyal and royal cousin, hum-
blest thanks.

Had you a pleasant voyage up the river?

Pole. We had your royal barge, and
that same chair,

Or rather throne of purple, on the deck.
Our silver cross sparkled before the prow,
The ripples twinkled at their diamond-
dance,

The boats that follow'd, were as glow-
ing-gay

As regal gardens; and your flocks of
swans,

As fair and white as angels; and your
shores

Wore in mine eyes the green of Para-
dise.

My foreign friends, who dream'd us
blanketed

In ever-closing fog, were much amazed
To find as fair a sun as might have flash'd
Upon their Lake of Garda, fire the
Thames;

Our voyage by sea was all but miracle;
And here the river flowing from the sea,
Not toward it (for they thought not of
our tides),

Seem'd as a happy miracle to make
glide —

In quiet — home your banish'd coun-
tryman.

Mary. We heard that you were sick
in Flanders, cousin.

Pole. A dizziness.

Mary. And how came you round again?

Pole. The scarlet thread of Rahab saved her life;

And mine, a little letting of the blood.

Mary. Well? now?

Pole. Ay, cousin, as the heathen giant

Had but to touch the ground, his force return'd—

Thus, after twenty years of banishment, feeling my native land beneath my foot, I said thereto: "Ah, native land of mine,

Thou art much beholden to this foot of mine,

That hastes with full commission from the Pope

To absolve thee from thy guilt of heresy. Thou hast disgraced me and attained me,

And mark'd me ev'n as Cain, and I return

As Peter, but to bless thee: make me well."

Methinks the good land heard me, for to-day

My heart beats twenty, when I see you, cousin.

Ah, gentle cousin, since your Herod's death,

How oft hath Peter knock'd at Mary's gate!

And Mary would have risen and let him in,

But, Mary, there were those within the house

Who would not have it.

Mary. True, good cousin Pole; and there were also those without the house

Who would not have it.

Pole. I believe so, cousin. State-policy and church-policy are con-joint,

But Janus-faces looking diverse ways. I fear the Emperor much misvalued me.

But all is well; 't was ev'n the will of God,

Who, waiting till the time had ripened, now,

Makes me his mouth of holy greeting. "Hail,

Daughter of God, and saver of the faith, Sit benedictus fructus ventris tui!"

Mary. Ah, heaven!

Pole. Unwell, your grace?

Mary. No, cousin, happy— Happy to see you; never yet so happy Since I was crown'd.

Pole. Sweet cousin, you forget That long low minster where you gave your hand

To this great Catholic King.

Philip. Well said, Lord Legate.

Mary. Nay, not well said; I thought of you, my liege,

Ev'n as I spoke.

Philip. Ay, Madam; my Lord Paget Waits to present our Council to the Legate.

Sit down here, all; Madam, between us you.

Pole. Lo, now you are enclosed with boards of cedar,

Our little sister of the Song of Songs! You are doubly fenced and shielded sitting here

Between the two most high-set thrones on earth,

The Emperor's highness happily symbol'd by

The King your husband, the Pope's Holiness

By mine own self.

Mary. True, cousin, I am happy. When will you that we summon both our houses

To take this absolution from your lips, And be regather'd to the Papal fold?

Pole. In Britain's calendar the brightest day

Beheld our rough forefathers break their Gods,

And clasp the faith in Christ; but after that

Might not St. Andrew's be her happiest day?

Mary. Then these shall meet upon St. Andrew's day.

Enter PAGET, who presents the Council Dumb show.

Pole. I am an old man wearied with my journey, Ev'n with my joy. Permit me to withdraw.

To Lambeth?

Philip. Ay, Lambeth has ousted Cranmer.

It was not meet the heretic swine should live

In Lambeth.

Mary. There or anywhere, or at all.

Philip. We have had it swept and garnish'd after him.

Pole. Not for the seven devils to enter in?

Philip. No, for we trust they parted in the swine.

Pole. True, and I am the Angel of the Pope.

Farewell, your Graces.

Philip. Nay, not here — to me ; I will go with you to the waterside.

Pole. Not be my Charon to the counter side?

Philip. No, my Lord Legate, the Lord Chancellor goes.

Pole. And unto no dead world ; but Lambeth palace,

Henceforth a centre of the living faith.

[*Exeunt* PHILIP, POLE, PAGET, *etc.*

Manet MARY.

Mary. He hath awaked ! he hath awaked !

He stirs within the darkness !

Oh, Philip, husband ! now thy love to mine

Will cling more close, and those bleak manners thaw,

That make me shamed and tongue-tied in my love.

The second Prince of Peace —

The great unborn defender of the Faith, Who will avenge me of mine enemies —

He comes, and my star rises.

The stormy Wyatts and Northumberlands,

The proud ambitions of Elizabeth,

And all her fieriest partisans — are pale Before my star !

The light of this new learning wanes and dies :

The ghosts of Luther and Zuinglius fade Into the deathless hell which is their doom

Before my star !

His sceptre shall go forth from Ind to Ind !

His sword shall hew the heretic peoples down !

His faith shall clothe the world that will be his,

Like universal air and sunshine ! Open, Ye everlasting gates ! The King is here ! —

My star, my son !

[*Enter* PHILIP, DUKE OF ALVA, *etc.*

Oh, Philip, come with me ;

Good news have I to tell you, news to make

Both of us happy — ay the Kingdom too.

Nay come with me — one moment ;

Philip (to ALVA). More than that : There was one here of late — William the Silent

They call him — he is free enough in talk,

But tells me nothing. You will be, we trust,

Some time the viceroy of those provinces —

He must deserve his surname better.

Alva. Ay, sir ; Inherit the Great Silence.

Philip. True ; the provinces Are hard to rule and must be hardly

ruled ;

Most fruitful, yet, indeed, an empty rind, All hollow'd out with stinging heresies ;

And for their heresies, Alva, they will fight :

You must break them or they break you.

Alva (proudly). The first.

Philip. Good ! Well, Madam, this new happiness of mine. [*Exeunt.*

Enter THREE PAGES.

First Page. News, mates ! a miracle ! a miracle ! news !

The bells must ring ; Te Deums must be sung ;

The Queen hath felt the motion of her babe !

Second Page. Ay ; but see here !

First Page. See what ?

Second Page. This paper, Dickon. I found it fluttering at the palace gates : —

“ The Queen of England is delivered of a dead dog ! ”

Third Page. These are the things that madden her. Fie upon it.

First Page. Ay ; but I hear she hath a dropsy, lad

Or a high-dropsy, as the doctors call it.

Third Page. Fie on her dropsy, so she have a dropsy !

I know that she was ever sweet to me.

First Page. For thou and thine are Roman to the core.

Third Page. So thou and thine must be. Take heed !

First Page. Not I,

And whether this flash of news be false
or true,

So the wine run, and there be revelry,
Content am I. Let all the steeples
clash,

Till the sun dance, as upon Easter Day.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE III. — GREAT HALL IN
WHITEHALL.

[*At the far end a dais. On this three chairs, two under one canopy for MARY and PHILIP, another on the right of these for POLE. Under the dais on POLE'S side, ranged along the wall, sit all the Spiritual Peers, and along the wall opposite, all the Temporal. The Commons on cross benches in front, a line of approach to the dais between them. In the foreground SIR RALPH BAGENHALL and other MEMBERS of the COMMONS.*]

First Member. St. Andrew's day; sit close, sit close, we are friends.

Is reconciled the word? the Pope again?
It must be thus; and yet, cocksbody!
how strange

That Gardiner, once so one with all of
us

Against this foreign marriage, should
have yielded

So utterly! — strange! but stranger
still that he,

So fierce against the Headship of the
Pope,

Should play the second actor in this
pageant

That brings him in; such a chameleon
he!

Second Member. This Gardiner turn'd
his coat in Henry's time;

The serpent that hath slough'd will
slough again.

Third Member. Tut, then we all are
serpents.

Second Member. Speak for yourself.

Third Member. Ay, and for Gardi-
ner! being English citizen,
How should he bear a bridegroom out
of Spain?

The Queen would have him! being
English churchman,

How should he bear the headship of the
Pope?

The Queen would have it! Statesmen
that are wise

Shape a necessity, as the sculptor clay,
To their own model.

Second Member. Statesmen that are
wise

Take truth herself for model, what say
you?

[*To SIR RALPH BAGENHALL.*]

Bagenhall. We talk and talk.

First Member. Ay, and what use to
talk?

Philip's no sudden alien — the Queen's
husband,

He's here, and king, or will be, — yet
cocksbody!

So hated here! I watch'd a hive of late;
My seven-years' friend was with me, my
young boy;

Out crept a wasp, with half the swarm
behind.

“Philip,” says he. I had to cuff the
rogue

For infant treason.

Third Member. But they say that
bees,

If any creeping life invade their hive
To gross to be thrust out, will build
him round,

And bind him in from harming of their
combs.

And Philip by these articles is bound
From stirring hand or foot to wrong the
realm.

Second Member. By bonds of bees-
wax, like your creeping thing;

But your wise bees had stung him first
to death.

Third Member. Hush, hush!

You wrong the Chancellor: the clauses
added

To that same treaty which the emperor
sent us

Were mainly Gardiner's: that no fore-
igner

Hold office in the household, fleet, forts,
army;

That if the Queen should die without a
child,

The bond between the kingdoms be dis-
solved;

That Philip should not mix us any way
With his French wars —

Second Member. Ay, ay, but what se-
curity,

Good sir, for this, if Philip —

Third Member. Peace — the Queen,
Philip, and Pole.

[*All rise, and stand.*]

Enter MARY, PHILIP, and POLE.

[GARDINER conducts them to the three chairs of state. PHILIP sits on the QUEEN'S left, POLE on her right.]

Gardiner. Our short-lived sun, before his winter plunge,
Laughs at the last red leaf, and Andrew's Day.

Mary. Should not this day be held in after years

More solemn than of old ?

Philip. Madam, my wish Echoes your Majesty's.

Pole. It shall be so.

Gardiner. Mine echoes both your Graces' ; (*aside*) but the Pope — Can we not have the Catholic church as well

Without as with the Italian ? if we cannot,

Why then the Pope.

My lords of the upper house, And ye, my masters, of the lower house, Do ye stand fast by that which ye resolved ?

Voices. We do.

Gardiner. And be you all one mind to supplicate The Legate here for pardon, and acknowledgment

The primacy of the Pope ?

Voices. We are all one mind.

Gardiner. Then must I play the vassal to this Pole. [*Aside.*

[*He draws a paper from under his robes and presents it to the KING and QUEEN, who look through it and return it to him ; then ascends a tribune and reads.*

We, the Lords Spiritual and Temporal, And Commons here in Parliament assembled,

Presenting the whole body of this realm Of England, and dominions of the same, Do make most humble suit unto your Majesties,

In our own name and that of all the state,

That by your gracious means and intercession

Our supplication be exhibited To the Lord Cardinal Pole, sent here as Legate

From our most holy father Julius, Pope, And from the apostolic see of Rome ;

And do declare our penitence and grief

For our long schism and disobedience, Either in making laws and ordinances Against the Holy Father's primacy, Or else by doing or by speaking aught Which might impugn or prejudice the same ;

By this our supplication promising, As well for our own selves as all the realm,

That now we be and ever shall be quick, Under and with your Majesties' authorities,

To do to the utmost all that in us lies Towards the abrogation and repeal Of all such laws and ordinances made ; Whereon we humbly pray your Majesties,

As persons undefiled with our offence, So to set forth this humble suit of ours That we the rather by your intercession May from the apostolic see obtain, Thro' this most reverend Father, absolute,

And full release from danger of all censures

Of Holy Church that we be fall'n into, So that we may, as children penitent, Be once again received into the bosom And unity of Universal Church ; And that this noble realm thro' after years

May in this unity and obedience Unto the holy see and reigning Pope Serve God and both your Majesties.

Voices. Amen. [*All sit.*

[*He again presents the petition to the KING and QUEEN, who hand it reverentially to POLE.*

Pole (sitting). This is the loveliest day that ever smiled

On England. All her breath should, incense like,

Rise to the heavens in grateful praise of Him

Who now recalls her to his ancient fold. Lo ! once again God to this realm hath given

A token of His more especial Grace ; For as this people were the first of all The islands call'd into the dawning church

Out of the dead, deep night of heathendom,

So now are these the first whom God hath given

Grace to repent and sorrow for their schism ;

And if your penitence be not mockery,
Oh how the blessed angels who rejoice
Over one saved do triumph at this
hour

In the reborn salvation of a land
So noble. *[A pause.]*

For ourselves we do protest
That our commission is to heal, not
harm ;

We come not to condemn, but recon-
cile ;

We come not to compel, but call again ;
We come not to destroy, but edify ;
Nor yet to question things already done ;
These are forgiven — matters of the
past —

And range with jetsam and with offal
thrown

Into the blind sea of forgetfulness.

[A pause.]
Ye have reversed the attainder laid
on us

By him who sack'd the house of God ;
and we,

Amplier than any field on our poor
earth

Can render thanks in fruit for being
sown,

Do here and now repay you sixty-fold,
A hundred, yea, a thousand thousand-
fold,

With heaven for earth.

[Rising and stretching forth his hands. All kneel but SIR RALPH BAGENHALL, who rises and remains standing.]

The Lord who hath redeem'd us
With his own blood, and wash'd us from
our sins,

To purchase for Himself a stainless
bride ;

He, whom the Father hath appointed
Head

Of all his church, He by His mercy ab-
solve you ! *[A pause.]*

And we by that authority Apostolic
Given unto us, his Legate, by the Pope,
Our Lord and Holy Father, Julius,
God's Vicar and Vicegerent upon earth,
Do here absolve you and deliver you
And every one of you, and all the realm
And its dominions from all heresy,
All schism, and from all and every cen-
sure,

Judgment, and pain accruing there-
upon ;

And also we restore you to the bosom

And unity of Universal Church.

[Turning to GARDINER.]
Our letters of commission will declare
this plainlier.

[QUEEN heard sobbing. Cries of Amen! Amen! Some of the members embrace one another. All but SIR RALPH BAGENHALL pass out into the neighboring chapel whence is heard the Te Deum.]

Bagenhall. We strove against the pa-
pacy from the first,
In William's time, in our first Edward's
time,

And in my master Henry's time ; but
now,

The unity of Universal Church,
Mary would have it ; and this Gardiner
follows ;

The unity of Universal Hell,
Philip would have it ; and this Gardiner
follows !

A Parliament of imitative apes !

Sheep at the gap which Gardiner takes,
who not

Believes the Pope, nor any of them be-
lieve —

These spaniel-Spaniard English of the
time,

Who rub their fawning noses in the
dust,

For that is Philip's gold-dust, and adore
This Vicar of their Vicar. Would I had
been

Born Spaniard ! I had held my head
up then.

I am ashamed that I am Bagenhall,
English.

Enter OFFICER.

Officer. Sir Ralph Bagenhall.

Bagenhall. What of that ?

Officer. You were the one sole man in
either house

Who stood upright when both the houses
fell.

Bagenhall. The houses fell !

Officer. I mean the houses knelt
Before the Legate.

Bagenhall. Do not scrimp your
phrase,

But stretch it wider ; say when England
fell.

Officer. I say you were the one sole
man who stood.

Bagenhall. I am the one sole man in
either house,

Perchance in England, loves her like a son.

Officer. Well, you one man, because you stood upright,

Her Grace the Queen commands you to the Tower.

Bagenhall. As traitor, or as heretic, or for what ?

Officer. If any man in any way would be

The one man he shall be so to his cost.

Bagenhall. What ! will she have my head ?

Officer. A round fine likelier.

Your pardon. [*Calling to Attendant.*

By the river to the Tower.
[*Exeunt.*

SCENE IV. — WHITEHALL. A ROOM IN THE PALACE.

MARY, GARDINER, POLE, PAGET, BONNER, *etc.*

Mary. The king and I, my Lords, now that all traitors Against our royal state have lost the heads

Wherewith they plotted in their treasonous malice,

Have talk'd together, and are well agreed

That those old statutes touching Lollardism

To bring the heretic to the stake, should be

No longer a dead letter, but requicken'd.

One of the Council. Why, what hath fluster'd Gardiner ? how he rubs His forelock.

Paget. I have changed a word with him

In coming, and may change a word again.

Gardiner. Madam, your Highness is our sun, the King

And you together our two suns in one ; And so the beams of both may shine upon us,

The faith that seem'd to droop will feel your light,

Lift head, and flourish ; yet not light alone,

There must be heat — there must be heat enough

To scorch and wither heresy to the root.

For what saith Christ ? "Compel them to come in."

And what saith Paul ? "I would they were cut off

That trouble you." Let the dead letter live !

Trace it in fire, that all the louts to whom

Their A B C is darkness, clowns and grooms

May read it ! so you quash rebellion too, For heretic and traitor are all one :

Two vipers of one breed — an amphibœna,

Each end a sting : Let the dead letter burn !

Paget. Yet there be some disloyal Catholics,

And many heretics loyal ; heretic throats

Cried no God-bless-her to the Lady Jane,

But shouted in Queen Mary. So there be Some traitor-heretic, there is axe and cord.

To take the lives of others that are loyal, And by the churchman's pitiless doom of fire

Were but a thankless policy in the crown,

Ay, and against itself ; for there are many.

Mary. If we could burn out heresy, my Lord Paget,

We reck not tho' we lost this crown of England —

Ay ! tho' it were ten Englands !

Gardiner. Right, your Grace.

Paget, you are all for this poor life of ours,

And care but little for the life to be.

Paget. I have some time, for curiosity, my Lord,

Watch'd children playing at *their* life to be,

And cruel at it, killing helpless flies ;

Such is our time — all times for aught I know.

Gardiner. We kill the heretics that sting the soul —

They, with right reason, flies that prick the flesh.

Paget. They had not reach'd right reason ; little children !

They kill'd but for their pleasure and the power

They felt in killing.

Gardiner. A spice of Satan, ha !
Why, good ! what then ? granted !—we
are fallen creatures ;

Look to your Bible, Paget ! we are
fallen.

Paget. I am but of the laity, my Lord
Bishop,
And may not read your Bible, yet I
found

One day, a wholesome scripture, “ Little
children,
Love one another.”

Gardiner. Did you find a scripture,
“ I come not to bring peace but a sword ” ?
The sword

Is in her Grace’s hand to smite with.
Paget,

You stand up here to fight for heresy,
You are more than guess’d at as a heretic,

And on the steep-up track of the true
faith

Your lapses are far seen.

Paget. The faultless Gardiner !

Mary. You brawl beyond the question ;
speak, Lord Legate.

Pole. Indeed, I cannot follow with
your Grace,

Rather would say — the shepherd doth
not kill

The sheep that wander from his flock,
but sends

His careful dog to bring them to the
fold.

Look to the Netherlands, wherein have
been

Such holocausts of heresy ! to what end ?
For yet the faith is not established there.

Gardiner. The end’s not come.

Pole. No — nor this way will come,
Seeing there lie two ways to every end,
A better and a worse — the worse is
here

To persecute, because to persecute
Makes a faith hated, and is furthermore

No perfect witness of a perfect faith
In him who persecutes : when men are
tost

On tides of strange opinion, and not sure
Of their own selves, they are wroth with
their own selves,

And thence with others ; then, who
lights the fagot ?

Not the full faith, no, but the lurking
doubt.

Old Rome, that first made martyrs in
the Church,

Trembled for her own gods, for these
were trembling —

But when did our Rome tremble ?

Paget. Did she not
In Henry’s time and Edward’s ?

Pole. What, my Lord !
The Church on Peter’s rock ? never ! I
have seen

A pine in Italy that cast its shadow
Athwart a cataract ; firm stood the
pine —

The cataract shook the shadow. To my
mind,

The cataract typed the headlong plunge
and fall

Of heresy to the pit : the pine was Rome.
You see, my Lords,

It was the shadow of the Church that
trembled ;

Your church was but the shadow of a
church,

Wanting the triple mitre.

Gardiner (muttering). Here be tropes.

Pole. And tropes are good to clothe a
naked truth,

And make it look more seemly.

Gardiner. Tropes again !

Pole. You are hard to please. Then
without tropes, my Lord,

An overmuch severeness, I repeat,
When faith is wavering makes the wa-
verer pass

Into more settled hatred of the doctrines
Of those who rule, which hatred by and
by

Involves the ruler (thus there springs to
light

That Centaur of a monstrous Common
weal,

The traitor-heretic) then tho’ some may
quail,

Yet others are that dare the stake and
fire,

And their strong torment bravely borne,
begets

An admiration and an indignation,
And hot desire to imitate ; so the plague
Of schism spreads ; were there but three

or four

Of these misleaders, yet I would not
say

Burn ! and we cannot burn whole towns ;
they are many,

As my Lord Paget says.

Gardiner. Yet, my Lord Cardinal —

Pole. I am your Legate ; please you
let me finish.

Methinks that under our Queen's regi-
 men
 We might go softlier than with crimson
 rowel
 And streaming lash. When Herod-Henry
 first
 Began to batter at your English Church,
 This was the cause, and hence the judg-
 ment on her.
 She seethed with such adulteries, and
 the lives
 Of many among your churchmen were
 so foul
 That heaven wept and earth blush'd.
 I would advise
 That we should thoroughly cleanse the
 Church within
 Before these bitter statutes be requick-
 en'd.
 So after that when she once more is seen
 White as the light, the spotless bride
 of Christ,
 Like Christ himself on Tabor, possibly
 The Lutheran may be won to her again ;
 Till when, my Lords, I counsel tolerance.
Gardiner. What, if a mad dog bit
 your hand, my Lord,
 Would you not chop the bitten finger
 off,
 Lest your whole body should madden
 with the poison ?
 I would not, were I Queen, tolerate the
 heretic,
 No, not an hour. The ruler of a land
 Is bounden by his power and place to see
 His people be not poison'd. Tolerate
 them !
 Why ? do they tolerate you ? Nay,
 many of them
 Would burn — have burnt each other ;
 call they not
 The one true faith, a loathsome idol-
 worship ?
 Beware, Lord Legate, of a heavier crime
 Than heresy is itself ; beware I say
 Lest men accuse you of indifference
 To all faiths, all religion ; for you know
 Right well that you yourself have been
 supposed
 Tainted with Lutheranism in Italy.
Pole (angered). But you, my Lord,
 beyond all supposition,
 In clear and open day were congruent
 With that vile Cranmer in the accursed
 lie
 Of good Queen Catherine's divorce — the
 spring

Of all those evils that have flow'd upon
 us ;
 For you yourself have truckled to the
 tyrant,
 And done your best to bastardize our
 Queen,
 For which God's righteous judgment fell
 upon you
 In your five years of imprisonment, my
 Lord,
 Under young Edward. Who so bolster'd
 up
 The gross King's headship of the Church,
 or more
 Denied the Holy Father !
Gardiner. Ha ! what ! eh ?
 But you, my Lord, a polish'd gentleman,
 A bookman, flying from the heat and
 tussle,
 You lived among your vines and oranges,
 In your soft Italy yonder ! You were
 sent for,
 You were appeal'd to, but you still pre-
 ferr'd
 Your learned leisure. As for what I
 did
 I suffer'd and repented. You, Lord Leg-
 ate
 And Cardinal-Deacon, have not now to
 learn
 That ev'n St. Peter in his time of fear
 Denied his Master, ay, and thrice, my
 Lord.
Pole. But not for five and twenty
 years, my Lord.
Gardiner. Ha ! good ! it seems then
 I was summon'd hither
 But to be mock'd and baited. Speak,
 friend Bonner,
 And tell this learned Legate he lacks
 zeal.
 The Church's evil is not as the King's,
 Cannot be heal'd by stroking. The mad
 bite
 Must have the cautery — tell him — and
 at once.
 What wouldst thou do hadst thou his
 power, thou
 That layest so long in heretic bonds with
 me.
 Wouldst thou not burn and blast them
 root and branch ?
Bonner. Ay, after you, my Lord.
Gardiner. Nay, God's passion, before
 me ! speak.
Bonner. I am on fire until I see them
 flame.

Gardiner. Ay, the psalm - singing
weavers, cobblers, scum —
But this most noble prince Plantagenet,
Our good Queen's cousin — dallying over
seas

Even when his brother's, nay, his noble
mother's,

Head fell —

Pole. Peace, mad man !
Thou stirrest up a grief thou canst not
fathom.

Thou Christian Bishop, thou Lord Chan-
cellor

Of England ! no more rein upon thine
anger

Than any child ! Thou mak'st me much
ashamed

That I was for a moment wroth at
thee.

Mary. I come for counsel and ye give
me feuds,

Like dogs that set to watch their mas-
ter's gate,

Fall, when the thief is ev'n within the
walls,

To worrying one another. My Lord
Chancellor,

You have an old trick of offending us ;
And but that you are art and part with
us

In purging heresy, well we might, for
this

Your violence and much roughness to
the Legate,

Have shut you from our counsels. Coun-
in Pole,

You are fresh from brighter lands. Re-
tire with me.

His highness and myself (so you allow
us)

Will let you learn in peace and privacy
What power this cooler sun of England
hath

In breeding Godless vermin. And pray
Heaven

That you may see according to our sight.
Come, cousin.

[*Exeunt* QUEEN and POLE, etc.]

Gardiner. Pole has the Plantagenet
face,

But not the force made them our mighti-
est kings.

Fine eyes — but melancholy, irresolute —
A fine beard, Bonner, a very full fine
beard.

But a weak mouth, an indeterminate —
ha ?

Bonner. Well, a weak mouth, pei-
chance.

Gardiner. And not like thine
To gorge a heretic whole, roasted or
raw.

Bonner. I'd do my best, my Lord ;
but yet the Legate

Is here as Pope and Master of the Church,
And if he go not with you —

Gardiner. Tut, Master Bishop,
Our bashful Legate, saw'st not how he
flush'd ?

Touch him upon his old heretical talk,
He'll burn a diocese to prove his ortho-
doxy.

And let him call me truckler. In those
times,

Thou knowest we had to dodge, or duck,
or die ;

I kept my head for use of Holy Church ;
And see you, we shall have to dodge
again,

And let the Pope trample our rights, and
plunge

His foreign fist into our island Church
To plump the leaner pouch of Italy.

For a time, for a time.

Why ? that these statutes may be put
in force,

And that his fan may thoroughly purge
his floor.

Bonner. So then you hold the Pope —
Gardiner. I hold the Pope !

What do I hold him ? what do I hold
the Pope ?

Come, come, the morsel stuck — this
Cardinal's fault —

I have gulpt it down. I am wholly for
the Pope,

Utterly and altogether for the Pope,
The Eternal Peter of the changeless
chair,

Crown'd slave of slaves, and mitred king
of kings,

God upon earth ! what more ? what
would you have ?

Hence, let's be gone.

[*Enter* USHER.]

Usher. Well that you be not gone,
My Lord. The Queen, most wroth at
first with you,

Is now content to grant you full forgive-
ness,

So that you crave full pardon of the
Legate.

I am sent to fetch you.

Gardiner. Doth Pole yield, sir, ha !
Did you hear 'em ? were you by ?

Usher. I cannot tell you,
His bearing is so courtly-delicate ;
And yet methinks he falters : their two
Graces

Do so dear-cousin and royal-cousin him,
So press on him the duty which as Legate
He owes himself, and with such royal
smiles —

Gardiner. Smiles that burn men.
Bonner, it will be carried.

He falters, ha ? 'fore God we change and
change ;

Men now are bow'd and old, the doctors
tell you,

At threescore years ; then if we change
at all

We needs must do it quickly ; it is an
age

Of brief life, and brief purpose, and
brief patience,

As I have shown to-day. I am sorry
for it

If Pole be like to turn. Our old friend
Cranmer,

Your more especial love, hath turn'd so
often,

He knows not where he stands, which,
if this pass,

We two shall have to teach him ; let
'em look to it,

Cranmer and Hooper, Ridley and Lati-
mer,

Rogers and Ferrar, for their time is
come,

Their hour is hard at hand, their “ dies
Irae,”

Their “ dies Illa,” which will test their
sect.

I feel it but a duty — you will find in it
Pleasure as well as duty, worthy Bon-
ner, —

To test their sect. Sir, I attend the
Queen

To crave most humble pardon — of her
most

Royal, Infallible, Papal Legate-cousin.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE V. — WOODSTOCK.

ELIZABETH, LADY IN WAITING.

Lady. The colors of our Queen are
green and white,
These fields are only green, they make
me gape.

Elizabeth. There 's whitethorn, girl.

Lady. Ay, for an hour in May.
But court is always May, buds out in
masks,

Breaks into feather'd merriments, and
flowers

In silken pageants. Why do they keep
us here ?

Why still suspect your Grace ?

Elizabeth. Hard upon both.

[*Writes on the window with a diamond.*]

Much suspected, of me
Nothing proven can be,
Quoth Elizabeth, prisoner.

Lady. What hath your Highness
written ?

Elizabeth. A true rhyme.

Lady. Cut with a diamond ; so to
last like truth.

Elizabeth. Ay, if truth last.

Lady. But truth, they say, will out,
So it must last. It is not like a word,
That comes and goes in uttering.

Elizabeth. Truth, a word !
The very Truth and very Word are
one.

But truth of story, which I glanced at,
girl,

Is like a word that comes from olden
days,

And passes thro' the peoples : every
tongue

Alters it passing, till it spells and speaks
Quite other than at first.

Lady. I do not follow.

Elizabeth. How many names in the
long sweep of time

That so foreshortens greatness, may but
hang

On the chance mention of some fool that
once

Brake bread with us, perhaps ; and my
poor chronicle

Is but of glass. Sir Henry Bedingfield
May split it for a spite.

Lady. God grant it last,
And witness to your Grace's innocence,
Till doomsday melt it.

Elizabeth. Or a second fire,
Like that which lately crackled under-
foot

And in this very chamber, fuse the glass,
And char us back again into the dust

We spring from. Never peacock against
rain

Scream'd as you did for water.

Lady. And I got it.

I woke Sir Henry — and he's true to
you —

I read his honest horror in his eyes.

Elizabeth. Or true to you?

Lady. Sir Henry Bedingfield!

I will have no man true to me, your
Grace,

But one that pares his nails; to me?
the clown!

For, like his cloak, his manners want
the nap

And gloss of court; but of this fire he
says,

Nay swears, it was no wicked wilfulness,
Only a natural chance.

Elizabeth. A chance — perchance
One of those wicked wilfuls that men
make,

Nor shame to call it nature. Nay, I
know

They hunt my blood. Save for my
daily range

Among the pleasant fields of Holy Writ
I might despair. But there hath some
one come;

The house is all in movement. Hence,
and see. [*Exit LADY.*]

Milkmaid (singing without).

Shame upon you, Robin,
Shame upon you now!

Kiss me would you? with my hands
Milking the cow?

Daisies grow again,

Kingcups blow again,

And you came and kiss'd me milking the cow.

Robin came behind me,

Kiss'd me well I vow;

Cuff him could I? with my hands

Milking the cow?

Swallows fly again,

Cuckoos cry again,

And you came and kiss'd me milking the cow.

Come, Robin, Robin,

Come and kiss me now;

Help it can I? with my hands

Milking the cow?

Ringdoves coo again,

All things woo again,

Come behind and kiss me milking the cow!

Elizabeth. Right honest and red-
cheek'd; Robin was violent,

And she was crafty — a sweet violence,

And a sweet craft. I would I were a
milkmaid,

To sing, love, marry, churn, brew, bake,
and die,

Then have my simple headstone by the
church,

And all things lived and ended honestly.

I could not if I would. I am Harry's
daughter:

Gardiner would have my head. They
are not sweet,

The violence and the craft that do divide
The world of nature; what is weak
must lie;

The lion needs but roar to guard his
young;

The lapwing lies, says "here" when
they are there.

Threaten the child; "I'll scourge you
if you did it."

What weapon hath the child, save his
soft tongue,

To say "I did not"? and my rod's the
block.

I never lay my head upon the pillow
But that I think, "Wilt thou lie there
to-morrow?"

How oft the falling axe, that never
fell,

Hath shock'd me back into the daylight
truth

That it may fall to-day! Those damp,
black, dead

Nights in the Tower; dead — with the
fear of death —

Too dead ev'n for a death-watch! Toll
of a bell,

Stroke of a clock, the scurrying of a
rat

Affrighted me, and then delighted me,
For there was life — And there was life
in death —

The little murder'd princes, in a pale
light,

Rose hand in hand, and whisper'd,
"come away,

The civil wars are gone forevermore:

Thou last of all the Tudors, come away,
With us is peace!" The last? It was
a dream;

I must not dream, not wink, but watch.
She has gone,

Maid Marian to her Robin — by and by
Both happy! a fox may filch a hen by

night,
And make a morning outcry in the yard;

But there's no Renard here to "catch
her tripping."

Catch me who can; yet, sometime I
have wish'd

That I were caught, and kill'd away at
once

Out of the flutter. The gray rogue,
Gardiner,

Went on his knees, and pray'd me to confess

In Wyatt's business, and to cast myself
Upon the good Queen's mercy; ay,
when, my Lord?

God save the Queen. My jailer —

Enter SIR HENRY BEDINGFIELD.

Bedingfield. One, whose bolts,
That jail you from free life, bar you
from death.

There haunt some Papist ruffians here-
about

Would murder you.

Elizabeth. I thank you heartily, sir,
But I am royal, tho' your prisoner,
And God hath blest or cursed me with
a nose —

Your boots are from the horses.

Bedingfield. Ay, my Lady.
When next there comes a missive from
the Queen

It shall be all my study for one hour
To rose and lavender my horsiness,
Before I dare to glance upon your Grace.

Elizabeth. A missive from the Queen:
last time she wrote,
I had like to have lost my life: it takes
my breath:

O God, sir, do you look upon your boots,
Are you so small a man? Help me:
what think you,

Is it life or death?

Bedingfield. I thought not on my
boots;

The devil take all boots were ever made
Since man went barefoot. See, I lay it
here,

For I will come no nearer to your Grace;

[Laying down the letter.]

And whether it bring you bitter news
or sweet,

And God have given your Grace a nose,
or not,

I'll help you, if I may.

Elizabeth. Your pardon, then;
it is the heat and narrowness of the
cage

That makes the captive testy; with free
wing

The world were all one Araby. Leave
me now,

Will you, companion to myself, sir?

Bedingfield. Will I?
With most exceeding willingness, I will;
You know I never come till I be call'd.

[Exit.]

Elizabeth. It lies there folded: is
there venom in it?

A snake — and if I touch it, it may sting.
Come, come, the worst!

Best wisdom is to know the worst at
once. *[Reads:]*

"It is the King's wish that you
should wed Prince Philibert of Savoy.
You are to come to Court on the in-
stant; and think of this in your com-
ing. "MARY THE QUEEN."

Think! I have many thoughts;

I think there may be birdlime here for
me;

I think they fain would have me from
the realm;

I think the Queen may never bear a
child;

I think that I may be sometime the
Queen,

Then, Queen indeed: no foreign prince
or priest

Should fill my throne, myself upon the
steps.

I think I will not marry any one,
Specially not this landless Philibert
Of Savoy; but, if Philip menace me,
I think that I will play with Philibert, —
As once the holy father did with mine,
Before my father married my good
mother, —

For fear of Spain.

Enter LADY.

Lady. O Lord! your Grace, your
Grace

I feel so happy: it seems that we shall
fly

These bald, blank fields, and dance into
the sun

That shines on princes.

Elizabeth. Yet, a moment since,
I wish'd myself the milkmaid singing
here,

To kiss and cuff among the birds and
flowers —

A right rough life and healthful.

Lady. But the wench
Hath her own troubles; she is weeping
now;

For the wrong Robin took her at her
word.

Then the cow kick'd, and all her milk
was spilt.

Your Highness such a milkmaid?

Elizabeth. I had kept

My Robins and my cows in sweeter order
Had I been such.

Lady (stilyly). And had your Grace a
Robin.

Elizabeth. Come, come, you are chill
here; you want the sun
That shines at court; make ready for
the journey.
Pray God, we 'scape the sunstroke.
Ready at once. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE VI. — LONDON. A ROOM
IN THE PALACE.

LORD PETRE and LORD WILLIAM HOW-
ARD.

Petre. You cannot see the Queen.
Renard denied her,
Ev'n now to me.

Howard. Their Flemish go-between
And all-in-all. I came to thank her
Majesty
For freeing my friend Bagenhall from
the Tower;

A grace to me! Mercy, that herb-of-
grace,
Flowers now but seldom.

Petre. Only now perhaps,
Because the Queen hath been three days
in tears
For Philip's going — like the wild
hedge-rose
Of a soft winter, possible, not proba-
ble,

However, you have prov'n it.
Howard. I must see her.

Enter RENARD.

Renard. My Lords, you cannot see
her Majesty.

Howard. Why then the King! for I
would have him bring it
Home to the leisure wisdom of his
Queen,
Before he go, that since these statutes
past,
Gardiner out-Gardiniers Gardiner in his
heat,
Bonner cannot out-Bonner his own
self —
Beast! — but they play with fire as
children do,
And burn the house. I know that
these are breeding
A fierce resolve and fixt heart-hate in
men

Against the King, the Queen, the Holy
Father,

The faith itself. Can I not see him?
Renard. Not now.

And in all this, my Lord, her Majesty
Is flint of flint, you may strike fire from
her,

Not hope to melt her. I will give your
message.

[*Exeunt* PETRE and HOWARD.

Enter PHILIP (*musings*).

Philip. She will not have Prince
Philibert of Savoy,
I talk'd with her in vain — says she will
live

And die true maid — a goodly creature
too.

Would *she* had been the Queen! yet she
must have him;

She troubles England: that she breathes
in England

Is life and lungs to every rebel birth
That passes out of embryo.

Simon Renard! —
This Howard, whom they fear, what
was he saying?

Renard. What your imperial father
said, my liege,
To deal with heresy gentlier. Gardiner
burns,

And Bonner burns; and it would seem
this people

Care more for our brief life in their wet
land,

Than yours in happier Spain. I told
my Lord

He should not vex her Highness; she
would say

These are the means God works with,
that His church

May flourish.

Philip. Ay, sir, but in statesmanship
To strike too soon is oft to miss the blow.
Thou knowest I bade my chaplain, Cas-
tro, preach

Against these burnings.

Renard. And the Emperor
Approved you, and when last he wrote,
declared

His comfort in your Grace that you
were bland

And affable to men of all estates,
In hope to charm them from their hate
of Spain.

Philip. In hope to crush all heresy
under Spain.

But, Renard, I am sicker staying here
Than any sea could make me passing
hence,

Tho' I be ever deadly sick at sea.
So sick am I with biding for this child.
Is it the fashion in this clime for women
To go twelve months in bearing of a
child?

The nurses yawn'd, the cradle gaped,
they led

Processions, chanted litanies, clash'd
their bells,

Shot off their lying cannon, and her
priests

Have preach'd, the fools, of this fair
prince to come,

Till, by St. James, I find myself the
fool.

Why do you lift your eyebrow at me
thus?

Renard. I never saw your highness
moved till now.

Philip. So, weary am I of this wet
land of theirs,

And every soul of man that breathes
therein.

Renard. My liege, we must not drop
the mask before

The masquerade is over —

Philip. — Have I dropt it?
I have but shown a loathing face to
you,

Who knew it from the first.

Enter MARY.

Mary (aside). With Renard. Still
Parleying with Renard, all the day with
Renard,

And scarce a greeting all the day for
me —

And goes to-morrow. [*Exit MARY.*

*Philip (to RENARD, who advances to
him).* Well, sir, is there more?

Renard (who has perceived the QUEEN).
May Simon Renard speak a single
word?

Philip. Ay.

Renard. And be forgiven for it?

Philip. Simon Renard

Knows me too well to speak a single
word

That could not be forgiven.

Renard. Well, my liege,
Your Grace hath a most chaste and lov-
ing wife.

Philip. Why not? The Queen of
Philip should be chaste.

Renard. Ay, but, my Lord, you know
what Virgil sings,

Woman is various and most mutable.

Philip. She play the harlot! never.

Renard. No, sire, no,

Not dream'd of by the rabidest Gospeller.
There was a paper thrown into the palace,
"The King hath wearied of his barren
bride."

She came upon it, read it, and then rent
it,

With all the rage of one who hates a
truth

He cannot but allow. Sire, I would
have you —

What should I say, I cannot pick my
words —

Be somewhat less — majestic to your
Queen.

Philip. Am I to change my manners,
Simon Renard,

Because these islanders are brutal beasts?
Or would you have me turn a sonneteer,
And warble those brief-sighted eyes of
hers?

Renard. Brief-sighted tho' they be,
I have seen them, sire,

When you perchance were trifling roy-
ally

With some fair dame of court, suddenly
fill

With such fierce fire — had it been fire
indeed

It would have burnt both speakers.

Philip. Ay, and then?

Renard. Sire, might it not be policy
in some matter

Of small importance now and then to
cede

A point to her demand?

Philip. Well, I am going.

Renard. For should her love when
you are gone, my liege,

Witness these papers, there will not be
wanting

Those that will urge her injury — should
her love —

And I have known such women more
than one —

Veer to the counterpoint, and jealousy
Hath in it an alchemic force to fuse

Almost into one metal love and hate, —
And she impress her wrongs upon her
Council,

And these again upon her Parliament —
We are not loved here, and would be
then perhaps

Not so well holpen in our wars with
France,
As else we might be — here she comes.

Enter MARY.

Mary. O Philip!
Nay, must you go indeed?

Philip. Madam, I must.

Mary. The parting of a husband and
a wife

Is like the cleaving of a heart; one half
Will flutter here, one there.

Philip. You say true, Madam.

Mary. The Holy Virgin will not have
me yet

Lose the sweet hope that I may bear a
prince.

If such a prince were born and you not
here!

Philip. I should be here if such a
prince were born.

Mary. But must you go?

Philip. Madam, you know my father,
Retiring into cloistral solitude

To yield the remnant of his years to
heaven,

Will shift the yoke and weight of all the
world

From off his neck to mine. We meet
at Brussels.

But since mine absence will not be for
long,

Your Majesty shall go to Dover with me,
And wait my coming back.

Mary. To Dover? no,
I am too feeble. I will go to Greenwich,
So you will have me with you; and
there watch

All that is gracious in the breath of
heaven

Draw with your sails from our poor land,
and pass

And leave me, Philip, with my prayers
for you.

Philip. And doubtless I shall profit
by your prayers.

Mary. Methinks that would you tarry
one day more

(The news was sudden) I could mould
myself

To bear your going better; will you do
it?

Philip. Madam, a day may sink or
save a realm.

Mary. A day may save a heart from
breaking too.

Philip. Well, Simon Renard, shall
we stop a day?

Renard. Your Grace's business will
not suffer, sire,

For one day more, so far as I can tell.

Philip. Then one day more to please
her Majesty.

Mary. The sunshine sweeps across
my life again.

O if I knew you felt this parting, Philip,
As I do!

Philip. By St. James I do protest,
Upon the faith and honor of a Spaniard,
I am vastly grieved to leave your Maj-
esty.

Simon, is supper ready?

Renard. Ay, my liege,
I saw the covers laying.

Philip. Let us have it. [*Exeunt.*]

ACT IV.

SCENE I. — A ROOM IN THE PAL- ACE.

MARY, CARDINAL POLE.

Mary. What have you there?

Pole. So please your Majesty,
A long petition from the foreign exiles

To spare the life of Cranmer. Bishop
Thirlby,

And my Lord Paget and Lord William
Howard,

Crave, in the same cause, hearing of
your Grace.

Hath he not written himself — infat-
uated —

To sue you for his life?

Mary. His life? Oh, no;
Not sued for that — he knows it were in
vain.

But so much of the anti-papal leaven
Works in him yet, he hath pray'd me
not to sully

Mine own prerogative, and degrade the
realm

By seeking justice at a stranger's hand
Against my natural subject. King and
Queen,

To whom he owes his loyalty after God,
Shall these accuse him to a foreign
prince?

Death would not grieve him more. I
cannot be

True to this realm of England and the
Pope

Together, says the heretic.

Pole. And there errs ;
As he hath ever err'd thro' vanity.
A secular kingdom is but as the body
Lacking a soul ; and in itself a beast.
The Holy Father in a secular king-
dom
Is as the soul descending out of heaven
Into a body generate.

Mary. Write to him, then.

Pole. I will.

Mary. And sharply, Pole.

Pole. Here come the Cranmerites !

Enter THIRLBY, LORD PAGET, LORD WIL-
LIAM HOWARD.

Howard. Health to your Grace. Good-
morrow, my Lord Cardinal ;
We make our humble prayer unto your
Grace
That Cranmer may withdraw to foreign
parts,
Or into private life within the realm.
In several bills and declarations, Mad-
am,
He hath recanted all his heresies.

Paget. Ay, ay ; if Bonner have not
forged the bills. [*Aside.*]

Mary. Did not More die, and Fisher ?
he must burn.

Howard. He hath recanted, Madam.

Mary. The better for him.
He burns in Purgatory, not in Hell.

Howard. Ay, ay, your Grace ; but
it was never seen

That any one recanting thus at full,
As Cranmer hath, came to the fire on
earth.

Mary. It will be seen now, then.

Thirlby. O Madam, Madam !
I thus implore you, low upon my knees,
To reach the hand of mercy to my
friend.

I have err'd with him ; with him I have
recanted.

What human reason is there why my
friend

Should meet with lesser mercy than my-
self ?

Mary. My Lord of Ely, this. After
a riot

We hang the leaders, let their follow-
ing go.

Cranmer is head and father of these
heresies,

New learning as they call it ; yea, may
God

Forget me at most need when I forget

Her foul divorce — my sainted mother
— No ! —

Howard. Ay, ay, but mighty doctors
doubted there.

The Pope himself waver'd ; and more
than one

Row'd in that galley — Gardiner to
wit,

Whom truly I deny not to have been
Your faithful friend and trusty coun-
cillor.

Hath not your Highness ever read his
book,

His tractate upon True Obedience,
Writ by himself and Bonner ?

Mary. I will take
Such order with all bad, heretical books
That none shall hold them in his house
and live,

Henceforward. No, my Lord.

Howard. Then never read it.
The truth is here. Your father was a
man

Of such colossal kinghood, yet so cour-
teous,

Except when wroth, you scarce could
meet his eye

And hold your own ; and were he wroth
indeed,

You held it less, or not at all. I say,
Your father had a will that beat men
down ;

Your father had a brain that beat men
down —

Pole. Not me, my Lord.

Howard. No, for you were not here ;
You sit upon this fallen Cranmer's
throne ;

And it would more become you, my
Lord Legate,

To join a voice, so potent with her
Highness,

To ours in plea for Cranmer than to
stand

On naked self-assertion.

Mary. All your voices
Are waves on flint. The heretic must
burn.

Howard. Yet once he saved your Maj-
esty's own life ;

Stood out against the King in your be-
half,

At his own peril.

Mary. I know not if he did ;
And if he did I care not, my Lord How-
ard.

My life is not so happy, no such boon,

That I should spare to take a heretic
priest's,
Who saved it or not saved. Why do
you vex me ?

Paget. Yet to save Cranmer were to
save the Church,

Your Majesty's I mean ; he is effaced,
Self-blotted out ; so wounded in his
honor,

He can but creep down into some dark
hole

Like a hurt beast, and hide himself and
die ;

But if you burn him, — well, your High-
ness knows

The saying, " Martyr's blood — seed of
the Church."

Mary. Of the true Church ; but his is
none, nor will be.

You are too politic for me, my Lord
Paget.

And if he have to live so loath'd a life,
It were more merciful to burn him
now.

Thirlby. O yet relent. O, Madam, if
you knew him

As I do, ever gentle, and so gracious,
With all his learning —

Mary. Yet a heretic still.
His learning makes his burning the
more just.

Thirlby. So worshipt of all those that
came across him ;

The stranger at his hearth, and all his
house —

Mary. His children and his concu-
bine, belike.

Thirlby. To do him any wrong was
to beget

A kindness from him, for his heart was
rich,

Of such fine mould, that if you sow'd
therein

The seed of Hate, it blossom'd Charity.

Pole. " After his kind it costs him
nothing," there's

An old world English adage to the point.
These are but natural graces, my good
Bishop,

Which in the Catholic garden are as
flowers,

But on the heretic dunghill only weeds.

Howard. Such weeds make dunghills
gracious.

Mary. Enough, my Lords.
It is God's will, the Holy Father's
will,

And Philip's will, and mine, that he
should burn.

He is pronounced anathema.

Howard. Farewell, Madam,
God grant you ampler mercy at your
call

Than you have shown to Cranmer.

[*Exeunt Lords.*]

Pole. After this,
Your Grace will hardly care to over-
look

This same petition of the foreign exiles,
For Cranmer's life.

Mary. Make out the writ to-night.
[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II. — OXFORD. CRANMER IN PRISON.

Cranmer. Last night, I dream'd the
fagots were alight,
And that myself was fasten'd to the
stake,

And found it all a visionary flame,
Cool as the light in old decaying wood ;
And then King Harry look'd from out
a cloud,

And bade me have good courage ; and I
heard

An angel cry, " there is more joy in
Heaven," —

And after that, the trumpet of the dead.
[*Trumpets without.*]

Why, there are trumpets blowing now :
what is it ?

Enter FATHER COLE.

Cole. Cranmer, I come to question
you again ;

Have you remain'd in the true Catholic
Faith

I left you in ?

Cranmer. In the true Catholic faith,
By Heaven's grace, I am more and more
confirm'd.

Why are the trumpets blowing, Father
Cole ?

Cole. Cranmer, it is decided by the
Council

That you to-day should read your recan-
tation

Before the people in St. Mary's Church.
And there be many heretics in the town,
Who loathe you for your late return to
Rome,

And might assail you passing through
the street.

And tear you piecemeal : so you have a guard.

Cranmer. Or seek to rescue me. I thank the Council.

Cole. Do you lack any money ?

Cranmer. Nay, why should I ?

The prison fare is good enough for me.

Cole. Ay, but to give the poor.

Cranmer. Hand it me, then !

I thank you.

Cole. For a little space, farewell ; Until I see you in St. Mary's Church.

[Exit COLE.]

Cranmer. It is against all precedent to burn

One who recants ; they mean to pardon me.

To give the poor — they give the poor who die.

Well, burn me or not burn me I am fixt ;

It is but a communion, not a mass :

A holy supper, not a sacrifice ;

No man can make his Maker — Villa Garcia.

Enter VILLA GARCIA.

Villa Garcia. Pray you write out this paper for me, Cranmer.

Cranmer. Have I not writ enough to satisfy you ?

Villa Garcia. It is the last.

Cranmer. Give it me, then.

[He writes.]

Villa Garcia. Now sign.

Cranmer. I have sign'd enough, and I will sign no more.

Villa Garcia. It is no more than what you have sign'd already,

The public form thereof.

Cranmer. It may be so ; I sign it with my presence, if I read it.

Villa Garcia. But this is idle of you.

Well, sir, well,

You are to beg the people to pray for you ;

Exhort them to a pure and virtuous life ;

Declare the Queen's right to the throne ; confess

Your faith before all hearers ; and retract

That Eucharistic doctrine in your book. Will you not sign it now ?

Cranmer. No, Villa Garcia, I sign no more. Will they have mercy on me ?

Villa Garcia. Have you good hopes of mercy ! So, farewell. [Exit.]

Cranmer. Good hopes, not theirs, have I that I am fixt,

Fixt beyond fall ; however, in strange hours,

After the long brain-dazing colloquies, And thousand-times recurring argument

Of those two friars ever in my prison, When left alone in my despondency,

Without a friend, a book, my faith would seem

Dead or half-drown'd, or else swam heavily

Against the huge corruptions of the Church,

Monsters of mistradition, old enough To scare me into dreaming, "what

am I, Cranmer, against whole ages?" was

it so,

Or am I slandering my most inward friend,

To veil the fault of my most outward foe —

The soft and tremulous coward in the flesh ?

O higher, holier, earlier, purer church, I have found thee and not leave thee any

more.

It is but a communion, not a mass — No sacrifice, but a life-giving feast !

[Writes]. So, so ; this will I say — thus will I pray.

[Puts up the paper.]

Enter BONNER.

Bonner. Good-day, old friend ; what, you look somewhat worn ;

And yet it is a day to test your health Ev'n at the best : I scarce have spoken

with you Since when ? — your degradation. At your trial

Never stood up a bolder man than you ! You would not cap the Pope's commis-

sioner — Your learning, and your stoutness, and your heresy,

Dumfounded half of us. So, after that, We had to dis-archbishop and unlord,

And make you simple Cranmer once again.

The common barber clipt your hair, and I

Scraped from your finger-points the holy oil ;

And worse than all, you had to kneel to
me :

Which was not pleasant for you, Mas-
ter Cranmer.

Now you, that would not recognize the
Pope,

And you, that would not own the Real
Presence,

Have found a real presence in the stake,
Which frights you back into the ancient
faith ;

And so you have recanted to the Pope,
How are the mighty fallen, Master
Cranmer !

Cranmer. You have been more fierce
against the Pope than I ;

But why fling back the stone he strikes
me with ? *[Aside.*

O Bonner, if I ever did you kindness —
Power hath been given you to try faith
by fire —

Pray you, remembering how yourself
have changed,

Be somewhat pitiful, after I have gone,
To the poor flock -- to women and to
children —

That when I was archbishop held with
me.

Bonner. Ay — gentle as they call
you — live or die !

Pitiful to this pitiful heresy ?

I must obey the Queen and Council,
man.

Win thro' this day with honor to your-
self,

And I 'll say something for you — so —
good-by. *[Exit.*

Cranmer. This hard coarse man of old
hath crouch'd to me

Till I myself was half ashamed for him.

Enter THIRLBY.

Weep not, good Thirlby.

Thirlby. Oh, my Lord, my Lord !
My heart is no such block as Bonner's
is :

Who would not weep ?

Cranmer. Why do you so my-lord
me,

Who am disgraced ?

Thirlby. On earth ; but saved in
heaven

By your recanting.

Cranmer. Will they burn me, Thirl-
by ?

Thirlby. Alas, they will ; these burn-
ings will not help

The purpose of the faith ; but my poor
voice

Against them is a whisper to the roar
Of a spring-tide.

Cranmer. And they will surely burn
me ?

Thirlby. Ay ; and besides, will have
you in the church

Repeat your recantation in the ears
Of all men, to the saving of their souls,
Before your execution. May God help
you

Thro' that hard hour.

Cranmer. And may God bless you,
Thirlby.

Well, they shall hear my recantation
there. *[Exit THIRLBY.*

Disgraced, dishonor'd ! — not by them,
indeed,

By mine own self — by mine own hand !
O thin-skinn'd hand and jutting veins,
't was you

That sign'd the burning of poor Joan of
Kent ;

But then she was a witch. You have
written much,

But you were never raised to plead for
Frith,

Whose dogmas I have reach'd : he was
deliver'd

To the secular arm to burn ; and there
was Lambert ;

Who can foresee himself ? truly these
burnings,

As Thirlby says, are profitless to the
burners,

And help the other side. You shall
burn too,

Burn first when I am burnt.

Fire — inch by inch to die in agony !
Latimer

Had a brief end — not Ridley. Hooper
burn'd

Three-quarters of an hour. Will my
fagots

Be wet as his were ? It is a day of
rain.

I will not muse upon it.

My fancy takes the burner's part, and
makes

The fire seem even crueller than it is.

No, I not doubt that God will give me
strength,

Albeit I have denied him.

Enter SOTO and VILLA GARCIA.

Villa Garcia.

We are ready

To take you to St. Mary's, Master Cranmer.

Cranmer. And I: lead on; ye loose me from my bonds. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE III. — ST. MARY'S CHURCH.

COLE *in the Pulpit*, LORD WILLIAMS OF THAME *presiding*, LORD WILLIAM HOWARD, LORD PAGET, *and others*. CRANMER *enters between SOTO and VILLA GARCIA, and the whole Choir strike up "Nunc Dimittis."* CRANMER *is set upon a Scaffold before the people.*

Cole. Behold him —

[*A pause; people in the foreground.*]
People. Oh, unhappy sight!

First Protestant. See how the tears run down his fatherly face.

Second Protestant. James, didst thou ever see a carrion crow stand watching a sick beast before he dies?

First Protestant. Him perch'd up there? I wish some thunderbolt would make this Cole a cinder, pulpit and all.

Cole. Behold him, brethren: he hath cause to weep! —

So have we all: weep with him if ye will,

Yet —

It is expedient for one man to die, Yea, for the people, lest the people die. Yet wherefore should he die that hath return'd

To the one Catholic Universal Church, Repentant of his errors?

Protestant Murmurs. Ay, tell us that.

Cole. Those of the wrong side will despise the man,

Deeming him one that thro' the fear of death

Gave up his cause, except he seal his faith

In sight of all with flaming martyrdom.

Cranmer. Ay.

Cole. Ye hear him, and albeit there may seem

According to the canons pardon due To him that so repents, yet are there causes

Wherefore our Queen and Council at this time

Adjudge him to the death. He hath been a traitor,

A shaker and confounder of the realm;

And when the King's divorce was sued at Rome,

He here, this heretic metropolitan, As if he had been the Holy Father, sat And judg'd it. Did I call him heretic? A huge heresiarch! never was it known That any man so writing, preaching so, So poisoning the Church, so long continuing, Hath found his pardon; therefore he must die, For warning and example.

Other reasons There be for this man's ending, which our Queen

And Council at this present deem it not Expedient to be known.

Protestant Murmurs. I warrant you.

Cole. Take therefore, all, example by this man,

For if our Holy Queen not pardon him, Much less shall others in like cause escape,

That all of you, the highest as the lowest,

May learn there is no power against the Lord.

There stands a man, once of so high degree,

Chief prelate of our Church, archbishop, first

In Council, second person in the realm, Friend for so long time of a mighty King;

And now ye see downfallen and debased From councillor to caitiff — fallen so low,

The leprous flutterings of the byway, scum

And offal of the city would not change Estates with him; in brief, so miserable,

There is no hope of better left for him, No place for worse.

Yet, Cranmer, be thou glad. This is the work of God. He is glorified

In thy conversion: lo! thou art reclaim'd;

He brings thee home: nor fear but that to-day

Thou shalt receive the penitent thief's award,

And be with Christ the Lord in Paradise.

Remember how God made the fierce fire seem

To those three children like a pleasant dew.

Remember, too,
The triumph of St. Andrew on his cross,

The patience of St. Lawrence in the fire.

Thus, if thou call on God and all the saints,

God will beat down the fury of the flame,

Or give thee saintly strength to undergo.

And for thy soul shall masses here be sung

By every priest in Oxford. Pray for him.

Cranmer. Ay, one and all, dear brothers, pray for me ;

Pray with one breath one heart, one soul, for me.

Cole. And now, lest any one among you doubt

The man's conversion and remorse of heart,

Yourselves shall hear him speak.

Speak, Master Cranmer,

Fulfil your promise made me, and proclaim

Your true undoubted faith, that all may hear.

Cranmer. And that I will. O God, Father of Heaven !

O Son of God, Redeemer of the world !

O Holy Ghost ! proceeding from them both,

Three persons and one God, have mercy on me,

Most mi-erable sinner, wretched man.

I have offended against heaven and earth

More grievously than any tongue can tell.

Then whither should I flee for any help ?

I am ashamed to lift my eyes to heaven,
And I can find no refuge upon earth.

Shall I despair then ? — God forbid ! O God,

For thou art merciful, refusing none

That come to Thee for succor, unto Thee.

Therefore, I come ; humble myself to Thee ;

Saying, O Lord God, although my sins be great,

For thy great mercy have mercy ! O God the Son,

Not for slight faults alone, when thou becamest

Man in the Flesh, was the great mystery wrought ;

O God the Father, not for little sins

Didst thou yield up thy Son to human death ;

But for the greatest sin that can be sinn'd,

Yea, even such as mine, incalculable, Unpardonable, — sin against the light,
The truth of God, which I had proven and known.

Thy mercy must be greater than all sin. Forgive me, Father, for no merit of mine,

But that Thy name by man be glorified,
And Thy most blessed Son's, who died for man.

Good people, every man at time of death

Would fain set forth some saying that may live

After his death and better humankind ;
For death gives life's last word a power to live,

And, like the stone-cut epitaph, remain
After the vanish'd voice, and speak to men.

God grant me grace to glorify my God !

And first I say it is a grievous case,

Many so dote upon this bubble world,
Whose colors in a moment break and fly,

They care for nothing else. What saith St. John : —

“ Love of this world is hatred against God.”

Again, I pray you all that, next to God,
You do un murmuringly and willingly

Obey your King and Queen, and not for dread

Of these alone, but from the fear of Him
Whose ministers they be to govern you.

Thirdly, I pray you all to love together
Like brethren ; yet what hatred Christian men

Bear to each other, seeming not as brethren,

But mortal foes ! But do you good to all

As much as in you lieth. Hurt no man more

Than you would harm your loving natural brother

Of the same roof, same breast. If any do,

Albeit he think himself at home with
God,

Of this be sure, he is whole worlds away.

Protestant Murmurs. What sort of
brothers then be those that lust

To burn each other ?

Williams. Peace among you, there.

Cranmer. Fourthly, to those that
own exceeding wealth,

Remember that sore saying spoken once
By Him that was the truth, "how hard
it is

For the rich man to enter into Heaven";

Let all rich men remember that hard
word.

I have not time for more : if ever, now
Let them flow forth in charity, seeing
now

The poor so many, and all food so dear.

Long have I lain in prison, yet have
heard

Of all their wretchedness. Give to the
poor,

Ye give to God. He is with us in the
poor.

And now, and forasmuch as I have
come

To the last end of life, and thereupon
Hangs all my past, and all my life to be,

Either to live with Christ in Heaven
with joy,

Or to be still in pain with devils in hell ;
And, seeing in a moment, I shall find

[*Pointing upwards.*

Heaven or else hell ready to swallow
me,

[*Pointing downwards.*

I shall declare to you my very faith
Without all color.

Cole. Hear him, my good brethren.

Cranmer. I do believe in God, Father
of all ;

In every article of the Catholic faith,
And every syllable taught us by our
Lord,

His prophets, and apostles, in the Tes-
taments,

Both Old and New.

Cole. Be plainer, Master Cranmer.

Cranmer. And now I come to the
great cause that weighs

Upon my conscience more than any thing
Or said or done in all my life by me ;
For there be writings I have set abroad
Against the truth I knew within my
heart,

Written for fear of death, to save my
life,

If that might be ; the papers by my
hand

Sign'd since my degradation — by this
hand

[*Holding out his right hand.*

Written and sign'd — I here renounce
them all ;

And, since my hand offended, having
written

Against my heart, my hand shall first
be burnt,

So I may come to the fire.

[*Dead silence.*

Protestant murmurs.

First Protestant. I knew it would be
so.

Second Protestant. Our prayers are
heard !

Third Protestant. God bless him !

Catholic Murmurs. Out upon him !
out upon him !

Liar ! dissembler ! traitor ! to the fire !

Williams (raising his voice). You
know that you recanted all you
said

Touching the sacrament in that same
book

You wrote against my Lord of Win-
chester ;

Dissemble not ; play the plain Christian
man.

Cranmer. Alas, my Lord,
I have been a man loved plainness all
my life ;

I *did* dissemble, but the hour has come
For utter truth and plainness ; where-
fore, I say,

I hold by all I wrote within that book.

Moreover,
As for the Pope I count him Antichrist,
With all his devil's doctrines ; and re-
fuse,

Reject him, and abhor him. I have said.

Cries (on all sides). Pull him down !
Away with him.

Cole. Ay, stop the heretic's mouth.
Hale him away.

Williams. Harm him not, harm him
not, have him to the fire.

[*Cranmer goes out between Two
Friars, smiling ; hands are reached
to him from the crowd.* LORD
WILLIAM HOWARD and LORD
PAGET are left alone in the church.

Paget. The nave and aisles all empty
as a fool's jest !

No, here 's Lord William Howard.

What, my Lord,

You have not gone to see the burning?

Howard. Fie!

To stand at ease, and stare as at a show,
And watch a good man burn. Never
again.

I saw the deaths of Latimer and Ridley.
Moreover tho' a Catholic, I would not,
For the pure honor of our common
nature,

Hear what I might — another recantation

Of Cranmer at the stake.

Paget. You 'd not hear that.

He pass'd out smiling, and he walk'd
upright;

His eye was like a soldier's, whom the
general

He looks to and he leans on as his God,
Hath rated for some backwardness and
bidd'n him

Charge one against a thousand, and the
man

Hurls his soil'd life against the pikes
and dies.

Howard. Yet that he might not after
all those papers

Of recantation yield again, who knows?

Paget. Papers of recantation, think
you then

That Cranmer read all papers that he
sign'd?

Or sign'd all those they tell us that he
sign'd?

Nay, I trow not: and you shall see,
my Lord,

That howsoever hero-like the man
Dies in the fire, this Bonner or another

Will in some lying fashion misreport
His ending to the glory of their church.

And you saw Latimer and Ridley die?
Latimer was eighty, was he not? his best

Of life was over then.

Howard. His eighty years
Look'd somewhat crooked on him in his
frieze;

But after they had stript him to his
shroud,

He stood upright, a lad of twenty-one,
And gather'd with his hands the start-

ing flame,
And wash'd his hands and all his face

therein,
Until the powder suddenly blew him

dead.
Ridley was longer burning; but he died

As manfully and boldly, and 'fore God,
I know them heretics, but right Eng-
lish ones.

If ever, as heaven grant, we clash with
Spain,

Our Ridley-soldiers and our Latimer-
sailors

Will teach her something.

Paget. Your mild Legate Pole
Will tell you that the devil helpt them
thro' it.

[*A murmur of the Crowd in the dis-
tance.*]

Hark, how those Roman wolfdogs howl
and bay him.

Howard. Might it not be the other
side rejoicing

In his brave end?

Paget. They are too crush'd, too
broken,

They can but weep in silence.

Howard. Ay, ay, *Paget,*
They have brought it in large measure
on themselves.

Have I not heard them mock the blessed
Host

In songs so lewd, the beast might roar
his claim

To being in God's image, more than
they?

Have I not seen the gamekeeper, the
groom,

Gardener, and huntsman, in the par-
son's place,

The parson from his own spire swung
out dead,

And Ignorance crying in the streets, and
all men

Regarding her? I say they have drawn
the fire

On their own heads: yet, *Paget,* I do
hold

The Catholic, if he have the greater
right,

Hath been the crueller.

Paget. Action and re-action,
The miserable see-saw of our child-world,
Make us despise it at odd hours, my

Lord.
Heaven help that this re-action not react,
Yet fiercelier under Queen Elizabeth,

So that she come to rule us.

Howard. The world's mad.

Paget. My Lord, the world is like a
drunken man,

Who cannot move straight to his end —
but reels

Now to the right, then as far to the left,
 Push'd by the crowd beside — and underfoot
 An earthquake ; for since Henry for a
 doubt —
 Which a young lust had clapt upon the
 back,
 Crying, "Forward," — set our old
 church rocking, men
 Have hardly known what to believe, or
 whether
 They should believe in any thing ; the
 currents
 So shift and change, they see not how
 they are borne,
 Nor whither. I conclude the King a
 beast ;
 Verily a lion if you will — the world
 A most obedient beast and fool — myself
 Half beast and fool as appertaining to
 it ;
 Altho' your Lordship hath as little of
 each
 Cleaving to your original Adam-clay,
 As may be consonant with mortality.
Howard. We talk and Cranmer suf-
 fers.
 The kindest man I ever knew ; see, see,
 I speak of him in the past. Unhappy
 land !
 Hard-natured Queen, half Spanish in
 herself,
 And grafted on the hard-grain'd stock
 of Spain —
 Her life, since Philip left her, and she
 lost
 Her fierce desire of bearing him a child,
 Hath, like a brief and bitter winter's
 day,
 Gone narrowing down and darkening to
 a close.
 There will be more conspiracies, I fear.
Paget. Ay, ay, beware of France.
Howard. O Paget, Paget !
 I have seen heretics of the poorer sort,
 Expectant of the rack from day to day,
 To whom the fire were welcome, lying
 chain'd
 In breathless dungeons over steaming
 sewers,
 Fed with rank bread that crawl'd upon
 the tongue,
 And putrid water, every drop a worm,
 Until they died of rotted limbs ; and
 then
 Cast on the dunghill naked, and become
 Hideously alive again from head to heel,

Made even the carrion-nosing mongrel
 vomit
 With hate and horror.
Paget. Nay, you sicken *me*
 To hear you.
Howard. Fancy-sick ; these things
 are done,
 Done right against the promise of this
 Queen
 Twice given.
Paget. No faith with heretics, my
 Lord !
 Hist ! there be two old gossips — Gos-
 pellers,
 I take it ; stand behind the pillar here ;
 I warrant you they talk about the
 burning.
Enter TWO OLD WOMEN. JCAN, and
after her TIB.
Joan. Why, it be Tib.
Tib. I cum behind tha, gall, and
 could n't make tha hear. Eh, the wind
 and the wet ! What a day, what a day !
 nigh upo' judgment daay loike. Pwoaps
 be pretty things, Joan, but they wunt
 set i' the Lords' cheer o' that daay.
Joan. I must set down myself, Tib ;
 it be a yar waay vor my owld legs up
 vro' Islip. Eh, my rheumatizy be that
 bad howiver be I to win to the burnin'.
Tib. I should saay 'twur ower by
 now. I'd ha' been here avore, but
 Dumble wur blow'd wi' the wind, and
 Dumble's the best milcher in Islip.
Joan. Our Daisy's as good 'z her.
Tib. Noa, Joan.
Joan. Our Daisy's butter' sas good '
 hern.
Tib. Noa, Joan.
Joan. Our Daisy's cheeses be better.
Tib. Noa, Joan.
Joan. Eh, then ha' thy waay wi me,
 Tib ; ez thou hast wi' thy owld man.
Tib. Ay, Joan, and my owld man
 wur up and awaay betimes wi' dree hard
 eggs for a good pleace at the burnin' ;
 and barrin' the wet, Hodge 'ud ha'
 been a-harrowin' o' white peasen i' the
 outfield — and barrin' the wind, Dum-
 ble wur blow'd wi' the wind, so 'z we
 was forced to stick her, but we fetch'd
 her round at last. Thank the Lord
 therevore. Dumble's the best milcher
 in Islip.
Joan. Thou's thy way wi' man and
 beast, Tib. I wonder at tha', it beats

me! Eh, but I do know ez Pwoaps and vires be bad things; tell 'ee now, I heerd summat as sunnun towld sunnun o' owld Bishop Gardiner's end; there wur an owld lord a-cum to dine wi' un, and a wur so owld a could n't bide vor his dinner, but a had to bide howsomiver, vor "I wunt dine," says my Lord Bishop, says he, "not till I hears ez Latimer and Ridley be a-vire"; and so they bided on and on till vour o' the clock, till his man cum in post vro' here, and tells un ez the vire has tuk holt, "Now," says the bishop, says he, "we'll gwo to dinner"; and the owld lord fell to 's meat wi' a will, God bless un; but Gardiner wur struck down like by the hand o' God avore a could taste a mossel, and a set him all a-vire, so 'z the tongue on un cum a-lolling out o' 'is mouth as black as a rat. Thank the Lord, therevore.

Paget. The fools!

Tib. Ay, Joan; and Queen Mary gwoes on a-burnin' and a-burnin', to git her baaby born; but all her burnin's 'ill never burn out the hypocrisy that makes the water in her. There 's nought but the vire of God's hell ez can burn out that.

Joan. Thank the Lord, therevore.

Paget. The fools!

Tib. A-burnin', and a-burnin', and a-makin' o' volk madder and madder; but tek thou my word vor't, Joan, — and I beau't wrong not twice i' ten year — the burnin' o' the owld archbishop 'ill burn the Pwoap out o' this 'ere land vor iver and iver.

Howard. Out of the church, you brace of cursed crones,

Or I will have you duck'd. (*Women hurry out.*) Said I not right? For how should reverend prelate or throned prince Brook for an hour such brute malignity?

Ah, what an acrid wine has Luther brew'd!

Paget. Pooh, pooh, my Lord! poor garrulous country-wives.

Buy you their cheeses, and they 'll side with you;

You cannot judge the liquor from the lees.

Howard. I think that in some sort we may. But see,

Enter PETERS.

Peters, my gentleman, an honest Catholic,

Who follow'd with the crowd to Cranmer's fire.

One that would neither misreport nor lie,

Not to gain paradise: no, nor if the Pope

Charged him to do it — he is white as death.

Peters, how pale you look! you bring the smoke

Of Cranmer's burning with you.

Peters. Twice or thrice
The smoke of Cranmer's burning wrapt me round.

Howard. Peters, you know me Catholic, but English.

Did he die bravely? Tell me that, or leave

All else untold.

Peters. My Lord, he died most bravely.

Howard. Then tell me all.

Paget. Ay, Master Peters, tell us.

Peters. You saw him how he past among the crowd;

And ever as he walk'd the Spanish friars Still plied him with entreaty and reproach:

But Crammer, as the helmsman at the helm

Steers, ever looking to the happy haven Where he shall rest at night, moved to his death;

And I could see that many silent hands Came from the crowd and met his own; and thus,

When we had come where Ridley burnt with Latimer,

He, with a cheerful smile, as one whose mind

Is all made up, in haste put off the rags They had mock'd his misery with, and all in white,

His long white beard, which he had never shaven

Since Henry's death, down-sweeping to the chain,

Wherewith they bound him to the stake, he stood,

More like an ancient father of the Church,

Than heretic of these times; and still the friars

Plied him, but Cranmer only shook his head,

Or answer'd them in smiling negatives ;

Whereat Lord Williams gave a sudden cry : —

“ Make short ! make short ! ” and so they lit the wood.

Then Cranmer lifted his left hand to heaven,

And thrust his right into the bitter flame ;

And crying, in his deep voice, more than once,

“ This hath offended — this unworthy hand ! ”

So held it till it all was burn'd, before The flame had reach'd his body ; I stood near —

Mark'd him — he never uttered moan of pain :

He never stirr'd or writhed, but, like a statue,

Unmoving in the greatness of the flame, Gave up the ghost ; and so past martyr-like —

Martyr I may not call him — past — but whither ?

Paget. To purgatory, man, to purgatory.

Peters. Nay, but, my Lord, he denied purgatory.

Paget. Why then to heaven, and God ha' mercy on him.

Howard. *Paget*, despite his fearful heresies,

I loved the man, and needs must moan for him ;

O Cranmer !

Paget. But your moan is useless now :

Come out, my Lord, it is a world of fools.

[*Exeunt.*]

ACT V.

SCENE I. — LONDON. HALL IN THE PALACE.

QUEEN, SIR NICHOLAS HEATH.

Heath. Madam,

I do assure you, that it must be look'd to :

Calais is but ill-garrison'd, in Guisnes Are scarce two hundred men, and the French fleet

Rule in the narrow seas. It must be look'd to,

If war should fall between yourself and France ;

Or you will lose your Calais.

Mary. It shall be look'd to ; I wish you a good-morning, good Sir

Nicholas :
Here is the King. [*Exit* HEATH.

Enter PHILIP.

Philip. Sir Nicholas tells you true, And you must look to Calais when I go.

Mary. Go ! must you go, indeed — again — so soon ?

Why, nature's licensed vagabond, the swallow,

That might live always in the sun's warm heart,

Stays longer here in our poor north than you : —

Knows where he nested — ever comes again.

Philip. And, Madam, so shall I.

Mary. O, will you ? will you ? I am faint with fear that you will come

no more.

Philip. Ay, ay ; but many voices call me hence.

Mary. Voices — I hear unhappy rumors — nay,

I say not, I believe. What voices call you

Dearer than mine that should be dearest to you ?

Alas, my Lord ! what voices and how many ?

Philip. The voices of Castile and Aragon,

Granada, Naples, Sicily, and Milan, — The voices of Franche-Comté, and the Netherlands,

The voices of Peru and Mexico, Tunis, and Oran, and the Philippines,

And all the fair spice-islands of the East.

Mary (*admiringly*). You are the mightiest monarch upon earth,

I but a little Queen ; and so, indeed, Need you the more ; and wherefore could

you not Helm the huge vessel of your state, my

liege, Here, by the side of her who loves you

most ?

Philip. No, Madam, no ! a candle in the sun

Is all but smoke — a star beside the moon

Is all but lost ; your people will not
crown me —

Your people are as cheerless as your
clime ;

Hate me and mine : witness the brawls,
the gibbets.

Here swings a Spaniard — there an Eng-
lishman ;

The peoples are unlike as their com-
plexion ;

Yet will I be your swallow and return —
But now I cannot bide.

Mary. Not to help *me* ?
They hate *me* also for my love to you,
My Philip ; and these judgments on the
land —

Harvestless autumns, horrible agues,
plague —

Philip. The blood and sweat of here-
tics at the stake
Is God's best dew upon the barren field.
Burn more !

Mary. I will, I will ; and you will
stay.

Philip. Have I not said ? Madam, I
came to sue
Your Council and yourself to declare
war.

Mary. Sir, there are many English
in your ranks
To help your battle.

Philip. So far, good. I say
I came to sue your Council and yourself
To declare war against the King of
France.

Mary. Not to see me ?
Philip. Ay, Madam, to see you.
Unalterably and pesteringly fond !

[*Aside.*
But, soon or late you must have war
with France ;
King Henry warms your traitors at his
hearth.

Carew is there, and Thomas Stafford
there.
Courtenay, belike —

Mary. A fool and featherhead !
Philip. Ay, but they use his name.
In brief, this Henry

Stirs up your land against you to the
intent

That you may lose your English heritage.
And then, your Scottish namesake mar-
rying

The Dauphin, he would weld France,
England, Scotland,
Into one sword to hack at Spain and me.

Mary. And yet the Pope is now col-
leagued with France ;

You make your wars upon him down in
Italy : —

Philip, can that be well ?

Philip. Content you, Madam ;
You must abide my judgment, and my
father's,

Who deems it a most just and holy
war.

The Pope would cast the Spaniard out
of Naples :

He calls us worse than Jews, Moors,
Saracens.

The Pope has push'd his horns beyond
his mitre —

Beyond his proviuce. Now,
Duke Alva will but touch him on the
horns,

And he withdraws ; and of his holy
head —

For Alva is true son of the true church —
No hair is harm'd. Will you not help
me here ?

Mary. Alas ! the Council will not
hear of war.

They say your wars are not the wars of
England.

They will not lay more taxes on a land
So hunger-nipt and wretched ; and you
know

The crown is poor. We have given the
church-lands back :

The nobles would not ; nay, they clapt
their hands

Upon their swords when ask'd ; and
therefore God

Is hard upon the people. What 's to be
done ?

Sir, I will move them in your cause
again,

And we will raise us loans and subsidies
Among the merchants ; and Sir Thomas
Gresham

Will aid us. There is Antwerp and the
Jews.

Philip. Madam, my thanks.

Mary. And you will stay your going ?

Philip. And further to discourage and
lay lame

The plots of France, altho' you love her
not,

You must proclaim Elizabeth your heir.
She stands between you and the Queen
of Scots.

Mary. The Queen of Scots at least is
Catholic.

Philip. Ay, Madam, Catholic; but I will not have The King of France the King of England too.

Mary. But she's a heretic, and, when I am gone, Brings the new learning back.

Philip. It must be done. You must proclaim Elizabeth your heir.

Mary. Then it is done; but you will stay your going Somewhat beyond your settled purpose?

Philip. No!

Mary. What, not one day?

Philip. You beat upon the rock.

Mary. And I am broken there.

Philip. Is this a place To wail in, Madam? what! a public hall.

Go in, I pray you.

Mary. Do not seem so changed. Say go; but only say it lovingly.

Philip. You do mistake. I am not one to change.

I never loved you more.

Mary. Sire, I obey you. Come quickly.

Philip. Ay. [Exit MARY.]

Enter COUNT DE FERIA.

Feria (aside). The Queen in tears.

Philip. Feria!

Hast thou not mark'd — come closer to mine ear —

How doubly aged this Queen of ours hath grown

Since she lost hope of bearing us a child?

Feria. Sire, if your Grace hath mark'd it, so have I.

Philip. Hast thou not likewise mark'd Elizabeth,

How fair and royal — like a Queen, indeed?

Feria. Allow me the same answer as before —

That if your Grace hath mark'd her, so have I.

Philip. Good, now; methinks my Queen is like enough

To leave me by and by.

Feria. To leave you, sire?

Philip. I mean not like to live. Elizabeth —

To Philibert of Savoy, as you know, We meant to wed her; but I am not sure

She will not serve me better — so my Queen

Would leave me — as — my wife.

Feria. Sire, even so.

Philip. She will not have Prince Philibert of Savoy.

Feria. No, sire.

Philip. I have to pray you, some odd time,

To sound the Princess carelessly on this; Not as from me, but as your fantasy; And tell me how she takes it.

Feria. Sire, I will.

Philip. I am not certain but that Philibert

Shall be the man; and I shall urge his suit

Upon the Queen, because I am not certain:

You understand, Feria.

Feria. Sire, I do.

Philip. And if you be not secret in this matter,

You understand me there, too?

Feria. Sire, I do.

Philip. You must be sweet and supple, like a Frenchman.

She is none of those who loathe the honeycomb. [Exit FERIA.]

Enter RENARD.

Renard. My liege, I bring you goodly tidings.

Philip. Well.

Renard. There will be war with France, at last, my liege;

Sir Thomas Stafford, a bull-headed ass, Sailing from France, with thirty Englishmen,

Hath taken Scarboro' Castle, north of York;

Proclaims himself protector, and affirms The Queen has forfeited her right to reign

By marriage with an alien — other things

As idle; a weak Wyatt! Little doubt This buzz will soon be silenced! but the

Council (I have talk'd with some already) are for

war.

This is the fifth conspiracy hatch'd in France;

They show their teeth upon it; and your Grace,

So you will take advice of mine, should stay

Yet for a while, to shape and guide the event.

Philip. Good! Renard, I will stay then.

Renard. Also, sire,
Might I not say — to please your wife,
the Queen?

Philip. Ay, Renard, if you care to put it so. [Exeunt.

SCENE II. — A ROOM IN THE PAL-
ACE.

MARY and CARDINAL POLE. LADY CLARENCE and ALICE in the background.

Mary. Reginald Pole, what news hath plagued thy heart?

What makes thy favor like the bloodless head

Fall'n on the block, and held up by the hair?

Philip? —

Pole. No, Philip is as warm in life as ever.

Mary. Ay, and then as cold as ever. Is Calais taken?

Pole. Cousin, there hath chanced
A sharper harm to England and to Rome,

Than Calais taken. Julius the Third
Was ever just, and mild, and fatherlike
But this new Pope Caraffa, Paul the Fourth,

Not only reft me of that legateship
Which Julius gave me, and the legateship

Annex'd to Canterbury — nay, but worse —

And yet I must obey the holy father,
And so must you, good cousin; — worse than all,

A passing bell toll'd in a dying ear —
He hath cited me to Rome, for heresy,
Before his Inquisition.

Mary. I knew it, cousin,
But held from you all papers sent by Rome,

That you might rest among us, till the Pope,
To compass which I wrote myself to Rome,

Reversed his doom, and that you might not seem

To disobey his Holiness.

Pole. He hates Philip;
He is all Italian, and he hates the Spaniard;

He cannot dream that I advised the war;

He strikes thro' me at Philip and yourself.

Nay, but I know it of old, he hates me too;

So brands me in the stare of Christendom

A heretic!

Now, even now, when bow'd before my time,

The house half-ruin'd ere the lease be out;

When I should guide the Church in peace at home,

After my twenty years of banishment,

And all my lifelong labor to uphold

The primacy — a heretic. Long ago,

When I was ruler in the patrimony,

I was too lenient to the Lutheran,

And I and learned friends among ourselves

Would freely canvass certain Lutheranisms.

What then, he knew I was no Lutheran. A heretic!

He drew this shaft against me to the head,

When it was thought I might be chosen Pope,

But then withdrew it. In full consistory,

When I was made Archbishop, he approved me.

And how should he have sent me Legatè hither,

Deeming me heretic? and what heresy since?

But he was evermore mine enemy,

And hates the Spaniard — fiery-choleric,

A drinker of black, strong, volcanic wines,

That ever make him fierier. I, a heretic!

Your Highness knows that in pursuing heresy

I have gone beyond your late Lord Chancellor, —

He cried Enough! enough! before his death. —

Gone beyond him and mine own natural man

(It was God's cause); so far they call me now,

The scourge and butcher of their English church.

Mary. Have courage, your reward is Heaven itself.

Pole. They groan amen ; they swarm into the fire
Like flies — for what ? no dogma. They know nothing,
They burn for nothing.

Mary. You have done your best.

Pole. Have done my best, and as a faithful son.
That all day long hath wrought his father's work,
When back he comes at evening hath the door
Shut on him by the father whom he loved,
His early follies cast into his teeth,
And the poor son turn'd out into the street
To sleep, to die — I shall die of it, cousin.

Mary. I pray you be not so disconsolate ;
I still will do mine utmost with the Pope.
Poor cousin.
Have I not been the fast friend of your wife
Since mine began, and it was thought we two
Might make one flesh, and cleave unto each other
As man and wife.

Pole. Ah, cousin, I remember
How I would dandle you upon my knee
At lisping-age. I watch'd you dancing once
With your huge father ; he look'd the Great Harry,
You but his cockboat ; prettily you did it,
And innocently. No — we were not made
One flesh in happiness, no happiness here ;
But now we are made one flesh in misery ;
Our bridemaids are not lovely — Disappointment,
Ingratitude, Injustice, Evil-tongue,
Labor-in-vain.

Mary. Surely, not all in vain.
Peace, cousin, peace ! I am sad at heart myself.

Pole. Our altar is a mound of dead men's clay,
Dug from the grave that yawns for us beyond ;
And there is one Death stands behind the Groom,

And there is one Death stands behind the Bride —

Mary. Have you been looking at the "Dance of Death" ?

Pole. No ; but these libellous papers which I found
Strewn in your palace. Look you here — the Pope
Pointing at me with "Pole, the heretic,
Thou hast burnt others, do thou burn thyself,
Or I will burn thee" and this other ; see ! —
"We pray continually for the death
Of our accursed Queen and Cardinal Pole."
This last — I dare not read it her.

[*Aside.*
Away !

Mary. Why do you bring me these ?
I thought you knew me better. I never read,
I tear them ; they come back upon my dreams.
The hands that write them should be burnt clean off
As Cranmer's, and the fiends that utter them
Tongue-torn with pincers, lash'd to death, or lie
Famishing in black cells, while famish'd rats
Eat them alive. Why do they bring me these ?
Do you mean to drive me mad ?

Pole. I had forgotten
How these poor libels trouble you.
Your pardon
Sweet cousin, and farewell ! "O bubble world,
Whose colors in a moment break and fly !"
Why, who said that ? I know not — true enough !

[*Puts up the papers, all but the last, which falls. Exit POLE.*

Alice. If Cranmer's spirit were a mocking one,
And heard these two, there might be sport for him. [*Aside.*

Mary. Clarence, they hate me ; even while I speak
There lurks a silent dagger, listening
In some dark closet, some long gallery,
drawn,
And panting for my blood as I go by.

Lady Clarence. Nay, Madam, there
be loyal papers too,
And I have often found them.

Mary. Find me one !

Lady Clarence. Ay, Madam ; but Sir
Nicholas Heath, the Chancellor,
Would see your Highness.

Mary. Wherefore should I see him ?

Lady Clarence. Well, Madam, he may
bring you news from Philip.

Mary. So, Clarence.

Lady Clarence. Let me first put up
your hair ;
It tumbles all abroad.

Mary. And the gray dawn
Of an old age that never will be mine
Is all the clearer seen. No, no ; what
matters ?
Forlorn I am, and let me look forlorn.

Enter SIR NICHOLAS HEATH.

Heath. I bring your Majesty such
grievous news
I grieve to bring it. Madam, Calais is
taken.

Mary. What traitor spoke ? Here,
let my cousin Pole
Seize him and burn him for a Lutheran.

Heath. Her Highness is unwell. I
will retire.

Lady Clarence. Madam, your chan-
cellor, Sir Nicholas Heath.

Mary. Sir Nicholas ? I am stunn'd
— Nicholas Heath ?

Methought some traitor smote me on
the head.
What said you, my good Lord, that our
brave English
Had sallied out from Calais and driven
back
The Frenchmen from their trenches ?

Heath. Alas ! no.
That gateway to the mainland over
which
Our flag hath floated for two hundred
years
Is France again.

Mary. So ; but it is not lost —
Not yet. Send out : let England as of
old
Rise lionlike, strike hard and deep into
The prey they are rending from her —
ay, and rend
The renders too. Send out, send out,
and make
Musters in all the counties ; gather all
From sixteen years to sixty ; collect the
fleet ;

Let every craft that carries sail and
gun
Steer toward Calais. Guisnes is not
taken yet ?

Heath. Guisnes is not taken yet.

Mary. There yet is hope.

Heath. Ah, Madam, but your people
are so cold ;
I do much fear that England will not
care.
Methinks there is no manhood left
among us.

Mary. Send out ; I am too weak to
stir abroad :

Tell my mind to the Council — to the
Parliament :
Proclaim it to the winds. Thou art
cold thyself
To babble of their coldness. O would I
were
My father for an hour ! Away now —
quick ! *[Exit HEATH.*

I hoped I had served God with all my
might !
It seems I have not. Ah ! much her-
esy
Shelter'd in Calais. Saints, I have
rebuilt
Your shrines, set up your broken im-
ages ;
Be comfortable to me. Suffer not
That my brief reign in England be
defamed
Thro' all her angry chronicles hereafter
By loss of Calais. Grant me Calais.
Philip,
We have made war upon the Holy
Father
All for your sake : what good could
come of that ?

Lady Clarence. No, Madam, not
against the Holy Father ;
You did but help King Philip's war
with France.
Your troops were never down in Italy.

Mary. I am a byword. Heretic and
rebel
Point at me and make merry. Philip
gone !
And Calais gone ! Time that I were
gone too !

Lady Clarence. Nay, if the fetid
gutter had a voice
And cried I was not clean, what should
I care ?
Or you, for heretic cries ? And I be-
lieve,

Spite of your melancholy Sir Nicholas,
Your England is as loyal as myself.

Mary (*seeing the paper dropt by Pole*).
There, there! another paper!

Said you not
Many of these were loyal? Shall I try

If this be one of such?

Lady Clarence. Let it be, let it be.
God pardon me! I have never yet found
one. [*Aside*.

Mary (*reads*). "Your people hate you
as your husband hates you."

Clarence, Clarence, what have I done?
what sin

Beyond all grace, all pardon? Mother
of God,

Thou knowest never woman meant so
well,

And fared so ill in this disastrous world.
My people hate me and desire my death.

Lady Clarence. No, Madam, no.

Mary. My husband hates me, and
desires my death.

Lady Clarence. No, Madam; these
are libels.

Mary. I hate myself, and I desire my
death.

Lady Clarence. Long live your Maj-
esty! Shall Alice sing you

One of her pleasant songs? Alice, my
child,

Bring us your lute. (*ALICE goes.*) They
say the gloom of Saul

Was lighten'd by young David's harp.

Mary. Too young!
And never knew a Philip. (*Re-enter*

ALICE.) Give me the lute.
He hates me!

(*She sings.*)

Hapless doom of woman happy in betrothing!
Beauty passes like a breath and love is lost in
loathing:

Low, my lute; speak low, my lute, but say the
world is nothing—

Low, lute, low!

Love will hover round the flowers when they
first awaken;

Love will fly the fallen leaf, and not be over-
taken;

Low, my lute! oh low, my lute! we fade and
are forsaken—

Low, dear lute, low!

Take it away! not low enough for
me!

Alice. Your Grace hath a low voice.

Mary. How dare you say it?
Even for that he hates me. A low
voice

Lost in a wilderness where none can
hear!

A voice of shipwreck on a shoreless sea!
A low voice from the dust and from the
grave (*sitting on the ground*).

There, am I low enough now?

Alice. Good Lord! how grim and
ghastly looks her Grace,

With both her knees drawn upward to
her chin.

There was an old-world tomb beside my
father's,

And this was open'd, and the dead were
found

Sitting, and in this fashion; she looks
a corpse.

Enter LADY MAGDALEN DACRES.

Lady Magdalen. Madam, the Count
de Feria waits without,

In hopes to see your Highness.

Lady Clarence (*pointing to MARY*).
Wait he must—

Her trance again. She neither sees nor
hears,

And may not speak for hours.

Lady Magdalen. Unhappiest
Of Queens and wives and women.

Alice (*in the foreground with* LADY
MAGDALEN). And all along
Of Philip.

Lady Magdalen. Not so loud! Our
Clarence there

Sees ever such an aureole round the
Queen,

It gilds the greatest wronger of her
peace,

Who stands the nearest to her.

Alice. Ay, this Philip;
I used to love the Queen with all my
heart—

God help me, but methinks I love her
less

For such a dotage upon such a man.
I would I were as tall and strong as
you.

Lady Magdalen. I seem half-shamed
at times to be so tall.

Alice. You are the stateliest deer in
all the herd—

Beyond his aim—but I am small and
scandalous,

And love to hear bad tales of Philip.

Lady Magdalen. Why?
I never heard him utter worse of you
Than that you were low-statured.

Alice. Does he think

Low stature is low nature, or all women's

Low as his own ?

Lady Magdalen. There you strike in the nail.

This coarseness is a want of fantasy. It is the low man thinks the woman low ; Sin is too dull to see beyond himself.

Alice. Ah, Magdalen, sin is bold as well as dull.

How dared he ?

Lady Magdalen. Stupid soldiers oft are bold.

Poor lads, they see not what the general sees,

A risk of utter ruin. I am not Beyond his aim, or was not.

Alice. Who? Not you? Tell, tell me : save my credit with myself.

Lady Magdalen. I never breathed it to a bird in the caves,

Would not for all the stars and maiden moon

Our drooping Queen should know ! In Hampton Court

My window look'd upon the corridor ; And I was robing ;— this poor throat of mine,

Barer than I should wish a man to see it, —

When he we speak of drove the window back,

And, like a thief, push'd in his royal hand ;

But by God's providence a good stout staff

Lay near me ; and you know me strong of arm ;

I do believe I lamed his Majesty's For a day or two, tho', give the Devil his due,

I never found he bore me any spite.

Alice. I would she could have wedded that poor youth,

My Lord of Devon — light enough, God knows,

And mixt with Wyatt's rising — and the boy

Not out of him — but neither cold, coarse, cruel,

And more than all — no Spaniard.

Lady Clarence. Not so loud. Lord Devon, girls ! what are you whispering here ?

Alice. Probing an old state-secret — how it chanced

That this young Earl was sent on foreign travel,

Not lost his head.

Lady Clarence. There was no proof against him.

Alice. Nay, Madam ; did not Gardiner intercept

A letter which the Count de Noailles wrote

To that dead traitor, Wyatt, with full proof

Of Courtenay's treason ? What became of that ?

Lady Clarence. Some say that Gardiner, out of love for him,

Burnt it, and some relate that it was lost

When Wyatt sack'd the Chancellor's house in Southwark.

Let dead things rest.

Alice. Ay, and with him who died Alone in Italy.

Lady Clarence. Much changed, I hear,

Had put off levity and put graveness on,

The foreign courts report him in his manner

Noble as his young person and old shield.

It might be so — but all is over now ; He caught a chill in the lagoons of Venice,

And died in Padua.

Mary (looking up suddenly). Died in the true faith ?

Lady Clarence. Ay, Madam, happily.

Mary. Happier he than I.

Lady Magdalen. It seems her Highness hath awaken'd. Think you That I might dare to tell her that the Count —

Mary. I will see no man hence forevermore,

Saving my confessor and my cousin Pole.

Lady Magdalen. It is the Count de Feria, my dear lady.

Mary. What Count ?

Lady Magdalen. The Count de Feria, from his Majesty

King Philip.

Mary. Philip ! quick ! loop up my hair !

Throw cushions on that seat, and make it throne-like.

Arrange my dress — the gorgeous Indian shawl

That Philip brought me in our happy days! —

That covers all. So — am I somewhat Queenlike,

Bride of the mightiest sovereign upon earth!

Lady Clarence. Ay, so your Grace would bide a moment yet.

Mary. No, no, he brings a letter. I may die

Before I read it. Let me see him at once.

Enter COUNT DE FERIA (kneels).

Feria. I trust your Grace is well. (*Aside*) How her hand burns.

Mary. I am not well, but it will better me,

Sir Count, to read the letter which you bring.

Feria. Madam, I bring no letter.

Mary. How! no letter?

Feria. His Highness is so vex'd with strange affairs —

Mary. That his own wife is no affair of his.

Feria. Nay, Madam, nay! he sends his veriest love,

And says, he will come quickly.

Mary. Doth he, indeed?

You, sir, do *you* remember what *you* said

When last you came to England?

Feria. Madam, I brought My King's congratulations; it was hoped Your Highness was once more in happy state

To give him an heir male.

Mary. Sir, you said more; You said he would come quickly. I had horses

On all the road from Dover, day and night;

On all the road from Harwich, night and day;

But the child came not, and the husband came not;

And yet he will come quickly. . . . Thou hast learnt

Thy lesson, and I mine. There is no need

For Philip so to shame himself again.

Return,

And tell him that I know he comes no more.

Tell him at last I know his love is dead,

And that I am in state to bring forth death —

Thou art commission'd to Elizabeth, And not to me!

Feria. Mere compliments and wishes, But shall I take some message from your Grace?

Mary. Tell her to come and close my dying eyes, And wear my crown, and dance upon my grave.

Feria. Then I may say your Grace will see your sister?

Your Grace is too low-spirited. Air and sunshine.

I would we had you, Madam, in our warm Spain.

You droop in your dim London.

Mary. Have him away, I sicken of his readiness.

Lady Clarence. My Lord Count, Her Highness is too ill for colloquy.

Feria (kneels, and kisses her hand). I wish her Highness better.

(*Aside*) How her hand burns. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE III. — A HOUSE NEAR LONDON.

ELIZABETH, STEWARD OF THE HOUSEHOLD, ATTENDANTS.

Elizabeth. There's half an angel wrong'd in your account; Methinks I am all angel, that I bear it Without more ruffling. Cast it o'er again.

Steward. I were whole devil if I wrong'd you, Madam.

[*Exit* STEWARD.]

Attendant. The Connt de Feria, from the King of Spain.

Elizabeth. Ah! — let him enter. Nay, you need not go:

[*To her* LADIES.]

Remain within the chamber, but apart. We'll have no private conference. Welcome to England!

Enter FERIA.

Feria. Fair island star.

Elizabeth. I shiue! What else, Sir Count?

Feria. As far as France, and into Philip's heart.

My King would know if you be fairly served,

And lodged, and treated.

Elizabeth. You see the lodging, sir, I am well-served, and am in every thing Most loyal and most grateful to the Queen.

Feria. You should be grateful to my master, too,
He spoke of this ; and unto him you owe That Mary hath acknowledged you her heir.

Elizabeth. No, not to her nor him ; but to the people,
Who know my right, and love me, as I love The people ! whom God aid !

Feria. You will be Queen,
And, were I Philip —

Elizabeth. Wherefore pause you — what ?

Feria. Nay, but I speak from mine own self, not him :
Your royal sister cannot last ; your hand Will be much coveted ! What a delicate one !

Our Spanish ladies have none such — and there,

Were you in Spain, this fine fair gossamer gold —

Like sun-gilt breathings on a frosty dawn —

That hovers round your shoulder —

Elizabeth. Is it so fine ?
Troth, some have said so.

Feria. — would be deemed a miracle.

Elizabeth. Your Philip hath gold hair and golden beard,
There must be ladies many with hair like mine.

Feria. Some few of Gothic blood have golden hair,
But none like yours.

Elizabeth. I am happy you approve it.

Feria. But as to Philip and your Grace — consider, —

If such a one as you should match with Spain,

What hinders but that Spain and England join'd,

Should make the mightiest empire earth has known.

Spain would be England on her seas, and England

Mistress of the Indies.

Elizabeth. It may chance, that England

Will be the mistress of the Indies yet,
Without the help of Spain.

Feria. Impossible ;

Except you put Spain down.
Wide of the mark ev'n for a madman's dream.

Elizabeth. Perhaps ; but we have seamen. Count de Feria,
I take it that the King hath spoken to you ;

But is Don Carlos such a goodly match ?
Feria. Don Carlos, Madam, is but twelve years old.

Elizabeth. Ay, tell the King that I will muse upon it ;
He is my good friend, and I would keep him so ;

But — he would have me Catholic of Rome,

And that I scarce can be ; and, sir, till now

My sister's marriage, and my father's marriages,

Make me full fain to live and die a maid.
But I am much beholden to your King.

Have you aught else to tell me ?

Feria. Nothing, Madam,
Save that methought I gather'd from the Queen

That she would see your Grace before she — died.

Elizabeth. God's death ! and wherefore spake you not before ?

We dally with our lazy moments here,
And hers are number'd. Horses there,

without !
I am much beholden to the King, your master.

Why did you keep me prating ? Horses, there ! [*Exit ELIZABETH, &c.*]

Feria. So from a clear sky falls the thunderbolt !

Don Carlos ? Madam, if you marry Philip,

Then I and he will snaffle your " God's death,"

And break your paces in, and make you tame ;

God's death, forsooth — you do not know King Philip. [*Exit.*]

SCENE IV. — LONDON. BEFORE THE PALACE.

A light burning within. Voices of the night passing.

First. Is not yon light in the Queen's chamber ?

Second. Ay,

They say she's dying.

First. So is Cardinal Pole.
May the great angels join their wings,
and make
Down for their heads to heaven?

Second. Amen, Come on. [*Exeunt.*]

TWO OTHERS.

First. There's the Queen's light. I
hear she cannot live.

Second. God curse her and her Leg-
ate! Gardiner burns
Already; but to pay them full in kind,
The hottest hold in all the devil's den
Were but a sort of winter; sir, in
Guernsey,
I watch'd a woman burn; and in her
agony
The mother came upon her — a child
was born —
And, sir, they hurl'd it back into the
fire,
That, being but baptized in fire, the
babe
Might be in fire forever. Ah, good
neighbor,
There should be something fiercer than
fire
To yield them their deserts.

First. Amen to all
You wish, and further.

A Third Voice. Deserts! Amen to
what? Whose deserts? Yours? You
have a gold ring on your finger, and
soft raiment about your body; and is
not the woman up yonder sleeping after
all she has done, in peace and quietness,
on a soft bed, in a closed room, with
light, fire, physic, tendance; and I
have seen the true men of Christ lying
famine-dead by scores, and under no
reiling but the cloud that wept on
them, not for them.

First. Friend, tho' so late, it is not
safe to preach.

You had best go home. What are you?

Third. What am I? One who cries
continually with sweat and tears to the
Lord God that it would please Him out
of His infinite love to break down all
kingship and queenship, all priesthood
and prelacy; to cancel and abolish all
bonds of human allegiance, all the mag-
istracy, all the nobles, and all the
wealthy; and to send us again, accord-
ing to his promise, the one King, the
Christ, and all things in common, as in
the day of the first church, when Christ
Jesus was King.

First. If ever I heard a madman, —
let's away!

Why, you long-winded — Sir, you go
beyond me.

I pride myself on being moderate.
Good-night! Go home. Besides, you
curse so loud,

The watch will hear you. Get you home
at once. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE V. — LONDON. A ROOM IN
THE PALACE.

*A Gallery on one side. The moonlight
streaming through a range of windows
on the wall opposite. MARY, LADY
CLARENCE, LADY MAGDALEN DACRES,
ALICE. QUEEN pacing the Gallery.
A writing-table in front. QUEEN comes
to the table and writes and goes again,
pacing the Gallery.*

Lady Clarence. Mine eyes are dim:
what hath she written? read.

Alice. "I am dying, Philip; come
to me."

Lady Magdalen. There — up and
down, poor lady, up and down.

Alice. And how her shadow crosses
one by one

The moonlight casements pattern'd on
the wall,

Following her like her sorrow. She
turns again.

[*QUEEN sits and writes, and goes again.*]

Lady Clarence. What hath she writ-
ten now?

Alice. Nothing; but "come, come,
come," and all awry,

And blotted by her tears. This cannot
last. [*QUEEN returns.*]

Mary. I whistle to the bird has
broken cage,

And all in vain. [*Sitting down.*]
Calais gone — Guisnes gone, too — and

Philip gone!

Lady Clarence. Dear Madam, Philip
is but at the wars;

I cannot doubt but that he comes again;
And he is with you in a measure still.

I never look'd upon so fair a likeness
As your great King in armor there, his
hand

Upon his helmet.

[*Pointing to the portrait of PHILIP
on the wall.*]

Mary. Doth he not look noble?
I had heard of him in battle over
seas,

And I would have my warrior all in
arms.

He said it was not courtly to stand hel-
meted

Before the Queen. He had his gracious
moment

Altho' you'll not believe me. How he
smiles

As if he loved me yet!

Lady Clarence. And so he does.

Mary. He never loved me — nay, he
could not love me.

It was his father's policy against France.
I am eleven years older than he,

Poor boy. [*Weeps.*]

Alice. That was a lusty boy of twen-
ty-seven; [*Aside.*]

Poor enough in God's grace!

Mary. — And all in vain!

The Queen of Scots is married to the
Dauphin,

And Charles, the lord of this low world,
is gone;

And all his wars and wisdoms past away;
And in a moment I shall follow him.

Lady Clarence. Nay, dearest Lady,
see your good physician.

Mary. Drugs — but he knows they
cannot help me — says

That rest is all — tells me I must not
think —

That I must rest — I shall rest by and
by.

Catch the wild cat, cage him, and when
he springs

And maims himself against the bars,
say "rest":

Why, you must kill him if you would
have him rest —

Dead or alive you cannot make him
happy.

Lady Clarence. Your Majesty has
lived so pure a life,

And done such mighty things by Holy
Church,

I trust that God will make you happy
yet.

Mary. What is the strange thing
happiness? Sit down here:

Tell me thine happiest hour.

Lady Clarence. I will, if that

May make your Grace forget yourself a
little.

There runs a shallow brook across our
field

For twenty miles, where the black crow
flies five,

And doth so bound and babble all the
way

As if itself were happy. It was May-
time,

And I was walking with the man I loved.
I loved him, but I thought I was not
loved.

And both were silent, letting the wild
brook

Speak for us — till he stoop'd and gather'd
one

From out a bed of thick forget-me-nots,
Look'd hard and sweet at me, and gave
it me,

I took it, tho' I did not know I took it,
And put it in my bosom, and all at once

I felt his arms about me, and his lips —

Mary. O God! I have been too

slack, too slack;

There are Hot Gospellers even among
our guards —

Nobles we dared not touch. We have
but burnt

The heretic priest, workmen, and women
and children.

Wet, famine, ague, fever, storm, wreck,
wrath, —

We have so play'd the coward; but by
God's grace,

We'll follow Philip's leading, and set
up

The Holy Office here — garner the wheat,
And burn the tares with unquenchable
fire!

Burn! —
Fie, what a savor! tell the cooks to close
The doors of all the offices below.

Latimer!

Sir, we are private with our women
here —

Ever a rough, blunt, and uncourtly fel-
low —

Thou light a torch that never will go
out!

'T is out — mine flames. Women, the
Holy Father

Has ta'en the legateship from our cousin
Pole —

Was that well done? and poor Pole
pines of it,

As I do, to the death. I am but a
woman,

I have no power. — Ah, weak and meek
old man,

Sevenfold dishonor'd even in the sight
Of thine own sectaries — No, no. No
pardon! —

Why that was false : there is the right hand still

Beckons me hence.

Sir, you were burnt for heresy, not for treason,

Remember that ! 't was I and Bonner did it,

And Pole ; we are three to one — Have you found mercy there,

Grant it me here : and see he smiles and goes,

Gentle as in life.

Alice. Madam, who goes ? King Philip ?

Mary. No, Philip comes and goes, but never goes.

Women, when I am dead, Open my heart, and there you will find written

Two names, Philip and Calais ; open his, —

So that he have one, —

You will find Philip only, policy, policy, —

Ay, worse than that — not one hour true to me !

Foul maggots crawling in a fester'd vice ! Adulterous to the very heart of Hell.

Hast thou a knife ?

Alice. Ay, Madam, but o' God's mercy —

Mary. Fool, think'st thou I would peril mine own soul

By slaughter of the body ? I could not, girl,

Not this way — callous with a constant stripe,

Unwoundable. Thy knife !

Alice. Take heed, take heed ! The blade is keen as death.

Mary. This Philip shall not Stare in upon me in my haggardness ;

Old, miserable, diseased, Incapable of children. Come thou down,

[*Cuts out the picture and throws it down.*]

Lie there. (*Wails.*) O God, I have killed my Philip.

Alice. No,

Madam, you have but cut the canvas out, We can replace it.

Mary. All is well then ; rest — I will to rest ; he said, I must have rest.

[*Cries of "ELIZABETH" in the street.*]

A cry ! What's that ? Elizabeth ? revolt ?

A new Northumberland, another Wyatt ?

I'll fight it on the threshold of the grave.

Lady Clarence. Madam, your royal sister comes to see you.

Mary. I will not see her.

Who knows if Boleyn's daughter be my sister ?

I will see none except the priest. Your arm. [*To LADY CLARENCE.*]

O Saint of Aragon, with that sweet worn smile

Among thy patient wrinkles — Help me hence. [*Exeunt.*]

The PRIEST passes. Enter ELIZABETH and SIR WILLIAM CECIL.

Elizabeth. Good counsel yours —

No one in waiting ? still,

As if the chamberlain were Death himself !

The room she sleeps in — is not this the way ?

No, that way there are voices. Am I too late ?

Cecil. . . . God guide me lest I lose the way. [*Exit ELIZABETH.*]

Cecil. Many points weather'd, many perilous ones,

At last a harbor opens ; but therein Sunk rocks — they need find steering

— much it is To be nor mad, nor bigot — have a mind —

Not let Priests' talk, or dream of worlds to be,

Miscolor things about her — sudden touches

For him, or him — sunk rocks ; no passionate faith —

But — if let be — balance and compromise ;

Brave, wary, sane to the heart of her — a Tudor

School'd by the shadow of death — a Boleyn, too,

Glancing across the Tudor — not so well.

Enter ALICE.

How is the good Queen now ?

Alice. Away from Philip.

Back in her childhood — prattling to her mother

Of her betrothal to the Emperor Charles, And childlike-jealous of him again —

and once She thank'd her father sweetly for his

book

Against that godless German. Ah,
those days
Were happy. It was never merry world
In England, since the Bible came among
us.

Cecil. And who says that?

Alice. It is a saying among the
Catholics.

Cecil. It never will be merry world
in England,

Till all men have their Bible, rich and
poor.

Alice. The Queen is dying, or you
dare not say it.

Enter ELIZABETH.

Elizabeth. The Queen is dead.

Cecil. Then here she stands! my
homage.

Elizabeth. She knew me, and ac-
knowledged me her heir,

Pray'd me to pay her debts, and keep
the Faith;

Then claspt the cross, and pass'd away
in peace.

I left her living still and beautiful,
More beautiful than in life. Why would
you vex yourself,

Poor sister? Sir, I swear I have no heart
To be your Queen. To reign is restless
fence,

Tierce, quart, and trickery. Peace is
with the dead.

Her life was winter, for her spring was
nipt:

And she loved much: pray God she be
forgiven.

Cecil. Peace with the dead, who
never were at peace!

Yet she loved one so much — I needs
must say —

That never English monarch dying left
England so little.

Elizabeth. But with Cecil's aid

And others, if our person be secured
From traitor stabs — we will make Eng-
land great.

*Enter PAGET, and other LORDS OF THE
COUNCIL, SIR RALPH BAGENHALL, etc.*

Lords. God save Elizabeth, the Queen
of England!

Bagenhall. God save the Crown: the
Papacy is no more.

Paget (aside). Are we so sure of that?

Acclamation. God save the Queen!

HAROLD.

TO HIS EXCELLENCY
THE RIGHT HON. LORD LYTTON,
VICEROY AND GOVERNOR-GENERAL OF INDIA.

MY DEAR LORD LYTTON, — After old-world records, — such as the Bayeux tapestry and the Roman de Rou, — Edward Freeman's History of the Norman Conquest, and your father's Historical Romance treating of the same times, have been mainly helpful to me in writing this Drama. Your father dedicated his "Harold" to my father's brother; allow me to dedicate my "Harold" to yourself.

A. TENNYSON.

SHOW-DAY AT BATTLE ABBEY, 1876.

A garden here — May breath and bloom of spring —
The cuckoo yonder from an English elm
Crying "with my false egg I overwhelm
The native nest": and fancy hears the ring
Of harness, and that deathful arrow sing,
And Saxon battle axe clang on Norman helm.
Here rose the dragon-banner of our realm:
Here fought, here fell, our Norman-slander'd king.
O Garden blossoming out of English blood!
O strange hate-healer Time! We stroll and stare
Where night made right eight hundred years ago;
Might, right? ay good, so all things make for good—
But he and he, if soul be soul, are where
Each stands full face with all he did below.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

KING EDWARD THE CONFESSOR.

STIGAND (*created Archbishop of Canterbury by the Antipope Benedict*).

ALDRED (*Archbishop of York*).

THE NORMAN BISHOP OF LONDON.

HAROLD, *Earl of Wessex, afterwards King of England* }

TOSTIG, *Earl of Northumbria* }

GURTH, *Earl of East Anglia* }

LEOFWIN, *Earl of Kent and Essex* }

WULFNOTH. }

Sons of Godwin.

COUNT WILLIAM OF NORMANDY.

WILLIAM RUFUS.

WILLIAM MALET* (*a Norman Noble*).

EDWIN, *Earl of Mercia* }

MORCAR, *Earl of Northumbria after Tostig* }

GAMEL (*a Northumbrian Thane*).

GUY (*Count of Ponthieu*).

ROLF (*a Ponthieu Fisherman*).

HUGH MARGOT (*a Norman Monk*).

OSGOD and ATHELRIC (*Canons from Waltham*).

THE QUEEN (*Edward the Confessor's Wife, Daughter of Godwin*).

ALDWYTH (*Daughter of Alfgar and Widow of Griffyth, King of Wales*).

EDITH (*Ward of King Edward*).

Courtiers, Earls and Thanes, Men-at-Arms, Canons of Waltham, Fishermen, etc.

* Computer Heraldii, quidam partim Normannus et Anglus. — *Guy of Amiens*.

ACT I.

SCENE I. — LONDON. THE KING'S PALACE.

(*A comet seen through the open window.*)

ALDWYTH, GAMEL, COURTIERS (*talking together*).

First Courtier. Lo! there once more
— this is the seventh night!

You grimly-glaring, treble-brandish'd
scourge
Of England!

Second Courtier. Horrible!

First Courtier. Look you, there's a
star

That dances in it as mad with agony!

Third Courtier. Ay, like a spirit in
hell who skips and flies

To right and left, and cannot scape the
flame.

Second Courtier. Steam'd upward
from the undescendible

Abysm.

First Courtier. Or floated downward
from the throne

Of God Almighty.

Aldwyth. Gamel, son of Orm,
What thinkest thou this means?

Gamel. War, my dear lady!

Aldwyth. Doth this affright thee?

Gamel. Mightily, my dear lady!

Aldwyth. Stand by me then, and look
upon my face,

Not on the comet.

Enter MORCAR.

Brother! why so pale?

Morecar. It glares in heaven, it flares
upon the Thames,

The people are as thick as bees below,
They hum like bees, — they cannot speak
— for awe;

Look to the skies, then to the river,
strike

Their hearts, and hold their babies up
to it.

I think that they would Molochize them
too,

To have the heavens clear.

Aldwyth. They fright not me.

Enter LEOFWIN, after him GURTH.

Ask thou Lord Leofwin what he thinks
of this!

Morecar. Lord Leofwin, dost thou believe,
that these

Three rods of blood-red fire up yonder
mean

The doom of England and the wrath of
Heaven?

Bishop of London (passing). Did ye
not cast with bestial violence

Our holy Norman bishops down from all
Their thrones in England? I alone remain.

Why should not Heaven be wroth?

Leofwin. With us, or thee?
Bishop of London. Did ye not outlaw
your archbishop Robert,

Robert of Jumieges — well-nigh murder
him too?

Is there no reason for the wrath of
Heaven?

Leofwin. Why then the wrath of
Heaven hath three tails,

The devil only one.

[*Exit BISHOP OF LONDON.*]

Enter ARCHBISHOP STIGAND.

Ask our Archbishop.

Stigand should know the purposes of
Heaven.

Stigand. Not I. I cannot read the
face of heaven,

Perhaps our vines will grow the better
for it.

Leofwin (laughing). He can but read
the king's face on his coins.

Stigand. Ay, ay, young lord, there the
king's face is power.

Gurth. O father, mock not at a public
fear,

But tell us, is this pendent hell in heaven
A harm to England?

Stigand. Ask it of King Edward!
And may he tell thee, I am a harm to
England.

Old uncanonical Stigand — ask of me
Who had my pallium from an Antipope!

Not he the man — for in our windy world
What's up is faith, what's down is
heresy.

Our friends, the Normans, help to shake
his chair.

I have a Norman fever on me, son,
And cannot answer sanely. . . . What it
means?

Ask our broad Earl.

[*Pointing to HAROLD, who enters.*]

Harold (seeing GAMEL). Hail, Gamel,
son of Orm!

Albeit no rolling stone, my good friend
Gamel,

Thou hast rounded since we met. Thy
life at home
Is easier than mine here. Look! am I
not

Work-wan, flesh-fallen?

Gamel. Art thou sick, good Earl?

Harold. Sick as an autumn swallow
for a voyage,

Sick for an idle week of hawk and hound
Beyond the seas — a change! When
camest thou hither?

Gamel. To-day, good Earl.

Harold. Is the North quiet, Gamel?

Gamel. Nay, there be murmurs, for
thy brother breaks us

With over-taxing — quiet, ay, as yet —
Nothing as yet.

Harold. Stand by him, mine old
friend,

Thou art a great voice in Northumber-
land!

Advise him: speak him sweetly, he will
hear thee.

He is passionate but honest. Stand thou
by him!

More talk of this to-morrow, if you weird
sign

Not blast us in our dreams. Well, father
Stigand —

[*To STIGAND, who advances to him.*

Stigand (pointing to the comet). War
there, my son? is that the doom
of England?

Harold. Why not the doom of all the
world as well?

For all the world sees it as well as Eng-
land.

These meteors came and went before our
day,

Not harming any: it threatens us no
more

Than French or Norman. War? the
worst that follows

Things that seem jerk'd out of the com-
mon rut

Of Nature is the hot religious fool,
Who, seeing war in heaven, for heaven's
credit

Makes it on earth: but look, where Ed-
ward draws

A faint foot hither, leaning upon Tostig.
He hath learnt to love our Tostig much
of late.

Leafwin. And he hath learnt, despite
the tiger in him,

To sleek and supple himself to the king's
hand.

Gurth. I trust the kingly touch that
cures the evil

May serve to charm the tiger out of him.

Leafwin. He hath as much of cat as
tiger in him.

Our Tostig loves the hand and not the
man.

Harold. Nay! Better die than lie!

Enter KING, QUEEN and TOSTIG.

Edward. In heaven signs!

Signs upon earth! signs everywhere!
your Priests

Gross, worldly, simoniacal, unlearn'd!
They scarce can read their Psalter; and

your churches

Uncouth, unhandsome, while in Nor-
manland

God speaks thro' abler voices, as He
dwells

In statelier shrines. I say not this, as
being

Half Norman-blooded, nor as some have
held,

Because I love the Norman better — no,
But dreading God's revenge upon this
realm

For narrowness and coldness: and I say it
For the last time perchance, before I go

To find the sweet refreshment of the
Saints.

I have lived a life of utter purity:
I have builded the great church of Holy

Peter:

I have wrought miracles — to God the
glory —

And miracles will in my name be wrought
Hereafter. — I have fought the fight and

go —

I see the flashing of the gates of pearl —
And it is well with me, tho' some of you

Have scorn'd me — ay — but after I am
gone

Woe, woe to England! I have had a
vision;

The seven sleepers in the cave at Ephesus
Have turn'd from right to left.

Harold. My most dear Master,

What matters? let them turn from left
to right

And sleep again.

Tostig. Too hardy with thy king!
A life of prayer and fasting well may

see

Deeper into the mysteries of heaven
Than thou, good brother.

Aldwyth (aside). Sees he into thine,

That thou wouldst have his promise for
the crown ?

Edward. Tostig says true ; my son,
thou art too hard,
Not stagger'd by this ominous earth and
heaven :

But heaven and earth are threads of the
same loom,
Play into one another, and weave the
web

That may confound thee yet.

Harold. Nay, I trust not,
For I have served thee long and honestly.

Edward. I know it, son ; I am not
thankless ; thou

Hast broken all my foes, lighten'd for
me
The weight of this poor crown, and left
me time

And peace for prayer to gain a better
one.

Twelve years of service ! England loves
thee for it.

Thou art the man to rule her !

Alwylth (aside). So, not Tostig !

Harold. And after those twelve years
a boon, my king,

Respite, a holiday : thyself wast wont
To love the chase : thy leave to set my
feet

On board, and hunt and hawk beyond
the seas !

Edward. What, with this flaming
horror overhead ?

Harold. Well, when it passes then.

Edward. Ay if it pass.
Go not to Normandy — go not to Nor-
mandy.

Harold. And wherefore not, my king,
to Normandy ?

Is not my brother Wulfnoth hostage
there

For my dead father's loyalty to thee ?

I pray thee, let me hence and bring him
home.

Edward. Not thee, my son : some
other messenger.

Harold. And why not me, my lord,
to Normandy ?

Is not the Norman Count thy friend and
mine ?

Edward. I pray thee, do not go to
Normandy.

Harold. Because my father drove the
Normans out

Of England ? — that was many a summer
gone —

Forgotten and forgiven by them and
thee.

Edward. Harold, I will not yield thee
leave to go.

Harold. Why then to Flanders. I
will hawk and hunt
In Flanders.

Edward. Be there not fair woods and
fields

In England ? Wilful, wilful. Go — the
Saints

Pilot and prosper all thy wandering out
And homeward. Tostig, I am faint
again.

Son Harold, I will in and pray for thee.

[*Exit, leaning on TOSTIG, and followed
by STIGAND, MORCAR, and COURT-
IERS.*

Harold. What lies upon the mind of
our good king

That he should harp this way on Nor-
mandy ?

Queen. Brother, the king is wiser than
he seems ;

And Tostig knows it ; Tostig loves the
king.

Harold. And love should know ; and
— be the king so wise, —

Then Tostig too were wiser than he
seems.

I love the man but not his fantasies.

Re-enter TOSTIG.

Well, brother,

When didst thou hear from thy Nor-
thumbria ?

Tostig. When did I hear aught but
this " *When* " from thee ?

Leave me alone, brother, with my Nor-
thumbria :

She is *my* mistress, let *me* look to her !

The King hath made me Earl ; make me
not fool !

Nor make the King a fool, who made
me Earl !

Harold. No, Tostig — lest I make
myself a fool

Who made thee King who made thee,
make thee Earl.

Tostig. Why chafe me then ? Thou
knowest I soon go wild.

Gurth. Come, come ! as yet thou art
not gone so wild

But thou canst hear the best and wisest
of us.

Harold. So says old Gurth, not I :
yet hear ! thine earldom,

Tostig, hath been a kingdom. Their
old crown

Is yet a force among them, a sun set
But leaving light enough for Alfgar's
house

To strike thee down by — nay, this
ghastly glare

May heat their fancies!

Tostig. My most worthy brother,
That art the quietest man in all the
world —

Ay, ay and wise in peace and great in
war —

Pray God the peccle choose thee for
their king :

But all the powers of the house of God-
win

Are not enfram'd in thee.

Harold. Thank the Saints, no !
But thou hast drain'd them shallow by
thy tolls,

And thou art ever here about the King :
Thine absence well may seem a want
of care.

Cling to their love ; for, now the sons
of Godwin

Sit topmost in the field of England, envy,
Like the rough bear beneath the tree,
good brother,

Waits till the man let go.

Tostig. Good counsel truly !
I heard from my Northumbria yesterday.

Harold. How goes it then with thy
Northumbria ? Well ?

Tostig. And wouldst thou that it went
aught else than well ?

Harold. I would it went as well as
with mine earldom,
Leofwin's and Gurth's.

Tostig. Ye govern milder men.

Gurth. We have made them milder
by just government.

Tostig. Ay, ever give yourselves your
own good word.

Leofwin. An honest gift, by all the
Saints, if giver

And taker be but honest ! but they bribe
Each other, and so often, an honest world
Will not believe them.

Harold. I may tell thee, Tostig,
I heard from thy Northumberland to-
day.

Tostig. From spies of thine to spy my
nakedness

In my poor North !

Harold. There is a movement there,
A blind one — nothing yet.

Tostig. Crush it at once
With all the power I have ! — I must —
I will ! —

Crush it half-born ! Fool still ? or wis-
dom there,

My wise head-shaking Harold ?

Harold. Make not thou
The nothing something. Wisdom when
in power

And wisest, should not frown as Power,
but smile

As kindness, watching all, till the true
must

Shall make her strike as Power : but
when to strike —

O Tostig, O dear brother — If they
prance,

Rein in, not lash them, lest they rear
and run

And break both neck and axle.

Tostig. Good again !
Good counsel tho' scarce needed. Pour
not water

In the full vessel running out at top
To swamp the house.

Leofwin. Nor thou be a wild thing
Out of the waste, to turn and bite the
hand

Would help thee from the trap.

Tostig. Thou playest in tune.

Leofwin. To the deaf adder thee, that
wilt not dance

However wisely Gurth'd.

Tostig. No more, no more !

Gurth. I likewise cry "no more."
Unwholesome talk

For Godwin's house ! Leofwin, thou
hast a tongue !

Tostig, thou lookst as thou wouldst spring
upon him

St. Olaf, not while I am by ! Come,
come,

Join hands, let brethren dwell in unity ;
Let kith and kin stand close as our
shield-wall,

Who breaks us then ? I say, thou hast
a tongue,

And Tostig is not stout enough to bear it.
Vex him not, Leofwin.

Tostig. No, I am not vext, —
Altho' ye seek to vex me, one and all.

I have to make report of my good earl-
dom

To the good king who gave it — not to
you —

Not any of you. — I am not vext at
all.

Harold. The king? the king is ever
at his prayers;
In all that handles matter of the state
I am the king.

Tostig. That shalt thou never be
If I can thwart thee.

Harold. Brother, brother!

Tostig. Away! [*Exit TOSTIG.*]

Queen. Spite of this grisly star ye
three must gall

Poor Tostig.

Leofwin. Tostig, sister, galls himself.
He cannot smell a rose but pricks his
nose

Against the thorn, and rails against the
rose.

Queen. I am the only rose of all the
stock

That never thorn'd him; Edward loves
him, so

Ye hate him. Harold always hated him.
Why — how they fought when boys —
and, Holy Mary!

How Harold used to beat him!

Harold. Why, boys will fight.
Leofwin would often fight me, and I
beat him.

Even old Gurth would fight. I had
much ado

To hold mine own against old Gurth.
Old Gurth,

We fought like great states for grave
cause; but Tostig —

On a sudden — at a something — for a
nothing —

The boy would fist me hard, and when
we fought

I conquer'd, and he loved me none the
less,

Till thou wouldst get him all apart, and
tell him

That where he was but worsted, he was
wring'd.

Ah! thou hast taught the king to spoil
him too;

Now the spoilt child sways both. Take
heed, take heed;

Thou art the Queen; ye are boy and girl
no more:

Side not with Tostig in any violence,
Lest thou be sideways guilty of the vio-
lence.

Queen. Come, fall not foul on me. I
leave thee, brother.

Harold. Nay, my good sister —

[*Exeunt* QUEEN, HAROLD, GURTH, and
LEOFWIN.]

Aldwyth. Gamel, son of Orm,
What thinkest thou this means?

[*Pointing to the comet.*]

Gamel. War, my dear lady,
War, waste, plague, famine, all malig-
nities.

Aldwyth. It means the fall of Tostig
from his earldom.

Gamel. That were too small a matter
for a comet!

Aldwyth. It means the lifting of the
house of Alfgar.

Gamel. Too small! a comet would
not show for that!

Aldwyth. Not small for thee, if thou
canst compass it.

Gamel. Thy love?

Aldwyth. As much as I can give thee,
man;

This Tostig is, or like to be, a tyrant;
Stir up thy people: oust him!

Gamel. And thy love?

Aldwyth. As much as thou canst bear.

Gamel. I can bear all,

And not be giddy.

Aldwyth. No more now: to-morrow.

SCENE II. — IN THE GARDEN. THE
KING'S HOUSE NEAR LONDON.
SUNSET.

Edith. Mad for thy mate, passionate
nightingale. . . .

I love thee for it — ay, but stay a mo-
ment;

He can but stay a moment: he is go-
ing.

I fain would hear him coming! . . . near
me . . . near,

Somewhere — To draw him nearer with
a charm

Like thine to thine.

(*Singing.*)

Love is come with a song and a smile,

Welcome Love with a smile and a song:

Love can stay but a little while.

Why cannot he stay? They call him away;

Ye do him wrong, ye do him wrong;

Love will stay for a whole life long.

Enter HAROLD.

Harold. The nightingales at Haver-
ing-in-the-bower

Sang out their loves so loud, that Ed-
ward's prayers

Were deafen'd, and he pray'd them
dumb, and thus

I dumb thee too, my wingless nightin-
gale ! [Kissing her.

Edith. Thou art my music ! Would
their wings were mine

To follow thee to Flanders ! Must thou
go ?

Harold. Not must, but will. It is
but for one moon.

Edith. Leaving so many foes in Ed-
ward's hall

To league against thy weal. The Lady
Aldwyth

Was here to-day, and when she touch'd
on thee,

She stammer'd in her hate ; I am sure
she hates thee,

Pants for thy blood.

Harold. Well, I have given her
cause —

I fear no woman.

Edith. Hate not one who felt

Some pity for thy hater ! I am sure
Her morning wanted sunlight, she so

praised

The convent and lone life — within the
pale —

Beyond the passion. Nay — she held
with Edward,

At least methought she held with holy
Edward,

That marriage was half sin.

Harold. A lesson worth

Finger and thumb — thus (*snaps his
fingers*). And my answer to it —

See here — an interwoven H and E !

Take thou this ring ; I will demand his
ward

From Edward when I come again. Ay,
would she ?

She to shut up my blossom in the
dark !

Thou art *my* nun, thy cloister in mine
arms.

Edith (taking the ring). Yea, but Earl
Tostig —

Harold. That's a truer fear !

For if the North take fire, I should be
back ;

I shall be, soon enough.

Edith. Ay, but last night

An evil dream that ever came and
went —

Harold. A gnat that vex't thy pillow !

Had I been by

I would have spoil'd his horn. My g'rl,
what was it ?

Edith. Oh ! that thou wert not going !

For so methought it was our marriage-
morn,

And while we stood together, a dead man
Rose from behind the altar, tore away

My marriage ring, and rent my bridal
veil ;

And then I turn'd, and saw the church
all fill'd

With dead men upright from their graves,
and all

The dead men made at thee to murder
thee,

But thou didst back thyself against a
pillar,

And strike among them with thy battle-
axe —

There, what a dream !

Harold. Well, well — a dream — no
more !

Edith. Did not Heaven speak to men
in dreams of old ?

Harold. Ay — well — of old. I tell
thee what, my child ;

Thou hast misread this merry dream of
thine,

Taken the rifted pillars of the wood

For smooth stone columns of the sanc-
tuary,

The shadows of a hundred fat dead deer
For dead men's ghosts. True, that the

battle-axe

Was out of place ; it should have been
the bow. —

Come, thou shalt dream no more such
dreams ; I swear it,

By mine own eyes — and these two sap-
phires — these

Twin rubies, that are amulets against all
The kisses of all kind of womankind

In Flanders, till the sea shall roll re-
back

To tumble at thy feet.

Edith. That would but shame me,
Rather than make me vain. The sea

may roll

Sand, shingle, shore-weed, not the living
rock

Which guards the land.

Harold. Except it be a soft one,
And undereaten to the fall. Mine am-
ulet . . .

This last . . . upon thine eyelids, to shut
in

A happier dream. Sleep, sleep, and
thou shalt see

My greyhounds fleeting like a beam of
light,

And hear my peregrine and her bells in
heaven ;
And other bells on earth, which yet are
heaven's ;
Guess what they be.

Edith. He cannot guess who knows.
Farewell, my king.

Harold. Not yet, but then — my
queen. [*Exeunt.*

Enter ALDWYTH from the thicket.

Aldwyth. The kiss that charms thine
eyelids into sleep,
Will hold mine waking. Hate him? I
could love him
More, tenfold, than this fearful child
can do ;

Griffyth I hated : why not hate the foe
Of England? Griffyth when I saw him
flee,

Chased deer-like up his mountains, all
the blood

That should have only pulsed for
Griffyth, beat

For his pursuer. I love him or think I
love him.

If he were King of England, I his queen,
I might be sure of it. Nay, I do love
him. —

She must be cloister'd somehow, lest
the king

Should yield his ward to Harold's will.
What harm?

She hath but blood enough to live, not
love. —

When Harold goes and Tostig, shall I
play

The craftier Tostig with him? fawn
upon him?

Chime in with all? "O thou more saint
than king!"

And that were true enough. "O blessed
relics!"

"O Holy Peter!" If he found me thus,
Harold might hate me ; he is broad and
honest,

Breathing an easy gladness . . . not like
Aldwyth . . .

For which I strangely love him. Should
not England

Love Aldwyth, if she stay the feuds
that part

The sons of Godwin from the sons of
Alfgar

By such a marrying? Courage, noble
Aldwyth!

Let all thy people bless thee !

Our wild Tostig,
Edward hath made him Earl : he would
be king : —

The dog that snapt the shadow, dropt
the bone. —

I trust he may do well, this Gamel,
whom

I play upon, that he may play the note
Whereat the dog shall howl and run,
and Harold

Hear the king's music, all alone with
him,

Pronounced his heir of England.

I see the goal and half the way to it. —
Peace-lover is our Harold for the sake

Of England's wholeness — so — to shake
the North

With earthquake and disruption — some
division —

Then fling mine own fair person in the
gap

A sacrifice to Harold, a peace-offering,
A scape-goat marriage — all the sins of
both

The houses on mine head — then a fair
life

And bless the Queen of England.

Morcar (coming from the thicket). Art
thou assured

By this, that Harold loves but Edith?
Aldwyth. Morcar!

Why creepst thou like a timorous beast
of prey

Out of the bush by night?

Morcar. I follow'd thee.
Aldwyth. Follow my lead, and I will
make thee earl.

Morcar. What lead then?
Aldwyth. Thou shalt flash it secretly

Among the good Northumbrian folk,
that I —

That Harold loves me — yea, and pres-
ently

That I and Harold are betroth'd — and
last —

Perchance that Harold wrongs me ; tho'
I would not

That it should come to that.

Morcar. I will both flash
And thunder for thee.

Aldwyth. I said "secretly" ;
It is the flash that murders, the poor
thunder

Never harm'd head.

Morcar. But thunder may bring down
That which the flash hath stricken.

Aldwyth. Down with Tostig!

That first of all. — And when doth Harold go?

Morcar. To-morrow — first to Bosham, then to Flanders.

Aldwyth. Not to come back till Tostig shall have shown

And redden'd with his people's blood the teeth

That shall be broken by us — yea, and thou

Chair'd in his place. Good-night, and dream thyself

Their chosen Earl. [*Exit ALDWYTH.*]

Morcar. Earl first, and after that Who knows I may not dream myself their King!

ACT II.

SCENE I. — SEASHORE. PONTHEIU. NIGHT.

HAROLD and his men, wrecked.

Harold. Friends, in that last inhospitable plunge Our boat hath burst her ribs; but ours are whole;

I have but bark'd my hands.

Attendant. I dug mine into My old fast friend the shore, and clinging thus

Felt the remorseless outdraught of the deep

Haul like a great strong fellow at my legs,

And then I rose and ran. The blast that came

So suddenly hath fallen as suddenly — Put thou the comet and this blast together —

Harold. Put thou thyself and mother-wit together.

Be not a fool!

Enter FISHERMEN with torches, HAROLD going up to one of them, ROLF.

Wicked sea-will-o'-the-wisp! Wolf of the shore! dog, with thy lying lights

Thou hast betray'd us on these rocks of thine!

Rolf. Ay, but thou liest as loud as the black herring-pond behind thee. We be fishermen: I came to see after my nets.

Harold. To drag us into them. Fishermen? devils!

Who, while ye fish for men with your false fires,

Let the great Devil fish for your own souls.

Rolf. Nay then, we be liker the blessed Apostles; they were fishers of men, Father Jean says.

Harold. I had liefer that the fish had swallowed me,

Like Jonah, than have known there were such devils.

What's to be done?

[*To his men — goes apart with them.*]

Fisherman. Rolf, what fish did swallow Jonah?

Rolf. A whale!

Fisherman. Then a whale to a whelk we have swallowed the King of England. I saw him over there. Look thee, Rolf, when I was down in the fever, she was down with the hunger, and thou didst stand by her and give her thy crabs, and set her up again, till now, by the patient Saints, she's as crabb'd as ever.

Rolf. And I'll give her my crabs again, when thou art down again.

Fisherman. I thank thee, Rolf. Run thou to Count Guy; he is hard at hand. Tell him what hath crept into our creel, and he will fee thee as freely as he will wrench this outlander's ransom out of him — and why not? for what right had he to get himself wrecked on another man's land?

Rolf. Thou art the human-heartedest, Christian-charitiest of all crab-catchers! Share and share alike! [*Exit.*]

Harold (to FISHERMAN). Fellow, dost thou catch crabs?

Fisherman. As few as I may in a wind, and less than I would in a calm. Ay!

Harold. I have a mind that thou shalt catch no more.

Fisherman. How?

Harold. I have a mind to brain thee with mine axe.

Fisherman. Ay, do, do, and our great Count-crab will make his nippers meet in thine heart; he'll sweat it out of thee, he'll sweat it out of thee. Look, he's here! He'll speak for himself! Hold thine own, if thou canst!

Enter GUY, COUNT OF PONTHEIU.

Harold. Guy, Count of Ponthieu!

Guy. Harold, Earl of Wessex!

Harold. Thy villains with their lying lights have wreck'd us!

Guy. Art thou not Earl of Wessex?

Harold. In mine earldom
A man may hang gold bracelets on a bush,
And leave them for a year, and coming back
Find them again.

Guy. Thou art a mighty man
In thine own earldom!

Harold. Were such murderous liars
In Wessex — if I caught them, they
should hang
Cliff-gibbeted for sea-marks; our sea-
mew

Winging their only wail!

Guy. Ay, but my men
Hold that the shipwreckt are accursed
of God; —
What hinders me to hold with mine
own men?

Harold. The Christian manhood of
the man who reigns!

Guy. Ay, rave thy worst, but in our
oubliettes
Thou shalt or rot or ransom. Hale him
hence!

[*To one of his Attendants.*
Fly thou to William; tell him we have
Harold.

SCENE II. — BAYEUX. PALACE.

COUNT WILLIAM and WILLIAM MALET.

William. We hold our Saxon wood-
cock in the springe,
But he begins to flutter. As I think
He was thine host in England when I
went
To visit Edward.

Malet. Yea, and there, my lord,
To make allowance for their rougher
fashions,
I found him all a noble host should be.

William. Thou art his friend: thou
knowst my claim on England
Thro' Edward's promise: we have him
in the toils.
And it were well, if thou shouldst let
him feel,
How dense a fold of danger nets him
round,
So that he bristle himself against my
will.

Malet. What would I do, my lord, if
I were you?

William. What wouldst thou do?

Malet. My lord, he is thy guest.

William. Nay, by the splendor of
God, no guest of mine.

He came not to see me, had passed me by
To hunt and hawk elsewhere, save for
the fate

Which hunted *him* when that un-Saxon
blast,
And bolts of thunder moulded in high
heaven

To serve the Norman purpose, drave and
crack'd

His boat on Ponthieu beach; where our
friend Guy

Had wrung his ransom from him by the
rack,

But that I stept between and purchased
him,

Translating his captivity from Guy
To mine own hearth at Bayeux, where
he sits

My ransom'd prisoner.

Malet. Well, if not with gold,
With golden deeds and iron strokes that
brought

Thy war with Brittany to a goodlier
close

Than else had been, he paid his ransom
back.

William. So that henceforth they are
not like to league
With Harold against *me*.

Malet. A marvel, how
He from the liquid sands of Coesnon
Haled thy shore-swallow'd, armor'd Nor-
mans up

To fight for thee again!

William. Perchance against
Their savor, save thou save him from
himself.

Malet. But I should let him home
again, my lord.

William. Simple! let fly the bird
within the hand,

To catch the bird again within the bush!
No.

Smooth thou my way, before he clash
with me;

I want his voice in England for the
crown,

I want thy voice with him to bring him
round;

And being brave he must be subtly
cow'd,

And being truthful wrought upon to swear
 Vows that he dare not break. England
 our own
 Thro' Harold's help, he shall be my dear
 friend
 As well as thine, and thou thyself shalt
 have
 Large lordship there of lands and territory.

Malet. I knew thy purpose; he and
 Wulfnoth never
 Have met, except in public; shall they
 meet
 In private? I have often talk'd with
 Wulfnoth,
 And stuff'd the boy with fears that these
 may act
 On Harold when they meet.

William. Then let them meet!

Malet. I can but love this noble, honest Harold.

William. Love him! why not? thine
 is a loving office,
 I have commission'd thee to save the
 man:
 Help the good ship, showing the sunken
 rock,
 Or he is wreckt forever.

Enter WILLIAM RUFUS.

William Rufus. Father.

William. Well, boy.

William Rufus. They have taken
 away the toy thou gavest me,
 The Norman knight.

William. Why, boy?

William Rufus. Because I broke
 The horse's leg—it was mine own to
 break;

I like to have my toys, and break them
 too.

William. Well, thou shalt have another Norman knight!

William Rufus. And may I break his legs?

William. Yea,—get thee gone!

William Rufus. I'll tell them I have had my way with thee. [*Exit.*]

Malet. I never knew thee check thy will for aught
 Save for the prattling of thy little ones.

William. Who shall be kings of England. I am heir
 Of England by the promise of her king.

Malet. But there the great Assembly
 choose their king,
 The choice of England is the voice of
 England.

William. I will be king of England
 by the laws,
 The choice, and voice of England.

Malet. Can that be!

William. The voice of any people is
 the sword
 That guards them, or the sword that
 beats them down.

Here comes the would-be what I will
 be... kinglike...

Tho' scarce at ease; for, save our meshes
 break,

More kinglike he than like to prove a
 king.

Enter HAROLD, musing, with his eyes on the ground.

He sees me not—and yet he dreams of
 me.

Earl, wilt thou fly my falcons this fair
 day?

They are of the best, strong-wing'd
 against the wind.

Harold (looking up suddenly, having caught but the last word). Which way does it blow?

William. Blowing for England, ha?
 Not yet. Thou hast not learnt thy
 quarters here,

The winds so cross and jostle among
 these towers.

Harold. Count of the Normans, thou
 hast ransom'd us,

Maintain'd, and entertain'd us royally!

William. And thou for us hast fought
 as loyally,

Which binds us friendship-fast forever!

Harold. Good!

But lest we turn the scale of courtesy
 By too much pressure on it, I would fain,
 Since thou hast promised Wulfnoth
 home with us,

Be home again with Wulfnoth.

William. Stay—as yet
 Thou hast but seen how Norman hands
 can strike,

But walk'd our Norman field, scarce
 touch'd or tasted

The splendors of our Court.

Harold. I am in no mood:
 I should be as the shadow of a cloud
 Crossing your light.

William. Nay, rest a week or two,

And we will fill thee full of Norman
sun,
And send thee back among thine island
mists
With laughter.

Harold. Count, I thank thee, but had
rather
Breathe the free wind from off our Saxon
downs,
Tho' charged with all the wet of all the
west.

William. Why if thou wilt, so let
it be — thou shalt.
That were a graceless hospitality
To chain the free guest to the banquet-
board;

To-morrow we will ride with thee to
Harfleur,
And see thee shipt, and pray in thy be-
half

For happier homeward winds than that
which crack'd

Thy bark at Ponthieu, — yet to us, in
faith,

A happy one — whereby we came to
know

Thy valor and thy value, noble earl.
Ay, and perchance a happy one for
thee,

Provided — I will go with thee to-mor-
row —

Nay — but there be conditions, easy
ones,

So thou, fair friend, will take them
easily.

Enter PAGE.

Page. My Lord, there is a post from
over seas

With news for thee. [*Exit PAGE.*]

William. Come, Malet, let us hear!

[*Exeunt COUNT WILLIAM and MALET.*]

Harold. Conditions? What condi-
tions? Pay him back

His ransom? "easy" — that were easy
— nay —

No money-lover he! What said the
King?

"I pray you do not go to Normandy."
And fate hath blown me hither, bound
me too

With bitter obligation to the Count —
Have I not fought it out? What did
he mean?

There lodged a gleaming grimness in his
eyes,

Gave his shorn smile the lie. The walls
oppress me,

And yon huge keep that hinders half the
heaven.

Free air! free field!

[*Moves to go out.* A MAN-AT-ARMS
follows him.

Harold (to the MAN-AT-ARMS). I need
thee not. Why dost thou follow
me?

Man-at-arms. I have the Count's
commands to follow thee.

Harold. What then? Am I in dan-
ger in this court?

Man-at-arms. I cannot tell. I have
the Count's commands.

Harold. Stand out of earshot then,
and keep me still

In eyeshot.

Man-at-arms. Yea, Lord Harold.

[*Withdraws.*]

Harold. And arm'd men

Ever keep watch beside my chamber
door,

And if I walk within the lonely wood,
There is an arm'd man ever glides be-
hind!

Enter MALET.

Why am I followed, haunted, harass'd,
watch'd?

See yonder!

[*Pointing to the MAN-AT-ARMS.*]

Malet. 'T is the good Count's care for
thee!

The Normans love thee not, nor thou
the Normans,

Or — so they deem.

Harold. But wherefore is the wind,
Which way soever the vane-arrow swing,
Not ever fair for England? Why but
now

He said (thou heardest him) that I must
not hence

Save on conditions.

Malet. So in truth he said.

Harold. Malet, thy mother was an
Englishwoman;

There somewhere beats an English pulse
in thee!

Malet. Well — for my mother's sake
I love your England,
But for my father I love Normandy.

Harold. Speak for thy mother's sake,
and tell me true.

Malet. Then for my mother's sake,
and England's sake

That suffers in the daily want of thee,
Obey the Count's conditions, my good
friend.

Harold. How, Malet, if they be not honorable!

Malet. Seem to obey them.

Harold. Better die than lie!

Malet. Choose therefore whether thou wilt have thy conscience White as a maiden's hand, or whether England Be shatter'd into fragments.

Harold. News from England?

Malet. Morcar and Edwin have stirr'd up the Thanes Against thy brother Tostig's governance; And all the North of Humber is one storm.

Harold. I should be there, Malet, I should be there!

Malet. And Tostig in his own hall on suspicion Hath massacred the Thane that was his guest, Gamel, the son of Orm: and there be more As villanously slain.

Harold. The wolf! the beast! Ill news for guests, ha, Malet! More? What more?

What do they say? did Edward know of this?

Malet. They say, his wife was knowing and abetting.

Harold. They say, his wife! — To marry and have no husband Makes the wife fool. My God, I should be there. I'll hack my way to the sea.

Malet. Thou canst not, Harold; Our Duke is all between thee and the sea, Our Duke is all about thee like a God; All passes block'd. Obey him, speak him fair, For he is only debonair to those That follow where he leads, but stark as death To those that cross him. — Look thou, here is Wulfnoth!

I leave thee to thy talk with him alone; How wan, poor lad! how sick and sad for home! [*Exit MALET.*]

Harold (*muttering*). Go not to Normandy — go not to Normandy!

Enter WULFNOTH.

Poor brother! still a hostage!

Wulfnoth. Yea, and I Shall see the dewy kiss of dawn no more

Make blush the maiden-white of our tall cliffs,
Nor mark the sea-bird rouse himself and hover
Above the windy ripple, and fill the sky
With free sea-laughter — never — save indeed
Thou canst make yield this iron-mooded Duke
To let me go.

Harold. Why, brother, so he will; But on conditions. Canst thou guess at them?

Wulfnoth. Draw nearer, — I was in the corridor,
I saw him coming with his brother Odo The Bayeux bishop, and I hid myself.

Harold. They did thee wrong who made thee hostage; thou Wast ever fearful.

Wulfnoth. And he spoke — I heard him —
“This Harold is not of the royal blood, Can have no right to the crown,” and Odo said,
“Thine is the right, for thine the might; he is here,
And yonder is thy keep.”

Harold. No, Wulfnoth, no.

Wulfnoth. And William laugh'd and swore that might was right,
Far as he knew in this poor world of ours —
“Marry, the Saints must go along with us,
And, brother, we will find a way,” said he —
Yea, yea, he would be king of England.

Harold. Never!

Wulfnoth. Yea, but thou must not this way answer *him*.

Harold. Is it not better still to speak the truth?

Wulfnoth. Not here, or thou wilt never hence nor I:
For in the racing toward this golden goal
He turns not right or left, but tramples flat
Whatever thwarts him; hast thou never heard
His savagery at Alençon, — the town Hung out raw hides along their walls, and cried
“Work for the tanner.”

Harold. That had anger'd me, Had I been William.

Wulfnoth. Nay, but he had prisoners,
He tore their eyes out, sliced their hands
away,
And flung them streaming o'er the bat-
tlements
Upon the heads of those who walk'd
within —
O speak him fair, Harold, for thine own
sake.

Harold. Your Welshman says, "The
Truth against the World,"
Much more the truth against myself.

Wulfnoth. Thyself?
But for my sake, oh brother! oh! for
my sake!

Harold. Poor Wulfnoth! do they not
entreat thee well?

Wulfnoth. I see the blackness of my
dungeon loom
Across their lamps of revel, and beyond
The merriest murmurs of their banquet
clank
The shackles that will bind me to the
wall.

Harold. Too fearful still.

Wulfnoth. Oh no, no — speak him
fair!
Call it to temporize; and not to lie;
Harold, I do not counsel thee to lie.
The man that hath to foil a murderous
aim
May, surely, play with words.

Harold. Words are the man.
Not ev'n for thy sake, brother, would
I lie.

Wulfnoth. Then for thine Edith?

Harold. There thou prickst me deep.

Wulfnoth. And for our Mother Eng-
land?

Harold. Deeper still.

Wulfnoth. And deeper still the deep-
down oubliette,
Down thirty feet below the smiling
day —
In blackness — dogs' food thrown upon
thy head.
And over thee the suns arise and set,
And the lark sings, the sweet stars come
and go,
And men are at their markets, in their
fields,
And woo their loves and have forgotten
thee;
And thou art upright in thy living grave,
Where there is barely room to shift thy
side,

And all thine England hath forgotten
thee;

And he our lazy-pious Norman King,
With all his Normans round him once
again,
Counts his old beads, and hath forgotten
thee.

Harold. Thou art of my blood, and
so methinks, my boy,
Thy fears infect me beyond reason.
Peace!

Wulfnoth. And then our fiery Toc-
tig, while thy hands
Are palsied here, if his Northumbrians
rise

And hurl him from them, — I have
heard the Normans
Count upon this confusion — may he
not make

A league with William, so to bring him
back?

Harold. That lies within the shadow
of the chance.

Wulfnoth. And like a river in flood
thro' a burst dam
Descends the ruthless Norman — our
good King

Kneels mumbling some old bone — our
helpless folk
Are wash'd away, wailing, in their own
blood —

Harold. Wailing! not warring? Boy,
thou hast forgotten
That thou art English.

Wulfnoth. Then our modest women —
I know the Norman license — thine own
Edith —

Harold. No more! I will not hear
thee — William comes.

Wulfnoth. I dare not well be seen
in talk with thee.
Make thou not mention that I spake
with thee.

[*Moves away to the back of the stage.*]

Enter WILLIAM, MALET, and OFFICER.

Officer. We have the man that rail'd
against thy birth.

William. Tear out his tongue.

Officer. He shall not rail again;
He said that he should see confusion
fall

On thee and on thine house.

William. Tear out his eyes,
And plunge him into prison.

Officer. It shall be done.
[*Exit* OFFICER.]

William. Look not amazed, fair earl!
Better leave undone
Than do by halves — tongueless and
eyeless, prison'd —
Harold. Better methinks have slain
the man at once!
William. We have respect for man's
immortal soul,
We seldom take man's life, except in
war;
It frights the traitor more to maim and
blind.
Harold. In mine own land I should
have scorn'd the man,
Or lash'd his rascal back, and let him go.
William. And let him go? To slan-
der thee again!
Yet in thine own land in thy father's
day
They blinded my young kinsman, Alfred
— ay,
Some said it was thy father's deed.
Harold. They lied.
William. But thou and he — whom
at thy word, for thou
Art known a speaker of the truth, I free
From this foul charge —
Harold. Nay, nay, he freed himself
By oath and compurgation from the
charge.
The king, the lords, the people clear'd
him of it.
William. But thou and he drove our
good Normans out
From England, and this rankles in us
yet.
Archbishop Robert hardly scaped with
life.
Harold. Archbishop Robert! Robert
the Archbishop!
Robert of Jumièges, he that —
Malet. Quiet! quiet!
Harold. Count! if there sat within
thy Norman chair
A ruler all for England — one who fill'd
All offices, all bishoprics with English —
We could not move from Dover to the
Humber
Saving thro' Norman bishoprics — I say
Ye would applaud that Norman who
should drive
The stranger to the fiends!
William. Why, that is reason!
Warrior thou art, and mighty wise
withal!
Ay, ay, but many among our Norman
lords

Hate thee for this, and press upon me
— saying
God and the sea have given thee to our
hands —
To plunge thee into life-long prison
here: —
Yet I hold out against them, as I
may,
Yea — would hold out, yea, tho' they
should revolt —
For thou hast done the battle in my
cause;
I am thy fastest friend in Normandy.
Harold. I am doubly bound to thee
... if this be so.
William. And I would bind thee
more, and would myself
Be bounden to thee more.
Harold. Then let me hence
With Wulfnoth to King Edward.
William. So we will.
We hear he hath not long to live.
Harold. It may be.
William. Why then the heir of Eng-
land, who is he?
Harold. The Atheling is nearest to
the throne.
William. But sickly, slight, half-
witted and a child,
Will England have him king?
Harold. It may be, no.
William. And hath King Edward
not pronounced his heir?
Harold. Not that I know.
William. When he was here in Nor-
mandy,
He loved us and we him, because we
found him
A Norman of the Normans.
Harold. So did we.
William. A gentle, gracious, pure
and saintly man!
And grateful to the hand that shielded
him,
He promised that if ever he were king
In England, he would give his kingly
voice
To me as his successor. Knowest thou
this?
Harold. I learn it now.
William. Thou knowest I am his
cousin,
And that my wife descends from Alfred?
Harold. Ay.
William. Who hath a better claim
then to the crown
So that ye will not crown the Atheling?

Harold. None that I know . . . if that
but hung upon
King Edward's will.

William. Wilt thou uphold my claim ?

Malet (aside to HAROLD). Be careful
of thine answer, my good friend.

Wulfnoth (aside to HAROLD). Oh !
Harold, for my sake and for thine
own !

Harold. Ay . . . if the king have not
revoked his promise.

William. But hath he done it then ?

Harold. Not that I know.

William. Good, good, and thou wilt
help me to the crown.

Harold. Ay . . . if the Witan will con-
sent to this.

William. Thou art the mightiest
voice in England, man,
Thy voice will lead the Witan — shall
I have it ?

Wulfnoth (aside to HAROLD). Oh !
Harold, if thou love thine Edith,
ay.

Harold. Ay, if —

Malet (aside to HAROLD). Thine "ifs"
will sear thine eyes out — ay.

William. I ask thee, wilt thou help
me to the crown ?

And I will make thee my great Earl of
Earls,

Foremost in England and in Normandy ;
Thou shalt be verily king — all but the
name —

For I shall most sojourn in Normandy ;
And thou be my vice-king in England.
Speak.

Wulfnoth (aside to HAROLD). Ay,
brother — for the sake of England
— ay.

Harold. My lord —

Malet (aside to HAROLD). Take heed
now.

Harold. Ay.

William. I am content,
For thou art truthful, and thy word thy
bond.

To-morrow we will ride with thee to
Harfleur. [*Exit WILLIAM.*]

Malet. Harold, I am thy friend, one
life with thee,
And even as I should bless thee saving
mine,

I thank thee now for having saved thy-
self. [*Exit MALET.*]

Harold. For having lost myself to
save myself,

Said "ay" when I meant "no," lied
like a lad

That dreads the pendent scourge, said
"ay" for "no !"

Ay ! No ! — he hath not bound me by
an oath —

Is "ay" an oath ? is "ay" strong as
an oath ?

Or is it the same sin to break my
word

As break mine oath ? He call'd my
word my bond !

He is a liar who knows I am a liar,
And makes believe that he believes my
word —

The crime be on his head — not boulder
— no.

[*Suddenly doors are flung open, dis-
covering in an inner hall COUNT
WILLIAM in his state robes, seated
upon his throne, between two bish-
ops, ODO OF BAYEUX being one : in
the centre of the hall an ark covered
with cloth of gold ; and on either
side of it the Norman barons.*]

Enter a JAILER before WILLIAM'S throne.

William (to JAILER). Knave, hast
thou let thy prisoner scape ?

Jailer. Sir Count,
He had but one foot, he must have hopt
away ;

Yea, some familiar spirit must have
help'd him.

William. Woe, knave, to thy familiar
and to thee !

Give me the keys. [*They fall clashing.*]
Nay, let them lie. Stand there and
wait my will.

[*The JAILER stands aside.*]

William (to HAROLD). Hast thou such
trustless jailers in thy North ?

Harold. We have few prisoners in
mine earldom there,

So less chance for false keepers.

William. We have heard
Of thy just, mild, and equal governance ;
Honor to thee ! thou art perfect in all
honor !

Thy naked word thy bond ! confirm it
now

Before our gather'd Norman baronage,
For they will not believe thee — as I
believe.

[*Descends from his throne and stands
by the ark.*]

Let all men here bear witness of our
bond !

[Beckons to HAROLD, who advances.
Enter MALET behind him.]

Lay thou thy hand upon this golden
pall!

Behold the jewel of St. Pancratius
Woven into the gold. Swear thou on
this!

Harold. What should I swear? Why
should I swear on this?

William (savagely). Swear thou to
help me to the crown of England.

Malet (whispering HAROLD). My
friend, thou hast gone too far to
palter now.

Wulfnoth (whispering HAROLD).
Swear thou to-day, to-morrow is
thine own.

Harold. I swear to help thee to the
crown of England . . .

According as King Edward promises.

William. Thou must swear absolute-
ly, noble Earl.

Malet (whispering). Delay is death to
thee, ruin to England.

Wulfnoth (whispering). Swear, dear-
est brother, I beseech thee, swear!

Harold (putting his hand on the jewel).
I swear to help thee to the crown
of England.

William. Thanks, truthful Earl; I
did not doubt thy word,

But that my barons might believe thy
word,

And that the Holy Saints of Normandy
When thou art home in England, with
thine own,

Might strengthen thee in keeping of thy
word,

I made thee swear. — Show him by whom
he hath sworn.

[The two Bishops advance, and raise
the cloth of gold. The bodies and
bones of Saints are seen lying in
the ark.]

The holy bones of all the Canonized
From all the holiest shrines in Nor-
mandy!

Harold. Horrible!

[They let the cloth fall again.]

William. Ay, for thou hast sworn
an oath

Which, if not kept, would make the
hard earth rive

To the very Devil's horns, the bright sky
cleave

To the very feet of God, and send her
hosts

Of injured Saints to scatter sparks of
plague

Thro' all your cities, blast your infants,
dash

The torch of war among your standing
corn,

Dabble your hearths with your own
blood. — Enough!

Thou wilt not break it! I, the Count
— the King —

Thy friend — am grateful for thine honest
oath,

Not coming fiercely like a conqueror,
now,

But softly as a bridegroom to his own.
For I shall rule according to your laws,

And make your ever-jarring Earldoms
move

To music and in order — Angle, Jute,
Dane, Saxon, Norman, help to build a
throne

Out-towering hers of France. . . . The
wind is fair

For England now. . . . To-night we will
be merry.

To-morrow will I ride with thee to Har-
flour.

[Exeunt WILLIAM and all the Norman
barons, etc.]

Harold. To-night we will be merry
— and to-morrow —

Juggler and bastard — bastard — he hates
that most —

William the tanner's bastard! Would
he heard me!

O God, that I were in some wide, waste
field

With nothing but my battle-axe and
him

To spatter his brains! Why let earth
rive, gulf in

These cursed Normans — yea and mine
own self.

Cleave heaven, and send thy saints that
I may say

Ev'n to their faces, "If ye side with
William

Ye are not noble." How their pointed
fingers

Glared at me! Am I Harold, Harold,
son

Of our great Godwin? Lo! I touch
mine arms,

My limbs — they are not mine — they
are a liar's —

I mean to be a liar — I am not bound —
Stigand shall give me absolution for it —

Did the chest move? did it move? I
an utter craven!

O Wulfnoth, Wulfnoth, brother, thou
hast betray'd me!

Wulfnoth. Forgive me, brother, I
will live here and die.

Enter PAGE.

Page. My lord! the Duke awaits thee
at the banquet.

Harold. Where they eat dead men's
flesh, and drink their blood.

Page. My lord —

Harold. I know your Norman cookery
is so spiced,
It masks all this.

Page. My lord! thou art white as
death.

Harold. With locking on the dead.
Am I so white?

Thy Duke will seem the darker. Hence,
I follow. *[Exeunt.]*

ACT III.

SCENE I. — THE KING'S PALACE. LONDON.

KING EDWARD *dying on a couch, and by
him standing the QUEEN, HAROLD,
ARCHBISHOP STIGAND, GURTE, LEOF-
WIN, ARCHBISHOP ALDRED, ALDWYTH,
and EDITH.*

Stigand. Sleeping or dying there? If
this be death,

Then our great Council wait to crown
thee King —

Come hither, I have a power;

[to HAROLD.]

They call me near, for I am close to thee
And England — I, old shrivell'd Sti-
gand, I,

Dry as an old wood-fungus on a dead
tree,

I have a power!

See here this little key about my neck!
There lies a treasure buried down in Ely:
If e'er the Norman grow too hard for
thee,

Ask me for this at thy most need, son
Harold,

At thy most need — not sooner.

Harold. So I will.

Stigand. Red gold — a hundred purses
— yea, and more!

If thou canst make a wholesome use of
these

To chink against the Norman, I do be-
lieve

My old crook'd spine would bud out two
young wings

To fly to heaven straight with.

Harold. Thank thee, father!
Thou art English, Edward too is English

now:

He hath clean repented of his Norman
ism.

Stigand. Ay, as the libertine repents
who cannot

Make done undone, when thro' his dying
sense

Shrills "lost thro' thee." They have
built their castles here;

Our priories are Norman; the Norman
adder

Hath bitten us; we are poison'd: our
dear England

Is demi-Norman. He! —

[Pointing to KING EDWARD sleeping.]

Harold. I would I were
As holy and as passionless as he!

That I might rest as calmly! Look at
him —

The rosy face, and long down-silvering
beard,

The brows unwrinkled as a summer
mere. —

Stigand. A summer mere with sud-
den wreckful gusts

From a side-gorge. Passionless? How
he flamed

When Tostig's anger'd earldom flung
him, nay,

He fain had calcined all Northumbria
To one black ash, but that thy patriot

passion

Siding with our great Council against
Tostig,

Out-passion'd his! Holy? ay, ay, for-
sooth,

A conscience for his own soul, not his
realm;

A twilight conscience lighted thro' a
chink;

Thine by the sun; nay, by some sun
to be,

When all the world hath learnt to speak
the truth,

And lying were self-murder by that state
Which was the exception.

Harold. That sun may God speed!

Stigand. Come, Harold, shake the
cloud off!

Harold.

Can I, father?

Our Tostig parted cursing me and Eng-
land ;

Our sister hates us for his banishment ;
He hath gone to kindle Norway against
England,

And Wulfnoth is alone in Normandy.
For when I rode with William down to
Harfleur,

‘ Wulfnoth is sick,’ he said ; ‘ he can-
not follow ’ ;

Then with that friendly-fiendly smile
of his,

‘ We have learnt to love him, let him
a little longer

Remain a hostage for the loyalty
Of Godwin’s house.” As far as touches
Wulfnoth,

I that so prized plain word and naked
truth

Have sin’d against it — all in vain.

Leofwin. Good brother,
By all the truths that ever priest hath
preach’d,

Of all the lies that ever men have lied,
Thine is the pardonablest.

Harold. May be so !
I think it so, I think I am a fool

To think it can be otherwise than so.

Stigand. Tut, tut, I have absolved
thee : dost thou scorn me,

Because I had my Canterbury pallium
From one whom they dispoed ?

Harold. No, Stigand, no !
Stigand. Is naked truth actable in
true life ?

I have heard a saying of thy father
Godwin,

That, were a man of state nakedly true,
Men would but take him for the craftier

liar.

Leofwin. Be men less delicate than
the Devil himself ?

I thought that naked Truth would
shame the Devil,

The Devil is so modest.

Gurth. He never said it !

Leofwin. Be thou not stupid-honest,
brother Gurth !

Harold. Better to be a liar’s dog,
and hold

My master honest, than believe that
lying

And ruling men are fatal twins that
cannot

Move one without the other. Edward
wakes ! —

Dazed — he hath seen a vision

Edward. The green tree !

Then a great Angel past along the
highest

Crying ‘ the doom of England,’ and
at once

He stood beside me, in his grasp a sword
Of lightnings, w’erewithal he cleft the
tree

From off the bearing trunk, and hurl’d
it from him

Three fields away, and then he dash’d
and drench’d,

He dyed, he soak’d the trunk with
human blood,

And brought the sunder’d tree again,
and set it

Straight on the trunk, that thus bap-
tized in blood

Grew ever high and higher, beyond my
seeing,

And shot out sidelong boughs across
the deep

That dropt themselves, and rooted in
far isles

Beyond my seeing : and the great Angel
rose

And past again along the highest crying
‘ The doom of England !’ — Tostig,
raise my head !

[*Falls back senseless.*

Harold (raising him). Let Harold
serve for Tostig !

Queen. Harold served
Tostig so ill, he cannot serve for Tostig !

Ay, raise his head, for thou hast laid it
low !

The sickness of our saintly king, for
whom

My prayers go up as fast as my tears
fall,

I well believe, hath mainly drawn itself
From lack of Tostig — thou hast ban-
ish’d him.

Harold. Nay — but the Council, and
the king himself !

Queen. Thou hatest him, hatest him.

Harold (coldly). Ay — Stigand, un-
riddle

This vision, canst thou ?

Stigand. Dotage !

Edward (starting up). It is finish’d.
I have built the Lord a house — the
Lord hath dwelt

In darkness. I have built the Lord a
house —

Palms, flowers, pomegranates, golden
cherubim

With twenty-cubit wings from wall to wall —
 I have built the Lord a house — sing,
 Asaph ! clash
 The cymbal, Heman ! blow the trumpet,
 priest !
 Fall, cloud, and fill the house — lo !
 my two pillars,
 Jachin and Boaz ! —
 [Seeing HAROLD and GURTH.
 Harold, Gurth, — where am I ?
 Where is the charter of our Westminster ?
 Stigand. It lies beside thee, king,
 upon thy bed.
 Edward. Sign, sign at once — take,
 sign it, Stigand, Aldred !
 Sign it, my good son Harold, Gurth,
 and Leofwin,
 Sign it, my queen !
 All. We have sign'd it.
 Edward. It is finish'd !
 The kingliest Abbey in all Christian
 lands,
 The lordliest, loftiest minster ever built
 To Holy Peter in our English isle !
 Let me be buried there, and all our
 kings,
 And all our just and wise and holy men
 That shall be born hereafter. It is finish'd !
 Hast thou had absolution for thine oath ?
 [To HAROLD.
 Harold. Stigand hath given me absolution for it.
 Edward. Stigand is not canonical enough
 To save thee from the wrath of Norman
 Saints.
 Stigand. Norman enough ! Be there
 no Saints of England
 To help us from their brethren yonder ?
 Edward. Prelate,
 The Saints are one, but those of Normanland
 Are mightier than our own. Ask it of
 Aldred. [To HAROLD.
 Aldred. It shall be granted him, my
 king ; for he
 Who vows a vow to strangle his own
 mother
 Is guiltier keeping this, than breaking it.
 Edward. O friends, I shall not overlive the day.
 Stigand. Why then the throne is empty. Who inherits ?
 For tho' we be not bound by the king's
 voice

In making of a king, yet the king's
 voice
 Is much toward his making. Who inherits ?
 Edgar the Atheling ?
 Edward. No, no, but Harold.
 I love him : he hath served me : none
 but he
 Can rule all England. Yet the curse
 is on him
 For swearing falsely by those blessed
 bones ;
 He did not mean to keep his vow.
 Harold. Not mean
 To make our England Norman.
 Edward. There spake Godwin,
 Who hated all the Normans ; but their
 Saints
 Have heard thee, Harold.
 Edith. Oh ! my lord, my king !
 He knew not whom he sware by.
 Edward. Yea, I know
 He knew not, but those heavenly ears
 have heard,
 Their curse is on him ; wilt thou bring
 another,
 Edith, upon his head ?
 Edith. No, no, not I.
 Edward. Why then, thou must not
 wed him.
 Harold. Wherefore, wherefore ?
 Edward. O son, when thou didst tell
 me of thine oath,
 I sorrow'd for my random promise given
 To yon fox-lion. I did not dream then
 I should be king. — My son, the Saints
 are virgins ;
 They love the white rose of virginity,
 The cold, white lily blowing in her cell :
 I have been myself a virgin ; and I swear
 To consecrate my virgin here to heaven—
 The silent, cloister'd, solitary life,
 A life of life-long prayer against the curse
 That lies on thee and England.
 Harold. No, no, no.
 Edward. Treble denial of the tongue
 of flesh,
 Like Peter's when he fell, and thou wilt
 have
 To wail for it like Peter. O my son !
 Are all oaths to be broken then, all
 promises
 Made in our agony for help from heaven ?
 Son, there is one who loves thee : and a
 wife,
 What matters who, so she be serviceable

In all obedience, as mine own hath
been :

God bless thee, wedded daughter.

[*Laying his hand on the QUEEN'S head.*
Queen. Bless thou too

That brother whom I love beyond the
rest,

My banish'd Tostig.

Edward. All the sweet Saints bless
him !

Spare and forbear him, Harold, if he
comes !

And let him pass unscathed ; he loves
me, Harold !

Be kindly to the Normans left among
us,

Who follow'd me for love ! and dear
son, swear,

When thou art king, to see my solemn
vow

Accomplish'd !

Harold. Nay, dear lord, for I have
sworn

Not to swear falsely twice.

Edward. Thou wilt not swear ?

Harold. I cannot.

Edward. Then on thee remains the
curse,

Harold, if thou embrace her ; and on
thee,

Edith, if thou abide it, —

[*The KING swoons : EDITH falls and
kneels by the couch.*

Stigand. He hath swoon'd !
Death ? . . . no, as yet a breath.

Harold. Look up ! look up !
Edith !

Aldred. Confuse her not ; she hath
begun

Her life-long prayer for thee.

Aldwyth. O noble Harold,
I would thou couldst have sworn.

Harold. For thine own pleasure ?

Aldwyth. No, but to please our dying
king, and those

Who make thy good their own — all
England, Earl.

Aldred. I would thou couldst have
sworn. Our holy king

Hath given his virgin lamb to Holy
Church

To save thee from the curse.

Harold. Alas ! poor man,
His promise brought it on me.

Aldred. O good son !
That knowledge made him all the care-
fuller

To find a means whereby the curse might
glance

From thee and England.

Harold. Father, we so loved —

Aldred. The more the love, the
mightier is the prayer ;

The more the love, the more acceptable
The sacrifice of both your loves to
heaven.

No sacrifice to heaven, no help from
heaven ;

That runs thro' all the faiths of all the
world.

And sacrifice there must be, for the king
Is holy, and hath talk'd with God, and
seen

A shadowing horror ; there are signs in
heaven —

Harold. Your comet came and went.

Aldred. And signs on earth !

Knowest thou Senlac hill ?

Harold. I know all Sussex ;

A good intrenchment for a perilous
hour !

Aldred. Pray God that come not sud-
denly ! There is one

Who passing by that hill three nights
ago —

He shook so that he scarce could out
with it —

Heard, heard —

Harold. The wind in his hair ?

Aldred. A ghostly horn

Blowing continually, and faint battle-
hymns,

And cries, and clashes, and the groans
of men ;

And dreadful shadows strove upon the
hill,

And dreadful lights crept up from out
the marsh —

Corpse-candles gliding over nameless
graves —

Harold. At Senlac ?

Aldred. Senlac.

Edward (waking). Senlac ! Sanguelac,
The Lake of Blood !

Stigand. This lightning before death
Plays on the word, — and Normanizes
too !

Harold. Hush, father, hush !

Edward. Thou uncanonical fool,
Wilt thou play with the thunder ? North
and South

Thunder together, showers of blood are
blown

Before a never-ending blast, and hiss

Against the blaze they cannot quench
— a lake,
A sea of blood — we are drown'd in
blood — for God
Has fill'd the quiver, and Death has
drawn the bow —
Sanguelac ! Sanguelac ! the arrow ! the
arrow ! [Dies.
Stigand. It is the arrow of death in
his own heart —
And our great Council wait to crown
thee King.

SCENE II. — IN THE GARDEN. THE
KING'S HOUSE NEAR LONDON.

Edith. Crown'd, crown'd and lost,
crown'd King — and lost to me !
(Singing.)

Two young lovers in winter weather,
None to guide them,
Walk'd at night on the misty heather ;
Night, as black as a raven's feather ;
Both were lost and found together,
None beside them.

That is the burthen of it — lost and
found
Together in the cruel river Swale
A hundred years ago ; and there 's au-
other,

Lost, lost, the light of day,
To which the lover answers lovingly

“ I am beside thee.”
Lost, lost, we have lost the way.
“ Love, I will guide thee.”

Whither, O whither ? into the river,
Where we two may be lost together,
And lost forever ? “ Oh ! never, oh ! never,
Tho' we be lost and be found together.”

Some think they loved within the pale
forbidden
By Holy Church : but who shall say ?
the truth
Was lost in that fierce North, where *they*
were lost,
Where all good things are lost, where
Tostig lost
The good hearts of his people. It is
Harold !

Enter HAROLD.

Harold the King !

Harold. Call me not King, but Har-
old.

Edith. Nay, thou art King !

Harold. Thine, thine, or King or
churl !

My girl, thou hast been weeping : turn
not thou

Thy face away, but rather let me be
King of the moment to thee, and com-
mand

That kiss my due when subject, which
will make

My kingship kinglier to me than to reign
King of the world without it.

Edith. Ask me not,
Lest I should yield it, and the second
curse

Descend upon thine head, and thou be
only

King of the moment over England.

Harold. Edith,
Tho' somewhat less a king to my true
self

Than ere they crown'd me one, for I
have lost

Somewhat of upright stature thro' mine
oath,

Yet thee I would not lose, and sell not
thou

Our living passion for a dead man's
dream ;

Stigand believed he knew not what he
spake.

O God ! I cannot help it, but at times
They seem to me too narrow, all the
faiths

Of this grown world of ours, whose baby
eye

Saw them sufficient. Fool and wise, I
fear

This curse, and scorn it. But a little
light ! —

And on it falls the shadow of the priest ;
Heaven yield us more ! for better, Wo-
den, all

Our cancell'd warrior-gods, our grim
Walkalla,

Eternal war, than that the Saints at
peace

The Holiest of our Holiest one should
be

This William's fellow-tricksters ; — bet-
ter die

Than credit this, for death is death, or
else

Lifts us beyond the lie. Kiss me — thou
art not

A holy sister yet, my girl, to fear
There might be more than brother in my
kiss,

And more than sister in thine own.

Edith. I dare not,

Harold. Scared by the church —
 “Love for a whole life long”
 When was that sung?
Edith. Here to the nightingales.
Harold. Their anthems of no church,
 how sweet they are!
 Nor kingly priest, nor priestly king to
 cross
 Their billings ere they nest.
Edith. They are but of spring,
 They fly the winter change — not so with
 us —
 No wings to come and go.
Harold. But wing'd souls flying
 Beyond all change and in the eternal
 distance
 To settle on the Truth.
Edith. They are not so true,
 They change their mates.
Harold. Do they? I did not know
 it.
Edith. They say thou art to wed the
 Lady Aldwyth.
Harold. They say, they say.
Edith. If this be politic,
 And well for thee and England — and
 for her —
 Care not for me who love thee.
Gurth (calling). Harold, Harold!
Harold. The voice of Gurth! (*Enter*
 GURTH.) Good even, my good
 brother!
Gurth. Good even, gentle Edith.
Edith. Good even, Gurth.
Gurth. Ill news hath come! Our
 hapless brother, Tostig —
 He, and the giant King of Norway,
 Harold
 Hardrada — Scotland, Ireland, Iceland,
 Orkney,
 Are landed North of Humber, and in a
 field
 So packt with carnage that the dikes
 and brooks
 Were bridged and damn'd with dead,
 have overthrown
 Morcar and Edwin.
Harold. Well, then, we must fight.
 How blows the wind?
Gurth. Against St. Valery
 And William.
Harold. Well then, we will to the
 North.
Gurth. Ay, but worse news: this
 William sent to Rome,
 Swearing thou swarest falsely by his
 Saints:

The Pope and that Archdeacon Hilde-
 brand
 His master, heard him, and have sent
 him back
 A holy gonfalon, and a blessed hair
 Of Peter, and all France, all Burgundy,
 Poitou, all Christendom, is raised against
 thee;
 He hath cursed thee, and all those who
 fight for thee,
 And given thy realm of England to the
 bastard.
Harold. Ha! ha!
Edith. Oh! laugh not! . . . Strange
 and ghastly in the gloom
 And shadowing of this double thunder-
 cloud
 That lowers on England — laughter!
Harold. No, not strange!
 This was old human laughter in old
 Rome
 Before a Pope was born, when that which
 reign'd
 Call'd itself God. — A kindly rendering
 Of “Render unto Caesar.” . . . The Good
 Shepherd!
 Take this, and render that.
Gurth. They have taken York.
Harold. The Lord was God and came
 as man — the Pope
 Is man and comes as God. — York taken?
Gurth. Yea,
 Tostig hath taken York!
Harold. To York then. Edith,
 Hadst thou been braver, I had better
 braved
 All — but I love thee and thou me —
 and that
 Remains beyond all chances and all
 churches,
 And that thou knowest.
Edith. Ay, but take back thy ring.
 It burns my hand — a curse to thee and
 me.
 I dare not wear it.
 [*Proffers HAROLD the ring, which he*
takes.
Harold. But I dare. God with thee!
 [*Exeunt HAROLD and GURTH.*
Edith. The King hath cursed him,
 if he marry me;
 The Pope hath cursed him, marry me or
 no!
 God help me! I know nothing — can
 but pray
 For Harold — pray, pray, pray — no help
 but prayer,

A breath that fleets beyond this iron
world,
And touches Him that made it.

ACT IV.

SCENE.—IN NORTHUMBRIA.

ARCHBISHOP ALDRED, MORCAR, EDWIN,
and Forces. Enter HAROLD; the
standard of the golden Dragon of Wes-
sex preceding him.

Harold. What! are thy people sullen
from defeat?

Our Wessex dragon flies beyond the
Humber,

No voice to greet it.

Edwin. Let not our great king
Believe us sullen — only shamed to the
quick

Before the king — as having been so
bruised

By Harold, king of Norway; but our
help

Is Harold, king of England. Pardon us,
thou!

Our silence is our reverence for the king!

Harold. Earl of the Mercians! if the
truth be gall,

Cram me not thou with honey, when our
good hive

Needs every sting to save it.

Voices. Aldwyth! Aldwyth!

Harold. Why cry thy people on thy
sister's name?

Morcar. She hath won upon our
people thro' her beauty,
And pleasantness among them.

Voices. Aldwyth, Aldwyth!

Harold. They shout as they would
have her for a queen.

Morcar. She hath follow'd with our
host, and suffer'd all.

Harold. What would ye, men?

Voice. Our old Northumbrian crown
And kings of our own choosing.

Harold. Your old crown
Were little help without our Saxon
earles

Against Hardrada.

Voice. Little! we are Danes,
Who conquer'd what we walk on, our
own field.

Harold. They have been plotting
here! [*Aside.*

Voice. He calls us little!

Harold. The kingdoms of this world
began with little,

A hill, a fort, a city — that reach'd a
hand

Down to the field beneath it, "Be thou
mine,"

Then to the next, "Thou also" — if the
field

Cried out "I am mine own"; another
hill,

Or fort, or city, took it, and the first
Fell, and the next became an Empire.

Voice. Yet

Thou art but a West Saxon: we are
Danes!

Harold. My mother is a Dane, and I
am English;

There is a pleasant fable in old books,

Ye take a stick, and break it; bind a
score

All in one fagot, snap it over knee,

Ye cannot.

Voice. Hear King Harold! he says
true!

Harold. Would ye be Norsemen?

Voices. No!

Harold. Or Norman?

Voices. No!

Harold. Snap not the fagot-band
then.

Voice. That is true!

Voice. Ay, but thou art not kingly,
only grandson

To Wulfnoth, a poor cow-herd.

Harold. This old Wulfnoth
Would take me on his knees and tell me
tales

Of Alfred and of Athelstan the Great

Who drove you Danes; and yet he held
that Dane,

Jute, Angle, Saxon, were or should be
all

One England, for this cow-herd, like my
father,

Who shook the Norman scoundrels off
the throne,

Had in him kingly thoughts — a king
of men,

Not made but born, like the great King
of all,

A light among the oxen.

Voice. That is true!

Voice. Ay, and I love him now, for
mine own father

Was great, and cobbled.

Voice. Thou art Tostig's brother,
Who wastes the land.

Harold. This brother comes to save
Your land from waste ; I saved it once
before,
For when your people banish'd Tostig
hence,
And Edward would have sent a host
against you,
Then I, who loved my brother, bade the
king
Who doted on him, sanction your decree
Of Tostig's banishment, and choice of
Morear,
To help the realm from scattering.

Voice. King ! thy brother,
If one may dare to speak the truth, was
wrog'd,
Wild was he, born so : but the plots
against him
Had madden'd tamer men.

Morcar. Thou art one of those
Who brake into Lord Tostig's treasure-
house
And slew two hundred of his following,
And now, when Tostig hath come back
with power,
Are frighted back to Tostig.

Old Thunc. Ugh ! Plots and feuds !
This is my ninetieth birthday. Can ye
not

Be brethren ? Godwin still at feud with
Alfgar,
And Alfgar hates King Harold. Plots
and feuds !

This is my ninetieth birthday !

Harold. Old man, Harold
Hates nothing ; not *his* fault, if our two
houses

Be less than brothers.

Voices. Aldwyth, Harold, Aldwyth !

Harold. Again ! Morear ! Edwin !
What do they mean ?

Edwin. So the good king would deign
to lend an ear

Not overscornful, we might chance —
perchance —

To guess their meaning.

Morcar. Thine own meaning, Har-
old,

To make all England one, to close all
feuds,

Mixing our bloods, that thence a king
may rise

Half-Godwin and half-Alfgar, one to rule
All England beyond question, beyond
quarrel.

Harold. Who sow'd this fancy here
among the people ?

Morcar. Who knows what sows itself
among the people ?
A goodly flower at times.

Harold. The Queen of Wales ?
Why, Morear, it is all but duty in her
To hate me ; I have heard she hates me.

Morcar. No.
For I can swear to that, but cannot
swear

That these will follow thee against the
Norsemen,
If thou deny them this.

Harold. Morcar and Edwin,
When will ye cease to plot against my
house ?

Edwin. The king can scarcely dream
that we, who know

His prowess in the mountains of the
West,

Should care to plot against him in the
North.

Morcar. Who dares arraign us, king,
of such a plot ?

Harold. Ye heard one witness even
now.

Morcar. The craven !
There is a faction risen again for Tostig,
Since Tostig came with Norway — fright
not love.

Harold. Morcar and Edwin, will ye,
if I yield,

Follow against the Norseman ?

Morcar. Surely, surely !

Harold. Morear and Edwin, will ye
upon oath

Help us against the Norman ?

Morcar. With good will ;
Yea, take the Sacrament upon it, king.

Harold. Where is thy sister ?

Morcar. Somewhere hard at hand,
Call and she comes.

[*One goes out, then enter ALDWYTH.*]

Harold. I doubt not but thou know-
est

Why thou art summon'd.

Aldwyth. Why ? — I stay with these,
Lest thy fierce Tostig spy me out alone,
And slay me all alive.

Harold. Canst thou love one
Who did diserown thine husband, un-
queen thee ?

Didst thou not love thine husband ?

Aldwyth. Oh ! my lord,
The nimble, wild, red, wiry, savage
king —

That was, my lord, a match of policy.
Harold. Was it ?

I knew him brave : he loved his land :
 he fain
 Had made her great : his finger on her
 harp
 (I heard him more than once) had in it
 Wales,
 Her floods, her woods, her hills : had I
 been his,

I had been all Welsh.

Aldwyth. Oh, ay — all Welsh — and
 yet

I saw thee drive him up his hills — and
 women

Cling to the conquer'd if they love, the
 more ;

If not, they cannot hate the conqueror.
 We never — oh ! good Morcar, speak
 for us,

His conqueror conquer'd Aldwyth.

Harold. Goodly news !

Morcar. Doubt it not thou ! Since
 Griffyth's head was sent

To Edward, she hath said it.

Harold. I had rather

She would have loved her husband.

Aldwyth, Aldwyth,

Canst thou love me, thou knowing where
 I love ?

Aldwyth. I can, my lord, for mine
 own sake, for thine,

For England, for thy poor white dove,
 who flutters

Between thee and the porch, but then
 would find

Her nest within the cloister, and be
 still.

Harold. Canst thou love one, who
 cannot love again ?

Aldwyth. Full hope have I that love
 will answer love.

Harold. Then in the name of the
 great God, so be it !

Come, Aldred, join our hands before the
 hosts,

That all may see.

[ALDRED joins the hands of HAROLD
 and ALDWYTH and blesses them.

Voices. Harold, Harold and Ald-
 wyth !

Harold. Set forth our golden Dragon,
 let him flap

The wings that beat down Wales !

Advance our Standard of the Warrior,
 Dark among gems and gold ; and thou,
 brave banner,

Blaze like a night of fatal stars on those
 Who read their doom and die.

Where lie the Norsemen ? on the Der-
 went ? ay

At Stamford-bridge.

Morcar, collect thy men ; Edwin, my
 friend —

Thou lingerest. — Gurth, —

Last night King Edward came to me in
 dreams —

The rosy face and long down-silvering
 beard —

He told me I should conquer : —

I am no woman to put faith in dreams.

(*To his army.*)

Last night King Edward came to me in
 dreams,

And told me we should conquer.

Voices. Forward ! Forward !

Harold and Holy Cross !

Aldwyth. The day is won !

SCENE II. — A PLAIN. BEFORE THE
 BATTLE OF STAMFORD-BRIDGE.

HAROLD and his Guard.

Harold. Who is it comes this way ?

Tostig ? (*Enter TOSTIG with a
 small forc.*) O brother,

What art thou doing here ?

Tostig. I am foraging

For Norway's army.

Harold. I could take and slay thee.

Thou art in arms against us.

Tostig. Take and slay me,

For Edward loved me.

Harold. Edward bade me spare thee.

Tostig. I hate King Edward, for he
 join'd with thee

To drive me outlaw'd. Take and slay
 me, I say,

Or I shall count thee fool.

Harold. Take thee, or free thee,
 Free thee or slay thee, Norway will

have war ;
 No man would strike with Tostig, save
 for Norway.

Thou art nothing in thine England,
 save for Norway,

Who loves not thee but war. What
 dost thou here,

Trampling thy mother's bosom into
 blood ?

Tostig. She hath wean'd me from it
 with such bitterness.

I come for mine own Earldom, my
 Northumbria ;

Thou hast given it to the enemy of our
 house.

Harold. Northumbria threw thee off,
she will not have thee,
Thou hast misused her; and, O crown-
ing crime!

Hast murder'd thine own guest, the son
of Orm,

Gamel, at thine own hearth.

Tostig. The slow, fat fool!
He draw'd and prated so, I smote him
suddenly:

I knew not what I did.

Harold. Come back to us,
Know what thou dost, and we may find
for thee,

So thou be chasten'd by thy banish-
ment,

Some easier Earldom.

Tostig. What for Norway then?
He looks for land among you, he and
his.

Harold. Seven feet of English land,
or something more.

Seeing he is a giant.

Tostig. O brother, brother,
O Harold —

Harold. Nay, then come thou back to
us!

Tostig. Never shall any man say that
I, that Tostig
Conjured the mightier Harold from his
North

To do the battle for me here in England,
Then left him for the meaner! thee! —
Thou hast no passion for the House of
Godwin —

Thou hast but cared to make thyself a
king —

Thou hast sold me for a cry. —

Thou gavest thy voice against me in the
Council —

I hate thee, and despise thee, and defy
thee.

Farewell forever! *[Exit.*

Harold. On to Stamford-bridge!

SCENE III. — AFTER THE BATTLE
OF STAMFORD-BRIDGE. BANQUET.

HAROLD and ALDWYTH. GURTH, LEOF-
WIN, MORCAR, EDWIN, and other Earls
and Thanes.

Voices. Hail! Harold! Aldwyth! hail,
bridegroom and bride!

Aldwyth (talking with HAROLD). An-
swer them thou!

Is this our marriage-banquet? Would
the wines

Of wedding had been dash'd into the
cups

Of victory, and our marriage and thy
glory

Been drunk together! these poor hands
but sew,

Spin, broider — would that they were
man's to have held

The battle-axe by thee!

Harold. There *was* a moment
When being forced aloof from all my
guard,

And striking at Hardrada and his mad-
men,

I had wish'd for any weapon.

Aldwyth. Why art thou sad?

Harold. I have lost the boy who
played at ball with me,

With whom I fought another fight than
this

Of Stamford-bridge.

Aldwyth. Ay! ay! thy victories
Over our own poor Wales, when at thy
side

He conquer'd with thee.

Harold. No — the childish fist
That cannot strike again.

Aldwyth. Thou art too kindly.
Why didst thou let so many Norsemen
hence?

Thy fierce forekings had clinch'd their
pirate hides

To the bleak church doors, like kites
upon a barn.

Harold. Is there so great a need to
tell thee why?

Aldwyth. Yea, am I not thy wife?

Voices. Hail, Harold, Aldwyth!
Bridegroom and bride!

Aldwyth. Answer them!
[To HAROLD.

Harold (to all). Earls and Thanes!
Full thanks for your fair greeting of my
bride!

Earls, Thanes, and all our countrymen!
the day,

Our day beside the Derwent will not
shine

Less than a star among the goldenest
hours

Of Alfred, or of Edward his great
son,

Or Athelstan, or English Ironside
Who fought with Knut, or Knut who

coming Dane
Died English. Every man about his
king

Fought like a king; the king like his
own man,

No better; one for all, and all for one,
One soul: and therefore have we shat-
ter'd back

The hugest wave from Norseland ever
yet

Surged on us, and our battle-axes broken
The Raven's wing, and dumb'd his car-
rion croak

From the gray sea forever. Many are
gone —

Drink to the dead who died for us, the
living

Who fought and would have died, but
happier lived,

If happier be to live; they both have
life

In the large mouth of England, till *her*
voice

Die with the world. Hail! — hail!

Morcar. May all invaders perish like
Hardrada!

All traitors fail like Tostig!

[*All drink but HAROLD.*

Aldwyth. Thy cup 's full!

Harold. I saw the hand of Tostig
cover it.

Our dear, dead, traitor-brother, Tostig,
him

Reverently we buried. Friends, had I
been here,

Without too large self-lauding I must
hold

The sequel had been other than his
league

With Norway, and this battle. Peace
be with him!

He was not of the worst. If there be
those

At banquet in this hall, and hearing
me —

For there be those I fear who prick'd
the lion

To make him spring, that sight of Dan-
ish blood

Might serve an end not English — peace
with them

Likewise, if *they* can be at peace with
what

God gave us to divide us from the wolf!

Aldwyth (aside to HAROLD). Make
not our *Morcar* sullen: it is not
wise.

Harold. Hail to the living who fought,
the dead who fell!

Voices. Hail, hail!

First Thane. How ran that answer
which King Harold gave
To his dead namesake, when he ask'd
for England?

Leofwin. "Seven feet of English
earth, or something more,
Seeing he is a giant!"

First Thane. Then for the bastard
Six feet and nothing more!

Leofwin. Ay, but belike
Thou hast not learnt his measure.

First Thane. By St. Edmund
I over-measure him. Sound sleep to the
man

Here by dead Norway without dream or
dawn!

Second Thane. What is he bragging
still that he will come

To thrust our Harold's throne from
under him?

My nurse would tell me of a molehill
crying

To a mountain "Stand aside and room
for me!"

First Thane. Let him come! let him
come. Here 's to him, sink or
swim! [*Drinks.*

Second Thane. God sink him!

First Thane. Cannot hands which
had the strength

To shove that stranded iceberg off our
shores,

And send the shatter'd North again to
sea,

Scuttle his cockle-shell? What 's Bru-
nanburg

To Stamford-bridge? a war-crash, and
so hard,

So loud, that, by St. Dunstan, old St.
Thor —

By God, we thought him dead — but
our old Thor

Heard his own thunder again, and woke
and came

Among us again, and mark'd the sons
of those

Who made this Britain England, break
the North:

Mark'd how the war-axe swang,
Heard how the war-horn sang,
Mark'd how the spear-head sprang,
Heard how the shield-wall rang,
Iron on iron clang,
Anvil on hammer bang —

Second Thane. Hammer on anvil,
hammer on anvil. Old dog,
Thou art drunk, old dog!

First Thane. Too drunk to fight with thee!

Second Thane. Fight thou with thine own double, not with me, Keep that for Norman William!

First Thane. Down with William.

Third Thane. The washerwoman's brat!

Fourth Thane. The tanner's bastard!

Fifth Thane. The Falaise byblow!

Enter a THANE, from Pevensey, spatter'd with mud.

Harold. Ay, but what late guest, As haggard as a fast of forty days, And caked and plaster'd with a hundred mires,

Hath stumbled on our cups?

Thane from Pevensey. My lord the King!

William the Norman, for the wind had changed—

Harold. I felt it in the middle of that fierce fight

At Stamford-bridge. William hath landed, ha?

Thane from Pevensey. Landed at Pevensey — I am from Pevensey —

Hath wasted all the land at Pevensey — Hath harried mine own cattle — God confound him!

I have ridden night and day from Pevensey —

A thousand ships, a hundred thousand men —

Thousands of horses, like as many lions

Neighing and roaring as they leapt to land —

Harold. How oft in coming hast thou broken bread?

Thane from Pevensey. Some thrice, or so.

Harold. Bring not thy hollowness On our full feast. Famine is fear, were it but

Of being starved. Sit down, sit down, and eat,

And, when again red-blooded, speak again;

(Aside.)

The men that guarded England to the South

Were scatter'd to the harvest. . . . No power mine

To hold their force together, . . . Many are fallen

At Stamford-bridge. . . . the people stupid-sure

Sleep like their swine. . . . in South and North at once

I could not be.

(Aloud.)

Gurth, Leofwin, Morcar, Edwin!
(Pointing to the revellers.) The curse of England! these are drown'd in wassail,

And cannot see the world but thro' their wines!

Leave them! and thee too, Aldwyth, must I leave—

Harsh is the news! hard is our honeymoon!

Thy pardon. *(Turning round to his attendants.)* Break the banquet up. . . . Ye four!

And thou, my carrier-pigeon of black news,

Cram thy crop full, but come when thou art call'd. *[Exit HAROLD.]*

ACT V.

SCENE I.—A TENT ON A MOUND, FROM WHICH CAN BE SEEN THE FIELD OF SENLAC.

HAROLD, sitting; by him standing HUGH MARGOT the Monk, GURTH, LEOFWIN.

Harold. Refer my cause, my crown to Rome! . . . The wolf Mudded the brook, and predetermined all.

Monk,

Thou hast said thy say, and had my constant "No"

For all but instant battle. I hear no more.

Margot. Hear me again — for the last time. Arise,

Scatter thy people home, descend the hill,

Lay hands of full allegiance in thy Lord's

And crave his mercy, for the Holy Father Hath given this realm of England to the Norman.

Harold. Then for the last time, monk, I ask again

When had the Lateran and the Holy Father

To do with England's choice of her own king?

Margot. Earl, the first Christian
Cæsar drew to the East
To leave the Pope dominion in the West.
He gave him all the kingdoms of the
West.

Harold. So! — did he? — Earl — I
have a mind to play
The William with thine eyesight and
thy tongue.

Earl — ay — thou art but a messenger
of William.

I am weary — go : make me not wroth
with thee !

Margot. Mock-king, I am the mes-
senger of God,
His Norman Daniel ; Mene, Mene,
Tekel !

Is thy wrath Hell, that I should spare
to cry,

Yon heaven is wroth with *thee* ? Hear
me again !

Our Saints have moved the Church that
moves the world,

And all the Heavens and very God :
they heard —

They know King Edward's promise and
thine — thine.

Harold. Should they not know free
England crowns herself ?

Not know that he nor I had power to
promise ?

Not know that Edward cancell'd his
own promise ?

And for *my* part therein — Back to that
juggler, [Rising.

Tell him the Saints are nobler than he
dreams,

Tell him that God is nobler than the
Saints,

And tell him we stand arm'd on Senlac
Hill,

And bide the doom of God.

Margot. Hear it thro' me.
The realm for which thou art forsworn
is cursed,

The babe enwomb'd and at the breast is
cursed,

The corpse thou whelme'st with thine
earth is cursed,

The soul who fighteth on thy side is
cursed,

The seed thou sowest in thy field is
cursed,

The steer wherewith thou ploughest thy
field is cursed,

The fowl that fleeth o'er thy field is
cursed,

And thou, usurper, liar —
Harold. Out, beast monk !

[Lifting his hand to strike him.
GURTH stops the blow.

I ever hated monks.
Margot. I am but a voice

Among you : murder, martyr me if ye
will —

Harold. Thanks, Gurth ! The sim-
ple, silent, honest man
Is worth a world of tonguesters. (*To*
MARGOT.) Get thee gone !

He means the thing he says. See him
out safe.

Leofwin. He hath blown himself as
red as fire with curses.

An honest fool ! Follow me, honest
fool,

But if thou blurt thy curse among our
folk,

I know not — I may give that egg-bald
head

The tap that silences.
Harold. See him out safe.

[*Exeunt* LEOFWIN and MARGOT.

Gurth. Thou hast lost thine even
temper, brother Harold !

Harold. Gurth, when I past by Wal-
tham, my foundation

For men who serve the neighbor, not
themselves,

I cast me down prone, praying ; and,
when I rose,

They told me that the Holy Rood had
lean'd

And bow'd above me ; whether that
which held it

Had weaken'd, and the Rood itself were
bound

To that necessity which binds us down ;
Whether it bow'd at all but in their
fancy ;

Or if it bow'd, whether it symbol'd ruin
Or glory, who shall tell ? but they were
sad,

And somewhat sadden'd me.

Gurth. Yet if a fear,
Or shadow of a fear, lest the strange
Saints

By whom thou swarest should have
power to balk

Thy puissance in this fight with him,
who made

And heard thee swear — brother — I
have not sworn —

If the king fall, may not the kingdom
fall?

But if I fall, I fall, and thou art king;
And if I win, I win, and thou art king;
Draw thou to London, there make
strength to breast

Whatever chance, but leave this day to
me.

Leofwin (entering). And waste the
land about thee as thou goest,
And be thy hand as winter on the field,
To leave the foe no forage.

Harold. Noble Gurth!
Best son of Godwin! If I fall, I fall—
The doom of God! How should the
people fight
When the king flies? And, Leofwin,
art thou mad?

How should the King of England waste
the fields
Of England, his own people?—No
glance yet

Of the Northumbrian helmet on the
heath?

Leofwin. No, but a shoal of wives
upon the heath,
And some one saw thy willy-nilly nun
Vying a tress against our golden fern.

Harold. Vying a tear with our cold
dews, a sigh
With these low-moaning heavens. Let
her be fetch'd.

We have parted from our wife without
reproach,
Tho' we have dived thro' all her prac-
tices;
And that is well.

Leofwin. I saw her even now:
She hath not left us.

Harold. Nought of Morcar then?
Gurth. Nor seen, nor heard; thine,
William's or his own
As wind blows, or tide flows: belike he
watches,

If this war-storm in one of its rough
rolls
Wash up that old crown of Northum-
berland.

Harold. I married her for Morcar—
a sin against
The truth of love. Evil for good, it
seems,
Is oft as childless of the good as evil
For evil.

Leofwin. Good for good hath borne
at times
A bastard false as William.

Harold. Ay, if Wisdom
Pair'd nor with Good. But I am some-
what worn,
A snatch of sleep were like the peace
of God.

Gurth, Leofwin, go once more about the
hill—
What did the dead man call it—San-
guelac,

The lake of blood?
Leofwin. A lake that dips in William
As well as Harold.

Harold. Like enough. I have seen
The trenches dug, the palisades up-
rear'd
And wattled thick with ash and willow-
wands;

Yea, wrought at them myself. Go
round once more;
See all be sound and whole. No Nor-
man horse
Can shatter England, standing shield
by shield;
Tell that again to all.

Gurth. I will, good brother.
Harold. Our guardsman hath but
toil'd his hand and foot,
I hand, foot, heart and head. Some
wine!

*One pours wine into a goblet, which
he hands to HAROLD.*
Too much!

What? we must use our battle-axe to-
day.
Our guardsmen have slept well, since
we came in?

Leofwin. Ay, slept and snored. Your
second-sighted man
That scared the dying conscience of the
king,
Misheard their snores for groans. They
are up again,
And chanting that old song of Brunan
burg
Where England conquer'd.

Harold. That is well. The Norman
What is he doing?

Leofwin. Praying for Normandy;
Our scouts have heard the tinkle of
their bells.

Harold. And our old songs are
prayers for England too!
But by all Saints—

Leofwin. Barring the Norman!
Harold. Nay,
Were the great trumpet blowing dooms-
day dawn,

I needs must rest. Call when the Norman moves —

[*Exeunt all but HAROLD.*

No horse — thousands of horses — our shield wall —

Wall — break it not — break not — break —

[*Sleeps.*

Vision of Edward. Son Harold, I thy king, who came before

To tell thee thou shouldst win at Stamford-bridge,

Come yet once more, from where I am at peace,

Because I loved thee in my mortal day,
To tell thee thou shalt die on Senlac hill —

Sanguelac!

Vision of Wulfnoth. O brother, from my ghastly oubliette

I send my voice across the narrow seas —
No more, no more, dear brother, nevermore —

Sanguelac!

Vision of Tostig. O brother, most unbrotherlike to me,

Thou gavest thy voice against me in my life,

I give my voice against thee from the grave —

Sanguelac!

Vision of Norman Saints. O hapless Harold! King but for an hour!

Thou swarest falsely by our blessed bones,

We give our voice against thee out of heaven!

Sanguelac! Sanguelac! The arrow! the arrow!

Harold (starting up, battle-axe in hand). Away!

My battle-axe against your voices.
Peace!

The king's last word — "the arrow!"
I shall die —

I die for England then, who lived for England —

What nobler? men must die.

I cannot fall into a falser world —

I have done no man wrong. Tostig, poor brother,

Art thou so anger'd?

Fain had I kept thine earldom in thy hands

Save for thy wild and violent will that wretch'd

All hearts of freemen from thee. I could do

No other than this way advise the king
Against the race of Godwin. Is it possible

That mortal men should bear their earthly heats

Into yon bloodless world, and threaten us thence

Unschool'd of Death? Thus then thou art revenged —

I left our England naked to the South
To meet thee in the North. The Norseman's raid

Hath helpt the Norman, and the race of Godwin

Hath ruin'd Godwin. No — our waking thoughts

Suffer a stormless shipwreck in the pools
Of sullen slumber, and arise again

Disjointed: only dreams — where mine own self

Takes part against myself! Why? for a spark

Of self-disdain born in me when I sware

Falsely to him, the falser Norman, over His gilded ark of mummy-saints, by whom

I knew not that I sware, — not for myself —

For England — yet not wholly —

Enter EDITH.

Edith, Edith,

Get thou into thy cloister as the king Will'd it: be safe: the perjury-mongering Count

Hath made too good an use of Holy Church

To break her close! There the great God of truth

Fill all thine hours with peace! — A lying devil

Hath haunted me — mine oath — my wife — I fain

Had made my marriage not a lie; I could not:

Thou art my bride! and thou in after years

Praying perchance for this poor soul of mine

In cold, white cells beneath an icy moon —

This memory to thee! — and this to England,

My legacy of war against the Pope
From child to child, from Pope to Pope,
from age to age,

Till the sea wash her level with her
shores,
Or till the Pope be Christ's.

Enter ALDWYTH.

Aldwyth (to EDITH). Away from him!

Edith. I will . . . I have not spoken
to the king

One word; and one I must. Farewell!
[*Going.*

Harold.

Stay.

Edith. To what use?

Harold. The king commands thee,
woman!

(*To ALDWYTH.*)

Have thy two brethren sent their forces
in?

Aldwyth. Nay, I fear not.

Harold. Then there's no force in
thee!

Thou didst possess thyself of Edward's
ear

To part me from the woman that I
loved!

Thou didst arouse the fierce Northun-
brians!

Thou hast been false to England and to
me!

As . . . in some sort . . . I have been false
to thee.

Leave me. No more — Pardon on both
sides — Go!

Aldwyth. Alas, my lord, I loved thee.

Harold. With a love

Passing thy love for Griffyth! where-
fore now

Obeys my first and last commandment.
Go!

Aldwyth. O Harold! husband! Shall
we meet again?

Harold. After the battle — after the
battle. Go.

Aldwyth. I go. (*Aside.*) That I
could stab her standing there!

[*Exit ALDWYTH.*

Edith. Alas, my lord, she loved thee.

Harold. Never! never!

Edith. I saw it in her eyes!

Harold. I see it in thine.

And not on thee — nor England — fall
God's doom!

Edith. On thee? on me. And thou
art England! Alfred

Was England. Ethelred was nothing.
England

Is but her king, and thou art Harold!

Harold.

Edith,

The sign in heaven — the sudden blast
at sea —

My fatal oath — the dead Saints — the
dark dreams —

The Pope's Anathema — the Holy Rood
That bow'd to me at Waltham — Edith,
if

I, the last English King of England —

Edith. No,

First of a line that coming from the
people,

And chosen by the people —

Harold. And fighting for
And dying for the people —

Edith. Living! living!

Harold. Yea so, good cheer! thou
art Harold, I am Edith!

Look not thus wan!

Edith. What matters how I look?

Have we not broken Wales and Norse-
land? slain,

Whose life was all one battle, incarnate
war,

Their giant-king, a mightier man-in-arms
Than William.

Harold. Ay, my girl, no tricks in
him —

No bastard he! when all was lost, he
yell'd,

And bit his shield, and dash'd it on the
ground,

And swaying his two-handed sword about
him,

Two deaths at every swing, ran in upon
us

And died so, and I loved him as I hate
This liar who made me liar. If Hate

can kill,

And loathing wield a Saxon battle-
axe —

Edith. Waste not thy might before
the battle!

Harold. And thou must hence. Sti-
gand will see thee safe,

And so — Farewell.

[*He is going, but turns back.*

The ring thou darrest not wear,
I have had it fashion'd, see, to meet my
hand.

[*HAROLD shows the ring which is on
his finger.*

Farewell!

[*He is going, but turns back again.*

I am dead as Death this day to aught
of earth's

Save William's death or mine.

Edith. Thy death! -- to-day!
's it not thy birthday?

Harold. Ay, that happy day!
A birthday welcome! happy days and
many!

One — this! [*They embrace.*]
Look, I will bear thy blessing into the
battle

And front the doom of God.

Norman Cries (heard in the distance).
Ha Rou! Ha Rou!

Enter GURTH.

Gurth. The Norman moves!

Harold. Harold and Holy Cross!
[*Exeunt HAROLD and GURTH.*]

Enter STIGAND.

Stigand. Our Church in arms — the
lamb the lion — not
Spear into pruning-hook — the counter
way —

Cowl, helm; and crozier, battle-axe.
Abbot Alfwig,

Leofric, and all the monks of Peter-
boro'

Strike for the king; but I, old wretch,
old Stigand,

With hands too limp to brandish iron —
and yet

I have a power — would Harold ask me
for it —

I have a power.

Edith. What power, holy father?

Stigand. Power now from Harold to
command thee hence

And see thee safe from Senlac.

Edith. I remain!

Stigand. Yea, so will I, daughter,
until I find

Which way the battle balance. I can
see it

From where we stand: and, live or die,
I would

I were among them!

Canons from Waltham (singing without).

Salva patriam
Sanctè Pater,
Salva Fili,
Salva Spiritus,
Salva patriam,
Sancta Mater.*

Edith. Are those the blessed angels
quiring, father?

Stigand. No, daughter, but the canons
out of Waltham,

The *a* throughout these hymns should be
sounded broad, as in "father."

The king's foundation, that have follow'd
him.

Edith. O God of battles, make their
wall of shields

Firm as thy cliffs, strengthen their pali-
sades!

What is that whirring sound?

Stigand. The Norman arrow!

Edith. Look out upon the battle — is
he safe?

Stigand. The king of England stand:
between his banners.

He glitters on the crowning of the
hill.

God save King Harold!

Edith. — chosen by his people,
And fighting for his people!

Stigand. There is one

Come as Goliath came of yore — he flings
His brand in air and catches it again;

He is chanting some old war-song.

Edith. And no David

To meet him?

Stigand. Ay, there springs a Saxon
on him,

Falls — and another falls.

Edith. Have mercy on us!

Stigand. Lo! our good Gurth hath
smitten him to the death.

Edith. So perish all the enemies of
Harold!

Canons (singing).

Hostis in Angliam
Ruit predator,
Illorum, domine,
Scutum scindatur!
Hostis per Angliæ
Plagas bacchatur;
Casa crematur,
Pastor fugatur
Grex trucidatur —

Stigand. Illos, trucidà, Domine.

Edith. Ay, good father.

Canons (singing).

Illorum scelera
Pœna sequatur!

English Cries. Harold and Holy Cross!
Out! out!

Stigand. Our javelins

Answer their arrows. All the Norman
foot

Are storming up the hill. The range
of knights

Sit, each a statue on his horse, and
wait.

English Cries. Harold and God Al-
mighty!

Norman Cries. Ha Rou! Ha Rou!

Canons (singing).

Eques cum pedite
Præpediatur!
Illorum in lacrymas
Cruor fundatur!
Pereant, pereant,
Anglia precatur.

Stigand. Look, daughter, look.

Edith. Nay, father, look for me!

Stigand. Our axes lighten with a single flash

About the summit of the hill, and heads

And arms are sliver'd off and splinter'd by

Their lightning — and they fly — the Norman flies.

Edith. Stigand, O father, have we won the day?

Stigand. No, daughter, no — they fall behind the horse —

Their horses are thronging to the barricades;

I see the gonfalon of Holy Peter floating above their helmets — ha! he is down!

Edith. He down! Who down?

Stigand. The Norman Count is down.

Edith. So perish all the enemies of England!

Stigand. No, no, he hath risen again — he bares his face —

Shouts something — he points onward — all their horse

Swallow the hill locust-like, swarming up.

Edith. O God of battles, make his battle-axe keen

As thine own sharp-dividing justice, heavy

As thine own bolts that fall on crimeful heads

Charged with the weight of heaven wherefrom they fall!

Canons (singing).

Jaeta tonitrua
Deus bellator!
Surgas e tenebris,
Sis vindicator!
Fulmina, fulmina
Deus vastator!

Edith. O God of battles, they are three to one,

Make thou one man as three to roll them down!

Canons (singing).

Eques cum equite
Dejiciatur!

Acies, Acies
Prona sternatur!
Illorum lanceas
Frangit Creator!

Stigand. Yea, yea, for how their lances snap and shiver

Against the shifting blaze of Harold's axe!

War-woodman of old Woden, how he fells

The mortal copse of faces! There! And there!

The horse and horseman cannot meet the shield.

The blow that brains the horseman cleaves the horse,

The horse and horseman roll along the hill,

They fly once more, they fly, the Norman flies!

Eques cum equite
Præcipitatur.

Edith. O God, the God of truth hath heard my cry.

Follow them, follow them, drive them to the sea!

Illorum scelera
Pœna sequatur!

Stigand. Truth! no; a lie; a trick, a Norman trick!

They turn on the pursuer, horse against foot,

They murder all that follow.

Edith. Have mercy on us!

Stigand. Hot-headed fools — to burst the wall of shields!

They have broken the commandment of the king!

Edith. His oath was broken — O holy Norman Saints,

Ye that are now of heaven, and see beyond

Your Norman shrines, pardon it, pardon it,

That he forswore himself for all he loved,

Me, me and all! Look out upon the battle!

Stigand. They press again upon the barricades.

My sight is eagle, but the strife so thick —

This is the hottest of it: hold, ash! hold, willow!

English Cries. Out, out!

Norman Cries.

Ha Rou!

Stigand. Ha ! Gurth hath leapt upon him
And slain him : he hath fallen.

Edith. And I am heard.
Glory to God in the Highest ! fallen,
fallen !

Stigand. No, no, his horse — he
mounts another — wields
His war-club, dashes it on Gurth, and
Gurth,
Our noble Gurth, is down !

Edith. Have mercy on us !

Stigand. And Leofwin is down !

Edith. Have mercy on us !
O Thou that knowest, let not my strong
prayer

Be weaken'd in thy sight, because I love
The husband of another !

Norman Cries. Ha Rou ! Ha Rou !

Edith. I do not hear our English war-
cry.

Stigand. No.

Edith. Look out upon the battle — is
he safe ?

Stigand. He stands between the ban-
ners with the dead

So piled about him he can hardly
move.

Edith (takes up the war-cry). Out !
out !

Norman Cries. Ha Rou !

Edith (cries out). Harold and Holy
Cross !

Norman Cries. Ha Rou ! Ha Rou !

Edith. What is that whirring sound ?

Stigand. The Norman sends his ar-
rows up to Heaven,

They fall on those within the palisade !

Edith. Look out upon the hill — is
Harold there ?

Stigand. Sanguelac — Sanguelac —
the arrow — the arrow ! — away !

SCENE II. — FIELD OF THE DEAD.
NIGHT.

ALDWYTH and EDITH.

Aldwyth. O Edith, art thou here ? O
Harold, Harold —
Our Harold — we shall never see him
more.

Edith. For there was more than sister
in my kiss,
And so the saints were wroth. I cannot
love them,
For they are Norman saints — and yet
I should —

They are so much holier than their har-
lot's sou

With whom they play'd their game
against the king !

Aldwyth. The king is slain, the king-
dom overthrown !

Edith. No matter !

Aldwyth. How no matter, Harold
slain ? —

I cannot find his body. O help me
thou !

O Edith, if I ever wrought against
thee,

Forgive me thou, and help me here !

Edith. No matter !

Aldwyth. Not help me, nor forgive
me ?

Edith. So thou saidest.

Aldwyth. I say it now, forgive me !

Edith. Cross me not !

I am seeking one who wedded me in
secret.

Whisper ! God's angels only know it.
Ha !

What art *thou* doing here among the
dead ?

They are stripping the dead bodies naked
yonder,

And thou art come to rob them of their
rings !

Aldwyth. O Edith, Edith, I have lost
both crown

And husband.

Edith. So have I.

Aldwyth. I tell thee, girl,

I am seeking my dead Harold.

Edith. And I mine !

The Holy Father strangled him with a
hair

Of Peter, and his brother Tostig helpt ;
The wicked sister clapt her hands and
laught ;

Then all the dead fell on him.

Aldwyth. Edith, Edith —

Edith. What was he like, this hus-
band ? like to thee ?

Call not for help from me. I knew him
not.

He lies not here : not close beside the
standard.

Here fell the truest, manliest hearts of
England.

Go further hence and find him.

Aldwyth. She is crazed !

Edith. That doth not matter either.
Lower the light.

He must be here.

Enter two Canons, OSGOD and ATHELRIC, with torches. They turn over the dead bodies and examine them as they pass.

Osgod. I think that this is Thurkill.

Athelric. More likely Godric.

Osgod. I am sure this body

Is Alfwig, the king's uncle.

Athelric.

So it is!

No, no — brave Gurth, one gash from brow to knee!

Osgod. And here is Leofwin.

Edith. And here is He!

Aldwyth. Harold? Oh no — nay, if it were — my God,

They have so main'd and martyr'd all his face

There is no man can swear to him.

Edith. But one woman!

Look you, we never mean to part again.

I have found him, I am happy.

Was there not some one ask'd me for forgiveness?

I yield it freely, being the true wife

Of this dead King, who never bore revenge.

Enter COUNT WILLIAM and WILLIAM MALET.

William. Who be these women? And what body is this?

Edith. Harold, thy better!

William. Ay, and what art thou?

Edith. His wife!

Malet. Not true, my girl, here is the Queen! [*Pointing out* ALDWYTH.]

William (to ALDWYTH). Wast thou his Queen?

Aldwyth. I was the Queen of Wales.

William. Why then of England.

Madam, fear us not.

(*To MALET.*)

Knowest thou this other?

Malet. When I visited England, Some held she was his wife in secret — some —

Well — some believed she was his paramour.

Edith. Norman, thou liest! liars all of you,

Your Saints and all! I am his wife! and she —

For look, our marriage ring!

[*She draws it off the finger of Harold.*

I lost it somehow —

I lost it, playing with it when I was wild.

That bred the doubt: but I am wiser now . . .

I am too wise . . . Will none among you all

Bear me true witness — only for this once —

That I have found it here again?

[*She puts it on.*

And thou

Thy wife am I for ever and evermore.

[*Falls on the body and dies.*

William. Death! — and enough of death for this one day,

The day of St. Calixtus, and the day,

My day, when I was born.

Malet.

And this dead king's,

Who, king or not, hath kinglike fought and fallen,

His birth-day, too. It seems but yesterday

I held it with him in his English halls, His day, with all his roof-tree ringing

“Harold,”

Before he fell into the snare of Guy;

When all men counted Harold would be king,

And Harold was most happy.

William. Thou art half English.

Take them away!

Malet, I vow to build a church to God Here on this hill of battle; let our high altar

Stand where their standard fell . . . where these two lie.

Take them away, I do not love to see them.

Pluck the dead woman off the dead man, Malet!

Malet. Faster than ivy. Must I hack her arms off?

How shall I part them?

William. Leave them. Let them be!

Bury him and his paramour together.

He that was false in oath to me, it seems Was false to his own wife. We will

not give him

A Christian burial: yet he was a warrior,

And wise, yea truthful, till that blighted vow

Which God avenged to-day.

Wrap them together in a purple cloak And lay them both upon the waste sea-shore

At Hastings, there to guard the land for which

He did forswear himself — a warrior —

ay,

And but that Holy Peter fought for us,
 And that the false Northumbrian held
 aloof,
 And save for that chance arrow which
 the Saints
 Sharpen'd and sent against him — who
 can tell? —
 Three horses had I slain beneath me :
 twice
 I thought that all was lost. Since I
 knew battle,
 And that was from my boyhood, never
 yet —
 No, by the splendor of God — have I
 fought men
 Like Harold and his brethren, and his
 guard
 Of English. Every man about his king
 Fell where he stood. They loved him :
 and, pray God

My Normans may but move as true
 with me
 To the door of death. Of one self-stock
 at first,
 Make them again one people — Norman,
 English ;
 And English, Norman ; — we should have
 a hand
 To grasp the world with, and a foot to
 stamp it . . .
 Flat. Praise the Saints. It is over. No
 more blood !
 I am King of England, so they thwart
 me not,
 And I will rule according to their laws.
 (To ALDWYTH.)
 Madam, we will entreat thee with all
 honor.
Aldwyth. My punishment is more
 than I can bear.

THE REVENGE.

A BALLAD OF THE FLEET, 1591.

I.

AT Flores in the Azores Sir Richard
Grenville lay,
And a pinnace, like a flutter'd bird, came
flying from far away :
" Spanish ships of war at sea ! we have
sighted fifty-three !"
Then swore Lord Thomas Howard :
" 'Fore God I am no coward !
But I cannot meet them here, for my
ships are out of gear,
And the half my men are sick. I must
fly, but follow quick.
We are six ships of the line ; can we fight
with fifty-three ?"

II.

Then spake Sir Richard Grenville : " I
know you are no coward ;
You fly them for a moment to fight with
them again.
But I've ninety men and more that are
lying sick ashore.
I should count myself the coward if I
left them, my Lord Howard,
To these Inquisition dogs and the devil-
doms of Spain."

III.

So Lord Howard past away with five ships
of war that day,
Till he melted like a cloud in the silent
summer heaven ;
But Sir Richard bore in hand all his sick
men from the land
Very carefully and slow,
Men of Bideford in Devon,
And we laid them on the ballast down
below ;
For we brought them all aboard,
And they blest him in their pain, that
they were not left to Spain,
To the thumbscrew and the stake, for the
glory of the Lord.

IV.

He had only a hundred seamen to work
the ship and to fight,
And he sail'd away from Flores till the
Spaniard came in sight,
With his huge sea-castles heaving upon
the weather bow.
" Shall we fight or shall we fly ?
Good Sir Richard, let us know,
For to fight is but to die !
There 'll be little of us left by the time
the sun be set."
And Sir Richard said again : " We be all
good Englishmen.
Let us bang these dogs of Seville, the
children of the devil,
For I never turn'd my back upon Don
or devil yet."

V.

Sir Richard spoke, and he laugh'd, and
we roared a hurrah, and so
The little " Revenge " ran on sheer into
the heart of the foe,
With her hundred fighters on deck, and
her ninety sick below ;
For half of their fleet to the right and
half to the left were seen,
And the little " Revenge " ran on thro' the
long sea-lane between.

VI.

Thousands of their soldiers look'd down
from their decks and laugh'd,
Thousands of their seamen made mock
at the mad little craft
Running on and on, till delay'd
By their mountain-like " San Philip "
that, of fifteen hundred tons,
And up-shadowing high above us with
her yawning tiers of guns,
Took the breath from our sails, and we
stay'd.

VII.

And while now the great "San Philip"
 hung above us like a cloud
 Whence the thunderbolt will fall
 Long and loud,
 Four galleons drew away
 From the Spanish fleet that day,
 And two upon the larboard and two upon
 the starboard lay,
 And the battle-thunder broke from them
 all.

VIII.

But anon the great "San Philip," she
 bethought herself and went,
 Having that within her womb that had
 left her ill-content ;
 And the rest they came aboard us, and
 they fought us hand to hand,
 For a dozen times they came with their
 pikes and musqueteers,
 And a dozen times we shook 'em off as a
 dog that shakes his ears
 When he leaps from the water to the land.

IX.

And the sun went down, and the stars
 came out far over the summer sea,
 But never a moment ceased the fight of
 the one and the fifty-three.
 Ship after ship, the whole night long,
 their high-built galleons came,
 Shipaftership, the whole night long, with
 her battle-thunder and flame ;
 Shipaftership, the whole night long, drew
 back with her dead and her shame ;
 For some were sunk and many were shat-
 ter'd, and so could fight us no
 more —
 God of battles, was ever a battle like this
 in the world before ?

X.

For he said, "Fight on ! fight on !"
 Tho' his vessel was all but a wreck ;
 And it chanced that, when half of the
 summer night was gone,
 With a grisly wound to be drest he had
 left the deck,
 But a bullet struck him that was dressing
 it suddenly dead,
 And himself he was wounded again in the
 side and the head,
 And he said, "Fight on ! fight on !"

XI.

And the night went down, and the sun
 smiled out far over the summer sea,
 And the Spanish fleet with broken sides
 lay round us all in a ring ;
 But they dared not touch us again, for they
 fear'd that we still could sting,
 So they watch'd what the end would be.
 And we had not fought them in vain,
 But in perilous plight were we,
 Seeing forty of our poor hundred were
 slain,
 And half of the rest of us maim'd for life
 In the crash of the cannonades and the
 desperate strife ;
 And the sick men down in the hold were
 most of them stark and cold,
 And the pikes were all broken or bent,
 and the powder was all of it spent ;
 And the masts and the rigging were lying
 over the side ;
 But Sir Richard cried in his English pride,
 "We have fought such a fight for a day
 and a night
 As may never be fought again !
 We have won great glory, my men !
 And a day less or more
 At sea or ashore,
 We die — does it matter when ?
 Sink me the ship, Master Gunner — sink
 her, split her in twain !
 Fall into the hands of God, not into the
 hands of Spain !"

XII.

And the gunner said, "Ay, ay," but the
 seamen made reply :
 "We have children, we have wives,
 And the Lord hath spared our lives.
 We will make the Spaniard promise, if we
 yield, to let us go ;
 We shall live to fight again, and to strike
 another blow."
 And the lion there lay dying, and they
 yielded to the foe.

XIII.

And the stately Spanish men to their
 flagship bore him then,
 Where they laid him by the mast, old Sir
 Richard caught at last,
 And they praised him to his face with
 their courtly foreign grace ;
 But he rose upon their decks, and he
 cried :

“ I have fought for Queen and Faith like
 a valiant man and true ;
 I have only done my duty as a man is
 bound to do :
 With a joyful spirit I, Sir Richard Gren-
 ville, die ! ”
 And he fell upon their decks, and he died.

XIV.

And they stared at the dead that had been
 so valiant and true,
 And had holden the power and glory of
 Spain so cheap,
 That he dared her with one little ship and
 his English few ;
 Was he devil or man ? He was devil for
 aught they knew,
 But they sank his body with honor down
 into the deep,

And they mann'd the “ Revenge ” with
 a swarthier alien crew,
 And away she sail'd with her loss and
 long'd for her own ;
 When a wind from the lands they had
 ruin'd awoke from sleep,
 And the water began to heave and the
 weather to moan,
 And or ever that evening ended a great
 gale blew,
 And a wave like the wave that is raised
 by an earthquake grew,
 Till it smote on their hulls and their
 sails and their masts and their
 flags,
 And the whole sea plunged and fell on the
 shot-shatter'd navy of Spain,
 And the little “ Revenge ” herself went
 down by the island crags
 To be lost evermore in the main.

THE DEFENCE OF LUCKNOW.

DEDICATORY POEM TO THE PRINCESS ALICE.

DEAD PRINCESS, living Power, if that,
which lived
True life, live on — and if the fatal kiss,
Born of true life and love, divorce thee
not
From earthly love and life — if what we
call
The spirit flash not all at once from out
This shadow into Substance — then per-
haps
The mellow'd murmur of the people's
praise
From thine own State, and all our breadth
of realm,
Where Love and Longing dress thy deeds
in light,
Ascends to thee ; and this March morn
that sees
Thy Soldier-brother's bridal orange-
bloom
Break thro' the yews and cypress of thy
grave,
And thine Imperial mother smile again,
May send one ray to thee ! and who can
tell —
Thou — England's England - loving
daughter — thou
Dying so English thou wouldst have her
flag
Borne on thy coffin — where is he can
swear
But that some broken gleam from our
poor earth
May touch thee, while remembering thee,
I lay
At thy pale feet this ballad of the deeds
Of England, and her banner in the East ?

I.

BANNER of England, not for a season, O
banner of Britain, hast thou
Floated in conquering battle or flap to
the battle-cry !
Never with mightier glory than when
we had rear'd thee on high
Flying at top of the roofs in the ghastly
siege of Lucknow —

Shot thro' the staff or the halyard, but
ever we raised thee anew,
And ever upon the topmost roof our ban-
ner of England blew.

II.

Frail were the works that defended the
hold that we held with our lives —
Women and children among us, God help
them, our children and wives !
Hold it we might — and for fifteen days
or for twenty at most.
“ Never surrender, I charge you, but
every man die at his post ! ”
Voice of the dead whom we loved, our
Lawrence the best of the brave :
Cold were his brows when we kiss'd him
— we laid him that night in his
grave.
“ Every man die at his post ! ” and there
hail'd on our houses and halls
Death from their rifle-bullets, and death
from their cannon-balls,
Death in our innermost chamber, and
death at our slight barricade,
Death while we stood with the musket,
and death while we stoopt to the
spade,
Death to the dying, and wounds to the
wounded, for often there fell
Striking the hospital wall, crashing thro'
it, their shot and their shell,
Death — for their spies were among us,
their marksmen were told of our
best,
So that the brute bullet broke thro' the
brain that could think for the rest ;
Bullets would sing by our foreheads, and
bullets would rain at our feet —
Fire from ten thousand at once of the
rebels that girdled us round —
Death at the glimpse of a finger from
over the breadth of a street,
Death from the heights of the mosque and
the palace, and death in the ground !
Mine ? yes, a mine ! Countermine !
down, down ! and creep thro' the
hole !
Keep the revolver in hand ! You can
hear him — the murderous mole.

Quiet, ah ! quiet — wait till the point
of the pickaxe be thro' !
Click with the pick, coming nearer and
nearer again than before —
Now let it speak, and you fire, and the
dark pioneer is no more ;
And ever upon the topmost roof our ban-
ner of England blew.

III.

Ay, but the foe sprung his mine many
times, and it chanced on a day
Soon as the blast of that underground
thunderclap echo'd away,
Dark thro' the smoke and the sulphur
like so many fiends in their hell —
Cannon-shot, musket-shot, volley on vol-
ley, and yell upon yell —
Fiercely on all the defences our myriad
enemy fell.
What have they done ? where is it ?
Out yonder. Guard the Redan !
Storm at the Water-gate ! storm at the
Bailey-gate ! storm, and it ran
Surging and swaying all round us, as
ocean on every side
Plunges and heaves at a bank that is
daily drown'd by the tide —
So many thousands that if they be bold
enough, who shall escape ?
Kill or be kill'd, live or die, they shall
know we are soldiers and men !
Ready ! take aim at their leaders — their
masses are gapp'd with our grape —
Backward they reel like the wave, like
the wave flinging forward again,
Flying and foil'd at the last by the hand-
ful they could not subdue ;
And ever upon the topmost roof our
banner of England blew.

IV.

Handful of men as we were, we were
English in heart and in limb,
Strong with the strength of the race to
command, to obey, to endure,
Each of us fought as if hope for the gar-
rison hung but on him ;
Still — could we watch at all points ? we
were every day fewer and fewer.
There was a whisper among us, but only
a whisper that past :
“ Children and wives — if the tigers leap
into the fold unawares —
Every man die at his post — and the foe
may outlive us at last —

Better to fall by the hands that they love,
than to fall into theirs ! ”
Roar upon roar in a moment two mines
by the enemy sprung
Clove into perilous chasms our walls and
our poor palisades.
Rifleman, true is your heart, but be sure
that your hand be as true !
Sharp is the fire of assault, better aim'd
are your flank fusillades —
Twice do we hurl them to earth from the
ladders to which they had clung,
Twice from the ditch where they shelter
we drive them with hand-gre-
nades ;
And ever upon the topmost roof our
banner of England blew.

V.

Then on another wild morning another
wild earthquake out-tore
Clean from our lines of defence ten or
twelve good paces or more.
Rifleman, high on the roof, hidden there
from the light of the sun —
One has leapt up on the breach, crying
out : “ Follow me, follow me ! ” —
Mark him — he falls ! then another, and
him too, and down goes he.
Had they been bold enough then, who
can tell but the traitors had won ?
Boardings and rafters and doors — an
embrasure ! make way for the
gun !
Now double-charge it with grape ! It is
charged and we fire, and they run.
Praise to our Indian brothers, and let the
dark face have his due !
Thanks to the kindly dark faces who
fought with us, faithful and few,
Fought with the bravest among us, and
drove them, and smote them, and
slew,
That ever upon the topmost roof our
banner in India blew.

VI.

Men will forget what we suffer and not
what we do. We can fight ;
But to be soldier all day and be sentinel
all thro' the night —
Ever the mine and assault, our sallies,
their lying alarms.
Bugles and drums in the darkness, and
shoutings and soundings to arms,
Ever the labor of fifty that had to be
done by five,

Ever the marvel among us that one
 should be left alive,
 Ever the day with its traitorous death
 from the loopholes around,
 Ever the night with its coffinless corpse
 to be laid in the ground,
 Heat like the mouth of a hell, or a del-
 uge of cataract skies,
 Stench of old offal decaying, and infinite
 torment of flies,
 Thoughts of the breezes of May blowing
 over an English field,
 Cholera, scurvy, and fever, the wound
 that *would* not be heal'd,
 Lopping away of the limb by the pitiful-
 pitiless knife, —
 Torture and trouble in vain, — for it
 never could save us a life,
 Valor of delicate women who tended the
 hospital bed,
 Horror of women in travail among the
 dying and dead,
 Grief for our perishing children, and
 never a moment for grief,
 Toil and ineffable weariness, faltering
 hopes of relief,
 Havelock baffled, or beaten, or butcher'd
 for all that we knew —
 Then day and night, day and night, com-
 ing down on the still-shatter'd
 walls

Millions of musket-bullets, and thou-
 sands of cannon-balls —
 But ever upon the topmost roof our ban-
 ner of England blew.

VII.

Hark cannonade, fusillade ! is it true
 what was told by the scout ?
 Outram and Havelock breaking their
 way thro' the fell mutineers !
 Surely the pibroch of Europe is ringing
 again in our ears !
 All on a sudden the garrison utter a ju-
 bilant shout,
 Havelock's glorious Highlanders answer
 with conquering cheers,
 Forth from their holes and their hidings
 our women and children come out,
 Blessing the wholesome white faces of
 Havelock's good fusileers,
 Kissing the war-harden'd hand of the
 Highlander wet with their tears !
 Dance to the pibroch ! — saved ! we are
 saved ! — is it you ? is it you ?
 Saved by the valor of Havelock, saved
 by the blessing of Heaven !
 “ Hold it for fifteen days ! ” we have
 held it for eighty-seven !
 And ever aloft on the palace roof the old
 banner of England blew.

THE LOVER'S TALE.

THE original preface to "The Lover's Tale" states that it was composed in my nineteenth year. Two only of the three parts then written were printed, when, feeling the imperfection of the poem, I withdrew it from the press. One of my friends, however, who, boy-like, admired the boy's work, distributed among our common associates of that hour some copies of these two parts, without my knowledge, without the omissions and amendments which I had in contemplation, and marred by the many misprints of the compositor. Seeing that these two parts have of late been mercilessly pirated, and that what I had deemed scarce worthy to live is not allowed to die, may I not be pardoned if I suffer the whole poem at last to come into the light, accompanied with a reprint of the sequel, — a work of my mature life, — "The Golden Supper"?

May, 1870.

ARGUMENT.

Julian, whose cousin and foster-sister, Camilla, has been wedded to his friend and rival, Lionel, endeavors to narrate the story of his own love for her, and the strange sequel. He speaks (in Parts II. and III.) of having been haunted by visions and the sound of bells, tolling for a funeral, and at last ringing for a marriage; but he breaks away, overcome, as he approaches the Event, and a witness to it completes the tale.

I.

HERE far away, seen from the topmost cliff,

Filling with purple gloom the vacancies
Between the tufted hills, the sloping seas
Hung in mid-heaven, and half way down
rare sails,

White as white clouds, floated from sky
to sky.

Oh! pleasant breast of waters, quiet bay,
Like to a quiet mind in the loud world,
Where the chafed breakers of the outer
sea

Sank powerless, as anger falls aside
And withers on the breast of peaceful
love;

Thou didst receive the growth of pines
that fledged

The hills that watched thee, as Love
watcheth Love,

In thine own essence, and delight thyself
To make it wholly thine on sunny days.
Keep thou thy name of "Lover's Bay."

See, sirs,

Even now the Goddess of the Past, that
takes

The heart, and sometimes touches but
one string

That quivers, and is silent, and some-
times

Sweeps suddenly all its half-moulder'd
chords

To some old melody, begins to play

That air which pleased her first. I feel
thy breath;

I come, great Mistress of the ear and eye:
Thy breath is of the pine wood; and
tho' years

Have hollow'd out a deep and stormy
strait

Betwixt the native land of Love and
me,

Breathe but a little on me, and the sail
Will draw me to the rising of the sun,
The lucid chambers of the morning star,
And East of Life.

Permit me, friend, I prithee,
To pass my hand across my brows, and
muse

On those dear hills, that never more will
meet

The sight that throbs and aches beneath
my touch,

As tho' there beat a heart in either eye;
For when the outer lights are darken'd
thus,

The memory's vision hath a keener edge.
It grows upon me now — the semicircle
Of dark blue waters and the narrow
fringe

Of curving beach — its wreaths of drip-
ping green —

Its pale pink shells — the summer-house
aloft

That open'd on the pines with doors of
glass,

A mountain nest—the pleasure-boat
that rock'd
Light green with its own shadow, keel
to keel,
Upon the dappled dimplings of the wave,
That blanch'd upon its side.

O Love, O Hope!
They come, they crowd upon me all at
once—

Moved from the cloud of unforgotten
things,
That sometimes on the horizon of the
mind

Lies folded, often sweeps athwart in
storm—

Flash upon flash they lighten thro' me
— days

Of dewy dawning and the amber eyes
When thou and I, Camilla, thou and I
Were borne about the bay or safely
moor'd

Beneath a low-brow'd cavern, where the
tide

Plash'd, sapping its worn ribs; and all
without

The slowly ridging rollers on the cliffs
Clash'd, calling to each other, and thro'
the arch

Down those loud waters, like a setting
star,

Mixt with the gorgeous west the light-
house shone,

And silver-smiling Venus ere she fell
Would often loiter in her balmy blue,
To crown it with herself.

Here, too, my love
Waver'd at anchor with me, when day
hung

From his mid-dome in Heaven's airy
halls;

Gleams of the water-circles, as they
broke,

Flicker'd like doubtful smiles about her
lips.

Quiver'd a flying glory on her hair,
Leapt like a passing thought across her
eyes;

And mine with one that will not pass,
till earth

And heaven pass too, dwelt on my
heaven, a face

Most starry-fair, but kindled from within
As 't were with dawn. She was dark-
haired, dark-eyed:

Oh, such dark eyes! a single glance of
them

Will govern a whole life from birth to
death,

Careless of all things else, led on with
light

In trances and in visions: look at them,
You lose yourself in utter ignorance;

You cannot find their depth; for they
go back,

And farther back, and still withdraw
themselves

Quite into the deep soul, that evermore
Fresh springing from her fountains in
the brain,

Still pouring thro', floods with redun-
dant life

Her narrow portals.

Trust me, long ago
I should have died, if it were possible
To die in gazing on that perfectness
Which I do bear within me: I had
died,

But from my farthest lapse, my latest
ebb,

Thine image, like a charm of light and
strength

Upon the waters, push'd me back again
On these deserted sands of barren life.

Tho' from the deep vault where the
heart of Hope

Fell into dust, and crumbled in the
dark—

Forgetting how to render beautiful
Her countenance with quick and health-
ful blood—

Thou didst not sway me upward; could
I perish

While thou, a meteor of the sepulchre,
Didst swathe thyself all round Hope's
quiet urn

Forever? He, that saith it, hath o'er-
stept

The slippery footing of his narrow wit,
And fall'n away from judgment. Thou
art light,

To which my spirit leaneth all her flow-
ers,

And length of days, and immortality
Of thought, and freshness ever self-re-
new'd.

For Time and Grief abode too long with
Life,

And, like all other friends i' the world,
at last

They grew weary of her fellowship:
So Time and Grief did beckon unto
Death,

And Death drew nigh and beat the doors
 of Life;
 But thou didst sit alone in the inner
 house,
 A wakeful portress, and didst parle with
 Death,—
 “This is a charmed dwelling which I
 hold”;
 So Death gave back, and would no fur-
 ther come.
 Yet is my life nor in the present time,
 Nor in the present place. To me alone,
 Push'd from his chair of regal heritage,
 The Present is the vassal of the Past:
 So that, in that I *have* lived, do I live,
 And cannot die, and am, in having been,
 A portion of the pleasant yesterday,
 Thrust forward on to-day and out of
 place;
 A body journeying onward, sick with
 toil,
 The weight as if of age upon my limbs,
 The grasp of hopeless grief about my
 heart,
 And all the senses weaken'd, save in that,
 Which long ago they had glean'd and
 garner'd up
 Into the granaries of memory —
 The clear brow, bulwark of the precious
 brain,
 Chink'd as you see, and seem'd — and
 all the while
 The light soul twines and mingles with
 the growths
 Of vigorous early days, attracted, won,
 Married, made one with, molten into all
 The beautiful in Past of act or place,
 And like the all-enduring camel, driven
 Far from the diamond fountain by the
 palms,
 Who toils across the middle moon-lit
 nights,
 Or when the white heats of the blinding
 noons
 Beat from the concave sand; yet in him
 keeps
 A draught of that sweet fountain that
 he loves,
 To stay his feet from falling, and his
 spirit
 From bitterness of death.

Ye ask me, friends,
 When I began to love. How should I
 tell you?
 Or from the after-fulness of my heart,
 Flow back again unto my slender spring

And first of love, tho' every turn and
 depth
 Between is clearer in my life than all
 its present flow. Ye know not what
 ye ask.
 How should the broad and open flower
 tell
 What sort of bud it was, when, prest
 together
 In its green sheath, close-lapt in silken
 folds,
 It seem'd to keep its sweetness to itself,
 Yet was not the less sweet for that it
 seem'd?
 For young Life knows not when young
 Life was born,
 But takes it all for granted: neither
 Love,
 Warm in the heart, his cradle, can re-
 member
 Love in the womb, but resteth satisfied,
 Looking on her that brought him to the
 light:
 Or as men know not when they fall
 asleep
 Into delicious dreams, our other life,
 So know I not when I began to love.
 This is my sum of knowledge — that my
 love
 Grew with myself — say rather, was my
 growth,
 My inward sap, the hold I have on earth,
 My outward circling air wherewith I
 breathe,
 Which yet upholds my life, and evermore
 Is to me daily life and daily death:
 For how should I have lived and not
 have loved?
 Can ye take off the sweetness from the
 flower,
 The color and the sweetness from the
 rose,
 And place them by themselves; or set
 apart
 Their motions and their brightness from
 the stars,
 And then point out the flower or the
 star?
 Or build a wall betwixt my life and love,
 And tell me where I am? 'Tis even
 thus:
 In that I live I love; because I love
 I live: whate'er is fountain to the one
 Is fountain to the other; and whene'er
 Our God unknits the riddle of the one,
 There is no shade or fold of mystery
 Swathing the other.

Many, many years
 (For they seem many and my most of life,
 And well I could have linger'd in that
 porch,
 So unproportion'd to the dwelling-place),
 In the May dews of childhood, opposite
 The flush and dawn of youth, we lived
 together,
 Apart, alone together on those hills.

Before he saw my day my father died,
 And he was happy that he saw it not ;
 But I and the first daisy on his grave
 From the same clay came into light at
 once.

As Love and I do number equal years,
 So she, my love, is of an age with me.
 How like each other was the birth of
 each !

On the same morning, almost the same
 hour,
 Under the selfsame aspect of the stars,
 (O falsehood of all starcraft !) we were
 born.

How like each other was the birth of
 each !

The sister of my mother — she that bore
 Camilla close beneath her beating heart,
 Which to the imprison'd spirit of the
 child,

With its true-touch'd pulses in the flow
 And hourly visitation of the blood,
 Sent notes of preparation manifold,
 And mellow'd echoes of the outer
 world —

My mother's sister, mother of my love,
 Who had a twofold claim upon my heart,
 One twofold mightier than the other
 was,

In giving so much beauty to the world,
 And so much wealth as God had charged
 her with —

Loathing to put it from herself forever,
 Left her own life with it ; and dying
 thus,

Crown'd with her highest act the placid
 face

And breathless body of her good deeds
 past.

So we were born, so orphan'd. She
 was motherless

And I without a father. So from each
 Of those two pillars which from earth
 uphold

Our childhood, one had fallen away, and
 all

The careful burden of our tender years
 Trembled upon the other. He that
 gave

Her life, to me delightedly fulfill'd
 All loving-kindnesses, all offices
 Of watchful care and trembling tender-
 ness.

He waked for both : he pray'd for both :
 he slept

Dreaming of both : nor was his love the
 less

Because it was divided, and shot forth
 Boughs on each side, laden with whole-
 some shade,

Wherein we nested sleeping or awake,
 And sang aloud the matin-song of life.

She was my foster-sister : on one arm
 The flaxen ringlets of our infancies
 Wander'd, the while we rested : one
 soft lap

Pillow'd us both : a common light of
 eyes

Was on us as we lay : our baby lips,
 Kissing one bosom, ever drew from
 thence

The stream of life, one stream, one life,
 one blood,

One sustenance, which, still as thought
 grew large,

Still larger moulding all the house of
 thought,

Made all our tastes and fancies like,
 perhaps —

All — all but one ; and strange to me,
 and sweet,

Sweet thro' strange years to know that
 whatsoe'er

Our general mother meant for me alone,
 Our mutual mother dealt to both of
 us :

So what was earliest mine in earliest life,
 I shared with her in whom myself re-
 mains.

As was our childhood, so our infancy,
 They tell me, was a very miracle

Of fellow-feeling and communion.
 They tell me that we would not be
 alone —

We cried when we were parted ; when I
 wept,

Her smile lit up the rainbow on my
 tears,

Staid on the cloud of sorrow ; that we
 loved

The sound of one another's voices more

Than the gray cuckoo loves his name,
and learnt

To lisp in tune together ; that we slept
In the same cradle always, face to face,
Heart beating time to heart, lip pressing
lip,

Folding each other, breathing on each
other,

Dreaming together (dreaming of each
other

They should have added), till the morn-
ing light

Sloped thro' the pines, upon the dewy
pane

Falling, unseal'd our eyelids, and we
woke

To gaze upon each other. If this be
true,

At thought of which my whole soul lan-
guishes

And faints, and hath no pulse, no breath
— as tho'

A man in some still garden should infuse
Rich attar in the bosom of the rose,

Till, drunk with its own wine, and over-
full

Of sweetness, and in smelling of itself,
It fall on its own thorns—if this be

true, —
And that way my wish leads me ever-
more

Still to believe it, 'tis so sweet a
thought, —

Why in the utter stillness of the soul
Doth question'd memory answer not,

nor tell

Of this our earliest, our closest-drawn,
Most loveliest, earthly-heavenliest har-
mony ?

O blossom'd portal of the lonely house,
Green prelude, April promise, glad new-
year

Of Being, which with earliest violets
And lavish carol of clear-throated larks

Fill'd all the March of life! — I will
not speak of thee ;

These have not seen thee, these can
never know thee,

They cannot understand me. Pass we
then

A term of eighteen years. Ye would but
laugh

If I should tell you how I heard in
thought

The faded rhymes and scraps of ancient
crones,

Gray relics of the nurseries of the world,
Which are as gems set in my memory,
Because she learnt them with me ; or
what use

To know her father left us just before
The daffodil was blown ? or how we

found
The dead man cast upon the shore ? All
this

Seems to the quiet daylight of your minds
But cloud and smoke, and in the dark

of mine
Is traced with flame. Move with me to
the event.

There came a glorious morning, such
a one

As dawns but once a season. Mercury
On such a morning would have flung
himself

From cloud to cloud, and swum with
balanced wings

To some tall mountain : when I said to
her,

“ A day for Gods to stoop,” she an-
swered, “ Ay,

And men to soar ” : for as that other
gazed,

Shading his eyes till all the fiery cloud,
The prophet and the chariot and the

steeds,
Suck'd into oneness like a little star

Were drunk into the inmost blue, we
stood,

When first we came from out the pines
at noon,

With hands for eaves, uplooking and
almost

Waiting to see some blessed shape in
heaven,

So bathed we were in brilliance. Never
yet

Before or after have I known the spring
Pour with such sudden deluges of light

Into the middle summer ; for that day
Love, rising, shook his wings, and

charged the winds
With spiced May-sweets from bound to
bound, and blew

Fresh fire into the sun, and from within
Burst thro' the heated buds, and sent his

soul
Into the songs of birds, and touch'd far-
off

His mountain-altars, his high hills, with
flame

Milder and purer,

Thro' the rocks we wound :
 The great pine shook with lonely sounds
 of joy
 That came on the sea-wind. As moun-
 tain streams
 Our bloods ran free : the sunshine seem'd
 to brood
 More warmly on the heart than on the
 brow.
 We often paused, and, looking back, we
 saw
 The clefts and openings in the mountains
 fill'd
 With the blue valley and the glistening
 brooks,
 And all the low dark groves, a land of
 love !
 A land of promise, a land of memory,
 A land of promise flowing with the milk
 And honey of delicious memories !
 And down to sea, and far as eye could
 ken,
 Each way from verge to verge a Holy
 Land,
 Still growing holier as you near'd the bay,
 For there the Temple stood.

When we had reach'd
 The grassy platform on some hill, I
 stoop'd,
 I gather'd the wild herbs, and for her
 brows
 And mine made garlands of the selfsame
 flower,
 Which she took smiling, and with my
 work thus
 Crown'd her clear forehead. Once or
 twice she told me
 (For I remember all things) to let grow
 The flowers that run poison in their
 veins.
 She said, "The evil flourish in the
 world."
 Then playfully she gave herself the lie —
 "Nothing in nature is unbeautiful ;
 So, brother, pluck, and spare not." So
 I wove
 Ev'n the dull-blooded poppy-stem,
 "whose flower,
 Hued with the scarlet of a fierce sunrise,
 Like to the wild youth of an evil prince,
 Is without sweetness, but who crowns
 himself
 Above the secret poisons of his heart
 In his old age." A graceful thought of
 hers
 Grav'n on my fancy ! And oh, how
 like a nymph,

A stately mountain nymph, she look'd !
 how native
 Unto the hills she trod on ! While I
 gazed,
 My coronal slowly disentwined itself
 And fell between us both ; tho' while I
 gazed
 My spirit leap'd as with those thrills of
 bliss
 That strike across the soul in prayer,
 and show us
 That we are surely heard. Methought
 a light
 Burst from the garland I had wov'n, and
 stood
 A solid glory on her bright black hair ;
 A light methought broke from her dark,
 dark eyes,
 And shot itself into the singing winds ;
 A mystic light flash'd ev'n from her
 white robe
 As from a glass in the sun, and fell about
 My footsteps on the mountains.

Last we came
 To what our people call "The Hill of
 Woe."
 A bridge is there, that, look'd at from
 beneath,
 Seems but a cobweb filament to link
 The yawning of an earthquake-cloven
 chasm.
 And thence one night, when all the
 winds were loud,
 A woful man (for so the story went)
 Had thrust his wife and child and dash'd
 himself
 Into the dizzy depth below. Below,
 Fierce in the strength of far descent, a
 stream
 Flies with a shatter'd foam along the
 chasm.

The path was perilous, loosely strewn
 with crags :
 We mounted slowly ; yet to both there
 came
 The joy of life in steepness overcome,
 And victories of ascent, and looking
 down
 On all that had look'd down on us ; and
 joy
 In breathing nearer heaven ; and joy
 to me,
 High over all the azure-circled earth,
 To breathe with her as if in heaven itself ;
 And more than joy that I to her became
 Her guardian and her angel, raising her

The Hill of Hope"; and I replied, "O sister,
My will is one with thine; the Hill of
Hope."
Nevertheless, we did not change the
name.

I did not speak; I could not speak
my love.

Love lieth deep: Love dwells not in
lip-depths.

Love wraps his wings on either side the
heart,

Constraining it with kisses close and
warm,

Absorbing all the incense of sweet
thoughts

So that they pass not to the shrine of
sound.

Else had the life of that delighted hour
Drunk in the largeness of the utterance
Of Love; but how should Earthly meas-
ure mete

The Heavenly-unmeasured or unlimited
Love,

Who scarce can tune his high majestic
sense

Unto the thunder-song that wheels the
spheres,

Scarce living in the Æolian harmony,
And flowing odor of the spacious air,

Scarce housed within the circle of this
Earth,

Be cabin'd up in words and syllables,
Which pass with that which breathes

them? Sooner Earth
Might go round Heaven, and the strait

girth of Time
Inswathe the fulness of Eternity,

Than language grasp the infinite of Love.

O day which did enwomb that happy
hour,

Thou art blessed in the years, divinest
day!

O Genius of that hour which dost uphold
Thy coronal of glory like a God,

Amid thy melancholy mates far-seen,
Who walk before thee, ever turning round

To gaze upon thee till their eyes are dim
With dwelling on the light and depth

of thine,
Thy name is ever worshipp'd among
hours!

Had I died then, I had not seem'd to die,
For bliss stood round me like the light

of Heaven —

Had I died then, I had not known the
death;

Yea had the Power from whose right
hand the light

Of Life issueth, and from whose left
hand floweth

The Shadow of Death, perennial efflu-
ences,

Whereof to all that draw the wholesome
air

Somewhile the one must overflow the
other;

Then had he stemm'd my day with night,
and driven

My current to the fountain whence it
sprang, —

Even his own abiding excellence —
On me, methinks, that shock of gloom

had fall'n
Unfelt, and in this glory I had merged

The other, like the sun I gazed upon,
Which seeming for the moment due to

death,
And dipping his head low beneath the
verge,

Yet bearing round about him his own
day,

In confidence of unabated strength,
Steppeth from Heaven to Heaven, from

light to light,
And holdeth his undimmed forehead far

Into a clearer zenith, pure of cloud.

We trod the shadow of the downward
hill;

We past from light to dark. On the
other side

Is scoop'd a cavern and a mountain hall,
Which none have fathom'd. If you go

far in
(The country people rumor) you may
hear

The moaning of the woman and the child,
Shut in the secret chambers of the rock.

I too have heard a sound — perchance
of streams

Running far on within its inmost halls,
The home of darkness; but the cavern-

mouth,
Half overtrailed with a wanton weed,
Gives birth to a brawling brook, that

passing lightly
Adown a natural stair of tangled roots,
Is presently received in a sweet grave

Of eglantines, a place of burial
Far lovelier than its cradle for un-

seen,

But taken with the sweetness of the place,
It makes a constant bubbling melody
That drowns the nearer echoes. Lower
down

Spreads out a little lake, that, flooding,
leaves

Low banks of yellow sand; and from
the woods

That belt it rise three dark, tall cy-
presses, —

Three cypresses, symbols of mortal woe,
That men plant over graves.

Hither we came,

And sitting down upon the golden moss,
Held converse sweet and low — low
converse sweet,

In which our voices bore least part.
The wind

Told a love tale beside us, how he woo'd
The waters, and the waters answering
lisp'd

To kisses of the wind, that, sick with
love,

Fainted at intervals, and grew again
To utterance of passion. Ye cannot shape
Fancy so fair as is this memory.

Methought all excellence that ever was
Had drawn herself from many thousand
years,

And all the separate Edens of this earth,
To centre in this place and time. I
listen'd,

And her words stole with most prevail-
ing sweetness

Into my heart, as thronging fancies come
To boys and girls when summer days
are new,

And soul and heart and body are all at
ease :

What marvel my Camilla told me all ?
It was so happy an hour, so sweet a place,
And I was as the brother of her blood,
And by that name I moved upon her
breath ;

Dear name, which had too much of near-
ness in it

And heralded the distance of this time !
At first her voice was very sweet and low,
As if she were afraid of utterance ;

But in the onward current of her speech
(As echoes of the hollow-banked brooks
Are fashion'd by the channel which they
keep),

Her words did of their meaning borrow
sound,

Her cheek did catch the color of her
words.

I heard and trembled, yet I could but
hear ;

My heart paused — my raised eyelids
would not fall,

But still I kept my eyes upon the sky.
I seem'd the only part of Time stood still,
And saw the motion of all other things ;
While her words, syllable by syllable,
Like water, drop by drop, upon my ear
Fell ; and I wish'd, yet wish'd her not
to speak ;

But she spake on, for I did name no wish.
What marvel my Camilla told me all

Her maiden dignities of Hope and
Love —

“ Perchance,” she said, “ return'd.”
Even then the stars

Did tremble in their stations as I gazed ;
But she spake on, for I did name no wish,
No wish — no hope. Hope was not
wholly dead,

But breathing hard at the approach of
Death, —

Camilla, my Camilla, who was mine
No longer in the dearest sense of mine —
For all the secret of her inmost heart,
And all the maiden empire of her mind,
Lay like a map before me, and I saw
There, where I hoped myself to reign as
king,

There, where that day I crown'd myself
as king,

There in my realm and even on my
throne,

Another! Then it seem'd as tho' a link
Of some tight chain within my inmost
frame

Was riven in twain : that life I heeded
not

Flow'd from me, and the darkness of the
grave,

The darkness of the grave and utter
night,

Did swallow up my vision ; at her feet,
Even the feet of her I loved, I fell,
Smit with exceeding sorrow unto Death.

Then had the earth beneath me yawn-
ing cloven

With such a sound as when an iceberg
splits

From cope to base — had Heaven from
all her doors,

With all her golden thresholds clashing,
roll'd

Her heaviest thunder — I had lain as
dead,

Mute, blind and motionless as then I lay ;
Dead, for henceforth there was no life
for me !

Mute, for henceforth what use were
words to me !

Blind, for the day was as the night to me !
The night to me was kinder than the day ;
The night in pity took away my day,
Because my grief as yet was newly born
Of eyes too weak to look upon the light ;
And thro' the hasty notice of the ear
Frail Life was startled from the tender
love

Of him she brooded over. Would I
had lain

Until the plaited ivy-tress had wound
Round my worn limbs, and the wild
brier had driven

Its knotted thorns thro' my unpaining
brows,

Leaning its roses on my faded eyes.
The wind had blown above me, and the
rain

Had fall'n upon me, and the gilded snake
Had nestled in this bosom-throne of
Love,

But I had been at rest for evermore.

Long time entrancement held me.
All too soon

Life (like a wanton too-officious friend,
Who will not *hear* denial, vain and rude
With proffer of unwished-for services)
Entering all the avenues of sense
Passed thro' into his citadel, the brain,
With hated warmth of apprehensiveness.
And first the chillness of the sprinkled
brook

Smote on my brows, and then I seem'd
to hear

Its murmur, as the drowning seaman
hears,
Who with his head below the surface
dropt

Listens the muffled booming indistinct
Of the confused floods, and dimly knows
His head shall rise no more : and then
came in

The white light of the weary moon
above,

Diffused and molten into flaky cloud.
Was my sight drunk that it did shape
to me

Him who should own that name ? Were
it not well

If so be that the echo of that name
Ringing within the fancy had updrawn

A fashion and a phantasm of the form
It should attach to ? Phantom ! — had
the ghastliest

That ever lusted for a body, sucking
The foul steam of the grave to thicken
by it,

There in the shuddering moonlight
brought its face

And what it has for eyes as close to mine
As he did — better that than his, than he
The friend, the neighbor, Lionel, the
beloved,

The loved, the lover, the happy Lionel,
The low-voiced, tender-spirited Lionel,
All joy, to whom my agony was a joy.

Oh how her choice did leap forth from
his eyes !

Oh how her love did clothe itself in
smiles

About his lips ! and — not one moment's
grace —

Then when the effect weigh'd seas upon
my head

To come my way ! to twit me with the
cause !

Was not the land as free thro' all her
ways

To him as me ? Was not his wont to
walk

Between the going light and growing
night ?

Had I not learnt my loss before he came ?
Could that be more because he came my
way ?

Why should he not come my way if he
would ?

And yet to-night, to-night — when all
my wealth

Flash'd from me in a moment and I fell
Beggar'd forever — why *should* he come
my way

Robed in those robes of light I must not
wear,

With that great crown of beams about
his brows —

Come like an angel to a damned soul,
To tell him of the bliss he had with
God —

Come like a careless and a greedy heir
That scarce can wait the reading of the
will

Before he takes possession ? Was mine
a mood

To be invaded rudely, and not rather
A sacred, secret, unapproached woe,
Unspeaking ? I was shut up with Grief ;

She took the body of my past delight,
Narded and swathed and balm'd it for
herself,
And laid it in a sepulchre of rock
Never to rise again. I was led mute
Into her temple like a sacrifice ;
I was the High Priest in her holiest place,
Not to be loudly broken in upon.

O friend, thoughts deep and heavy as
these well nigh
O'erbore the limits of my brain ; but he
Bent o'er me, and my neck his arm up-
stay'd.
I thought it was an adder's fold, and
once
I strove to disengage myself, but fail'd,
Being so feeble : she bent above me, too ;
Wan was her cheek ; for whatso'er of
blight
Lives in the dewy touch of pity had
made
The red rose there a pale one — and her
eyes —
I saw the moonlight glitter on their
tears —
And some few drops of that distressful
rain
Fell on my face, and her long ringlets
moved,
Drooping and beaten by the breeze, and
brush'd
My fallen forehead in their to and fro,
For in the sudden anguish of her heart
Loosed from their simple thrall they had
flow'd abroad,
And floated on and parted round her neck,
Mantling her form half way. She, when
I woke,
Something she ask'd, I know not what,
and ask'd,
Unanswer'd, since I spake not ; for the
sound
Of that dear voice so musically low,
And now first heard with any sense of
pain,
As it had taken life away before,
Choked all the syllables, that strove to
rise
From my full heart.
The blissful lover, too,
From his great hoard of happiness dis-
till'd
Some drops of solace ; like a vain rich
man,
That, having always prosper'd in the
world,

Folding his hands, deals comfortable
words
To hearts wounded forever ; yet, in truth,
Fair speech was his and delicate of phrase,
Falling in whispers on the sense, ad-
dress'd
More to the inward than the outward
ear,
As rain of the midsummer midnight soft,
Scarce heard, recalling fragrance and the
green
Of the dead spring : but mine was wholly
dead,
No bud, no leaf, no flower, no fruit for
me.
Yet who had done, or who had suffer'd
wrong ?
And why was I to darken their pure love,
If, as I found, they two did love each
other,
Because my own was darken'd ? Why
was I
To cross between their happy star and
them ?
To stand a shadow by their shining
doors,
And vex them with my darkness ? Did
I love her ?
Ye know that I did love her ; to this
present
My full-orb'd love has waned not. Did
I love her,
And could I look upon her tearful eyes ?
What had *she* done to weep ? Why
should *she* weep ?
O innocent of spirit — let my heart
Break rather — whom the gentlest airs
of Heaven
Should kiss with an unwonted gentle-
ness.
Her love did murder mine ? What then ?
She deem'd
I wore a brother's mind : she call'd me
brother :
She told me all her love : she shall not
weep.
The brightness of a burning thought,
awhile
In battle with the glooms of my dark
will,
Moon-like emerged, and to itself lit up
There on the depth of an unfathom'd
woe
Reflex of action. Starting up at once,
As from a dismal dream of my own death,
I, for I loved her, lost my love in Love :

I, for I loved her, graspt the hand she
 lov'd,
 And laid it in her own, and sent my cry
 Thro' the blank night to Him who lov-
 ing made
 The happy and the unhappy love, that
 He
 Would hold the hand of blessing over
 them,
 Lionel, the happy, and her, and her, his
 bride !
 Let them so love that men and boys may
 say,
 " Lo ! how they love each other ! " till
 their love
 Shall ripen to a proverb, unto all
 Known, when their faces are forgot in
 the land --
 One golden dream of love, from which
 may death
 Awake them with Heaven's music in a life
 More living to some happier happiness,
 Swallowing its precedent in victory.
 And as for me, Camilla, as for me, —
 The dew of tears is an unwholesome dew,
 They will but sicken the sick plant the
 more.
 Deem that I love thee but as brothers do,
 So shalt thou love me still as sisters do ;
 Or if thou dream aught farther, dream
 but how
 I could have loved thee, had there been
 none else
 To love as lovers, loved again by thee.

Or this, or somewhat like to this, I
 spake,
 When I beheld her weep so ruefully ;
 For sure my love should ne'er indue the
 front
 And mask of Hate, who lives on others'
 moans.
 Shall Love pledge Hatred in her bitter
 draughts,
 And batten on her poisons ? Love for-
 bid !
 Love passeth not the threshold of cold
 Hate,
 And Hate is strange beneath the roof of
 Love.
 O Love, if thou be'st Love, dry up these
 tears
 Shed for the love of Love ; for tho' mine
 image,
 The subject of thy power, be cold in her,
 Yet, like cold snow, it melteth in the
 source

Of these sad tears, and feeds their down-
 ward flow.
 So Love, arraign'd to judgment and to
 death,
 Received unto himself a part of blame,
 Being guiltless, as an innocent prisoner,
 Who, when the woful sentence hath
 been past,
 And all the clearness of his fame hath
 gone
 Beneath the shadow of the curse of man,
 First falls asleep in swoon, wherefrom
 awaked,
 And looking round upon his tearful
 fiends,
 Forthwith and in his agony conceives
 A shameful sense as of a cleaving crime —
 For whence without some guilt should
 such grief be ?

So died that hour, and fell into the
 abyss
 Of forms outworn, but not to me out-
 worn,
 Who never hail'd another — was there
 one ?
 There might be one — one other, worth
 the life
 That made it sensible. So that hour
 died
 Like odor rapt into the winged wind
 Borne into alien lands and far away.

There be some hearts so airily built,
 that they,
 They — when their love is wreck'd — if
 Love can wreck —
 On that sharp ridge of utmost doom ride
 highly
 Above the perilous seas of Change and
 Chance ;
 Nay, more, hold out the lights of cheer-
 fulness ;
 As the tall ship, that many a dreary year
 Kuit to some dismal sand-bank far at
 sea,
 All thro' the livelong hours of utterdark,
 Showers slanting light upon the dolorous
 wave.
 For me — what light, what gleam on
 those black ways
 Where Love could walk with banish'd
 Hope no more ?

It was ill done to part you, Sisters fair ;
 Love's arms were wreath'd about the
 neck of Hope,

And Hope kiss'd Love, and Love drew
 in her breath
 In that close kiss, and drank her whis-
 per'd tales.
 They said that Love would die when
 Hope was gone,
 And Love mourn'd long, and sorrow'd
 after Hope ;
 At last she sought out Memory, and they
 trod
 The same old paths where Love had
 walk'd with Hope
 And Memory fed the soul of Love with
 tears.

II.

FROM that time forth I would not see
 her more ;
 But many weary moons I lived alone —
 Alone, and in the heart of the great
 forest,
 Sometimes upon the hills beside the sea
 All day I watch'd the floating isles of
 shade,
 And sometimes on the shore, upon the
 sands
 Insensibly I drew her name, until
 The meaning of the letters shot into
 My brain ; anon the wanton billow
 wash'd
 Them over, till they faded like my love.
 The hollow caverns heard me — the
 black brooks
 Of the mid-forest heard me — the soft
 winds,
 Laden with thistle down and seeds of
 flowers,
 Paused in their course to hear me, for
 my voice
 Was all of thee : the merry linnet knew
 me,
 The squirrel knew me, and the dragon-fly
 Shot by me like a flash of purple fire.
 The rough brier tore my bleeding palms ;
 the hemlock,
 Brow-high, did strike my forehead as I
 past ;
 Yet trod I not the wild flower in my path,
 Nor bruised the wild bird's egg.
 Was this the end ?
 Why grew we then together in one plot ?
 Why fed we from one fountain ? drew
 one sun ?
 Why were our mothers branches of one
 stem ?

Why were we one in all things, save in
 that
 Where to have been one had been the
 cope and crown
 Of all I hoped and fear'd ? — if that
 same nearness
 Were father to this distance, and that
one
 Vaunteourier to this *double* ? if Affec-
 tion
 Living slew Love, and Sympathy hew'd
 out
 The bosom-sepulchre of Sympathy ?

Chiefly I sought the cavern and the
 hill
 Where last we roam'd together, for the
 sound
 Of the loud stream was pleasant, and
 the wind
 Came soothingly with woodbine smells.
 Sometimes
 All day I sat within the cavern-mouth,
 Fixing my eyes on those three cypress-
 cones
 That spired above the wood ; and with
 mad hand
 Tearing the bright leaves of the ivy-
 screen,
 I cast them in the noisy brook beneath,
 And watch'd them till they vanish'd
 from my sight
 Beneath the bower of wreathed eglan-
 times :
 And all the fragments of the living rock
 (Huge blocks, which some old trembling
 of the world
 Had loosen'd from the mountain, till
 they fell
 Half digging their own graves) these in
 my agony
 Did I make bare of all the golden moss,
 Wherewith the dashing runnel in the
 spring
 Had liveried them all over. In my brain
 The spirit seem'd to flay from thought
 to thought,
 As moonlight wandering thro' a mist :
 my blood
 Crept like marsh drains thro' all my
 languid limbs ;
 The motions of my heart seem'd far
 within me,
 Unfrequent, low, as tho' it told its
 pulses ;
 And yet it shook me, that my frame
 would shudder,

As if 't were drawn asunder by the rack.
But over the deep graves of Hope and
Fear,

And all the broken palaces of the Past,
Brooded one master-passion evermore,
Like to a low-hung and a fiery sky
Above some fair metropolis, earth-
shock'd, —

Hung round with ragged rims and burn-
ing folds, —

Embathing all with wild and woful hues,
Great hills of ruins, and collapsed masses
Of thunder-shaken columns indistinct,
And fused together in the tyrannous
light —

Ruins, the ruin of all my life and me !

Sometimes I thought Camilla was no
more,

Some one had told me she was dead,
and ask'd me

If I would see her burial ; then I seem'd
To rise, and through the forest-shadow
borne

With more than mortal swiftness, I ran
down

The steepy sea-bank, till I came upon
The rear of a procession, curving round
The silver-sheeted bay : in front of which
Six stately virgins, all in white, upbare
A broad earth-sweeping pall of whitest
lawn,

Wreathed round the bier with garlands :
in the distance,

From out the yellow woods upon the hill
Look'd forth the summit and the pinna-
cles

Of a gray steeple — thence at intervals
A low bell tolling. All the pageantry,
Save those six virgins which upheld the
bier,

Were stoled from head to foot in flowing
black ;

One walk'd abreast with me, and veil'd
his brow,

And he was loud in weeping and in praise
Of her he follow'd : a strong sympathy
Shook all my soul : I flung myself upon
him

In tears and cries : I told him all my
love,

How I had loved her from the first ;
whereat

He shrank and howl'd, and from his
brow drew back

His hand to push me from him ; and the
face,

The very face and form of Lionel
Flash'd thro' my eyes into my innermost
brain,

And at his feet I seemed to faint and
fall,

To fall and die away. I could not rise
Albeit I strove to follow. They past
on,

The lordly Phantasms ! in their floating
olds

They past and were no more : but I had
fallen

Prone by the dashing runnel on the grass.

Always the inaudible invisible thought
Artificer and subject, lord and slave,
Shaped by the audible and visible,
Moulded the audible and visible ;
All crisped sounds of wave and leaf and
wind

Flatter'd the fancy of my fading brain ;
The cloud-pavilion'd element, the wood,
The mountain, the three cypresses, the
cave,

Storm, sunset, glows and glories of the
moon

Below black firs, when silent-creeping
winds

Laid the long night in silver streaks and
bars,

Were wrought into the tissue of my
dream :

The moanings in the forest, the loud
brook,

Cries of the partridge like a rusty key
Turn'd in a lock, owl-whoop and dor-
hawk-whir

Awoke me not, but were a part of sleep,
And voices in the distance calling to me
And in my vision bidding me dream on,
Like sounds without the twilight realm
of dreams,

Which wander round the bases of the
hills,

And murmur at the low-dropt eaves of
sleep,

Half-entering the portals. Oftentimes
The vision had fair prelude, in the
end

Opening on darkness, stately vestibules
To caves and shows of Death : whether
the mind,

With some revenge, — even to itself un-
known, —

Made strange division of its suffering

With her, whom to have suffering view'd
had been

Extremest pain ; or that the clear-eyed
 Spirit,
 Being blunted in the Present, grew at
 length
 Prophetic and prescient of what'er
 The Future had in store : or that which
 most
 Enchains belief, the sorrow of my spirit
 Was of so wide a compass it took in
 All I had loved, and my dull agony,
 Ideally to her transferr'd, became
 Anguish intolerable.

The day waned ;

Alone I sat with her : about my brow
 Her warm breath floated in the utter-
 ance
 Of silver-chorded tones : her lips were
 sunder'd
 With smiles of tranquil bliss, which
 broke in light
 Like morning from her eyes—her elo-
 quent eyes
 (As I have seen them many a hundred
 times),
 Filled all with pure clear fire, thro' mine
 down rain'd
 Their spirit-searching splendors. As a
 vision
 Unto a haggard prisoner, iron-stay'd
 In damp and dismal dungeons under-
 ground,
 Confined on points of faith, when
 strength is shock'd
 With torment, and expectancy of worse
 Upon the morrow, thro' the ragged walls,
 All unawares before his half-shut eyes,
 Comes in upon him in the dead of night,
 And with the excess of sweetness and of
 awe,
 Makes the heart tremble, and the sight
 run over
 Upon his steely gyves ; so those fair
 eyes
 Shone on my darkness, forms which
 ever stood
 Within the magic cirque of memory,
 Invisible but deathless, waiting still
 The edict of the will to re-assume
 The semblance of those rare realities
 Of which they were the mirrors. Now
 the light
 Which was their life bursts through the
 cloud of thought
 Keen, irrepressible.

It was a room

Within the summer-house of which I
 spake,
 Hung round with paintings of the sea,
 and one
 A vessel in mid-ocean, her heaved prow
 Clambering, the mast bent and the ravin
 wind
 In her sail roaring. From the outer day,
 Betwixt the close-set ivies came a broad
 And solid beam of isolated light,
 Crowded with driving atomies, and fell
 Slanting upon that picture, from prime
 youth
 Well known, well loved. She drew it
 long ago
 Forth-gazing on the waste and open sea,
 One morning when the upblown billow
 ran
 Shoreward beneath red clouds, and I
 had pour'd
 Into the shadowing pencil's naked forms
 Color and life : it was a bond and seal
 Of friendship, spoken of with tearful
 smiles ;
 A monument of childhood and of love ;
 The poesy of childhood ; my lost love
 Symbol'd in storm. We gazed on it
 together
 In mute and glad remembrance, and
 each heart
 Grew closer to the other, and the eye
 Was riveted and charm-bound, gazing
 like
 The Indian on a still-eyed snake, low-
 couch'd —
 A beauty which is death ; when all at
 once
 That painted vessel, as with inner life,
 Began to heave upon that painted sea ;
 An earthquake, my loud heart-beats,
 made the ground
 Reel under us, and all at once, soul, life
 And breath and motion, past and flow'd
 away
 To those unreal billows : round and round
 A whirlwind caught and bore us ; mighty
 gyres
 Rapid and vast, of hissing spray wind-
 driven
 Far thro' the dizzy dark. Aloud she
 shriek'd ;
 My heart was cloven with pain ; I wound
 my arms
 About her : we whirl'd giddily ; the
 wind
 Sung ; but I clapt her without fear : her
 weight
 Shrank in my grasp, and over my dim
 eyes.

And parted lips which drank her breath,
 down hung
 The jaws of Death : I, groaning, from me
 flung
 Her empty phantom : all the sway and
 whirl
 Of the storm dropt to windless calm,
 and I
 Down welter'd thro' the dark ever and
 ever.

III.

I CAME one day and sat among the stones
 Strewn in the entry of the moaning cave ;
 A morning air, sweet after rain, ran over
 The rippling levels of the lake, and blew
 Coolness and moisture and all smells of
 bud
 And foliage from the dark and dripping
 woods
 Upon my fever'd brows that shook and
 throbb'd
 From temple unto temple. To what
 height
 The day had grown I know not. Then
 came on me
 The hollow tolling of the bell, and all
 The vision of the bier. As heretofore
 I walk'd behind with one who veil'd his
 brow.
 Methought by slow degrees the sullen
 bell
 Toll'd quicker, and the breakers on the
 shore
 Sloped into louder surf : those that went
 with me,
 And those that held the bier before my
 face,
 Moved with one spirit round about the
 bay,
 Trod swifter steps ; and while I walk'd
 with these
 In marvel at that gradual change, I
 thought
 Four bells instead of one began to ring,
 Four merry bells, four merry marriage
 bells,
 In clanging cadence jangling peal on
 peal —
 A long loud clash of rapid marriage bells.
 Then those who led the van, and those
 in rear,
 Rush'd into dance, and like wild
 Bacchanals
 Fled onward to the steeple in the weeds :

I, too, was borne along and felt the blast
 Beat on my heated eyelids : all at once
 The front rank made a sudden halt ; the
 bells
 Lapsed into frightful stillness ; the surge
 fell
 From thunder into whispers ; those six
 maids
 With shrieks and ringing laughter on
 the sand
 Threw down the bier ; the woods upon
 the hill
 Waved with a sudden gust that sweep-
 ing down
 Took the edges of the pall, and blew it far
 Until it hung, a little silver cloud,
 Over the sounding seas : I turn'd : my
 heart
 Shrank in me, like a snow-flake in the
 hand,
 Waiting to see the settled countenance
 Of her I lov'd, adorn'd with fading
 flowers.
 But she from out her death-like chrysalis,
 She from her bier, as into fresher life,
 My sister, and my cousin, and my love,
 Leapt lightly clad in bridal white — her
 hair
 Studded with one rich Provence rose —
 a light
 Of smiling welcome round her lips —
 her eyes
 And cheeks as bright as when she climb'd
 the hill.
 One hand she reach'd to those that came
 behind,
 And while I mused nor yet endured to
 take
 So rich a prize, the man who stood with
 me
 Stept gayly forward, throwing down his
 robes,
 And claspt her hand in his : again the
 bells
 Jangled and clang'd : again the stormy
 surf
 Crash'd in the shingle : and the whirling
 rout
 Led by those two rush'd into dance, and
 fled
 Wind-footed to the steeple in the woods,
 Till they were swallow'd in the leafy
 bowers,
 And I stood sole beside the vacant bier.
 There, there, my latest vision — then
 the event !

IV.

THE GOLDEN SUPPER.

Another speaks.)

HE flies 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 asked : but Lionel and the girl
Were wedded, and our Julian came again
Back to his mother's house among the
pines.
But these, 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 for ever, and had
gone
Surely, but for a whisper, "Go not yet,"
Some warning — sent divinely, as it
seem'd
By that which follow'd, but of this I deem
As of the visions that he told — the event
Glanced back upon them in his after-life,
And partly made them, tho' he knew it
not.

And thus he stayed 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
stayed for this ;
O love, I have not seen you for so long.
Now, now, will I go down into the grave,
I will be all alone with all I love,
And kiss her on the 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 all
will be.
The light was but a flash, and went again.
Then at the far end of the vault he saw
His lady with the 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
Drown'd in the gloom and horror of the
vault.

"It was my wish," he said, "to pass,
to sleep,
To rest, to be with her — till the great
day
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 loving
 hearts,
 Hearts 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 kissed her more than once, till
 helpless death
 And silence made him bold — nay, but
 I wrong him,
 He revered his dear lady even in
 death ;
 But, placing his true hand upon her
 heart,
 “O you warm heart,” he moaned, “not
 even death
 Can chill you all at once :” then, start-
 ing, 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
 drowned
 The feeble motion underneath his hand.
 But when at last his doubts were satis-
 fied,
 He raised her softly from the sepulchre,
 And, wrapping her all over with the cloak
 He came in, and now striding fast, and
 now
 Sitting awhile to rest, but evermore
 Holding his golden burden in his arms,
 So bore her thro’ the solitary land
 Back to the mother’s house where she
 was born.

There the good mother’s kindly min-
 istering,
 With half a night’s appliances, recall’d
 Her fluttering life : she raised an eye
 that ask’d
 “Where ?” till the things familiar to her
 youth
 Had made a silent answer : then she
 spoke :
 “Here ! and how came I here ?” and
 learning it
 (They told her somewhat rashly as I
 think)
 At once began to wander and to wail,
 “Ay, but you know that you must give
 me back :

Send ! bid him come ;” but Lionel was
 away —
 Stung by his loss had vanished, none
 knew where.
 “He casts me out,” she wept, “and
 goes” — a wail
 That seeming something, yet was noth-
 ing, born
 Not from believing mind, but shatter’d
 nerve,
 Yet haunting Julian, as her own reproof
 At some precipitance in her burial.
 Then, when her own true spirit had re-
 turned,
 “Oh yes, and you,” she said, “and
 none but you.
 For you have given me life and love
 again,
 And none but you yourself shall tell him
 of it,
 And you shall give me back when he
 returns.”
 “Stay then a little,” answered Julian,
 “here,
 And keep yourself, none knowing, to
 yourself ;
 And I will do your will. I may not
 stay,
 No, not an hour ; but send me notice
 of him
 When he returns, and then will I return,
 And I will make a solemn offering of you
 To him you love.” And faintly she re-
 plied,
 “And I will do *your* will, and none
 shall know.”

Not know ? with such a secret to be
 known !
 But all their house was old and loved
 them both,
 And all the house had known the loves
 of both ;
 Had died almost to serve them any way ;
 And all the land was waste and solitary :
 And then he rode away ; but after this,
 An hour or two, Camilla’s travail came
 Upon her, and that day a boy was born,
 Heir of his face and land, to Lionel.

And thus our lonely lover rode away,
 And pausing at a hostel in a marsh,
 There fever seized upon him : myself was
 then
 Travelling that land, and meant to rest
 an hour ;
 And sitting down to such a base repast

It makes me angry yet to speak of it,
I heard a groaning overhead, and climb'd
The moulder'd stairs (for everything was
vile),
And in a loft, with none to wait on him,
Found, as it seem'd, a skeleton alone,
Raving of dead men's dust and beating
hearts.

A dismal hostel in a dismal land,
A flat malarian world of reed and rush!
But there from fever and my care of him
Sprang up a friendship that may help
us yet.

For while we roam'd along the dreary
coast,
And waited for her message, piece by
piece

I learnt the drearier story of his life;
And, tho' he loved and honor'd Lionel,
Found that the sudden wail his lady
made

Dwelt in his fancy: did he know her
worth,
Her beauty even? should he not be
taught,

Ev'n by the price that others set upon it,
The value of that jewel he had to guard?

Suddenly came her notice, and we past,
I with our lover, to his native bay.

This love is of the brain, the mind, the
soul:

That makes the sequel pure; tho' some
of us

Beginning at the sequel know no more.
Not such am I: and yet I say, the bird
That will not hear my call, however
sweet,

But if my neighbor whistle answers
him —

What matter? there are others in the
wood.

Yet when I saw her (and I thought him
crazed,

Tho' not with such a craziness as needs
A cell and keeper), those dark eyes of
hers —

Oh! such dark eyes! and not her eyes
alone,

But all from these to where she touch'd
on earth —

For such a craziness as Julian's look'd
No less than one divine apology.

So sweetly and so modestly she came

To greet us, her young hero in her arms!
"Kiss him," she said. "You gave me
life again.

He, but for you, had never seen it once.
His other father you! Kiss him and
then

Forgive him, if his name be Julian too."

Talk of lost hopes and broken heart!
his own

Sent such a flame into his face, I knew
Some sudden vivid pleasure lit him
there.

But he was all the more resolved to go,
And sent at once to Lionel, praying him,
By that great love they both had borne
the dead,

To come and revel for one hour with him
Before he left the land for evermore;

And then to friends — they were not
many — who lived

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 costlier; 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 blossom'd;
and beneath,

Heirlooms, and ancient miracles of Art,
Chalice and salver, wines that, Heaven
knows when,

Had suck'd the fire of some forgotten
sun,

And kept it thro' a hundred years of
gloom,

Yet glowing in a heart of ruby — cups
Where nymph and god ran ever round
in gold —

Others of glass as costly — some with
gems

Movable and 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 was old, has in it rare or fair

Was brought before the guest: and they,
the guests,

Wonder'd at some strange light in Ju-
lian's eyes

(I told you that he had his golden hour),
 And such a feast, ill-suited as it seem'd
 To such a time, to Lionel's loss and his,
 And that resolved self-exile from a land
 He never would revisit, such a feast
 So rich, so strange, and stranger ev'n
 than rich —
 But rich as for the nuptials of a king.

And stranger yet, at one end of the hall
 Two great funereal curtains, looping down,
 Parted a little ere they met the floor,
 About a picture of his lady, taken
 Some years before, and falling hid the frame.
 And just above the parting was a lamp ;
 So the sweet figure folded round with night
 Seem'd 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
 Arising, 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” —

Pausing here a moment, all
 The guests broke in upon him with meeting hands
 And cries about the banquet — “Beautiful !
 Who could desire more beauty at a feast ?”

The lover answer'd, “There is more than one
 Here sitting who desires it. Laud me not
 Before my time, but hear me to the close.
 This custom steps yet further, when the guest
 Is loved and honor'd to the uttermost.
 For after he hath shown him gems of gold,
 He brings and sets before him in rich guise
 That which is thrice as beautiful as these,
 The beauty that is dearest to his heart —
 ‘O my heart's lord, would I could show you,’ he says,
 ‘Ev'n my heart, too.’ And 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 cherish'd him, and saved his life.
 I ask you now, should this first master claim
 His service, whom does it belong to ?
 Who thrust him out, or him who saved his life ?”

This question, so flung down before the guests,
 And balanced either way by each, at length
 When some were doubtful how the law would hold,
 Was handed over by consent of all
 To one who had not spoken, Lionel.

Fair speech was his, and delicate of phrase.
 And he beginning languidly — his loss

Weigh'd on him yet — but warming 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 each fine ear, an Eastern gauze
 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 flash'd, 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 —
 floated in —
 While all the guests in mute amazement
 rose —
 And slowly pacing to the middle hall,
 Before the board, there paused and stood,
 her breast
 Hard-heaving, and her eyes upon her feet,
 Not daring yet to glance at Lionel.
 But him she carried, him nor lights nor
 feast
 Dazed or amazed, nor eyes of men ; who
 cared
 Only to use his own, and staring wide
 And hungering for the gilt 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 us 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 ask'd 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 hers : 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 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 pro-
 nounced
 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 fain 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

Rush'd each at each with a cry, that
rather seem'd

Forsome new death than for a life renew'd;
Whereat the very babe began to wail;

At once they turn'd, and caught and
brought him in

To their charm'd circle, and, half killing
him

With kisses, round him closed and clasped
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 mount-
ing these

He part forever from his native land;
And I with him, my Juliau, back to mine.

DE PROFUNDIS.

TWO GREETINGS.

I.

Out of the deep, my child, out of the deep,
 Where all that was to be in all that was
 Whirl'd for a million aeons thro' the vast
 Waste dawn of multitudinous-eddyding
 light —
 Out of the deep, my child, out of the deep,
 Thro' all this changing world of change-
 less law,
 And every phase of ever-heightening life,
 And nine long months of antenatal
 gloom,
 With this last moon, this crescent — her
 dark orb
 Touch'd with earth's light — thou comest,
 darling boy ;
 Our own ; a babe in lineament and limb
 Perfect, and prophet of the perfect man ;
 Whose face and form are her's and mine
 in one,
 Indissolubly married like our love ;
 Live and be happy in thyself, and serve
 This mortal race thy kin so well that
 men
 May bless thee as we bless thee, O young
 life,
 Breaking with laughter from the dark,
 and may
 The fated channel where thy motion lives
 Be prosperously shaped, and sway thy
 course
 Along the years of haste and random
 youth
 Unshatter'd, then full-current thro' full
 man,
 And last in kindly curves, with gentlest
 fall,
 By quiet fields, a slowly-dying power,
 To that last deep where we and thou are
 still.

II.

1.

Out of the deep, my child, out of the deep,

From that great deep before our world
 begins
 Whereon the Spirit of God moves as he
 will —
 Out of the deep, my child, out of the deep,
 From that true world within the world
 we see,
 Whereof our world is but the bounding
 shore —
 Out of the deep, Spirit, out of the deep,
 With this ninth moon that sends the
 hidden sun
 Down yon dark sea, thou comest, darling
 boy.

2.

For in the world which is not ours, They
 said
 "Let us make man" and that which
 should be man,
 From that one light no man can look
 upon,
 Drew to this shore lit by the suns and
 moons
 And all the shadows. O dear Spirit,
 half-lost
 In thine own shadow and this fleshly sign
 That thou art thou — who wailest being
 born
 And banish'd into mystery, and the pain
 Of this divisible-indivisible world
 Among the numerable-innumerable
 Sun, sun, and sun, thro' finite-infinite
 space
 In finite-infinite time — our mortal veil
 And shatter'd phantom of that infinite
 One,
 Who made thee unconceivably thyself
 Out of His whole World-self and all in
 all —
 Live thou, and of the grain and husk, the
 grape
 And ivyberry, choose ; and still depart
 From death to death thro' life and life,
 and find
 Nearer and ever nearer Him who wrought
 Not Matter, nor the finite-infinite,
 But this main miracle, that thou art thou,
 With power on thine own act and on the
 world.

THE HUMAN CRY.

II.

I.

HALLOWÈD be Thy name — Halleluiah! —
 Infinite Ideality!
 Immeasurable Reality!
 Infinite Personality!
 Hallowèd be Thy name — Halleluiah!

We feel we are nothing — for all is Thou
 and in Thee;
 We feel we are something — *that* also has
 come from Thee;
 We are nothing, O Thou — but Thou
 wilt help us to be.
 Hallowèd be Thy name — Halleluiah!

BALLADS AND OTHER POEMS.

TO ALFRED TENNYSON,

MY GRANDSON

GOLDEN-HAIR'D Ally whose name is one with mine,
 Crazy with laughter and babble and earth's new wine,
 Now that the flower of a year and a half is thine,
 O little blossom, O mine, and mine of mine,
 Glorious poet who never hast written a line,
 Laugh, for the name at the head of my verse is thine.
 May'st thou never be wrong'd by the name that is mine!

THE FIRST QUARREL.

(IN THE ISLE OF WIGHT.)

I.

"WAIT a little," you say, "you are sure
 it 'll all come right,"
 But the boy was born i' trouble, an' looks
 so wan an' so white:
 Wait! an' once I ha' waited — I had n't
 to wait for long.
 Now I wait, wait, wait for Harry. — No,
 no, you are doing me wrong!
 Harry and I were married: the boy can
 hold up his head,
 The boy was born in wedlock, but after
 my man was dead;
 I ha' work'd for him fifteen years, an' I
 work an' I wait to the end.
 I am all alone in the world, an' you are
 my only friend.

II.

Doctor, if *you* can wait, I'll tell you the
 tale o' my life.
 When Harry an' I were children, he call'd
 me his own little wife;
 I was happy when I was with him, an'
 sorry when he was away,
 An' when we play'd together, I loved him
 better than play;
 He workt me the daisy chain — he made
 me the cowslip ball,
 He fought the boys that were rude an' I
 loved him better than all.
 Passionate girl tho' I was, an' often at
 home in disgrace,
 I never could quarrel with Harry — I had
 but to look in his face.

III.

There was a farmer in Dorset of Harry's
 kin, that had need
 Of a good stout lad at his farm; he sent,
 an' the father agreed;
 So Harry was bound to the Dorsetshire
 farm for years an' for years;
 I walked with him down to the quay,
 poor lad, an' we parted in tears.
 The boat was beginning to move, we
 heard them a-ringing the bell,
 "I'll never love any but you, God bless
 you, my own little Nell."

IV.

I was a child, an' he was a child, an' he
 came to harm;
 There was a girl, a hussy, that workt with
 him up at the farm,
 One had deceived her an' left her alone
 with her sin an' her shame,
 And so she was wicked with Harry; the
 girl was the most to blame.

V.

And years went over till I that was little
 had grown so tall,
 The men would say of the maids "Our
 Nelly's the flower of 'em all."
 I did n't take heed o' *them*, but I taught
 myself all I could
 To make a good wife for Harry, when
 Harry came home for good.

VI.

Often I seem'd unhappy, and often as
 happy too,
 For I heard it abroad in the fields "I'll
 never love any but you;"

"I'll never love any but you" the morn-
ing song of the lark,
"I'll never love any but you" the night-
ingale's hymn in the dark.

VII.

And Harry came home at last, but he
look'd at me sidelong and shy,
Vext me a bit, till he told me that so
many years had gone by,
I had grown so handsome and tall — that
I might ha' forgot him somehow —
For he thought — there were other lads —
he was fear'd to look at me now.

VIII.

Hard was the frost in the field, we were
married o' Christmas day,
Married among the red berries, an' all as
merry as May —
Those were the pleasant times, my house
an' my man were my pride,
We seen'd like ships i' the Channel a-
sailing with wind an' tide.

IX.

But work was scant in the Isle, tho' he
tried the villages round,
So Harry went over the Solent to see if
work could be found ;
An' he wrote "I ha' six weeks' work, lit-
tle wife, so far as I know ;
I'll come for an hour to-morrow, an' kiss
you before I go."

X.

So I set to righting the house, for was n't
he coming that day ?
An' I hit on an old deal-box that was
push'd in a corner away,
It was full of old odds an' ends, an' a
letter along wi' the rest,
I had better ha' put my naked hand in a
hornets' nest.

XI.

"Sweetheart" — this was the letter —
this was the letter I read —
"You promised to find me work near you,
an' I wish I was dead —
Did n't you kiss me an' promise ? you
have n't done it my lad,
An' I almost died o' your going away, an'
I wish that I had."

XII.

I too wish that I had — in the pleasant
times that had past,
Before I quarrell'd with Harry — *my quar-*
rel — the first an' the last.

XIII.

For Harry came in, an' I flung him the
letter that drove me wild,
An' he told it me all at once, as simple
as any child,
"What can it matter, my lass, what I did
wi' my single life ?
I ha' been as true to you as ever a man to
his wife ;
An' *she* was n't one o' the worst." "Then,"
I said, "I'm none o' the best."
An' he smiled at me, "Ain't you, my
love ? Come, come, little wife, let
it rest !
The man is n't like the woman, no need
to make such a stir."
But he anger'd me all the more, an' I
said "You were keeping with her,
When I was a-loving you all along an'
the same as before."
An' he did n't speak for a while, an' he
anger'd me more and more.

Then he patted my hand in his gentle
way, "Let bygones be !"
"Bygones ! you kept yours hush'd," I
said, "when you married me !
Bygones ma' be come-agains ; an' *she* —
in her shame an' her sin —
You'll have her to nurse my child, if I die
o' my lying in !
You'll make her its second mother ! I
hate her — an' I hate you !"
Ah, Harry, my man, you had better ha'
beaten me black an' blue
Than ha' spoken as kind as you did, when
I were so crazy wi' spite,
"Wait a little, my lass, I am sure it'll
all come right."

XIV.

An' he took three turns in the rain, an' I
watch'd him, an' when he came in
I felt that my heart was hard, he was all
wet thro' to the skin,
An' I never said "off wi' the wet," I never
said "on wi' the dry,"
So I knew my heart was hard, when he
came to bid me good-by.
"You said that you hated me, Ellen, but
that is n't true, you know ;
I am going to leave you a bit — you'll kiss
me before I go."

XV.

"Going! you're going to her — kiss her
— if you will," I said, —
I was near my time wif the boy, I must
ha' been light i' my head —
"I had sooner be cursed than kiss'd!" —
I did n't know well what I meant,
But I turn'd my face from *him*, an' he
turn'd *his* face an' he went.

XVI.

And then he sent me a letter, "I've got-
ten my work to do;
You would n't kiss me, my lass, an' I
never loved any but you;
I am sorry for all the quarrel an' sorry
for what she wrote,
I ha' six weeks' work in Jersey an' go to-
night by the boat."

XVII.

An' the wind began to rise, an' I thought
of him out at sea,
An' I felt I had been to blame; he was
always kind to me.
"Wait a little, my lass, I am sure it'll
all come right" —
An' the boat went down that night — the
boat went down that night.

RIZPAH.

17—.

I.

WAILING, wailing, wailing, the wind over
land and sea —
And Willy's voice in the wind, "O moth-
er, come out to me."
Why should he call me to-night, when he
knows that I cannot go?
For the downs are as bright as day, and
the full moon stares at the snow.

II.

We should be seen, my dear; they would
spy us out of the town.
The loud black nights for us, and the
storm rushing over the down,
When I cannot see my own hand, but am
led by the creak of the chain,
And grovel and grope for my son till I
find myself drenched with the rain.

III.

Any thing fallen again? nay — what was
there left to fall?
I have taken them home, I have number'd
the bones, I have hidden them all.
What am I saying? and what are *you*?
do you come as a spy?
Falls? what falls? who knows? As the
tree falls so must it lie.

IV.

Who let her in? how long has she been?
you — what have you heard?
Why did you sit so quiet! you never have
spoken a word.
O — to pray with me — yes — a lady —
none of their spies —
But the night has crept into my heart,
and begun to darken my eyes.

V.

Ah — you, that have lived so soft, what
should *you* know of the night,
The blast and the burning shame and the
bitter frost and the fright?
I have done it, while you were asleep —
you were only made for the day.
I have gather'd my baby together — and
now you may go your way.

VI.

Nay — for it's kind of you, Madam, to sit
by an old dying wife.
But say nothing hard of my boy, I have
only an hour of life
I kiss'd my boy in the prison, before he
went out to die.
"They dared me to do it," he said, and
he never has told me a lie.
I whipt him for robbing an orchard once
when he was but a child —
"The farmer dared me to do it," he said;
he was always so wild —
And idle — and could n't be idle — my
Willy — he never could rest
The King should have made him a sol-
dier, he would have been one of
his best.

VII.

But he lived with a lot of wild mates,
and they never would let him be
good;
They swore that he dare not rob the mail,
and he swore that he would;

And he took no life, but he took one
purse, and when all was done
He flung it among his fellows — I 'll none
of it, said my son.

VIII.

I came into court to the Judge and the
lawyers. I told them my tale,
God's own truth — but they kill'd him,
they kill'd him for robbing the
mail.
They hang'd him in chains for a show
— we had always borne a good
name —
To be hang'd for a thief — and then put
away — is n't that enough shame?
Dust to dust — low down — let us hide!
but they set him so high
That all the ships of the world could stare
at him, passing by.
God 'll pardon the hell-black raven and
horrible fowls of the air,
But not the black heart of the lawyer
who kill'd him and hang'd him
there.

IX.

And the jailer forced me away. I had
bid him my last good-by;
They had fasten'd the door of his cell.
"O mother!" I heard him cry.
I could n't get back tho' I tried, he had
something further to say,
And now I never shall know it. The jail-
er forced me away.

X.

Then since I could n't but hear that cry
of my boy that was dead,
They seized me and shut me up: they
fasten'd me down on my bed.
"Mother, O mother!" — he call'd in the
dark to me year after year —
They beat me for that, they beat me —
you know that I could n't but hear:
And then at the last they found I had
grown so stupid and still
They let me abroad again — but the crea-
tures had worked their will.

XI.

Flesh of my flesh was gone, but bone of
my bone was left —
I stole them all from the lawyers — and
you, will you call it a theft? —

My baby, the bones that had suck'd me,
the bones that had laughed and
had cried —
Theirs? O no! they are mine — not theirs
— they had moved in my side.

XII.

Do you think I was scared by the bones?
I kiss'd 'em, I buried 'em all —
I can't dig deep, I am old — in the night
by the churchyard wall.
My Willy 'll rise up whole when the
trumpet of judgment 'il sound,
But I charge you never to say that I laid
him in holy ground.

XIII.

They would scratch him up — they would
hang him again on the cursed tree.
Sin? O yes — we are sinners, I know —
let all that be,
And read me a Bible verse of the Lord's
good will toward men —
"Full of compassion and mercy, the
Lord" — let me hear it again;
"Full of compassion and mercy — long-
suffering." Yes, O yes!
For the lawyer is born but to murder —
the Saviour lives but to bless.
He 'll never put on the black cap except
for the worst of the worst,
And the first may be last — I have heard
it in church — and the last may be
first.
Suffering — O long-suffering — yes, as
the Lord must know,
Year after year in the mist and the wind
and the shower and the snow.

XIV.

Heard, have you? what? they have told
you he never repented his sin.
How do they know it! are *they* his moth-
er? are *you* of his kin?
Heard! have you ever heard, when the
storm on the downs began,
The wind that 'll wail like a child, and the
sea that 'll moan like a man?

XV.

Election, Election and Reprobation — it's
all very well.
But I go to-night to my boy, and I shall
not find him in Hell.

For I cared so much for my boy that the
Lord has look'd into my care,
And He means me, I'm sure, to be happy
with Willy, I know not where.

XVI.

And if *he* be lost — but to save *my* soul,
that is all your desire :
Do you think that I care for *my* soul if
my boy be gone to the fire ?
I have been with God in the dark — go,
go, you may leave me alone —
You never have borne a child — you are
just as hard as a stone.

XVII.

Madam, I beg your pardon ! I think that
you mean to be kind,
But I cannot hear what you say for my
Willy's voice in the wind —
The snow and the sky so bright — he used
but to call in the dark,
And he calls to me now from the church
and not from the gibbet — for
hark !
Nay — you can hear it yourself — it is
coming — shaking the walls —
Willy — the moon's in a cloud — Good
night. I am going. He calls.

THE NORTHERN COBBLER.

I.

WAÄIT till our Sally cooms in, fur thou
nun a' sights¹ to tell.
Eh, but I be maäin glad to seeä tha sa
'arty an' well.
"Cast awaäy on a disolut land wi' a var-
tical soon!"²
Strange fur to goä fur to think what saäil-
ors a' seäan an' a' doon ;
"Summat to drink — sa' 'ot ?" I'a nowt
but Adam's wine :
What's the 'eät o' this little 'ill-side to
the 'eät o' the line ?

¹ The vowels *aï*, pronounced separately, though in the closest conjunction, best render the sound of the long *i* and *y* in this dialect. But since such words as *cräin*, *daëin*, *whäi*, *aï* (I), etc., look awkward except in a page of express phonetics, I have thought it better to leave the simple *i* and *y*, and to trust that my readers will give them the broader pronunciation.

² The *oo* short, as in "wood."

II.

"What's i' tha bottle a-stanning theer ?"
I'll tell tha. Gin.
But if thou wants thy grog, tha nun goä
fur it down to the inn.
Naay — fur I be maäin-glad, but thaw tha
was iver sa dry,
Thou gits naw gin fro' the bottle theer,
an' I'll tell tha why.

III.

Meä an' thy sister was married, when wur
it ? back-end o' June,
Ten year sin', and wa' greed as well as a
fiddle i' tune :
I could fettle and clump owd booöts and
shoes wi' the best on 'em all,
As fer as fro' Thursby thurn hup to
Harmsby and Hutterby Hall.
We was busy as beeäs i' the bloom an' as
'appy as 'art could think,
An' then the babby wur burn and then I
taäkes to the drink.

IV.

An' I weänt gaäinsaäy it, my lad, thaw I
be hafe shaämed on it now,
We could sing a good song at the Plow, we
could sing a good song at the Plow ;
Thaw once of a frosty night I slither'd
an' hurted my huck,³
An' I coom'd neck-an-crop soometimes
slaäpe down i' the squad an' the
muck :
An' once I fowt wi' the Taäilor — not hafe
ov a man, my lad —
Fur he serawm'd an' scatted my faäce
like a cat, an' it maäde 'er sa mad
That Sally she turn'd a tongue-banger,⁴
an' raäted ma, "Sottin' thy braäins
Guzzlin' an' soäkin' an' smoäkin' an' haw-
min'"⁵ about i' the laänes,
Soä sow-droonk that tha doesn't touch
thy 'at to the Squire ;"
An' I loök'd cock-eyed at my noäse an'
I seeäd 'im a-gittin' o' fire ;
But sin' I wur hallus i' liquor an' hallus
as droonk as a king,
Foälk's' coostom flitted awaäy like a kite
wi' a brokken string.

V.

An' Sally she wesh'd foälk's' cloäths to
keep the wolf fro' the door,
Eh but the moor she riled me, she druv
me to drink the moor,

³ Hip. ⁴ Scold. ⁵ Lounging.

Fur I fun', when 'er back wur turn'd,
wheer Sally's owd stockin' wur
'id,

An' I grabb'd the munny she maäde, and
I weär'd it o' liquor, I did.

VI.

An' one night I cooms 'oäm like a bull
gotten loose at a faäir,

An' she wur a-waäit'iu' fo'mma, an' cryin'
an' teärin' 'er 'aäir,

An' I tumbled athurt the craädle an'
sweär'd as I'd breäk ivry stick

O' furnitur 'ere i' the 'ouse, an' I gied
our Sally a kick,

An' I mash'd the taäbles an' chairs, an'
she an' the babby beäl'd,¹

Fur I knaw'd naw moor what I did nor a
mortal beäst o' the feäld.

VII.

An' when I waäked i' the murnin' I seeäd
that our Sally went läämed

Cos' o' the kick as I gied 'er, an' I wur
dreäfuln' ashaämed;

An' Sally wur sloomy¹ an' draggle-
taäil'd in an owd turn gown,

An' the babby's faäce wur'n't wesh'd an'
the 'ole 'ouse hupside down.

VIII.

An' then I minded our Sally sa pratty
an' neät an' sweet,

Straät as a pole an' cleän as a flower fro'
'cäd to feeät :

An' then I minded the fust kiss I gied 'er
by Thursby thurn;

Theer wur a lark a-singin' 'is best of a
Sunday at murn,

Could n't see 'im, we 'eärd 'im a-mounntin'
oop 'igher an' 'igher,

An' then 'e turn'd to the sun, an' 'e shined
like a sparkle o' fire.

"Does n't tha see 'im," she axes, "fur I
can see 'im?" an' I

Seeäd nobbut the smile o' the sun as
danced in 'er pratty blue eye;

An' I says "I mun gie tha a kiss," an'
Sally says "Noä, thou moänt,"

But I gied 'er a kiss, an' then quoother,
an' Sally says "doänt!"

¹ Bellowed, cried out.

² Sluggish, out of spirits.

IX.

An' when we coom'd into Meeätin', at
fust she wur all in a tew,

But, arter, we sing'd the 'ymn togither
like birds on a bengh;

Au' Muggins e' preäch'd o' Hell-fire an'
the loov o' God fur men,

An' then upo' coomin' awaäy Sally gied
me a kiss ov 'ersen.

X.

Heer wur a fall fro' a kiss to a kick like
Saätan as fell

Down out o' heaven i' Hell-fire — thaw
theer 's naw drinkin' i' Hell;

Meä fur to kick our Sally as kep' the
wolf fro' the door,

All along o' the drink, fur I loov'd 'er as
well as afoor.

XI.

Sa like a graät num-cumpus I blubber'd
awaäy o' the bed —

"Weant niver do it naw moor;" an'
Sally loök't up an' she said,

"I'll upowd it³ tha weänt; thou 'rt laike
the rest o' the men,

Thou 'll goä sniffin' about the tap till tha
does it agään.

Theer 's thy hennemy, man, an' I knaws,
as knaws tha sa well,

That, if tha secäs 'im an' smells 'im
tha 'll foller 'im sliäk into Hell."

XII.

"Naäy," says I, "fur I weänt goä sniffin'
about the tap."

"Weänt tha?" she says, an' mysen I
thowt i' mysen "mayhap."

"Noa:" an' I started awaäy like a shot,
an' down to the Hinu,

An' I browt what tha secäs stannin' theer'
yon big black bottle o' gin.

XIII.

"That caps owt,"⁴ says Sally, an' saw she
begins to cry,

But I puts it inter 'er 'ands an' I says
to 'er, "Sally," says I,

"Stan' 'im theer i' the naäme o' the Lord
an' the power ov 'is Graäce,

Stan' 'im theer, fur I 'll look my hennemy
straüt i' the faäce,

³ I 'll uphold it.

⁴ That 's beyond everything

Stan' 'im theer i' the winder, an' let ma
looök at 'im then,
'E secäms naw moor nor watter, an' 'e 's
the Divil's oän sen."

XIV.

An' I wur down i' tha mouth, could n't
do naw work an' all,
Nasty an' snaggy an' shaäky, an' poonch'd
my 'and wi' the hawl,
But she wur a power o' coomfut, an' sat-
tled 'ersen o' my knce,
An' coäxd an' coodled me oop till ageän
I feel'd mysen free.

XV.

An' Sally she tell'd it about, and foälk
stood a-gawmin'¹ in,
As thaw it wur summat bewitch'd istead
of a quart o' gin ;
An' some on 'em said it wur watter — an'
I wur chon-in' the wife,
Fur I could n't 'owd 'ands off gin, were it
nobbut to saave my life :
An' blacksmith 'e strips me the thick ov
'is arm, an' 'e shaws it to me,
"Feäl thou this ! thou can't graw this
upo' watter !" says he.
An' Doctor 'e calls o' Sunday an' just as
candles was lit,
"Thou moänt do it," he says, "tha mun
breäk 'im off bit by bit."
"Thou 'rt but a Methody-man," says
Parson, and laäys down 'is 'at,
An' 'e points to the bottle o' gin, "but I
respecks tha fur that ;"
An' Squire, his oän very sen, walks down
fro' the 'All to see,
An' 'e spansk 'is 'and into mine, "fur I
respecks tha," says 'e ;
An' coostom ageän draw'd in like a wind
fro' far an' wide,
An' browt me the boöts to be cobbled
fro' hafe the countryside.

XVI.

An' theer 'e stans an' theer 'e shall stan
to my dying daäy ;
I 'a gotten to loov 'im ageän in anoother
kind of a waäy,
Proud on 'im, like, my lad, an' I keeäps
'im cleän an' bright,
Loovs 'im, an' roobs 'im, an' doosts 'im,
an' puts 'im back i' the light.

¹ Staring vacantly

XVII.

Would n't a pint a sarved as well as a
quart ? Naw doubt :
But I liked a bigger feller to fight wi' an'
fowt it out.
Fine an' meller 'e mun be by this, if I
cared to täaste,
But I moänt, my lad, and I weänt, fur
I 'd feäl mysen cleän disgraced.

XVIII.

An' once I said to the Missis, "My lass,
when I cooms to die,
Smash the bottle to smithers, the Divil 's
in 'im," said I.
But arter I chaänged my mind, an' if
Sally be left aloän,
I'll hev 'im a-buried wi'mma an' täake
'im afoor the Throan.

XIX.

Coom thou 'cer — yon läädy a-steppin'
along the streeät,
Does n't tha knaw 'er — sa pratty, an'
feät, an' neät, an' sweät ?
Look at the cloäths on 'er back, thebbe
ammost spick-span-new,
An' Tommy's faäce is as fresh as a cod-
lin 'at 's wesh'd 'i the dew.

XX.

'Ere our Sally an' Tommy, an' we be a-
goin' to dine,
Baäcon an' täates, an' a beslings-puddin'²
an' Adäm's wine ;
But if tha wants any grog tha mun goä
fur it down to the Hinn,
Fur I weänt shed a drop on 'is blood, noa,
not fur Sally's oän kin.

THE SISTERS.

THEY have left the doors ajar ; and by
their clash,
And prelude on the keys, I know the
song,
Their favorite — which I call "The
Tables Turned."
Evelyn begins it "O diviner Air."

EVELYN.

O diviner Air,
Thro' the heat, the drowth, the dust,
the glare,

² A pudding made with the first milk of the
cow after calving.

Far from out the west in shadowing
showers,
Over all the meadow baked and bare,
Making fresh and fair
All the bowers and the flowers,
Fainting flowers, faded bowers,
Over all this weary world of ours,
Breathe, diviner Air!

A sweet voice that — you scarce could
better that.
Now follows Edith echoing Evelyn.

EDITH.

O diviner Light,
Thro' the cloud that roofs our noon
with night,
Thro' the blotting mist, the blinding
showers,
Far from out a sky forever bright,
Over all the woodland's flooded bow-
ers,
Over all the meadow's drowning flow-
ers,
Over all this ruin'd word of ours,
Break, diviner Light!

Marvellously like, their voices — and
themselves!
Tho' one is somewhat deeper than the
other,
As one is somewhat graver than the
other —
Edith than Evelyn. Your good Uncle,
whom
You count the father of your fortune,
longs
For this alliance: let me ask you then,
Which voice most takes you? for I do not
doubt
Being a watchful parent, you are taken,
With one or other: tho' sometimes I fear
You may be flickering, fluttering in a
doubt
Between the two — which must not be —
which might
Be death to one: they both are beautiful:
Evelyn is gayer, wittier, prettier, says
The common voice, if one may trust it:
she?
No! but the paler and the graver, Edith.
Woo her and gain her then: no waver-
ing, boy!
The graver is perhaps the one for you
Who jest and laugh so easily and so
well.
For love will go by contrast, as by likes.

No sisters ever prized each other more.
Not so: their mother and her sister loved
More passionately still.

But that my best
And oldest friend, your Uncle, wishes it,
And that I know you worthy every way
To be my son, I might, perchance, be
loath
To part them, or part from them: and
yet one
Should marry, or all the broad lands in
your view
From this bay window — which our house
has held
Three hundred years — will pass collat-
erally.

My father with a child on either knee,
A hand upon the head of either child,
Smoothing their locks, as golden as his
own
Were silver, "get them wedded" would
he say.
And once my prattling Edith ask'd him
"why?"
Ay, why? said he, "for why should I go
lame?"
Then told them of his wars, and of his
wound.
For see — this wine — the grape from
whence it flow'd
Was blackening on the slopes of Portugal,
When that brave soldier, down the ter-
rible ridge
Plunged in the last fierce charge at Wa-
terloo,
And caught the laming bullet. He left
me this,
Which yet retains a memory of its youth,
As I of mine, and my first passion.
Come!
Here's to your happy union with my
child!

Yet must you change your name: no
fault of mine!
You say that you can do it as willingly
As birds make ready for their bridal-time
By change of feather: for all that, my boy
Some birds are sick and sullen when they
molt.
An old and worthy name! but mine that
stirr'd
Among our civil wars and earlier too
Among the Roses, the more venerable.
I care not for a name — no fault of mine
Once more — a happier marriage than
my own!

You see yon Lombard poplar on the plain.
The highway running by it leaves a breadth
Of sward to left and right, where, long ago,
One bright May morning in a world of song,
I lay at leisure, watching overhead
The aerial poplar wave, an amber spire.

A dozed; I woke. An open landaulet
Whirl'd by, which, after it had past me,
Turning my way, the loveliest face on earth.
The face of one there sitting opposite.
On whom I brought a strange unhappiness,
That time I did not see.

Love at first sight
May seem — with goodly rhyme and reason for it —
Possible — at first glimpse, and for a face
Gone in a moment — strange. Yet once,
when first
I came on lake Llanberris in the dark,
A moonless night with storm — one lightning-fork
Flash'd out the lake; and tho' I loiter'd there
The full day after, yet in retrospect
That less than momentary thunder-sketch
Of lake and mountain conquers all the day.

The Sun himself has limn'd the face for me.
Not quite so quickly, no, nor half as well.
For look you here — the shadows are too deep,
And like the critic's blurring comment make
The veriest beauties of the work appear
The darkest faults: the sweet eyes frown:
the lips
Seem but a gash. My sole memorial
Of Edith — no the other, — both indeed.

So that bright face was flash'd thro' sense and soul
And by the poplar vanish'd — to be found
Long after, as it seem'd, beneath the tall
Tree-bowers, and those long-sweeping
beechen boughs

Of our New Forest. I was there alone:
The phantom of the whirling landaulet
Forever past me by; when one quick peal
Of laughter drew me thro' the glimmering glades
Down to the snowlike sparkle of a cloth
On fern and foxglove. Lo, the face again,
My Rosalind in this Arden — Edith! — all
One bloom of youth, health, beauty, happiness,
And moved to merriment at a passing jest.

There one of those about her knowing me
Call'd me to join them; so with these I spent
What seem'd my crowning hour, my day of days.

I woo'd her then, nor unsuccessfully,
The worse for her, for me! was I content?
Ay — no, not quite; for now and then I thought
Laziness, vague love-longings, the bright May,
Had made a heated haze to magnify
The charm of Edith — that a man's ideal
Is high in heaven, and lodged with Plato's God,
Not findable here — content, and not content,
In some such fashion as a man may be
Drawn by an artist, looks at it, and says,
"Good! very like! not altogether he."

As yet I had not bound myself by words,
Only, believing I loved Edith, made
Edith love me. Then came the day when I,
Flattering myself that all my doubts were fools
Born of the fool this Age that doubts of all —
Not I that day of Edith's love or mine —
Had braced my purpose to declare myself:
I stood upon the stairs of Paradise.
The golden gates would open at a word.
I spoke it — told her of my passion, seen
And lost and found again, had got so far,
Had caught her hand, her eyelids fell —
I heard

Wheels, and a noise of welcome at the doors —

On a sudden after two Italian years
Had set the blossom of her health again,
The younger sister, Evelyn, enter'd —
there,

There was the face, and altogether she.
The mother fell about the daughter's
neck,

The sisters closed in one another's arms,
Their people throng'd about them from
the hall,

And in the thick of question and reply
I fled the house, driven by one angel face,
And all the Furies.

I was bound to her ;
I could not free myself in honor — bound
Not by the sounded letter of the word,
But counter-pressures of the yielded
hand

That timorously and faintly echoed mine,
Quick blushes, the sweet dwelling of her
eyes

Upon me when she thought I did not
see —

Were these not bonds? nay, nay, but
could I wed her

Loving the other? do her that great
wrong?

Had I not dream'd I loved her yester
morn?

Had I not known where Love, at first a
fear,

Grew after marriage to full height and
form?

Yet after marriage, that mock-sister
there —

Brother-in-law — the fiery nearness of
it —

Unlawful and disloyal brotherhood —
What end but darkness could ensue from
this

For all the three? So Love and Honor
jarr'd

Tho' Love and Honor join'd to raise the
full

High-tide of doubt that sway'd me up and
down

Advancing nor retreating.

Edith wrote :
" My mother bids me ask " (I did not tell
you —

A widow with less guile than many a
child.

God help the wrinkled children that are
Christ's

As well as the plump cheek — she
wrought us harm,

Poor soul, not knowing) " are you ill?"
(so ran

The letter) " you have not been here of
late.

You will not find me here. At last I go
On that long-promised visit to the North
I told your wayside story to my mother
And Evelyn. She remembers you. Fare-
well.

Pray come and see my mother. Almost
blind

With ever-growing cataract, yet she
thinks

She sees you when she hears. Again
farewell."

Cold words from one I had hoped to
warm so far

That I could stamp my image on her
heart!

" Pray come and see my mother, and
farewell."

Cold, but as welcome as free airs of
heaven

After a dungeon's closeness. Selfish,
strange!

What dwarfs are men! my strangled
vanity

Utter'd a stifled cry — to have vex't my-
self

And all in vain for her — cold heart or
none —

No bride for me. Yet so my path was
clear

To win the sister.

Whom I woo'd and won.
For Evelyn knew not of my former suit,
Because the simple mother work'd upon
By Edith pray'd me not to whisper of
it.

And Edith would be bridesmaid on the
day.

But on that day, not being all at ease,
I from the altar glancing back upon her,
Before the first " I will " was utter'd, saw
The bridesmaid pale, statuelike, passion-
less —

" No harm, no harm," I turned again,
and placed

My ring upon the finger of my bride.

So, when we parted, Edith spoke no
word,

She wept no tear, but round my Evelyn
clung

In utter silence for so long, I thought
" What, will she never set her sister
free?"

We left her, happy each in each, and then,
 As tho' the happiness of each in each
 Were not enough, must fain have tor-
 rents, lakes,
 Hills, the great things of Nature and the
 fair.
 To lift us as it were from commonplace,
 And help us to our joy. Better have
 sent
 Our Edith thro' the glories of the earth,
 To change with her horizon, if true Love
 Were not his own imperial all-in-all.
 Far off we went. My God, I would
 not live
 Save that I think this gross hard-seeming
 world
 Is our misshaping vision of the Powers
 Behind the world, that make our griefs
 our gains.

For on the dark night of our marriage-
 day
 The great Tragedian, that had quenched
 herself
 In that assumption of the bridesmaid —
 she
 That loved me — our true Edith — her
 brain broke
 With over-acting, till she rose and fled
 Beneath a pitiless rush of Autumn rain
 To the deaf church — to be let in — to
 pray
 Before that altar — so I think; and there
 They found her beating the hard Prot-
 estant doors.
 She died and she was buried ere we knew.

I learnt it first. I had to speak. At
 once
 The bright quick smile of Evelyn, that
 had sunn'd
 The morning of our marriage, passed
 away:
 And on our home-return the daily want
 Of Edith in the house, the garden, still
 Haunted us like her ghost; and by and
 by,
 Either from that necessity for talk
 Which lives with blindness, or plain in-
 nocence
 Of nature, or desire that her lost child
 Should earn from both the praise of
 heroism,
 The mother broke her promise to the
 dead,
 And told the living daughter with what
 love

Edith had welcomed my short wooing of
 her,
 And all her sweet self-sacrifice and death.

Henceforth that mystic bond betwixt
 the twins —
 Did I not tell you they were twins? —
 prevail'd
 So far that no caress could win my wife
 Back to that passionate answer of full
 heart
 I had from her at first. Not that her
 love,
 Tho' scarce as great as Edith's power of
 love,
 Had lessen'd, but the mother's garrulous
 wail
 Forever woke the unhappy Past again,
 Till that dead bridesmaid, meant to be
 my bride,
 Put forth cold hands between us, and I
 fear'd
 The very fountains of her life were
 chill'd;
 So took her thence, and brought her
 here, and here
 She bore a child, whom reverently we
 call'd
 Edith; and in the second year was born
 A second — this I named from her own
 self,
 Evelyn; then two weeks — no more —
 she joined,
 In and beyond the grave, that one she
 loved.

Now in this quiet of declining life,
 Thro' dreams by night and trances of the
 day,
 The sisters glide about me hand in hand,
 Both beautiful alike, nor can I tell
 One from the other, no, nor care to tell
 One from the other, only know they
 come,
 They smile upon me, till, remembering
 all
 The love they both have borne me, and
 the love
 I bore them both — divided as I am
 From either by the stillness of the
 grave —
 I know not which of these I love the
 best.

But you love Edith; and her own true
 eyes
 Are traitors to her; our quick Evelyn —
 The merrier, prettier, wittier, as they
 talk,

And not without good reason, my good
son —
Is yet untouched: and I that hold them
both
Dearest of all things — well, I am not
sure —
But if there lie a preference either
way,
And in the rich vocabulary of Love
"Most dearest" be a true superlative —
I think I likewise love your Edith most.

THE VILLAGE WIFE; OR, THE
ENTAIL.¹

I.

'OUSE-KEEPER sent tha my lass, fur new
Squire coom'd last night.
Butter an' heggs — yis — yis. I'll goä
wi' tha back: all right;
Butter I warrants be prime, an' I war-
rants the heggs be as well,
Hafe a pint o' milk runs out when ya
breaks the shell.

II.

Sit thysen down fur a bit: hev a glass o'
cowslip wine!
I like the owd Squire an' 'is gells as thaw
they was gells o' mine,
Fur then we was all es one, the Squire
an' 'is darters an' me,
Hall but Miss Annie, the heldest, I niver
not took to she:
But Nelly, the last of the cletch,² I liked
'er the fust on 'em all,
Fur hoffens we talkt o' my darter es died
o' the fever at fall:
An' I thowt 'twur the will o' the Lord,
but Miss Annie she said it wur
draäins,
Fur she hed n't naw coomfut in 'er, an'
arn'd naw thanks fur 'er paäins.
Eh! thebbe all wi' the Lord my childer,
I han't gotten none!
Sa new Squire 's coom'd wi' 'is taäil in 'is
'and, 'an owd Squire 's gone.

III.

Fur 'staäte be i' taäil, my lass: tha dosn'
know what that be?
But I knaws the law, I does, for the law-
yer ha tow'd it me.

¹ See note to "Northern Cobbler," page 639.

² A brood of chickens.

"When theer's naw 'eäd to a 'Ouse by
the fault o' that ere maäle —
The gells they counts fur nowt, and the
next un he taäkes the taäil."

IV.

What be the next un like? can tha tell
ony harm on 'im lass? —
Naäy sit down — naw 'urry — sa cowl!
— hev another glass!
Straänge an' cowl for the time! we may
happen a fall o' snaw —
Not es I cares fur to hear ony harm, but
I likes to know.
An' I oäps es 'e beänt booöklarn'd: but
'e dosn' not coom fro' the shere;
We'd anew o' that wi' the Squire, an
we haätes booöklarnin' ere.

V.

Fur Squire wur a Varsity scholard, an
niver lookt arter the land —
Whoäts or turmutts or taätes — 'e 'd hal-
lus a booök i' 'is 'and,
Hallus aloän wi' 'is booöks, thaw nigh
upo' seventy year.
An' booöks, what 's booöks? thou knaws
thebbe neyther 'ere nor theer.

VI.

An' the gells, they hed n't naw taäils, an'
the lawyer he tow'd it me
That 'is taäil were soä tied up es he
could n't cut down a tree!
"Drat the trees," says I, to be sewer I
haätes 'em, my lass,
Fur we puts the muck o' the land, an'
they sucks the muck fro' the grass.

VII.

An' Squire wur hallus a-smilin', an' gied
to the tramps goin' by —
An' all o' the wust i' the parish — wi'
hoffens a drop in 'is eye.
An' ivry darter o' Squire's hed her awn
ridin-erse to 'ersen,
An' they rampaged about wi' their
grooms, an' wus 'untin' arter the
men,
An' hallus a-dallackt³ an' dizen'd out, an'
a-buyin' new cloäthes,
While e' sit like a graät glimmer-gowk⁴
wi' 'is glasses athurt 'is noäse,
An' 'is noäse sa grufed wi' snuff as it
could n't be seroob'd awaäy,

³ Overdressed in gay colors.

⁴ Owl.

Fur 'atween is readin' an' writin' 'e snufft
up a box in a daäy,
An' 'e niver runn'd arter the fox, nor arter
the birds wi' 'is gun,
An' 'e niver not shot one 'are, but 'e
leäved it to Charlie 'is son,
An' 'e niver not fish'd 'is awn ponds, but
Charlie 'e coteh'd the pike,
Fur 'e warn't not burn to the land, an' 'e
did n't take kind to it like;
But i cärs es 'e'd gie fur a howry¹ owd
book thutty pound an' a moor,
An' 'e'd wrote an owd book, his awn sen,
sa I knaw'd es 'e'd coom to be
poor;
An' 'e gied — I be fear'd fur to tell tha
'ow much — fur an owd scratted
stoän,
An' 'e digg'd up a loomp i' the land an'
'e got a brown pot an' a boän,
An' 'e bowt owd money, es would n't goä,
wi' good gowd o' the Queen,
An' 'e bowt little statutes all-naäkt an'
which was a shaäme to be seen;
But 'e niver loökt ower a bill, nor 'e
niver not seed to owt,
An' 'e niver knawd nowt but booöks, an'
booöks, as thou knaws, beänt nowt.

VIII.

But owd Squire's läädý es long es she
lived she kep' 'em all clear,
Thaw es long es she lived I niver hed
none of 'er darters 'ere;
But arter she died we was all es one, the
childer an' me,
An' sarvints runn'd in an' out, an' offens
we hed 'em to tea.
Lawk! 'ow I laugh'd when the lasses 'ud
talk o' their Missis's waäys,
An' the Missis's talk'd o' the lasses. —
I 'll tell tha some o' these daäys.
Hoänly Mi-s Annie were saw stuck oop,
like 'er mother afoor —
'Er an' 'er blessed darter — they niver
derken'd my door.

IX.

An' Squire 'e smiled an' 'e smiled till
'e'd gotten a fright at last,
An' 'e calls fur 'is son, fur the 'turney's
letters they foller'd sa fast;
But Squire wur 'fear'd o' 'is son, an' 'e
says to 'im, meek as a mouse,
"Lad, thou mun cut off thy taäil, or the
gells 'ull goä to the 'Oase,

¹ Filthy.

Fur I finds es I be that i' debt, es I 'oäps
es thou 'll 'elp me a bit,
An' if thou 'll 'gree to cut off thy taäil I
may saäve mysen yit."

X.

But Charlie 'e sets back 'is ears, an' 'e
sweärs, an' 'e says to 'im "Noa."
"I've gotten the 'staate by the taäil ar'
be dang'd if I iver let goa!
Coom! coom! feyther," 'e says, "why
should n't thy booöks be sowd?
I hears es soom o' thy booöks mebbe
worth their weight i' gowd."

XI.

Heäps an' heäps o' booöks, I ha' see'd
'em, belonged to the Squire,
But the lasses 'ed teärd out leaves i' the
middle to kindle the fire;
Sa moäst on 'is owd big booöks fetch'd
nigh to nowt at the saäle,
And Squire were at Charlie ageän to git
'im to cut off 'is taäil.

XII.

Ya would n't find Charlie's likes — 'e
were that outdacious at 'oäm,
Not thaw ya went fur to räake out Hell
wi' a small-tooth coäm —
Droonk wi' the Quoloty's wine, an' droonk
wi' the farmer's säle,
Mad wi' the lasses an' all — an' 'e
would n't cut off the taäil.

XIII.

Thon 's coom'd oop by the beck; and a
thurn be a-grawin' theer,
I niver ha seed it sa white wi' the Maäy
es I see'd it to-year —
Theerabouts Charlie joompt — and it
gied me a scare tother night,
Fur I thowt it wur Charlie's ghoäst i' the
derk, fur it loökt sa white.
"Billy," says 'e, "hev a joomp!" — thaw
the banks o' the beck be sa high,
Fur he ca'd 'is 'erse Billy-rough-un, thaw
niver a hair wur äwry;
But Billy fell bakkuds o' Charlie, an'
Charlie 'e brok 'is neck,
So theer wur a hend o' the taäil, fur 'e
lost 'is taäil i' the beck.

XIV.

Sa 'is taäil wur lost an' 'is booöks wur
gone an' 'is boy wur deäd,

An' Squire 'e smiled an' 'e smiled, but 'e
niver not lift oop 'is eäd :
Hallus a soft un Squire! an' 'e smiled, fur
'e hed n't naw friend,
Sa feyther an' son was buried together,
an' this wur the hend.

XV.

An' Parson as hes n't the call, nor the
mooney, but hes the pride,
'E reäds of a sewer an' sartan 'oäp o' the
tother side ;
But I beänt that sewer es the Lord, how-
siver they praäy'd an praäy'd,
Lets them inter 'eaven eäsy es leäves their
debts to be pääd.
Siver the mou'ds rattled down upo' poor
owd Squire i' the wood,
An' I cried along w' the gells, fur they
weänt niver coom to naw good.

XVI.

Fur Molly the youngest she walkt awaäy
wi' a hoffer lad,
An' nawbody eärd on 'er sin, sa o' coorse
she be gone to the bad !
An' Lucy wur laäme o' one leg, sweet-
'arts she never 'ed none —
Straänge an' unheppen¹ Miss Lucy! we
näamed her "Dot an' gaw one!"
An' Hetty wur weak i' the hatties, wi'out
ony harm i' the legs,
An' the fever 'ed baäked Jinny's 'eäd as
bald as one o' them heggs,
An' Nelly wur up fro' the craädle as big
i' the mouth as a cow,
An' saw she mun hammerate,² lass, or
she weänt git a mäate onyhow !
An' es fur Miss Annie es call'd me afoor
my awn foälks to my faäce
"A hignorant village wife as 'ud hev to
be larn'd her awn plaäce,"
Hes fur Miss Hannie the heldest hes now
be a-grawin' sa howd,
I knaws that mooch o' sheä, es it beänt
not fit to be towd !

XVII.

Sa I did n't not taäke it kindly ov owd
Miss Annie to saäy
Es I should be talkin' ageän em, es soon
es they went waäy,
Fur, lawks! 'ow I cried when they went,
an' our Nelly she gied me 'er 'and,

¹ Ungainly, awkward.² Emigrate.

Fur I'd ha done owt fur the Squire an'
'is gells es belong'd to the land ;
Booöks, es I said afoor, thebbe neyther
'eré nor theer !
But I sarved 'em wi' butter an' heggs fur
huppu'ds o' twenty year.

XVIII.

An' they hallus pääd what I hax'd, sa
hallus deel'd wi' the Hall,
An' they knaw'd what butter wur, an
they knaw'd what a hegg wur an'
all ;
Hugger-mugger they lived, but they
was n't that eäsy to pleäse,
Till I gied 'em Hinjian curn, an' they
laäid big heggs es tha seesas ;
An' I niver puts saäme³ i' my butter,
they does it at Willis's farm,
Taäste another drop o' the wine — tweänt
do tha naw harm.

XIX.

Sa new Squire's coom'd wi' 'is taäl in
'is 'and, an' owd Squire's gone ;
I heard 'im a roomlin' by, but arter my
nightcap wur on ;
So I han't clapt eyes on 'im yit, fur he
coom'd last night sa laäte —
Pluksh!!!⁴ the hens i' the peäs! why
did n't tha hesp the gaäte ?

IN THE CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL.

EMMIE.

I.

OUR doctor had call'd in another, I never
had seen him before,
But he sent a chill to my heart when I
saw him come in at the door,
Fresh from the surgery-schools of France
and of other lands —
Harsh red hair, big voice, big chest, big
merciless hands !
Wonderful cures he had done, O yes, but
they said too of him
He was happier using the knife than in
trying to save the limb,
And that I can well believe, for he look'd
so coarse and so red,
I could think he was one of those who
would break their jests on the dead,

³ Lard.⁴ A cry accompanied by a clapping of hands to scare trespassing fowl.

And mangle the living dog that had loved
him and fawn'd at his knee —
Drench'd with the hellish ooral — that
ever such things should be !

II.

Here was a boy — I am sure that some
of our children would die
But for the voice of Love, and the smile,
and the comforting eye —
Here was a boy in the ward, every bone
seem'd out of its place —
Caught in a mill and crush'd — it was all
but a hopeless case :
And he handled him gently enough ; but
his voice and his face were not
kind,
And it was but a hopeless case, he had
seen it and made up his mind,
And he said to me roughly, " The lad
will need little more of your care."
" All the more need," I told him, " to
seek the Lord Jesus in prayer ;
They are all his children here, and I pray
for them all as my own :"
But he turn'd to me, " Ay, good woman,
can prayer set a broken bone ?"
Then he mutter'd half to himself, but I
know that I heard him say
" All very well — but the good Lord
Jesus has had his day,"

III.

Had ? has it come ? It has only dawn'd.
It will come by and by.
O how could I serve in the wards if the
hope of the world were a lie ?
How could I bear with the sights and
the loathsome smells of disease.
But that He said " Ye do it to me, when
ye do it to these " ?

IV.

So he went. And we past to this ward
where the younger children are
laid :
Here is the cot of our orphan, our dar-
ling, our meek little maid ;
Empty you see just now ! We have lost
her who loved her so much —
Patient of pain tho' as quick as a sensitive
plant to the touch ;
Mers was the prettiest prattle, it often
moved me to tears,
Mers was the gratefullest heart I have
found in a child of her years —

Nay you remember our Emmie ; you used
to send her the flowers ;
How she would smile at 'em, play with
'em, talk to 'em hours after hours !
They that can wander at will where the
works of the Lord are reveal'd
Little guess what joy can be got from a
cowslip out of the field ;
Flowers to these " spirits in prison " are
all they can know of the spring,
They freshen and sweeten the wards like
the waft of an Angel's wing ;
And she lay with a flower in one hand and
her thin hands crost on her breast —
Wan, but as pretty as heart can desire,
and we thought her at rest,
Quietly sleeping — so quiet, our doctor
said " Poor little dear,
Nurse, I must do it to-morrow ; she'll
never live thro' it, I fear."

V.

I walk'd with our kindly old doctor as
far as the head of the stair,
Then I return'd to the ward ; the child
did n't see I was there.

VI.

Never since I was nurse, had I been so
grieved and so vext !
Emmie had heard him. Softly she call'd
from her cot to the next,
" He says I shall never live thro' it, O
Annie, what shall I do ?"
Annie consider'd. " If I," said the wise
little Annie, " was you,
I should cry to the dear Lord Jesus to
help me, for, Emmie, you see,
It's all in the picture there : ' Little
children should come to me.' " —
(Meaning the print that you gave us, I
find that it always can please
Our children, the dear Lord Jesus with
children about his knees.)
" Yes, and I will," said Emmie, " but
then if I call to the Lord,
How should he know that it's me ? such
a lot of beds in the ward !"
That was a puzzle for Annie. Again she
consider'd and said : —
" Emmie, you put out your arms, and
you leave 'em outside on the bed —
The Lord has so much to see to ! but,
Emmie, you tell it him plain,
It's the little girl with her arms lying
out on the counterpane."

VII.

I had sat three nights by the child — I
 could not watch her for four —
 My brain had begun to reel — I felt I
 could do it no more.
 That was my sleeping-night, but I thought
 that it never would pass.
 There was a thunder-clap once, and a
 clatter of hail on the glass,
 And there was a phantom cry that I
 heard as I tost about,
 The motherless bleat of a lamb in the
 storm and the darkness without ;
 My sleep was broken besides with dreams
 of the dreadful knife
 And fears for our delicate Emmie who
 scarce would escape with her life ;
 Then in the gray of the morning it seem'd
 she stood by me and smiled,
 And the doctor came at his hour, and we
 went to see the child.

VIII.

He had brought his ghastly tools : we
 believed her asleep again —
 Her dear, long, lean, little arms lying out
 on the counterpane ;
 Say that His day is done ! Ah why
 should we care what they say ?
 The Lord of the children had heard her,
 and Emmie had past away.

SIR JOHN OLDCASTLE, LORD
COBHAM.

(IN WALES.)

MY friend should meet me somewhere
 hereabout
 To take me to that hiding in the hills.

I have broke their cage, no gilded one,
 I trow —
 I read no more the prisoner's mute wail
 Scribbled or carved upon the pitiless
 stone ;
 I find hard rocks, hard life, hard cheer,
 or none,
 For I am emptier than a friar's brains ;
 But God is with me in this wilderness,
 These wet black passes and foam-churn-
 ing chasms, —
 And God's free air, and hope of better
 things.
 I would I knew their speech ; not now
 to glean

Not now — I hope to do it — some scat-
 ter'd ears,
 Some ears for Christ in this wild field of
 Wales —
 But, bread, merely for bread. This
 tongue that wagg'd
 They said with such heretical arrogance
 Against the proud archbishop Arundel —
 So much God's cause was fluent in it —
 is here
 But as a Latin Bible to the crowd ;
 " Bara ! " — what use ? The Shepherd
 when I speak,
 Veiling a sullen eyelid with his hard
 " Dim Saesneg " passes, wroth at things
 of old —
 No fault of mine. Had he God's word
 in Welsh
 He might be kindlier : happily come the
 day !
 Not least art thou, thou little Bethle-
 hem
 In Judah, for in thee the Lord was born ;
 Nor thou in Britain, little Lutterworth,
 Least, for in thee the word was born
 again.

Heaven-sweet Evangel, ever living
 word,
 Who whilom spakest to the South in
 Greek
 About the soft Mediterranean shores,
 And then in Latin to the Latin crowd,
 As good need was — thou hast come to
 talk our isle.
 Hereafter thou, fulfilling Pentecost,
 Must learn to use the tongues of all the
 world.
 Yet art thou thine own witness that thou
 bringest
 Not peace, a sword, a fire.
 What did he say,
 My frightened Wiclif-preacher whom I crost
 In flying hither ? that one night a crowd
 Throng'd the waste field about the city
 gates :
 The king was on them suddenly with a
 host.
 Why there ? they came to hear their
 preacher. Then
 Some cried on Cobham, on the good Lord
 Cobham ;
 Ay, for they love me ! but the king —
 nor voice
 Nor finger raised against him — took and
 hang'd,
 Took, hang'd and burnt — how many —
 thirty-nine —

Call'd it rebellion — hang'd, poor friends,
as rebels
And burn'd alive as heretics! for your
Priest
Labels — to take the king along with
him —
All heresy, treason: but to call men
traitors
May make men traitors.

Rose of Lancaster,
Red in thy birth, redder with household
war,
Now reddest with the blood of holy men,
Redder to be, red rose of Lancaster —
If somewhere in the North, as Rumor
sang
Fluttering the hawks of this crown-just-
ing line —
By firth and loch thy silver sister grow,¹
That were my rose, there my allegiance
due.

Self-starved, they say — nay, murder'd:
doubtless dead.
So to this king I cleaved: my friend was
he.

Once my fast friend: I would have given
my life
To help his own from scathe, a thousand
lives

To save his soul. He might have come
to learn

Our Wiclif's learning: but the worldly
Priests

Who fear the king's hard common-sense
should find

What rotten piles uphold their mason-
work,

Urge him to foreign war. O had he will'd
I might have stricken a lusty stroke for
him.

But he would not; far liever led my friend
Back to the pure and universal church,
But he would not: whether that heirless
flaw

In his throne's title make him feel so
frail,

He leans on Antichrist; or that his mind,
So quick, so capable in soldiership,

In matters of the faith, alas the while!
More worth than all the kingdoms of this
world,

Runs in the rut, a coward to the Priest.

Burnt — good Sir Roger Acton, my
dear friend!

Burnt too, my faithful preacher, Bever-
ley!

Lord give thou power to thy two wit-
nesses!

Lest the false faith make merry over
them!

Two — nay but thirty-nine have risen and
staad,

Dark with the smoke of human sacrifice,
Before thy light, and cry continually —
Cry — against whom?

Him, who should bear the sword
Of Justice — what! the kingly, kindly
boy;

Who took the world so easily heretofore,
My boon companion, tavern-fellow — him
Who gibed and japed — in many a merry
tale

That shook our sides — at Pardoners,
Summoners,

Friars, absolution-sellers, monkeries
And nunneries, when the wild hour and
the wine

Had set the wits aflame.

Harry of Monmouth,
Or Amurath of the East!

Better to sink
Thy fleurs-de-lys in slime again, and fling
Thy royalty back into the riotous fits

Of wine and harlotry — thy shame, and
mine,

Thy comrade — than to persecute the
Lord,

And play the Saul that never will be Paul.

Burnt, burnt! and while this mitred
Arundel

Dooms our unlicensed preacher to the
flame,

The mitre-sanction'd harlot draws his
clerks

Into the suburb — their hard celibacy,
Sworn to be veriest ice of pureness, molten

Into adulterous living, or such crimes
As holy Paul — a shame to speak of
them —

Among the heathen —

Sanctuary granted
To bandit, thief, assassin — yea to him
Who hacks his mother's throat — denied

to him,

Who finds the Saviour in his mother
tongue.

The Gospel, the Priest's pearl, flung
down to swine —

The swine, lay-men, lay-women, who
will come,

God willing, to outlearn the filthy friar.
Ah rather, Lord, than that thy Gospel,
meant

¹ Richard II.

To course and range thro' all the world,
 should be
 Tether'd to these dead pillars of the
 Church —

Rather than so, if thou wilt have it so,
 Burst vein, snap sinew, and crack heart,
 and life

Pass in the fire of Babylon ! but how long,
 O Lord, how long !

My friend should meet me here.
 Here is the copse, the fountain and — a
 Cross !

To thee, dead wood, I bow not head nor
 knees.

Rather to thee, green boscaige, work of
 God,

Black holly, and white-flower'd wayfaring
 tree !

Rather to thee, thou living water, drawn
 By this good Wiclif mountain down from
 heaven,

And speaking clearly in thy native
 tongue —

No Latin — He that thirsteth, come and
 drink !

Eh ! how I anger'd Arundel asking
 me

To worship Holy Cross ! I spread mine
 arms,

God's work, I said, a cross of flesh and
 blood

And holier. That was heresy. (My good
 friend

By this time should be with me.) "Im-
 ages ?"

"Bury them as God's truer images
 Are daily buried." "Heresy. — Pen-
 ance ?" "Fast,

Hairshirt and scourge — nay, let a man
 repent,

Do penance in his heart, God hears him."
 "Heresy —

Not shriven, not saved ?" "What profits
 an ill Priest

Between me and my God ? I would not
 spurn

Good counsel of good friends, but shrive
 myself,

No, not to an Apostle." "Heresy."
 (My friend is long in coming.) "Pil-
 grimages ?"

Drink, bagpipes, revelling, devil's-
 dances, vice.

The poor man's money gone to fat the
 friar.

Who reads of begging saints in scrip-
 ture ? — "Heresy" —

(Hath he been here — not found me —
 gone again ?

Have I mislearnt our place of meeting ?)
 "Bread —

Bread left after the blessing ?" how they
 stared,

That was their main test-question —
 glared at me !

"He veild Himself in flesh, and now He
 veils

His flesh in bread, body and bread to-
 gether."

Then rose the howl of all the cassock'd
 wolves,

"No bread, no bread. God's body !"
 Archbishop, Bishop,

Priors, Canons, Friars, bell-ringers,
 Parish-clerks —

"No bread, no bread !" — "Authority of
 the Church,

Power of the keys !" — Then I, God help
 me, I

So mock'd, so spurn'd, so baited two whole
 days —

I lost myself and fell from evenness,
 And rail'd at all the Popes, that ever
 since

Sylvester shed the venom of world-wealth
 into the church, had only prov'n them-

seives

Poisoners, murderers. Well — God par-
 don all —

Me, them, and all the world — yea, that
 proud Priest,

That mock-meeke mouth of utter Anti-
 christ,

That traitor to King Richard and the
 truth,

Who rose and doom'd me to the fire.
 Amen !

Nay, I can burn, so that the Lord of life
 Be by me in my death.

Those three ! the fourth
 Was like the son of God. Not burnt

were they.

On *them* the smell of burning had no
 past.

That was a miracle to convert the king
 These Pharisees, this Caiaphas-Arundel

What miracle could turn ? *He* here again,
He thwarting their traditions of Him-
 self,

He would be found a heretic to Himself,
 And doom'd to burn alive.

So, caught, I burn
 Burn ? heathen men have borne as much
 as this,

For freedom, or the sake of those they
loved.
Or some less cause, some cause far less
than mine;
For every other cause is less than mine.
The moth will singe her wings, and
sing'd return,
Her love of light quenching her fear of
pain —
How now, my soul, we do not heed the
fire?
Faint-hearted? tut! — faint-stomach'd!
faint as I am,
God willing, I will burn for Him.

Who comes?

A thousand marks are set upon my head.
Friend? — foe perhaps — a tussle for it
then!
Nay, but my friend. Thou art so well
disguis'd,
I knew thee not. Hast thou brought
bread with thee?
I have not broken bread for fifty hours
None? I am damn'd already by the
Priest
For holding there was bread where bread
was none —
No bread. My friends await me yonder?
Yes.
Lead on then. *Up* the mountain? Is it
far?
Not far. Climb first and reach me down
thy hand.
I am not like to die for lack of bread,
For I must live to testify by fire.¹

COLUMBUS.

CHAINS, my good lord; in your raised
brows I read
Some wonder at our chamber ornaments.
We brought this iron from our isles of
gold.

Does the king know you deign to visit
him
Whom once he rose from off his throne
to greet
Before his people, like his brother king?
I saw your face that morning in the crowd.

At Barcelona — tho' you were not then
So bearded. Yes. The city deck'd her-
self

To meet me, roar'd n.y name; the king,
the queen
Bade me be seated, speak, and tell them
all
The story of my voyage, and while I
spoke
The crowd's roar fell as at the "Peace,
be still!"
And when I ceased to speak, the king
the queen
Sank from their thrones, and melted into
tears,
And knelt, and lifted hand and heart
and voice
In praise to God who led me thro' the
waste.
And then the great "Laudamus" rose to
heaven.

Chains for the Admiral of the Ocean!
chains
For him who gave a new heaven, a new
earth,
As holy John had prophesied of me,
Gave glory and more empire to the kings
Of Spain than all their battles! chains
for him
Who push'd his prows into the setting
sun,
And made West East, and sail'd the
Dragon's mouth,
And came upon the Mountain of the
World,
And saw the rivers roll from Paradise!

Chains! we are Admirals of the Ocean,
we,
We and our sons forever. Ferdinand
Hath sign'd it and our Holy Catholic
queen —
Of the Ocean — of the Indies — Admiral —
we —
Our title, which we never mean to yield,
Our guerdon not alone for what we did,
But our amends for all we might have
done —
The vast occasion of our stronger life —
Eighteen long years of waste, seven in
your Spain,
Lost, showing courts and kings a truth the
babe
Will suck in with his milk hereafter —
earth
A sphere.

Were you at Salamanca? No.
We fronted there the learning of all
Spain,

¹ He was burnt on Christmas Day, 1417.

All their cosmogonies, their astronomies :
Guess-work *they* guessed it, but the golden
guess

Is morning-star to the full round of truth.
No guess-work! I was certain of my
goal;

Some thought it heresy; that would not
hold.

King David call'd the heavens a hide, a
tent

Spread over earth, and so this earth was
flat;

Some cited old Lactantius: could it be
That trees grew downward, rain fell up-
ward, men

Walk'd like the fly on ceilings? and be-
sides

The great Augustine wrote that none
could breathe

Within the zone of heat; so might there
be

Two Adams, two mankinds, and that was
clean

Against God's word: thus was I beaten
back,

And chiefly to my sorrow by the Church,
And thought to turn my face from Spain,
appeal

Once more to France or England; but
our Queen

Recall'd me, for at last their Highnesses
Were half-assured this earth might be a
sphere.

All glory to the all-blessed Trinity,
All glory to the mother of our Lord,
And Holy Church, from whom I never
swerved

Not even by one hair's-breadth of heresy,
I have accomplish'd what I came to do.

Not yet — not all — last night a dream
— I sail'd

On my first voyage, harass'd by the
frights

Of my first crew, their curses and their
groans.

The great flame-banner borne by Tene-
riffe,

The compass, like an old friend false at
last

In our most need, appall'd them, and the
wind

Still westward, and the weedy seas — at
length

The landbird, and the branch with ber-
ries on it,

The carven staff — and last the light, the
light

On Guanahani! but I changed the name;
San Salvador I call'd it; and the light
Grew as I gazed, and brought out a
broad sky

Of dawning over — not those alien palms,
The marvel of that fair new nature —
not

That Indian isle, but our most ancient
East,

Moriah with Jerusalem; and I saw
The glory of the Lord flash up, and
beat

Thro' all the homely town from jasper,
sapphire,

Chalcedony, emerald, sardonyx, sardius,
Chrysolite, beryl, topaz, chrysoprase,
Jacinth, and amethyst — and those twelve
gates,

Pearl — and I woke, and thought — death
— I shall die —

I am written in the Lamb's own Book of
Life

To walk within the glory of the Lord
Sunless and moonless, utter light — but
no!

The Lord had sent this bright, strange
dream to me

To mind me of the secret vow I made
When Spain was waging war against the
Moor —

I strove myself with Spain against the
Moor.

There came two voices from the Sepul-
chre,

Two friars crying that if Spain should
oust

The Moslem from her limit, he, the fierce
Soldan of Egypt, would break down and
raze

The blessed tomb of Christ; whereon I
vow'd

That, if our Princes harken'd to my
prayer,

Whatever wealth I brought from that new
world

Should, in this old be consecrate to lead
A new crusade against the Saracen,
And free the Holy Sepulchre from thrall.

Gold? I had brought your Princes gold
enough

If left alone! Being but a Genovese,
I am handled worse than had I been a
Moor,

And breach'd the belting wall of Cam-
balu,

And given the Great Khan's palaces to
the Moor,

Or clutch'd the sacred crown of Prester
 John,
 And east it to the Moor: but *had* I
 brought
 From Solomon's now-recover'd Ophir all
 The gold that Solomon's navies carried
 home,
 Would that have gilded *me*? Blue blood
 of Spain,
 Tho' quartering your own royal arms of
 Spain,
 I have not: blue blood and black blood
 of Spain,
 The noble and the convict of Castile,
 How'd me from Hispaniola; for you
 know
 The flies at home, that ever swarm about
 And cloud the highest heads, and mur-
 mur down
 Truth in the distance — these out-buzz'd
 me so
 That even our prudent king, our right-
 eous queen —
 I pray'd them being so calumniated
 They would commission one of weight
 and worth
 To judge between my slander'd self and
 me —
 Fonseca my main enemy at their court,
 They send me out *his* tool, Bovadilla, one
 As ignorant and impolitic as a beast —
 Blockish irreverence, brainless greed —
 who sack'd
 My dwelling, seized upon my papers,
 loosed
 My captives, feed the rebels of the crown,
 Sold the crown-farms for all but nothing,
 gave
 All but free leave for all to work the
 mines,
 Drove me and my good brothers home in
 chains,
 And gathering ruthless gold — a single
 piece
 Weigh'd nigh four thousand Castillanos
 — so
 They tell me — weigh'd him down into
 the abysm —
 The hurricane of the latitude on him fell,
 The seas of our discovering over-roll
 Him and his gold; the frailer earavel,
 With what was mine, came happily to
 the shore.
 There was a glimmering of God's hand.

And God
 Hath more than glimmer'd on me. O my
 lord,

I swear to you I heard his voice between
 The thunders in the black Veragua
 nights,
 "O soul of little faith, slow to believe!
 Have I not been about thee from thy
 birth?
 Given thee the keys of the great Ocean
 sea?
 Set thee in light till time shall be no
 more?
 Is it I who have deceived thee or the
 world?
 Endure! thou hast done so well for men,
 that men
 Cry out against thee: was it otherwise
 With mine own Son?"

And more than once in days
 Of doubt and cloud and storm, when
 drowning hope
 Sank all but out of sight, I heard his
 voice,
 "Be not cast down. I lead thee by the
 hand,
 Fear not." And I shall hear his voice
 again —
 I know that he has lead me all my life,
 I am not yet too old to work his will —
 His voice again.

Still for all that, my lord,
 I lying here bedridden and alone,
 Cast off, put by, scouted by court and
 king —
 The first discoverer starves — his follow-
 ers, all
 Flower into fortune — our world's way —
 and I,
 Without a roof that I can call mine own,
 With scarce a coin to buy a meal withal,
 And seeing what a door for scoundrel
 scum
 I open'd to the West, thro' which the
 lust,
 Villany, violence, avarice, of your Spain
 Pour'd in on all those happy naked isles —
 Their kindly native princes slain or
 slaved,
 Their wives and children Spanish concu-
 bines,
 Their innocent hospitalities quench'd in
 blood,
 Some dead of hunger, some beneath the
 scourge,
 Some over-labor'd, some by their own
 hands, —
 Yea, the dear mothers, crazing Nature,
 kill

Their babies at the breast, for hate of Spain —

Ah, God, the harmless people whom we found

In Hispaniola's island-Paradise!

Who took us for the very Gods from Heaven,

And we have sent them very fiends from Hell;

And I myself, myself not blameless, I
Could sometimes wish I had never led
the way.

Only the ghost of our great Catholic Queen

Smiles on me, saying, "Be thou comforted!

This creedless people will be brought to Christ

And own the holy governance of Rome."

But who could dream that we, who bore the Cross

Thither, were excommunicated there,
For curbing crimes that scandalized the Cross,

By him, the Catalonian Minorite,
Rome's Vicar in our Indies? who believe
These hard memorials of our truth to Spain

Clung closer to us for a longer term
Than any friend of ours at Court? and yet

Pardon — too harsh, unjust. I am rack'd
with pains.

You see that I have hung them by my bed,
And I will have them buried in my grave.

Sir, in that flight of ages which are God's

Own voice to justify the dead — perchance

Spain once the most chivalric race on earth,

Spain then the mightiest, wealthiest realm on earth,

So made by me, may seek to unbury me,
To lay me in some shrine of this old Spain,

Or in that vaster Spain I leave to Spain.
Then some one standing by my grave will say,

"Behold the bones of Christopher Colón" —

"Ay, but the chains, what do *they* mean —
the chains?" —

I sorrow for that kindly child of Spain.
Who then will have to answer, "These
same chains

Bound these same bones back thro' the
Atlantic sea,

Which he unchain'd for all the world to
come."

O Queen of Heaven who seest the souls
in Hell

And purgatory, I suffer all as much
As they do — for the moment. Stay, my
son

Is here anon: my son will speak for me
Ablier than I can in these spasms that
grind

Bone against bone. You will not. One
last word.

You move about the Court, I pray you
tell

King Ferdinand who plays with me, that
one,

Whose life has been no play with him
and his

Hidalgos — shipwrecks, famines, fevers,
fights,

Mutinies, treacheries — wink'd at, and
condoned —

That I am loyal to him till the death,
And ready — tho' our Holy Catholic
Queen,

Who fain had pledged her jewels on my
first voyage,

Whose hope was mine to spread the Cath-
olic faith,

Who wept with me when I return'd in
chains,

Who sits beside the blessed Virgin now,
To whom I send my prayer by night and
day —

She is gone — but you will tell the King,
that I,

Rack'd as I am with gout, and wrench'd
with pains

Gain'd in the service of His Highness, yet
Am ready to sail forth on one last voyage,

And readier, if the King would hear, to
lead

One last crusade against the Saracene,
And save the Holy Sepulchre from thrall.

Going? I am old and slighted: you
have dared

Somewhat perhaps in coming? my poor
thanks!

I am but an alien and a Genovese.

THE VOYAGE OF MAELDUNE.

(Founded on an Irish Legend. A. D. 700.)

I.

I WAS the chief of the race — he had
stricken my father dead —
But I gather'd my fellows together, I
swore I would strike off his head.
Each of them look'd like a king, and was
noble in birth as in worth,
And each of them boasted he sprang from
the oldest race upon earth.
Each was as brave in the fight as the
bravest hero of song,
And each of them liefer had died than
have done one another a wrong.
He lived on an isle in the ocean — we
sail'd on a Friday morn —
He that had slain my father the day be-
fore I was born.

II.

And we came to the isle in the ocean, and
there on the shore was he.
But a sudden blast blew us out and away
thro' a boundless sea.

III.

And we came to the Silent Isle that we
never had touch'd at before,
Where a silent ocean always broke on a
silent shore,
And the brooks glitter'd on in the light
without sound, and the long wa-
terfalls
Pour'd in a thunderless plunge to the
base of the mountain walls,
And the poplar and cypress unshaken by
storm flourish'd up beyond sight,
And the pine shot aloft from the crag to
an unbelievable height,
And high in the heaven above there flick-
er'd a songless lark,
And the cock could n't crow, and the bull
could n't low, and the dog could n't
bark.
And round it we went, and thro' it, but
never a murmur, a breath —
It was all of it fair as life, it was all of it
quiet as death,
And we hated the beautiful Isle, for
whenever we strove to speak
Our voices were thinner and fainter than
any flitter-mouse shriek;
And the men that were mighty of tongue
and could raise such a battle-cry

That a hundred who heard it would rush
on a thousand lances and die —
O they to be dumb'd by the charm! — so
fluster'd with anger were they
They almost fell on each other; but after
we sail'd away.

IV.

And we came to the Isle of Shouting, we
landed, a score of wild birds
Cried from the topmost summit with hu-
man voices and words;
Once in an hour they cried, and wherever
their voices peal'd
The steer fell down at the plow and the
harvest died from the field,
And the men dropt dead in the valleys
and half of the cattle went lame,
And the roof sank in on the hearth, and
the dwelling broke into flame;
And the shouting of these wild birds ran
into the hearts of my crew,
Till they shouted along with the shouting
and seized one another and slew;
But I drew them the one from the other;
I saw that we could not stay,
And we left the dead to the birds and we
sail'd with our wounded away.

V.

And we came to the Isle of Flowers:
their breath met us out on the seas,
For the Spring and the middle Summer
sat each on the lap of the breeze;
And the red passion-flower to the cliffs,
and the dark blue elematis, elung,
And starr'd with a myriad blossom the
long convolvulus hung;
And the topmost spire of the mountain
was lilies in lieu of snow,
And the lilies like glaciers winded down,
running out below
Thro' the fire of the tulip and poppy, the
blaze of gorse, and the blush
Of millions of roses that sprang without
leaf or a thorn from the bush;
And the whole isle-side flashing down
from the peak without ever a tree
Swept like a torrent of gems from the
sky to the blue of the sea;
And we roll'd upon capes of crocus and
vaunted our kith and our kin,
And we wallow'd in beds of lilies, and
chanted the triumph of Finn,
Till each like a golden image was pol-
len'd from head to feet

And each was as dry as a cricket, with
thirst in the middle-day heat.
Blossom and blossom, and promise of
blossom, but never a fruit!
And we hated the Flowering Isle, as we
hated the isle that was mute,
And we tore up the flowers by the million
and flung them in bight and bay,
And we left but a naked rock, and in an-
ger we sail'd away.

VI.

And we came to the Isle of Fruits : all
round from the cliffs and the capes,
Purple or amber, dangled a hundred
fathom of grapes,
And the warm melon lay like a little sun
on the tawny sand,
And the fig ran up from the beach and
rioted over the land,
And the mountain arose like a jewell'd
throne thro' the fragrant air,
Glowing with all-color'd plums and with
golden masses of pear,
And the crimson and scarlet of berries
that flamed upon bine and vine,
But in every berry and fruit was the poi-
sonous pleasure of wine ;
And the peak of the mountain was apples,
the hugest that ever were seen,
And they prest, as they grew, on each
other, with hardly a leaflet be-
tween,
And all of them redder than rosiest
health or than utterest shame,
And setting, when Even descended, the
very sunset aflame ;
And we stay'd three days, and we gorged
and we madden'd, till every one
drew
His sword on his fellow to slay him, and
ever they struck and they slew ;
And myself, I had eaten but sparingly, and
fought till I sunder'd the fray,
Then I bade them remember my father's
death, and we sail'd away.

VII.

And we came to the Isle of Fire : we
were lured by the light from afar,
For the peak sent up one league of fire
to the Northern Star ;
Lured by the glare and the blare, but
scarcely could stand upright,
For the whole isle shudder'd and shook
like a man in a mortal affright ;

We were giddy besides with the fruits we
we had gorged, and so crazed that
at last

There were some leap'd into the fire ; and
away we sail'd, and we past
Over that undersea isle, where the water
is clearer than air :
Down we look'd : what a Garden ! O
bliss, what a Paradise there !
Towers of a happier time, low down in a
rainbow deep
Silent palaces, quiet fields of eternal sleep !
And three of the gentlest and best of my
people, whate'er I could say,
Plunged head down in the sea, and the
Paradise trembled away.

VIII.

And we came to the Bounteous Isle,
where the heavens lean low on the
land,
And ever at dawn from the cloud glit-
ter'd o'er us a sunbright hand,
Then it open'd and dropt at the side of
each man, as he rose from his
rest,
Bread enough for his need till the labor-
less day dipt under the West ;
And we wander'd about it and thro' it.
O never was time so good !
And we sang of the triumphs of Finn,
and the boast of our ancient blood,
And we gazed at the wandering wave as
we sat by the gurgle of springs,
And we chanted the songs of the Bards
and the glories of fairy kings ;
But at length we began to be weary, to
sigh, and to stretch and yawn,
Till we hated the Bounteous Isle and the
sunbright hand of the dawn,
For there was not an enemy near, but
the whole green Isle was our own,
And we took to playing at ball, and we
took to throwing the stone,
And we took to playing at battle, but
that was a perilous play,
For the passion of battle was in us, we
slew and we sail'd away.

IX.

And we came to the Isle of Witches and
heard their musical cry —
" Come to us, O come, come " in the
stormy red of a sky
Dashing the fires and the shadows of
dawn on the beautiful shapes,

For a wild witch naked as heaven stood
 on each of the loftiest capes,
 And a hundred ranged on the rock like
 white sea-birds in a row,
 And a hundred gamboll'd and pranced
 on the wrecks in the sand be-
 low,
 And a hundred splash'd from the ledges,
 and bosom'd the burst of the
 spray.
 But I knew we should fall on each other,
 and hastily sail'd away.

x.

And we came in an evil time to the Isle
 of the Double Towers :
 One was of smooth-cut stone, one carved
 all over with flowers :
 But an earthquake always moved in the
 hollows under the dells,
 And they shock'd on each other and
 butted each other with clashing
 of bells,
 And the daws flew out of the Towers and
 jangled and wrangled in vain,
 And the clash and boom of the bells ran
 into the heart and the brain,
 Till the passion of battle was on us,
 and all took sides with the Tow-
 ers,
 There were some for the clean-cut stone,
 there were more for the carven
 flowers,
 And the wrathful thunder of God peal'd
 over us all the day,
 For the one half slew the other, and after
 we sail'd away.

xi.

And we came to the Isle of a Saint who
 had sail'd with St. Brendan of yore
 He had lived ever since on the Isle and
 his winters were fifteen-score,
 And his voice was low as from other
 worlds, and his eyes were sweet,
 And his white hair sank to his heels and
 his white beard fell to his feet,
 And he spake to me, " O Maclunc, le
 be this purpose of thine !
 Remember the words of the Lord when
 he told us ' Vengeance is mine !'
 His fathers have slain thy fathers in war
 or in single strife,
 Thy fathers have slain his fathers, each
 taken a life for a life,
 Thy father had slain his father, how long
 shall the murder last ?
 Go back to the Isle of Finn and suffer
 the Past to be Past."
 And we kiss'd the fringe of his beard and
 we pray'd as we heard him pray,
 And the Holy man he assoil'd us, and
 sadly we sail'd away.

xii.

And we came to the Isle we were blown
 from, and there on the shore was
 he,
 The man that had slain my father. I
 saw him and let him be.
 O weary was I of the travel, the trouble,
 the strife and the sin,
 When I landed again, with a tithe of my
 men, on the Isle of Finn.

SONNETS.

PREFATORY SONNET.

TO THE "NINETEENTH CENTURY."

THOSE that of late had fled to far and
 fast
 To touch all shores, now leaving to the
 skill
 Of others their old craft seaworthy still,
 Have chartered this ; where, mindful of
 the past,

Our true co-mates gather round the
 mast ;
 Of diverse tongue, but with a common
 will,
 Here, in this roaring moon of daffodi
 And crocus, to put forth and brave the
 blast ;
 For some, descending from the sacred
 peak
 Of hoar high-templed Faith, have leagu'd
 again

Their lot with ours to rove the world
about ;
And some are wilder comrades, sworn to
seek
If any golden harbor be for men
In seas of Death and sunless gulfs of
Doubt.

TO THE REV. W. H. BROOK-
FIELD.

BROOKS, for they call'd you so that knew
you best,
Old Brooks, who loved so well to mouth
my rhymes,
How oft we two have heard St. Mary's
chimes !
How oft the Cantab supper, host and
guest,
Would echo helpless laughter to your
jest !
How oft with him we paced that walk of
limes,
Him, the lost light of those dawn-golden
times,
Who loved you well ! Now both are
gone to rest.
Yon man of humorous melancholy mark,
Dead of some inward agony — it is so ?
Our kindlier, trustier Jaques, past away !
I cannot land this life, it looks so dark :
Σκιάς ὄναρ — dream of a shadow, go —
God bless you. I shall join you in a day.

MONTENEGRO.

THEY rose to where their sovran eagle
sails,
They kept their faith, their freedom, on
the height,
Chaste, frugal, savage, arm'd by day and
night
Against the Turk ; whose inroad nowhere
scales

Their headlong passes, but his footstep
fails,
And red with blood the Crescent reels
from fight
Before their dauntless hundreds, in prone
fight
By thousands down the crags and thro'
the vales.
O smallest among peoples ! rough rock
throne
Of Freedom ! warriors beating back the
swarm
Of Turkish Islam for five hundred years,
Great Tsernogora ! never since thine own
Black ridges drew the cloud and brake
the storm
Has breathed a race of mightier moun-
taineers.

TO VICTOR HUGO.

VICTOR in Drama, Victor in Romance,
Cloud-weaver of phantasma! hopes and
fears,
French of the French, and Lord of hu-
man tears ;
Child-lover ; Bard whose fame-lit laurels
glance
Darkening the wreaths of all that would
advance,
Beyond our strait, their claim to be thy
peers ;
Weird Titan by thy winter weight of
years
As yet unbroken, Stormy voice of France !
Who dost not love our England — so they
say ;
I know not — England, France, all man
to be
Will make one people ere man's race be
run :
And I, desiring that diviner day,
Yield thee full thanks for thy full cour-
tesy
To younger England in the boy my son.



VICTOR HUGO. See page 628.

TRANSLATIONS, ETC.

BATTLE OF BRUNANBURH.

Constantinus, King of the Scots, after having sworn allegiance to Athelstan, allied himself with the Danes of Ireland under Anlaf, and invading England, was defeated by Athelstan and his brother Edmund with great slaughter at Brunanbuh in the year 937.

I.

ATHELSTAN¹ King,
 Lord among Earls,
 Bracelet-bestower and
 Baron of Barons,
 He with his brother,
 Edmund Atheling,
 Gaining a lifelong
 Glory in battle,
 Slew with the sword-edge
 There by Brunanburh,
 Brake the shield-wall,
 Hew'd the linden-wood,²
 Hack'd the battle-shield,

Sons of Edward with hammer'd brands.

II.

Theirs was a greatness
 Got from their Grandsires —
 Theirs that so often in
 Strife with their enemies

Struck for their hoards and their hearths
 and their homes.

III.

Bow'd the spoiler,
 Bent the Scotsman,
 Fell the ship-crews
 Doom'd to the death.
 All the field with blood of the fighters
 Flow'd, from when first the great
 Sun-star of morning-tide,
 Lamp of the Lord God
 Lord everlasting,
 Glode over earth till the glorious creature
 Sunk to his setting.

¹ I have more or less availed myself of my son's prose translation of this poem in the *Contemporary Review* (November, 1873).

² Shields of linden-wood.

IV.

There lay many a man
 Marr'd by the javelin,
 Men of the Northland
 Shot over shield.
 There was the Scotsman
 Weary of war.

V.

We the West Saxons,
 Long as the daylight
 Lasted, in companies
 Troubled the track of the host that
 we hated,
 Grimly with swords that were sharp from
 the grindstone,
 Fiercely we hack'd at the flyers before us.

VI.

Mighty the Mercian,
 Hard was his hand-play,
 Sparing not any of
 Those that with Anlaf,
 Warriors over the
 Weltering waters
 Borne in the bark's-bosom,
 Drew to this island,
 Doom'd to the death.

VII.

Five young kings put asleep by the sword-
 stroke,
 Seven strong Earls of the army of Anlaf
 Fell on the war-field, numberless numbers,
 Shipmen and Scotsmen.

VIII.

Then the Norse leader,
 Dire was his need of it,
 Few were his following,
 Fled to his war-ship:
 Fleeted his vessel to sea with the king in
 it,
 Saving his life on the fallow flood.

IX.

Also the crafty one,
 Constantinus,

Crept to his North again,
Hoar-headed hero!

x.

Slender reason had
He to be proud of
The welcome of war-knives —
He that was rest of his
Folk and his friends that had
Fallen in conflict,
Leaving his son too
Lost in the carnage,
Mangled to morsels,
A youngster in war!

xi.

Slender reason had
He to be glad of
The clash of the war-glaive —
Traitor and trickster
And spurner of treaties —
He nor had Anlaf
With armies so broken
A reason for bragging
That they had the better
In perils of battle
On places of slaughter —
The struggle of standards,
The rush of the javelins,
The crash of the charges,¹
The wielding of weapons —
The play that they play'd with
The children of Edward.

xii.

Then with their nail'd prows
Parted the Norsemen, a
Blood-redden'd relic of
Javelins over
The jarring breaker, the deep-sea
billow,
Shaping their way toward Dyefin²
again,
Shamed in their souls.

xiii.

Also the brethren,
King and Atheling,
Each in his glory,
Went to his own in his own West-Saxon-
land,
Glad of the war.

¹ Lit. "the gathering of men."

² Dublin.

xiv.

Many a carcass they left to be carrion,
Many a livid one, many a sallow-skin —
Left for the white-tail'd eagle to tear it,
and
Left for the horny-nib'd raven to rend
it, and
Gave to the garbaging war-hawk to gorge
it, and
That gray beast, the wolf of the weald.

xv.

Never had huger
Slaughter of heroes
Slain by the sword-edge —
Such as old writers
Have writ of in histories —
Hapt in this isle, since
Up from the East hither
Saxon and Angle from
Over the broad billow
Broke into Britain with
Haughty war-workers who
Harried the Welshmen, when
Earls that were lured by the
Hunger of glory gat
Hold of the land.

ACHILLES OVER THE TRENCH.

Iliad, xviii. 202.

So saying, light-foot Iris pass'd away.
Then rose Achilles dear to Zeus; and
round
The warrior's puissant shoulders Pallas
flung
Her fringed ægis, and around his head
The glorious goddess wreath'd a golden
cloud,
And from it lighted an all-shining flame.
As when a smoke from a city goes to
heaven
Far off from out an island girt by foes,
All day the men contend in grievous war
From their own city, but with set of
sun
Their fires flame thickly and aloft the
glare
Flies streaming, if perchance the neigh-
bors round
May see, and sail to help them in the
war;
So from his head the splendor went to
heaven.



DANTE. See page 631.

From wall to dike he stept, he stood, nor
 join'd
 The Achæans — honoring his wise moth-
 er's word —
 There standing, shouted, and Pallas far
 away
 Call'd; and a boundless panic shook the
 foe.
 For like the clear voice when a trumpet
 shrills,
 Blown by the fierce beleaguers of a
 town,
 So rang the clear voice of Æakidès;
 And when the brazen cry of Æakidès
 Was heard among the Trojans, all their
 hearts
 Were troubled, and the full-maned horses
 whir'd
 The chariots backward, knowing griefs
 at hand;
 And sheer-astounded were the chariot-
 eers
 To see the dread, unvariable fire
 That always o'er the great Peleions'
 head
 Burn'd, for the bright-eyed goddess made
 it burn.
 Thrice from the dike he sent his mighty
 shout,
 Thrice backward reel'd the Trojans and
 allies;
 And there and then twelve of their noblest
 died
 Among their spears and chariots.

TO THE PRINCESS FREDERICA ON HER MARRIAGE.

O YOU that were eyes and light to the
 King till he past away
 From the darkness of life —
 He saw not his daughter — he blest her:
 the blind King sees you to-day,
 He blesses the wife.

SIR JOHN FRANKLIN.

On the cenotaph in Westminster Abbey.

NOR here! the white North has thy bones;
 and thou,
 Heroic sailor-soul,
 Art passing on thine happier voyage now
 Toward no earthly pole.

TO DANTE.

(Written at request of the Florentines.)

KING, that hast reign'd six hundred years,
 and grown
 In power, and ever growest, since thine
 own
 Fair Florence honoring thy nativity,
 Thy Florence now the crown of Italy,
 Hath sought the tribute of a verse from
 me,
 I, wearing but the garland of a day,
 Cast at thy feet one flower that fades
 away.

THE CHARGE OF THE HEAVY BRIGADE AT BALACLAVA.

October 25, 1854.

I.

THE charge of the gallant three hundred,
 the Heavy Brigade!
 Down the hill, down the hill, thousands of
 Russians,
 Thousands of horsemen, drew to the val-
 ley — and stay'd;
 For Scarlett and Scarlett's three hun-
 dred were riding by
 When the points of the Russian lances
 arose in the sky;
 And he call'd "Left wheel into line!"
 and they wheel'd and obey'd.
 Then he look'd at the host that had
 halted he knew not why,
 And he turn'd half round, and he bad
 his trumpeter sound
 To the charge, and he rode on ahead, as
 he waved his blade
 To the gallant three hundred whose
 glory will never die —
 "Follow," and up the hill, up the hill,
 up the hill, follow'd the Heavy
 Brigade.

II.

The trumpet, the gallop, the charge, and
 the might of the fig!
 Thousands of horsemen had gather'd
 there on the height,
 With a wing push'd out to the left, and
 a wing to the right,
 And who shall escape if they close? but
 he dash'd up alone
 Thro the great grey slope of men,

Sway'd his sabre, and held his own
 Like an Englishman there and then ;
 All in a moment follow'd with force,
 Three that were next in their fiery course,
 Wedged themselves in between horse and
 horse,
 Fought for their lives in the narrow gap
 they had made —
 Four amid thousands! and up the hill, up
 the hill
 Gallopt the gallant three hundred, the
 Heavy Brigade.

III.

Fell like a cannonshot,
 Burst like a thunderbolt,
 Crash'd like a hurricane,
 Broke thro' the mass from below,
 Drove thro' the midst of the foe,
 Plunged up and down, to and fro,
 Rode flashing blow upon blow,
 Brave Inniskillens and Greys
 Whirling their sabres in circles of light!
 And some of us, all in amaze,
 Who were held for a while from the fight,
 And were only standing at gaze,
 When the dark-muffled Russian crowd
 Folded its wings from the left and the
 right,
 And roll'd them around like a cloud, —
 O mad for the charge and the battle
 were we,
 When our own good redcoats sank from
 sight,
 Like drops of blood in a dark-grey sea,
 And we turned to each other, whispering,
 all dismay'd,
 Lost are the gallant three hundred of
 Scarlett's Brigade!

IV.

"Lost one and all" were the words
 Mutter'd in our dismay ;
 But they rode like Victors and Lords
 Thro' the forest of lances and swords
 In the heart of the Russian hordes,
 They rode, or they stood at bay —
 Struck with the sword-hand and slew,
 Down with the bridle-hand drew
 The foe from the saddle and threw
 Underfoot there in the fray —
 Ranged like a storm or stood like a rock
 In the wave of a stormy day ;
 Till suddenly shock upon shock
 Stagger'd the mass from without,
 Drove it in wild disarray,
 For our men gallopt up with a cheer and
 a shout,

And the foeman surged, and waver'd,
 and reel'd
 Up the hill, up the hill, up the hill, out
 of the field,
 And over the brow and away.

V.

Glory to each and to all, and the charge
 that they made!
 Glory to all the three hundred, and all
 the Brigade!

NOTE. — The "three hundred" of the "Heavy
 Brigade" who made this famous charge were
 the Scots Greys and the second squadron of
 Inniskillings; the remainder of the "Heavy
 Brigade" subsequently dashing up to their
 support.

The "three" were Scarlett's aide-de-camp,
 Elliot, and the trumpeter and Shegog the or-
 derly, who had been close behind him.

HANDS ALL ROUND!*

FIRST pledge our Queen this solemn
 night,
 Then drink to England, every guest ;
 That man's the best Cosinopolite
 Who loves his native country best!
 May freedom's oak forever live,
 With stronger life from day to day ;
 That man's the best Conservative
 Who lops the mouldered branch away.
 Hands all round!
 God the traitor's hope confound!
 To this great cause of Freedom drink,
 my friends,
 And the great name of England round
 and round.

To all the loyal hearts who long
 To keep our English empire whole!
 To all our noble sons, the strong
 New England of the Southern Pole!
 To England under Indian skies,
 To those dark millions of her realm!
 To Canada whom we love and prize,
 Whatever statesman hold the helm!
 Hands all round!
 God the traitor's hope confound!
 To this great name of England drink, my
 friends,
 And all her glorious empire, round and
 round.

To all our statesmen so they be
 True leaders of the land's desire!

* Written after the Queen's escape from assass-
 ination, 1882.

To both our Houses; may they see
 Beyond the borough and the shire!
 We sailed wherever ship could sail
 We founded many a mighty state,
 Pray God our greatness may not fail
 Through craven fears of being great.
 Hands all round!
 God the traitor's hope confound!
 To this great cause of Freedom drink,
 my friends,
 And the great name of England round
 and round.

TO VIRGIL

WRITTEN AT THE REQUEST OF THE
 MANTUANS FOR THE NINETEENTH
 CENTENARY OF VIRGIL'S DEATH.

I.

ROMAN VIRGIL, thou that singest
 Ilium's lofty temples robed in fire,
 Ilium falling, Rome arising,
 wars, and filial faith, and Dido's pyre;

II.

Landscape lover, lord of language,
 more than he that sang the Works
 and Days,
 All the chosen coin of fancy
 flashing out from many a golden
 phrase;

III.

Thou that singest wheat and woodland,
 tilth and vineyard, hive and horse and
 herd;
 All the charm of all the Muses
 often flowering in a lonely word;

IV.

Poet of the happy Titivrus
 piping underneath his beechen bowers;

Poet of the poet-satyr
 whom the laughing shepherd bound
 with flowers;

V.

Chanter of the Pollio, glorying
 in the blissful years again to be,
 Summers of the snakeless meadow,
 unlaborious earth and oarless sea;

VI.

Thou that seest Universal
 Nature moved by Universal Mind;
 Thou majestic in thy sadness
 at the doubtful doom of human kind;

VII.

Light among the vanished ages;
 star that gildest yet this phantom
 shore;
 Golden branch amid the shadows,
 kings and realms that pass to rise no
 more;

VIII.

Now thy Forum roars no longer,
 fallen every purple Cæsar's dome —
 Tho' thine ocean-roll of rhythm
 sound for ever of Imperial Rome —

IX.

Now the Rome of slaves hath perish'd,
 and the Rome of freemen holds her
 place,
 I, from out the Northern Island,
 sunder'd once from all the human race.

X.

I salute thee, Mantovano,
 I that loved thee since my day be-
 gan,
 Wielder of the stateliest measure
 ever moulded by the lips of man.

EARLY SONNETS.

ALEXANDER.

WARRIOR of God, whose strong right
arm debased

The throne of Persia, when her Satrap
bled

At Issus by the Syrian gates, or fled
Beyond the Memmian naphtha-pits, dis-
graced

Forever — thee (thy pathway sand-erased)
Gliding with equal crowns two serpents
led

Joyful to that palm-planted fountain-fed
Ammonian Oasis in the waste.

There in a silent shade of laurel brown
Apart the Chamian Oracle divine
Shelter'd his unapproachèd mysteries :
High things were spoken there, unhandled
down ;

Only they saw thee from the secret shrine
Returning with hot cheek and kindled
eyes.

IF I were loyed, as I desire to be,
What is there in the great sphere of the
earth,

And range of evil between death and
birth,

That I should fear, — if I were loved by
thee ?

All the inner, all the outer world of
pain

Clear Love would pierce and cleave, if
thou wert mine,

As I have heard that, somewhere in the
main,

Fresh-water springs come up through bit-
ter brine.

'T were joy, not fear, claspt hand-in-hand
with thee,

To wait for death — unite — careless of
all ills,

Apart upon a mountain, tho' the surge
Of some new deluge from a thousand
hills

Flung leagues of roaring foam into the
gorge

Below us, as far on as eye could see

THE BRIDESMAID.

O BRIDESMAID, ere the happy knot was
tied,

Thine eyes so wept that they could hardly
see ;

Thy sister smiled and said, " No tears for
me !

A happy bridesmaid makes a happy bride."
And then, the couple standing side by
side,

Love lighted down between them full of
glee,

And over his left shoulder laugh'd at
thee,

" O happy bridesmaid, make a happy
bride."

And all at once a pleasant truth I learn'd,
For while the tender service made thee
weep,

I loved thee for the tear thou couldst not
hide,

And prest thy hand, and knew the press
return'd

And thought, " My life is sick of single
sleep :

O happy bridesmaid, make a happy bride."

CHILD-SONGS.

I.

THE CITY CHILD.

DAINTY little maiden, whither would you
wander ?

Whither from this pretty home, the home
where mother dwells ?

" Far and far away," said the dainty lit-
tle maiden,

" All among the gardens, auriculas, anem-
ones,

Roses and lilies and Canterbury-bells."

Dainty little maiden, whither would you
wander ?

Whither from this pretty house, this city-
house of ours?
“Far and far away,” said the dainty lit-
tle maiden,
“All among the meadows, the clover and
the clematis,
Daisies and kingcups and honeysuckle-
flowers.”

II.

MINNIE AND WINNIE.

MINNIE and Winnie
Slept in a shell.
Sleep, little ladies!
And they slept well.

Pink was the shell within,
Silver without;
Sounds of the great sea
Wander'd about.

Sleep, little ladies!
Wake not soon!
Echo on echo
Dies to the moon.

Two bright stars
Peep'd into the shell.
“What are they dreaming of?
Who can tell?”

Started a green linnet
Out of the croft;
Wake, little ladies,
The sun is aloft!

MISCELLANEOUS.

ENGLAND AND AMERICA IN 1782.

O THOU, that sendest out the man
To rule by land and sea,
Strong mother of a Lion-line,
Be proud of those strong sons of thine
Who wrench'd their rights from thee!

What wonder, if in noble heat
Those men thine arms withstood,
Retaght the lesson thou hadst taught,
And in thy spirit with thee fought —
Who sprang from English blood!

But Thou rejoice with liberal joy,
Lift up thy rocky face,
And shatter, when the storms are black,
In many a streaming torrent back,
The seas that shock thy base!

Whatever harmonies of law
The growing world assume,
Thy work is thine — The single note
From that deep chord which Hampden
smote
Will vibrate to the doom.

ON TRANSLATIONS OF HOMER.

Hexameters and Pentameters.

THESE lame hexameters the strong-
wing'd music of Homer:

No — but a most burlesque barbarous
experiment.
When was a harsher sound ever heard, ye
Muses, in England?
When did a frog coarser croak upon
our Helicon?
Hexameters no worse than daring Ger-
man gave us,
Barbarous experiment, barbarous hex-
ameters.

“FRATER AVE ATQUE VALE.”

Row us out from Desenzano, to your Sir-
mione row!
So they row'd, and there we landed —
“O venusta Sirmio!”
There to me thro' all the groves of olive
in the summer glow,
There beneath the Roman ruin where the
purple flowers grow,
Came that “Ave atque Vale” of the
Poet's hopeless woe,
Tenderest of Roman poets nineteen hun-
dred years ago,
“Frater Ave atque Vale” — as we wan-
der'd to and fro
Gazing at the Lydian laughter of the
Garda Lake below
Sweet Catullus's all-but-island, olive-sil-
very Sirmio!

DESPAIR.

A DRAMATIC MONOLOGUE.

A man and his wife having lost faith in a God, and hope of a life to come, and being utterly miserable in this, resolve to end themselves by drowning. The woman is drowned, but the man is rescued by a minister of the sect he had abandoned.

I.

Is it you, that preach'd in the chapel
there looking over the sand?
Follow'd us too that night, and dogg'd us,
and drew me to land?

II.

What did I feel that night? You are
curious. How should I tell?
Does it matter so much what I felt? You
rescued me — yet — was it well
That you came unwish'd for, uncall'd,
between me and the deep and my
doom
Three days since, three more dark days
of the Godless gloom
Of a life without sun, without health,
without hope, without any delight
In anything here upon earth? but ah
God, that night, that night
When the rolling eyes of the light-nouse
there on the fatal neck
Of land running out into rock — they
had saved many hundreds from
wreck —
Glared on our way toward death, I remem-
ber I thought, as we past,
Does it matter how many they saved?
we are all of us wreck'd at last —
“Do you fear?” and there came thro'
the roar of the breaker a whisper,
a breath
“Fear? am I not with you? I am
frighted at life, not death.”

III.

And the suns of the limitless Universe
sparkled and shone in the sky,
Flashing with fires as of God, but we
knew that their light was a lie —
Bright as with deathless hope — but, how-
ever they sparkled and shone,
The dark little worlds running round
them were worlds of woe like our
own —
No soul in the heaven above, no soul on
the earth below,
A fiery scroll written over with lamenta-
tion and woe.

IV.

See, we were nursed in the drear night-fold
of your fatalist creed,
And we turn'd to the growing dawn, we
had hoped for a dawn indeed,
When the light of a Sun that was coming
would scatter the ghosts of the
Past,
And the cramping creeds that had mad-
den'd the peoples would vanish at
last,
And we broke away from the Christ, our
human brother and friend,
For He spoke, or it seem'd that He spoke,
of a Hell without help, without
end.

V.

Hoped for a dawn and it came, but the
promise had faded away;
We had past from a cheerless night to
the glare of a drearier day;
He is only a cloud and a smoke who was
once a pillar of fire,
The guess of a worm in the dust and the
shadow of its desire —
Of a worm as it writhes in a world of the
weak trodden down by the strong,
Of a dying worm in a world, all massacre,
murder, and wrong.

VI.

O we poor orphans of nothing — alone on
that lonely shore —
Born of the brainless Nature who knew
not that which she bore!
Trusting no longer that earthly flower
would be heavenly fruit —
Come from the brute, poor souls — no
souls — and to die with the brute —

VII.

Nay, but I am not claiming your pity: I
know you of old —
Small pity for those that have ranged
from the narrow warmth of your
fold,
Where you bawl'd the dark side of your
faith and a God of eternal rage,
Till you fling us back on ourselves, and
the human heart, and the Age.

VIII.

But pity — the Pagan held it a vice —
was in her and in me,
Helpless, taking the place of the pitying
God that should be!

Pity for all that aches in the grasp of an
idiot power,
And pity for our own selves on an earth
that bore not a flower;
Pity for all that suffers on land or in air
or the deep,
And pity for our own selves till we
long'd for eternal sleep.

IX.

"Lightly step over the sands! the wa-
ters — you hear them call!
Life with its anguish, and horrors, and
errors — away with it all!"
And she laid her hand in my own — she
was always loyal and sweet —
Till the points of the foam in the dusk
came playing about our feet.
There was a strong sea current would
sweep us out to the main.
"Ah God" tho' I felt as I spoke I was
taking the name in vain —
"Ah God" and we turn'd to each other,
we kiss'd, we embraced, she and I,
Knowing the Love we were used to be-
lieve everlasting would die:
We had read their know-nothing books
and we lean'd to the darker side —
Ah God, should we find Him, perhaps,
perhaps, if we died, if we died;
We never had found Him on earth, this
earth is a fatherless Hell —
"Dear Love, for ever and ever, for ever
and ever farewell,"
Never a cry so desolate, not since the
world began!
Never a kiss so sad, no, not since the
coming of man.

X.

But the blind wave cast me ashore, and
you saved me, a valueless life.
Not a grain of gratitude mine! You
have parted the man from the
wife.
I am left alone on the land, she is all
alone in the sea,
If a curse meant aught, I would curse you
for not having let me be.

XI.

Visions of youth — for my brain was
drunk with the water, it seems;
I had past into perfect quiet at length
out of pleasant dreams,

And the transient trouble of drowning —
what was it when match'd with the
pains
Of the hellish heat of a wretched life
rushing back thro' the veins?

XII.

Why should I live? One son had forged
on his father and fled,
And if I believed in a God, I would thank
him, the other is dead,
And there was a baby-girl, that had never
look'd on the light:
Happiest she of us all, for she past from
the night to the night.

XIII.

But the crime, if a crime, of her eldest-
born, her glory, her boast,
Struck hard at the tender heart of the
mother, and broke it almost;
Tho', glory and shame dying out for ever
in endless time,
Does it matter so much whether crown'd
for a virtue, or hang'd for a crime?

XIV.

And ruin'd by *him*, by *him*, I stood there,
naked, amazed
In a world of arrogant opulence, fear'd
myself turning crazed,
And I would not be mock'd in a mad-
house! and she, the delicate wife,
With a grief that could only be cured, if
cured, by the surgeon's knife, —

XV.

Why should we bear with an hour of
torture, a moment of pain,
If every man die for ever, if all his griefs
are in vain,
And the homeless planet at length will be
wheel'd thro' the silence of space,
Motherless evermore of an ever-vanishing
race,
When the worm shall have writhed its
last, and its last brother-worm will
have fled
From the dead fossil skull that is left in
the rocks of an earth that is dead?

XVI.

Have I crazed myself over their horrible
infidel writings? O yes,
For these are the new dark ages, you see,
of the popular press,

When the bat comes out of his cave, and
 the owls are whooping at noon,
 And Doubt is the lord of this dunghill
 and crows to the sun and the moon,
 Till the Sun and the Moon of our science
 are both of them turn'd into blood,
 And Hope will have broken her heart,
 running after a shadow of good ;
 For their knowing and know-nothing
 books are scatter'd from hand to
 hand —
 We have knelt in your know-all chapel
 too looking over the sand.

XVII.

What ! I should call on that Infinite Love
 that has served us so well ?
 Infinite cruelty rather that made ever-
 lasting Hell,
 Made us, foreknew us, foredoom'd us,
 and does what he will with his
 own ;
 Better our dead brute mother who never
 has heard us groan !

XVIII.

Hell ? if the souls of men were immortal,
 as men have been told,
 The lecher would cleave to his lusts, and
 the miser would yearn for his
 gold,
 And so there were Hell for ever ! but
 were there a God as you say,
 His Love would have power over Hell
 till it utterly vanish'd away.

XIX.

Ah yet — I have had some glimmer, at
 times, in my gloomiest woe,
 Of a God behind all — after all — the
 great God for aught that I know ;
 But the God of Love and of Hell to-
 gether — they cannot be thought,
 If there be such a God, may the Great
 God curse him and bring him to
 nought !

XX.

Blasphemy ! whose is the fault ? is it
 mine ? for why would you save
 A madman to vex you with wretched
 words, who is best in his grave ?
 Blasphemy ! ay, why not, being damn'd
 beyond hope of grace ?
 O would I were yonder with her, and
 away from your faith and your
 face !

Blasphemy ! true ! I have scared you pale
 with my scandalous talk,
 But the blasphemy to *my* mind lies all in
 the way that you walk.

XXI.

Hence ! she is gone ! can I stay ? can I
 breathe divorced from the Past ?
 You needs must have good lynx-eyes if
 I do not escape you at last.
 Our orthodox coroner doubtless will find
 it a *felo-de-se*,
 And the stake and the cross-road, fool, if
 you will, does it matter to me ?

EARLY SPRING.

I.

ONCE more the Heavenly Power
 Makes all things new,
 And domes the red-plow'd hills
 With loving blue ;
 The blackbirds have their wills,
 The throistles too.

II.

Opens a door in Heaven ;
 From skies of glass
 A Jacob's ladder falls
 On greening grass,
 And o'er the mountain-walls
 Young angels pass.

III.

Before them fleets the shower,
 And burst the buds,
 And shine the level lands,
 And flash the floods ;
 The stars are from their hands
 Flung thro' the woods, . .

IV.

The woods with living airs
 How softly fann'd,
 Light airs from where the deep,
 All down the sand,
 Is breathing in his sleep,
 Heard by the land.

V.

O follow, leaping blood,
 The season's lure !
 O heart, look down and up,
 Serene, secure,
 Warm as the crocus cup,
 Like snow-drops, pure !

VI.

Past, Future glimpse and fade
Thro' some slight spell,
Some gleam from yonder vale,
Some far blue fell,
And sympathies, how frail,
In sound and smell !

VII.

Till at thy chuckled note,
Thou twinkling bird,
The fairy fancies range,

And, lightly stirred,
Ring little bells of change
From word to word.

VIII.

For now the Heavenly Power
Makes all things new,
And thaws the cold, and fills
The flower with dew ;
The blackbirds have their wills,
The poets too.

THE CUP.

A TRAGEDY.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

GALATIANS.

SYNORIX, an *ex-Tetrarch*.
SINNATUS, a *Tetrarch*.
Attendant.
Boy

Maid.
PHEBE.
CAMMA, wife of *Sinnatus*, afterwards
Priestess in the *Temple of Artemis*.

ROMANS.

ANTONIUS, a *Roman General*.
PUBLIUS.

Nobleman.
Messenger.

ACT I.

SCENE I. — DISTANT VIEW OF A
CITY OF GALATIA.

As the curtain rises, Priestesses are heard singing in the Temple. Boy discovered on a pathway among Rocks, picking grapes. A party of Roman Soldiers, guarding a prisoner in chains, come down the pathway and exeunt.

Enter SYNORIX (looking round). Singing ceases.

SYNORIX.

Pine, beech and plane, oak, walnut, apricot,
Vine, cypress, poplar, myrtle, bowering-in
The city where she dwells. She past me here
Three years ago when I was flying from
My Tetrarchy to Rome. I almost touch'd
her —

A maiden slowly moving on to music —
Among her maidens to this Temple —
O Gods!
She is my fate — else wherefore has my
fate
Brought me again to her own city? —
married
Since — married Sinnatus, the Tetrarch
here —
But if he be conspirator, Rome will
chain,
Or slay him. I may trust to gain her
then
When I shall have my tetrarchy restored
By Rome, our mistress, grateful that I
show'd her
The weakness and the dissonance of our
clans,
And how to crush them easily. Wretched
race!
And once I wish'd to scourge them to the
bones.
But in this narrow breathing-time of life
Is vengeance for its own sake worth the
while,

If once our ends are gain'd? and now
this cup —

I never felt such passion for a woman.
[Brings out a cup and scroll from
under his cloak.

What have I written to her?
[Reading the scroll.

“To the admired Camma, wife of Sinnatus, the Tetrarch, one who years ago, himself an adorer of our great goddess, Artemis, beheld you afar off worshipping in her Temple, and loved you for it, sends you this cup rescued from the burning of one of her shrines in a city thro' which he past with the Roman army: it is the cup we use in our marriages. Receive it from one who cannot at present write himself other than

“A GALATIAN SERVING BY FORCE IN
THE ROMAN LEGION.”

[Turns and looks up to Boy.

Boy, dost thou know the house of Sinnatus?

BOY.

‘These grapes are for the house of Sinnatus —
Close to the Temple.

SYNORIX.

Yonder?

BOY.

Yes.

SYNORIX (*aside*).

That I
With all my range of women should yet
shun

To meet her face to face at once! My boy,
[Boy comes down rocks to him.

Take thou this letter and this cup to
Camma,

The wife of Sinnatus.

BOY.

Going or gone to-day
To hunt with Sinnatus.

SYNORIX.

That matters not.
Take thou this cup and leave it at her
doors.

[Gives the cup and scroll to the Boy.

BOY.

I will, my lord.

[Takes his basket of grapes and exit

Enter ANTONIUS.

ANTONIUS (*meeting the Boy as he goes out*).

Why, whither runs the boy?
Is that the cup you rescued from the
fire?

SYNORIX.

I send it to the wife of Sinnatus,
One half besotted in religious rites.
You come here with your soldiers to en-
force

The long-withholden tribute: you sus-
pect

This Sinnatus of playing patriotism,
Which in your sense is treason. You
have yet

No proof against him: now this pious
cup

Is passport to their house, and open arms
To him who gave it; and once there I
warrant

I worm thro' all their windings.

ANTONIUS.

If you prosper,
Our Senate, wearied of their tetrarchies,
Their quarrels with themselves, their
spites at Rome,

Is like enough to cancel them, and throne
One king above them all, who shall be
true

To the Roman: and from what I heard
in Rome,

This tributary crown may fall to you.

SYNORIX.

The king, the crown! their talk in Rome?
is it so?

[ANTONIUS nods.

Well — I shall serve Galatia taking it,
And save her from herself, and be to
Rome

More faithful than a Roman.

[Turns and sees CAMMA coming.

Stand aside; here she comes!
Stand aside,

[Watching CAMMA as she enters with
her Maid

CAMMA (*to Maid*).

Where is he, girl?

MAID.

You know the waterfall
That in the summer keeps the mountain
side,
But after rain o'erleaps a jutting rock
And shoots three hundred feet.

CAMMA.

The stag is there ?

MAID.

Seen in the thicket at the bottom there
But yester-even.

CAMMA.

Good, then, we will climb
The mountain opposite and watch the
chase.
[*They descend the rocks and exeunt.*]

SYNORIX (*watching her*).

(*Aside.*) The bust of Juno and the brows
and eyes
Of Venus; face and form unmatched !

ANTONIUS.

Why do you look at her so lingeringly ?

SYNORIX.

To see if years have changed her.

ANTONIUS (*sarcastically*).

Love her, do you ?

SYNORIX.

I envied Sinnatus when he married her.

ANTONIUS.

She knows it ? Ha !

SYNORIX.

She — no, nor ev'n my face.

ANTONIUS.

Nor Sinnatus either ?

SYNORIX.

No, nor Sinnatus.

ANTONIUS.

Hot-blooded ! I have heard them say in
Rome,

That your own people cast you from
their bounds,
For some unprincipally violence to a woman,
As Rome did Tarquin.

SYNORIX.

Well, if this were so,
I here return like Tarquin — for a crown.

ANTONIUS.

And may be foil'd like Tarquin, if you
follow
Not the dry light of Rome's straight-
going policy,
But the fool-fire of love or lust, which
well
May make you lose yourself, may even
drown you
In the good regard of Rome.

SYNORIX.

Tut — fear me not ;
I ever had my victories among women.
I am most true to Rome.

ANTONIUS (*aside*).

I hate the man !
What filthy tools our Senate works with !
Still
I must obey them. (*Aloud*). Fare you
well. [*Going*].

SYNORIX.

Farewell !

ANTONIUS (*stopping*).

A moment ! If you track this Sinnatus
In any treason, I give you here an order
[*Produces a paper.*]
To seize upon him. Let me sign it.
(*Signs it.*) There
"Antonius leader of the Roman Legion."
[*Hands the paper to SYNORIX. Goes
up pathway and exit*]

SYNORIX.

Woman again ! — but I am wiser now.
No rushing on the game — the net, —
the net.
[*Shouts of "Sinnatus ! Sinnatus !"*
Then horn
(*Looking off stage*) He comes, a rough,
bluff, simple-looking fellow.
If we may judge the kernel by the husk,
Not one to keep a woman's fealty when

Assailed by Craft and Love. I'll join
with him :

I may reap something from him — come
upon *her*

Again, perhaps, to-day — *her*. Who are
with him ?

I see no face that knows me. Shall I
risk it ?

I am a Roman now, they dare not touch
me.

I will.

Enter SINNATUS, HUNTSMEN and hounds.

Fair Sir, a happy day to you !
You reck but little of the Roman here,
While you can take your pastime in the
woods.

SINNATUS.

Ay, ay, why not ? What would you
with me, man ?

SYNORIX.

I am a life-long lover of the chase,
And tho' a stranger fain would be allow'd
To join the hunt.

SINNATUS.

Your name ?

SYNORIX.

Strato, my name.

SINNATUS.

No Roman name ?

SYNORIX.

A Greek, my lord; you know
That we Galatians are both Greek and
Gaul.

[Shouts and horns in the distance.

SINNATUS.

Hillo, the stag ! *(To SYNORIX.)* What,
you are all unfurnish'd ?

Give him a bow and arrows — follow —
follow

[Exit, followed by Huntsmen.

SYNORIX.

Slowly but surely — till I see my way.
It is the one step in the dark beyond
Our expectation, that amazes us.

[Distant shouts and horns.

Hillo ! Hillo !

[Exit SYNORIX. Shouts and horns.

SCENE II. — A ROOM IN THE TE-
TRARCH'S HOUSE.

*Frescoed figures on the walls. Evening
Moonlight outside. A couch with cush-
ions on it. A small table with flagon of
wine, cups, plate of grapes, etc., also the
cup of Scene I. A chair with drapery
on it.*

CAMMA enters, and opens curtains of win-
dow.

CAMMA.

No Sinnatus yet — and there the rising
moon.

*[Takes up a cithern and sits on couch.
Plays and sings.*

“ Moon on the field and the foam,
Moon on the waste and the wold,
Moon bring him home, bring him home,
Safe from the dark and the cold,
Home, sweet moon, bring him home,
Home with the flock to the fold —
Safe from the wolf ” —

(Listening.) Is he coming ? I thought
I heard

A footstep. No not yet. They say that
Rome

Sprang from a wolf. I fear my dear
lord mixt

With some conspiracy against the wolf.
This mountain shepherd never dream'd
of Rome.

(Sings.) “ Safe from the wolf to the
fold ” —

And that great break of precipice that
runs

Thro' all the wood, where twenty years
ago

Huntsman, and hound, and deer were all
neck-broken !

Nay, here he comes.

Enter SINNATUS followed by SYNORIX

SINNATUS *(angrily).*

I tell thee, my good fellow
My arrow struck the stag.

SYNORIX.

But was it so ?

Nay, you were further off: besides the
wind

Went with *my* arrow.

SINNATUS.

I am sure *I* struck him.

SYNORIX.

And I am just as sure, my lord, I struck him.

(*Aside.*) And I may strike your game when you are gone.

CAMMA.

Come, come, we will not quarrel about the stag.

I have had a weary day in watching you. Yours must have been a wearier. Sit and eat,

And take a hunter's vengeance on the meats.

SINNATUS.

No, no — we have eaten — we are heated. Wine!

CAMMA.

Who is our guest?

SINNATUS.

Strato he calls himself.

[CAMMA offers wine to SYNORIX, while SINNATUS helps himself.

SINNATUS.

I pledge you, Strato. [*Drinks.*

SYNORIX.

And I you, my lord. [*Drinks.*

SINNATUS (*seeing the cup sent to CAMMA*).
What's here?

CAMMA.

A strange gift sent to me to-day.
A sacred cup saved from a blazing shrine
Of our great Goddess, in some city where
Antonius past. I had believed that Rome
Made war upon the peoples, not the Gods.

SYNORIX.

Most like the city rose against Antonius,
Whereon he fired it, and the sacred shrine

By chance was burnt along with it.

SINNATUS.

Had you then
No message with the cup?

CAMMA.

Why, yes, see here. [*Gives him the scroll.*

SINNATUS (*reads*).

"To the admired Camma, — beheld you afar off — loved you — sends you this cup — the cup we use in our marriages — cannot at present write himself other than

"A GALATIAN SERVING BY FORCE IN THE ROMAN LEGION."

Serving by force! Were there no boughs to hang on,
Rivers to drown in? Serve by force? No force
Could make me serve by force.

SYNORIX.

How then, my lord?
The Roman is encampt without your city —
The force of Rome a thousand-fold our own.
Must all Galatia hang or drown herself?
And you a Prince and Tetrarch in this province —

SINNATUS.

Province!

SYNORIX.

Well, well, they call it so in Rome.

SINNATUS (*angrily*).

Province!

SYNORIX.

A noble anger! but Antonius
To-morrow will demand your tribute —
you,
Can you make war? Have you alliances?
Bithynia, Pontus, Paphlagonia?
We have had our leagues of old with
Eastern kings.
There is my hand — if such a league
there be.
What will you do?

SINNATUS.

Not set myself abroad
And run my mind out to a random guest
Who join'd me in the hunt. You saw my hounds
True to the scent; and we have two-legged dogs
Among us who can smell a true occasion,
And when to bark and how.

SYNORIX.

My good Lord Sinnatus,
 I once was at the hunting of a lion.
 Roused by the clamor of the chase he
 woke,
 Came to the front of the wood — his
 monarch mane
 Bristled about his quick ears — he stood
 there
 Staring upon the hunter. A score of
 dogs
 Gnaw'd at his ankles: at the last he felt
 The trouble of his feet, put forth one
 paw,
 Slew four, and knew it not, and so re-
 main'd
 Staring upon the hunter: and this Rome
 Will crush you if you wrestle with her;
 then
 Save for some slight report in her own
 Senate
 Scarce know what she has done.
 (*Aside.*) Would I could move him,
 Provoke him any way! (*Loud.*) The
 Lady Camma.
 Wise I am sure as she is beautiful,
 Will close with me that to submit at once
 Is better than a wholly hopeless war,
 Our gallant citizens murder'd all in vain,
 Son, husband, brother gash'd to death in
 vain,
 And the small state more cruelly trampled
 on
 Than had she never moved.

CAMMA.

Sir, I had once
 A boy who died a babe; but were he
 living
 And grown to man and Sinnatus will'd
 it, I
 Would set him in the front rank of the
 fight
 With scarce a pang. (*Rises.*) Sir, if a
 state submit
 At once, she may be blotted out at once
 And swallow'd in the conqueror's chron-
 icle.
 Whereas in wars of freedom and defence
 The glory and grief of battle won or lost
 Solders a race together — yea — tho' they
 fail,
 The names of those who fought and fell
 are like
 A bank'd-up fire that flashes out again
 From century to century, and at last

May lead them on to victory — I hope
 so —
 Like phantoms of the Gods.

SINNATUS.

Well spoken, wife.

SYNORIX (*bowing*).

Madam, so well I yield.

SINNATUS.

I should not wonder
 If Synorix, who has dwelt three years in
 Rome
 And wrought his worst against his native
 land,
 Returns with this Antonius.

SYNORIX.

What is Synorix?

SINNATUS.

Galatian, and not know? This Synorix
 Was Tetrarch here, and tyrant also —
 did
 Dishonor to our wives.

SYNORIX.

Perhaps you judge him
 With feeble charity: being as you tell me
 Tetrarch, there might be willing wives
 enough
 To feel dishonor, honor.

CAMMA.

Do not say so.
 I know of no such wives in all Galatia.
 There may be courtesans for aught I
 know
 Whose life is one dishonor.

Enter ATTENDANT.

ATTENDANT (*aside*).

My lord, the men!

SINNATUS (*aside*).

Our anti-Roman faction?

ATTENDANT (*aside*).

Ay, my lord.

SYNORIX (*overhearing*).

(*Aside.*) I have enough — their anti-
 Roman faction.

SINNATUS (*aloud*).

Some friends of mine would speak with me without.

You, Strato, make good cheer till I return. [*Exit.*]

SYNORIX.

I have much to say, no time to say it in. First, lady, know myself am that Galatian

Who sent the cup.

CAMMA.

I thank you from my heart.

SYNORIX.

Then that I serve with Rome to serve Galatia.

That is my secret : keep it, or you sell me

To torment and to death.

[*Coming closer.*]

For your ear only —

I love you — for your love to the great Goddess.

The Romans sent me here a spy upon you,

To draw you and your husband to your doom.

I'd sooner die than do it.

[*Takes out paper given him by Antonius.*]

This paper sign'd

Antonius — will you take it, read it there!

CAMMA.

[*Reads.*] " You are to seize on Sinnatus, — if — "

SYNORIX.

[*Snatches paper.*] No more.

What follows is for no wife's eyes. O Camma,

Rome has a glimpse of this conspiracy ; Rome never yet hath spar'd conspirator. Horrible! flaying, scourging, crucifying —

CAMMA.

I am tender enough. Why do you practise on me ?

SYNORIX.

Why should I practise on you ? How you wrong me !

I am sure of being every way malign'd And if you should betray me to your husband —

CAMMA.

Will you betray him by this order ?

SYNORIX.

I tear it all to pieces, never dream'd Of acting on it. [*See, Tears the paper*]

CAMMA.

I owe you thanks for ever

SYNORIX.

Hath Sinnatus never told you of this plot ?

CAMMA.

What plot ?

SYNORIX.

A child's sand-castle on the beach For the next wave — all seen, — all calculated, All known by Rome. No chance for Sinnatus.

CAMMA.

Why, said you not as much to my brave Sinnatus ?

SYNORIX.

Brave — ay — too brave, too over-confident,

Too like to ruin himself, and you, and me !

Who else, with this black thunderbolt of Rome

Above him, would have chased the stag to-day

In the full face of all the Roman camp ? A miracle that they let him home again,

Not caught, maim'd, blinded him. [*CAMMA shudders.*]

[*Aside.*] I have made her tremble. [*Aloud.*] I know they mean to torture him to death.

I dare not tell him how I came to know it ;

I durst not trust him with — my serving Rome

To serve Galatia : you heard him on the letter.

Not say as much ? I all but said as much. I am sure I told him that his plot was folly.

I say it to you — you are wiser — Rome knows all,

But you know not the savagery of Rome

CAMMA.

O — have you power with Rome? use it
for him!

SYNORIX.

Alas! I have no such power with Rome.
All that
Lies with Antonius.

[*As if struck by a sudden thought.*
Comes over to her.

He will pass to-morrow
In the gray dawn before the Temple
doors.
You have beauty, — O great beauty, —
and Antonius,
So gracious toward women, never yet
Flung back a woman's prayer. Plead to
him,
I am sure you will prevail.

CAMMA.

Still — I should tell
My husband.

SYNORIX.

Will he let you plead for him
To a Roman?

CAMMA.

I fear not.

SYNORIX.

Then do not tell him.
Or tell him, if you will, when you return,
When you have charm'd our general into
mercy,
And all is safe again. O dearest lady,
[*Murmurs of* "Synorix! Synorix!"
heard outside.
Think, — torture, — death, — and come.

CAMMA.

I will, I will.
And I will not betray you.

SYNORIX (*aside*).

(*As SINNATUS enters.*) Stand apart.

Enter SINNATUS and ATTENDANT.

SINNATUS.

Thou art that Synorix! One whom thou
hast wrong'd
Without there, knew thee with Antonius.
They howl for thee, to rend thee head
from limb.

SYNORIX.

I am much malign'd. I thought to serve
Galatia.

SINNATUS.

Serve thyself first, villain! They shall
not harm
My guest within my house. There:
(*points to door*) there! this door
Opens upon the forest! Out, begone!
Henceforth I am thy mortal enemy.

SYNORIX.

However I thank thee (*draws his sword*);
thou hast saved my life. [*Exit.*

SINNATUS.

(*To Attendant.*) Return and tell them
Synorix is not here.
[*Exit Attendant.*
What did that villain Synorix say to you?

CAMMA.

Is he — that — Synorix?

SINNATUS.

Wherefore should you doubt it?
One of the men there knew him.

CAMMA.

Only one,
And he perhaps mistaken in the face.

SINNATUS.

Come, come, could he deny it? What
did he say?

CAMMA.

What *should* he say?

SINNATUS.

What *should* he say, my wife!
He should say this, that being Tetrarch
once
His own true people cast him from their
doors
Like a base coin.

CAMMA.

Not kindly to them?

SINNATUS.

Kindly?
O the most kindly Prince in all the
world!
Would clap his honest citizens on the back,
Bandy their own rude jests with them, be
curious

About the welfare of their babes, their
wives,

O ay — their wives — their wives. What
should he say ?

He should say nothing to my wife if I
Were by to throttle him ! He steep'd
himself

In all the lust of Rome. How should *you*
guess

What manner of beast it is ?

CAMMA.

Yet he seem'd kindly,
And said he loathed the cruelties that
Rome
Wrought on her vassals.

SINNATUS.

Did he, *honest* man ?

CAMMA.

And you, that seldom brook the stranger
here,
Have let him hunt the stag with you to-
day.

SINNATUS.

I warrant you now, he said *he* struck the
stag.

CAMMA.

Why no, he never touch'd upon the stag.

SINNATUS.

Why so I said, *my* arrow. Well, to sleep.
[*Goes to close door.*]

CAMMA.

Nay, close not yet the door upon a night
That looks half day.

SINNATUS.

True ; and my friends may spy him
And slay him as he runs.

CAMMA.

He is gone already.
Oh look, — yon grove upon the moun-
tain, — white

In the sweet moon as with a lovelier
snow !

But what a blotch of blackness under-
neath !

Sinnatus, you remember — yea you
must,

That there three years ago — the vast
vine-bowers

Ran to the summit of the trees, and dropt

Their streamers earthward, which a breeze
of May

Took ever and anon, and open'd out
The purple zone of hill and heaven ;
there

You told your love ; and like the sway-
ing vines —

Yea, — with our eyes, — our hearts, our
prophet hopes

Let in the happy distance, and that all
But cloudless heaven which we have
found together

In our three married years ! You kiss'd
me there

For the first time. Sinnatus, kiss me
now.

SINNATUS.

First kiss. (*Kisses her.*) There then.
You talk almost as if it
Might be the last.

CAMMA.

Will you not eat a little ?

SINNATUS.

No, no, we found a goat-herd's hut and
shared

His fruits and milk. Liar ! You will
believe

Now that he never struck the stag — a
brave one

Which you shall see to-morrow.

CAMMA.

I rise to-morrow
In the gray dawn, and take this holy cup
To lodge it in the shrine of Artemis.

SINNATUS.

Good !

CAMMA.

If I be not back in half an hour,
Come after me.

SINNATUS.

What ! is there danger ?

CAMMA.

Nay,
None that I know : 't is but a step from
here
To the Temple.

SINNATUS.

All my brain is full of sleep.
Wake me before you go, I'll after you —
After me now ! [*Closes door and exit.*]

CAMMA (*drawing curtains*).

Your shadow. Synorix —
His face was not malignant, and he said
That men malign'd him. Shall I go?
Shall I go?
Death, torture —
"He never yet flung back a woman's
prayer" —
I go, but I will have my dagger with me.
[*Exit*.

SCENE III. — SAME AS SCENE I.
DAWN.

Music and singing in the Temple.

Enter SYNORIX *watchfully, after him*
PUBLIUS and SOLDIERS.

SYNORIX.

Publius!

PUBLIUS.

Here!

SYNORIX.

Do you remember what
I told you?

PUBLIUS.

When you cry "Rome, Rome," to seize
On whomsoever may be talking with
you,
Or man, or woman, as traitors unto
Rome.

SYNORIX.

Right. Back again. How many of you
are there?

PUBLIUS.

Some half a score.

[*Exeunt Soldiers and Publius.*

SYNORIX.

I have my guard about me.
I need not fear the crowd that hunted me
Across the woods, last night. I hardly
gain'd
The camp at midnight. Will she come
to me
Now that she knows me Synorix? Not if
Sinnatus
Has told her all the truth about me.
Well,
I cannot help the mould that I was cast
in.
I fling all that upon my fate, my star,

I know that I am genial, I would be
Happy, and make all others happy so
They did not thwart me. Nay, she will
not come.

Yet if she be a true and loving wife
She may, perchance, to save this husband.
Ay!

See, see, my white bird stepping toward
the snare.

Why now I count it all but miracle,
That this brave heart of mine should
shake me so,

As helplessly as some unbearded boy's
When first he meets his maiden in a
bower.

Enter CAMMA (with cup).

SYNORIX.

The lark first takes the sunlight on his
wing,
But you, twin sister of the morning star,
Forelead the sun.

CAMMA.

Where is Antonius?

SYNORIX.

Not here as yet. You are too early for
him.

[*She crosses towards Temple.*

SYNORIX.

Nay, whither go you now?

CAMMA.

To lodge this cup
Within the holy shrine of Artemis,
And so return.

SYNORIX.

To find Antonius here.
[*She goes into the Temple, he looks
after her.*

The loveliest life that ever drew the light
From heaven to brood upon her, and
enrich
Earth with her shadow! I trust she *will*
return.

These Romans dare not violate the
Temple.

No, I must lure my game into the camp.
A woman I could live and die for. What!
Die for a woman, what new faith is this?
I am not mad, not sick, not old enough
To doat on one alone. Yes, mad for her,
Camma the stately, Camma the great-
hearted,

So mad, I fear some strange and evil
 chance
 Coming upon me, for by the Gods I seem
 Strange to myself.

Re-enter CAMMA.

CAMMA.

Where is Antonius ?

SYNORIX.

Where ? As I said before, you are still
 too early.

CAMMA.

Too early to be here alone with thee ;
 For whether men malign thy name, or
 no,
 It bears an evil savor among women.
 Where is Antonius ? (*Loud.*)

SYNORIX.

Madam, as you know
 The camp is half a league without the
 city ;
 If you will walk with me we needs must
 meet
 Antonius coming, or at least shall find
 him
 There in the camp.

CAMMA.

No, not one step with thee.
 Where is Antonius ? (*Louder.*)

SYNORIX (*advancing towards her*).

Then for your own sake,
 Lady, I say it with all gentleness,
 And for the sake of Sinnatus your hus-
 band,
 I must compel you.

CAMMA (*drawing her dagger*).

Stay ! — too near is death.

SYNORIX (*disarming her*).

Is it not easy to disarm a woman ?

Emer SINNATUS (*seizes him from behind
 by the throat*).

SYNORIX (*throttled and scarce audible*).

Rome ! Rome !

SINNATUS.

Adulterous dog !

SYNORIX (*stabbing him with CAMMA'S
 dagger*).

What ! will you have it ?

[CAMMA utters a cry and runs to SIN-
 NATUS.

SINNATUS (*falls backward*).

I have it in my heart — to the Temple —
 fly —

For my sake — or they seize on thee.
 Remember !

Away — farewell ! [*Dies*

CAMMA (*runs up the steps into the Temple,
 looking back*).

Farewell !

SYNORIX (*seeing her escape*).

The women of the Temple drag her in.
 Publius ! Publius ! No,
 Antonius would not suffer me to break
 into the sanctuary. She hath escaped.

[*Looking down at SINNATUS.*
 “Adulterous dog !” that red-faced rage
 at me !

Then with one quick short stab — eternal
 peace.

So end all passions. Then what use in
 passions ?

To warm the cold bounds of our dying life
 And, lest we freeze in mortal apathy,
 Employ us, heat us, quicken us, help us,
 keep us

From seeing all too near that urn, those
 ashes

Which all must be. Well used, they
 serve us well.

I heard a saying in Egypt, that ambition
 Is like the sea wave, which the more you
 drink,

The more you thirst — yea — drink too
 much, as men

Have done on rafts of wreck — it drives
 you mad.

I will be no such wreck, am no such
 gamester

As, having won the stake, would dare,
 the chance

Of double, or losing all. The Roman
 Senate,

For I have always play'd into their
 hands,

Means me the crown. And Camma for
 my bride —

The people love her — if I win her love,
 They too will cleave to me, as one with
 her.

There then I rest, Rome's tributary king.
 [*Looking down on SINNATUS.*

Why did I strike him ? — having proof
 enough

Against the man, I surely should have left
That stroke to Rome. He saved my life
too. Did he?

It seem'd so. I have play'd the sudden
fool.

And that sets her against me — for the
moment.

Camma — well, well, I never found the
woman

I could not force or wheedle to my will.
She will be glad at last to wear my
crown.

And I will make Galatia prosperous too,
And we will chirp among our vines, and
smile

At bygone things till that (*pointing to*
SINNATUS) eternal peace.

Rome! Rome!

Enter PUBLIUS and SOLDIERS.

Twice I cried Rome. Why came ye not
before?

PUBLIUS.

Why come we now? Whom shall we
seize upon?

SYNORIX (*pointing to the body of SIN-*
NATUS).

The body of that dead traitor Sinnatus.
Bear him away.

Music and singing in Temple.

ACT II.

SCENE. — INTERIOR OF THE TEMPLE
OF ARTEMIS.

*Small gold gates on platform in front of the
veil before the colossal statue of the God-
dess, and in the centre of the Temple a
tripod altar, on which is a lighted lamp.
Lamps (lighted) suspended between each
pillar. Tripods, vases, garlands of flow-
ers, etc., about stage. Altar at back close
to Goddess, with two cups. Solemn mu-
sic. Priestesses decorating the Temple.*

Enter a PRIESTESS.

PRIESTESS.

Phœbe, that man from Synorix, who has
been
So oft to see the Priestess, waits once
more
Before the Temple.

PHŒBE.

We will let her know.

[*Signs to one of the Priestesses, who goes out.*
Since Camma fled from Synorix to our
Temple,

And for her beauty, stateliness, and
power,
Was chosen Priestess here, have you not
mark'd

Her eyes were ever on the marble floor?
To-day they are fixt and bright — they
look straight out.

Hath she made up her mind to marry
him?

PRIESTESS.

To marry him who stabb'd her Sinnatus.
You will not easily make me credit that.

PHŒBE.

Ask her.

*Enter CAMMA as Priestess (in front of the
curtains).*

PRIESTESS.

You will not marry Synorix?

CAMMA.

My girl, I am the bride of Death, and
only
Marry the dead.

PRIESTESS.

Not Synorix, then?

CAMMA.

My girl,

At times this oracle of great Artemis
Has no more power than other oracles
To speak directly.

PHŒBE.

Will you speak to him.

The messenger from Synorix who waits
Before the Temple?

CAMMA.

Why not? Let him enter.

[*Comes forward on to step by tripod.*

Enter a MESSENGER.

MESSENGER (*kneels*).

Greeting and health from Synorix!
More than once
You have refused his hand. When last
I saw you,

You all but yielded. He entreats you
now

For your last answer. When he struck
at Sinnatus —

As I have many a time declared to you
He knew not at the moment who had
fasten'd

About his throat — he begs you to forget
it

As scarce his act: — a random stroke:
all else

Was love for you: he prays you to be-
lieve him.

CAMMA.

I pray him to believe — that I believe
him.

MESSENGER.

Why that is well. You mean to marry
him?

CAMMA.

I mean to marry him — if that be well.

MESSENGER.

This very day the Romans crown him
king

For all his faithful services to Rome.
He wills you then this day to marry him,
And so be throned together in the sight
Of all the people, that the world may
know

You twain are reconciled, and no more
feuds

Disturb our peaceful vassalage to Rome.

CAMMA.

To-day? Too sudden. I will brood
upon it.

When do they crown him?

MESSENGER.

Even now.

CAMMA.

And where?

MESSENGER.

Here by your temple.

CAMMA.

Come once more to me
Before the crowning, — I will answer you.
[Exit Messenger.

PHŒBE.

Great Artemis! O Camma, can it be
well,

Or good, or wise, that you should clasp a
hand

Red with the sacred blood of Sinnatus?

CAMMA.

Good! mine own dagger driven by Syn-
orix found

All good in the true heart of Sinnatus,
And quench'd it there for ever. Wise!

Life yields to death and wisdom bows to
Fate,

Is wisest, doing so. Did not this man
Speak well? We cannot fight imperial
Rome,

But he and I are both Galatian-born,
And tributary sovereigns, he and I

Might teach this Rome — from knowl-
edge of our people —

Where to lay on her tribute — heavily
here

And lightly there. Might I not live for
that,

And drown all poor self-passion in the
sense

Of public good?

PHŒBE.

I am sure you will not marry him.

CAMMA.

Are you so sure? I pray you wait and
see.

[Shouts (from the distance), "Syno-
rix! Synorix!"

CAMMA.

Synorix, Synorix! So they cried Sinnatus
Not so long since — they sicken me. The

One

Who shifts his policy suffers something,
must

Accuse himself, excuse himself; the
Many

Will feel no shame to give themselves the
lie.

PHŒBE.

Most like it was the Roman soldier
shouted.

CAMMA.

Their shield-borne patriot of the morning
star

Hang'd at mid-day, their traitor of the
dawn

The clamor'd darling of their afternoon!
And that same head they would have
play'd at ball with,

And kick'd it featureless — they now
would crown.

[*Flourish of trumpets.*]

Enter a Galatian NOBLEMAN with crown on
a cushion.

NOBLE (*kneels*).

Greeting and health from Synorix. He
sends you
This diadem of the first Galatian Queen,
That you may feed your fancy on the
glory of it,
And join your life this day with his, and
wear it
Beside him on his throne. He waits your
answer.

CAMMA.

Tell him there is one shadow among the
shadows,
One ghost of all the ghosts — as yet so
new,
So strange among them — such an alien
there,
So much of husband in it still — that if
The shout of Synorix and Camma sitting
Upon one throne, should reach it, it would
rise —
HE! . . . HE, with that red star between
the ribs,
And my knife there — and blast the king
and me,
And blanch the crowd with horror. I
dare not, sir!
Throne him — and then the marriage —
ay and tell him
That I accept the diadem of Galatia —
[*All are amazed.*]
Yea, that ye saw me crown myself withal.
[*Puts on the crown.*]
I wait him his crown'd queen.

NOBLE.

So will I tell him.

[*Exit.*]

MUSIC. *Two Priestesses go up the steps before the shrine, draw the curtains on either side (discovering the Goddess), then open the gates and remain on steps, one on either side, and kneel. A Priestess goes off and returns with a veil of marriage, then assists Phæbe to veil Camma. At the same time Priestesses enter and stand on either side of the Temple. Camma and all the Priestesses kneel, raise their hands to the Goddess, and bow down.*

[*Shouts, "Synorix! Synorix!" All rise.*]

CAMMA.

Fling wide the doors, and let the new
made children
Of our imperial mother see the show.
[*Sunlight pours through the doors.*]
I have no heart to do it. (*To Phæbe*).
Look for me!

[*Crouches. Phæbe looks out.*]

[*Shouts "Synorix! Synorix!"*]

PHÆBE.

He climbs the throne. Hot blood, am-
bition, pride
So bloat and redden his face — O would
it were
His third last apoplexy! O bestial!
O how unlike our goodly Sinnatus.

CAMMA (*on the ground*).

You wrong him surely; far as the face
goes
A goodlier-looking man than Sinnatus.

PHÆBE (*aside*).

How dare she say it? I could hate her
for it
But that she is distracted. [*A flourish of
trumpets.*]

CAMMA.

Is he crown'd?

PHÆBE.

Ay, there they crown him.
[*Crowd without shout, "Synorix!
Synorix!"*]

CAMMA (*rises*).

[*A Priestess brings a box of spices to
CAMMA, who throws them on the
altar flame.*]

Rouse the dead altar flame, fling in the
spices,
Nard, cinnamon, amomum, benzoin,
Let all the air reel into a mist of odor,
As in the midmost heart of Paradise.
Lay down the Lydian carpets for the king.
The king should pace on purple to his
bride,
And music there to greet my lord the
king. [*Music.*]
(*To Phæbe.*) Dost thou remember when
I wedded Sinnatus?
Ay, thou wast there — whether from
maiden fears
Or reverential love for him I loved,
Or some strange second-sight, the mar-
riage-cup

Wherefrom we make libation to the Goddess

So shook within my hand, that the red wine

Ran down the marble and looked like blood, like blood.

PHIÈBE.

I do remember your first-marriage fears.

CAMMA.

I have no fears at this my second marriage.

See here — I stretch my hand out — hold it there.

How steady it is!

PHIÈBE.

Steady enough to stab him!

CAMMA.

O hush! O peace! This violence ill becomes

The silence of our Temple. Gentleness, Low words best chime with this solemnity.

Enter a procession of Priestesses and Children bearing garlands and golden goblets, and strewing flowers.

Enter SYNORIX (as King, with gold laurel-wreath crown and purple robes), followed by ANTONIUS, PUBLIUS, Noblemen, Guards, and the Populacè.

CAMMA.

Hail, King!

SYNORIX.

Hail, Queen!

The wheel of Fate has roll'd me to the top. I would that happiness were gold, that I might cast my largess of it to the crowd!

I would that every man made feast to-day

Beneath the shadow of our pines and planes!

For all my truer life begins to-day.

The past is like a travell'd land now sunk

Below the horizon — like a barren shore That grew salt weeds, but now all drown'd in love

And glittering at full tide — the bounteous bays

And havens filling with a blissful sea.

Nor speak I now too mightily, being King

And happy! happiest, Lady, in my power To make you happy.

CAMMA.

Yes, sir.

SYNORIX.

Our Antonius, Our faithful friend of Rome, tho' Rome may set

A free foot where she will, yet of his courtesy

Entreats he may be present at our marriage.

CAMMA.

Let him come — a legion with him, if he will.

(To ANTONIUS.) Welcome, my lord Antonius, to our Temple.

(To SYNORIX.) You on this side the altar. (To ANTONIUS.) You on that.

Call first upon the Goddess, Synorix.

[All face the Goddess. Priestesses, Children, Populace, and Guards kneel — the others remain standing.]

SYNORIX.

O Thou, that dost inspire the germ with life,

The child, a thread within the house of birth,

And give him limbs, then air, and send him forth

The glory of his father — Thou whose breath

Is balmy wind to robe our hills with grass,

And kindley all our vales with myrtle-blossom,

And roll the golden oceans of our grain, And sway the long grape-bunches of our vines,

And fill all hearts with fatness and the lust

Of plenty — make me happy in my marriage!

CHORUS (*chanting*).

Artemis, Artemis! hear him, Ionian Artemis.

CAMMA.

O thou that slayest the babe within the womb

Or in the being born, or after slayest him As boy or man, great Goddess, whose storm-voice

Unsockets the strong oak, and rears his
root

Beyond his head, and strows our fruits,
and lays

Our golden grain, and runs to sea and
makes it

Foam over all the fledged wealth of kings
And peoples, hear.

Whose arrow is the plague — whose
quick flash splits

The mid-sea mast, and rifts the tower to
the rock,

And hurls the victor's column down with
him

That crowns it, hear.

Who causeth the safe earth to shudder
and gape,

And gulf and flatten in her closing chasm
Domed cities, hear.

Whose lava-torrents blast and blacken a
province

To a cinder, hear.

Whose winter-cataracts find a realm and
leave it

A waste of rock and ruin, hear. I call
thee

To make my marriage prosper to my
wish!

CHORUS.

Artemis, Artemis, hear her, Ephesian
Artemis!

CAMMA.

Artemis, Artemis, hear me, Galatian Ar-
temis!

I call on our own Goddess in our own
Temple.

CHORUS.

Artemis, Artemis, hear her, Galatian Ar-
temis!

[Thunder. All rise.

SYNORIX (*aside*).

Thunder! Ay, ay, the storm was draw-
ing hither

Across the hills when I was being
crown'd.

I wonder if I look as pale as she?

CAMMA.

Art thou — still bent — on marrying?

SYNORIX.

Surely — yet
These are strange words to speak to
Artemis.

CAMMA.

Words are not always what they seem,
my King.

I will be faithful to thee till thou die.

SYNORIX.

I thank thee, Camma, — I thank thee.

CAMMA (*turning to ANTONIUS*).

ANTONIUS,

Much graced are we that our Queen
Rome in you

Deigns to look in upon our barbarisms.

[Turns, goes up steps to altar before
the Goddess. Takes a cup from off
the altar. Holds it towards ANTO-
NIUS. ANTONIUS goes up to the foot
of the steps, opposite to SYNORIX.

You see this cup, my lord.

[Gives it to him.

ANTONIUS.

Most curious!

The many-breasted mother Artemis

Emboss'd upon it.

CAMMA.

It is old, I know not

How many hundred years. Give it me
again.

It is the cup belonging our own Temple.

[Puts it back on altar, and takes up
the cup of Act I. Showing it to

ANTONIUS.

Here is another sacred to the Goddess,
The gift of Synorix; and the Goddess,
being

For this most grateful, wills, thro' me
her Priestess,

In honor of his gift and of our mar-
riage,

That Synorix should drink from his own
cup.

SYNORIX.

I thank thee, Camma, — I thank thee.

CAMMA.

For — my lord —

It is our ancient custom in Galatia
That ere two souls be knit for life and
death,

They two should drink together from one
cup,

In symbol of their married unity,
Making libation to the Goddess. Bring
me

The costly wines we use in marriages.
 { *They bring in a large jar of wine.*
 CAMMA pours wine into cup.

(To SYNORIX.) See here, I fill it. (To ANTONIUS.) Will you drink, my lord?

ANTONIUS.

I? Why should I? I am not to be married.

CAMMA.

But that might bring a Roman blessing on us.

ANTONIUS (*refusing cup*).

Thy pardon, Priestess!

CAMMA.

Thou art in the right.
 This blessing is for Synorix and for me.
 See first I make libation to the Goddess,

{ *Makes libation.*

And now I drink. { *Drinks and fills the cup again.*

Thy turn, Galatian King.

Drink and drink deep — our marriage will be fruitful.

Drink and drink deep, and thou wilt make me happy.

{ SYNORIX goes up to her. She hands him the cup. He drinks.

SYNORIX.

There, Camma! I have almost drain'd the cup —
 A few drops left.

CAMMA.

Libation to the Goddess.

{ *He throws the remaining drops on the altar and gives CAMMA the cup.*

CAMMA (*placing the cup on the altar*).

Why then the Goddess hears.

{ *Comes down and forward to tripod.*

ANTONIUS follows.

Antonius,
 Where wast thou on that morning when I came

To plead to thee for Sinnatus's life,
 Beside this temple half a year ago?

ANTONIUS.

I never heard of this request of thine

SYNORIX (*coming forward hastily to foot of tripod steps*).

I sought him and I could not find him.

Pray you,

Go on with the marriage rites.

CAMMA.

Antonius —

“Camma!” who spake?

ANTONIUS.

Not I.

PHEBE.

Nor any here.

CAMMA.

I am all but sure that some one spake.

Antonius,

If you had found him plotting against Rome,

Would you have tortured Sinnatus to death?

ANTONIUS.

No thought was mine of torture or of death,

But had I found him plotting, I had counsell'd him

To rest from vain resistance. Rome is fated

To rule the world. Then, if he had not listen'd,

I might have sent him prisoner to Rome.

SYNORIX.

Why do you palter with the ceremony?
 Go on with the marriage rites.

CAMMA.

They are finish'd.

SYNORIX.

How!

CAMMA.

Thou hast drunk deep enough to make me happy.

Dost thou not feel the love I bear to thee
 Glow thro' thy veins?

SYNORIX.

The love I bear to thee
 Glows thro' my veins since first I look'd on thee.

But wherefore slur the perfect ceremony?
 The sovereign of Galatia weds his Queen.
 Let all be done to the fullest in the sight

Of all the Gods. (*Starts.*) This pain —
 what is it? — again?
 I had a touch of this last year — in —
 Rome.
 Yes, yes. (*To ANTONIUS.*) Your arm — a
 moment — It will pass.
 I reel beneath the weight of utter joy —
 This all too happy day, crown — queen
 at once.

[*Staggers.*

Oh all ye Gods — Jupiter! — Jupiter!
 [*Falls backward.*

CAMMA.

Dost thou cry out upon the Gods of Rome.
 Thou art Galatian-born? Our Artemis
 Has vanquish'd their Diana.

SYNORIX (*on the ground*).

I am poison'd.
 She — close the Temple doors. Let her
 not fly.

CAMMA (*leaning on tripod*).

Have I not drunk of the same cup with
 thee?

SYNORIX.

Ay, by the Gods of Rome and all the
 world,
 She too — she too — the bride! the
 Queen! and I —
 Monstrous! I that loved her.

CAMMA.

I loved *him*.

SYNORIX.

O murderous mad-woman! I pray you
 lift me
 And make me walk awhile. I have
 heard these poisons
 May be walk'd down.

[*ANTONIUS and PUBLIUS raise him up.*

My feet are tons of lead,

They will break in the earth — I am
 sinking — hold me —

Let me alone.

[*They leave him; he sinks down on ground.*

Too late — thought myself wise —

A woman's dupe. Antonius, tell the
 Senate

I have been most true to Rome — would
 have been true

To *her* — if — if —

[*Falls as if dead.*

CAMMA (*coming and leaning over him*).

So falls the throne of an hour.

SYNORIX (*half rising*).

Throne? is it thou? the Fates are
 throned, not we —

Not guilty of ourselves — thy doom and
 mine —

Thou — coming my way too — Camma
 — good-night. [*Dies.*

CAMMA (*upheld by weeping Priestesses*).

Thy way? poor worm, crawl down thine
 own black hole

To the lowest Hell. Antonius, is *he*
 there?

I meant thee to have follow'd — better
 thus.

Nay, if my people must be thralls of
 Rome,

He is gentle, tho' a Roman.

[*Sinks back into the arms of the Priestesses.*

ANTONIUS.

Thou art one

With thine own people, and tho' a Ro-
 man I

Forgive thee, Camma.

CAMMA (*raising herself*).

"Camma!" — why there again

I am most sure that some one call'd. O
 women,

Ye will have Roman masters. I am glad
 I shall not see it. Did not some old
 Greek

Say death was the chief good? He had
 my fate for it,

Poison'd. (*Sinks back again.*) Have I
 the crown on? I will go

To meet him, crown'd! crown'd victor of
 my will —

On my last voyage — but the wind has
 fail'd —

Growing dark too — but light enough to
 row.

Row to the blessed Isles! the blessed
 Isles! —

Sinnatus!

Why comes he not to meet me? It is
 the crown

Offends him — and my hands are too
 sleepy

To lift it off.

[*PHOEBE takes the crown off.*

Who touch'd me then? I thank you.

[*Rises, with outspread arms.*

There — league on league of ever-shining
 shore

Beneath an ever-rising sun — I see him —
 "Camma, Camma!" Sinnatus, Sinna-

tus! [*Dies*

THE FALCON.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

THE COUNT FEDERIGO DEGLI ALBERIGHI.
 FILIPPO, *Count's foster-brother.*
 THE LADY GIOVANNA.
 ELISABETTA, *the Count's nurse.*

SCENE. — AN ITALIAN COTTAGE. CASTLE AND MOUNTAINS SEEN THROUGH WINDOW.

ELISABETTA *discovered seated on stool in window, darning. The COUNT with Falcon on his hand comes down through the door at back. A withered wreath on the wall.*

ELISABETTA.

So, my lord, the Lady Giovanna, who hath been away so long, came back last night with her son to the castle.

COUNT.

Hear that, my bird! Art thou not jealous of her?

My princess of the cloud, my plumed purveyor,

My far-eyed queen of the winds — thou that canst soar

Beyond the morning lark, and howsoever Thy quarry wind and wheel, swoop down upon him

Eagle-like, lightning-like — strike, make his feathers

Glance in mid heaven. [*Crosses to chair*

I would thou hadst a mate!

Thy breed will die with thee, and mine with me:

I am as lone and loveless as thyself.

[*Sits in chair.*

Giovanna here! Ay, ruffle thyself — be jealous!

Thou should'st be jealous of her. Tho' I bred thee

The full-train'd marvel of all falconry, And love thee and thou me, yet if Giovanna

Be here again — No, no! Buss me, my bird!

The stately widow has no heart for me. Thou art the last friend left me upon earth —

No, no again to that. [*Rises and turns.*

My good old nurse,

I had forgotten thou wast sitting there.

ELISABETTA.

Ay, and forgotten thy foster-brother too.

COUNT.

Bird-babble for my falcon! Let it pass. What art thou doing there?

ELISABETTA.

Darning, your lordship. We cannot flaunt it in new feathers now: Nay, if we *will* buy diamond necklaces To please our lady, we must darn, my lord.

This old thing here (*points to necklace round her neck*), they are but blue beads — my Piero,

God rest his honest soul, he bought 'em for me,

Ay, but he knew I meant to marry him. How couldst thou do it, my son? How couldst thou do it?

COUNT.

She saw it at a dance, upon a neck Less lovely than her own, and long'd for it.

ELISABETTA.

She told thee as much?

COUNT.

No, no — a friend of hers.

ELISABETTA.

Shame on her that she took it at thy hands,

She rich enough to have bought it for herself!

COUNT.

She would have robb'd me then of a great pleasure.

ELISABETTA.

But hatk she yet return'd thy love?

COUNT.

Not yet!

ELISABETTA.

She should return thy necklace then.

COUNT.

Ay, if
She knew the giver; but I bound the
seller

To silence, and I left it privily
At Florence, in her palace.

ELISABETTA.

And sold thine own
To buy it for her. She not know? She
knows
There 's none such other —

COUNT.

Madman anywhere.
Speak freely, tho' to call a madman mad
Will hardly help to make him sane
again.

Enter FILIPPO.

FILIPPO.

Ah, the women, the women! Ah, Monna
Giovanna, you here again! you that have
the face of an angel and the heart of a
— that 's too positive! You that have
a score of lovers and have not a heart for
any of them — that 's positive-negative:
you that have *not* the head of a toad, and
not a heart like the jewel in it — that 's
too regative; you that have a cheek like
a peach and a heart like the stone in
it — that 's positive again — that 's bet-
ter!

ELISABETTA.

Sh — sh — Filippo!

FILIPPO (turns half round).

Here has our master been a glorifying
and a-velveting and a-silking himself, and
a-peacocking and a-spreading to catch
her eye for a dozen year, till he has n't
an eye left in his own tail to flourish
among the peahens, and all along o' you,
Monna Giovanna, all along o' you!

ELISABETTA.

Sh — sh — Filippo! Can't you hear
that you are saying behind his back what
you see you are saying afore his face?

COUNT.

Let him — he never spares me to my
face!

FILIPPO.

No, my lord, I never spare your lordship

(to your lordship's face, nor behind your
lordship's back, nor to right, nor to left,
nor to round about and back to your
lordship's face again, for I 'm honest,
your lordship.

COUNT.

Come, come, Filippo, what is there in the
larder?

[*ELISABETTA crosses to fireplace and
puts on wood.*

FILIPPO.

Shelves and hooks, shelves and hooks,
and when I see the shelves I am like to
hang myself on the hooks.

COUNT.

No bread?

FILIPPO.

Half a breakfast for a rat!

COUNT.

Milk?

FILIPPO.

Three laps for a cat!

COUNT.

Cheese?

FILIPPO.

A supper for twelve mites.

COUNT.

Eggs?

FILIPPO.

One, but addled.

COUNT.

No bird?

FILIPPO.

Half a tit and a hern's bill.

COUNT.

Let be thy jokes and thy jerks, man!
Anything or nothing?

FILIPPO.

Well, my lord, if all-but-nothing be
anything, and one plate of dried prunes
be all-but-nothing, then there is anything
in your lordship's larder at your lordship's
service, if your lordship care to call for it.

COUNT.

Good mother, happy was the prodigal
son,
For he return'd to the rich father; I
But add my poverty to thine. And all

Thro' following of my fancy. Pray thee
make

Thy slender meal out of those scraps and
shreds

Filippo spoke of. As for him and me,
There sprouts a salad in the garden still.
(*To the Falcon.*) Why didst thou miss
thy quarry yester-even?

To-day, my beauty, thou must dash us
down

Our dinner from the skies. Away,
Filippo!

[*Exit, followed by FILIPPO.*]

ELISABETTA.

I knew it would come to this. She has
beggared him. I always knew it would
come to this! (*Goes up to table as if to
resume darning, and looks out of window.*)
Why, as I live, there is Mouna Giovanna
coming down the hill from the castle.
Stops and stares at our cottage. Ay,
ay! stare at it: it's all you have left us.
Shame upon you! *She* beautiful! sleek
as a miller's mouse! Meal enough, meat
enough, well fed; but beautiful — bah!
Nay, see, why she turns down the path
through our little vineyard, and I sneezed
three times this morning. Coming to
visit my lord, for the first time in her
life too! Why, bless the saints! I'll be
bound to confess her love to him at last.
I forgive her, I forgive her! I knew it
would come to this — I always knew it
must come to this! (*Going up to door
during latter part of speech and opens it.*)
Come in, Madonna, come in. (*Retires to
front of table and curtsies as the LADY
GIOVANNA enters, then moves chair towards
the hearth.*) Nay, let me place this chair
for your ladyship.

[*LADY GIOVANNA moves slowly down
stage, then crosses to chair, looking
about her, bows as she sees the Ma-
donna over fireplace, then sits in chair.*]

LADY GIOVANNA.

Can I speak with the Count?

ELISABETTA.

Ay, my lady, but won't you speak with
the old woman first, and tell her all about
it and make her happy? for I've been on
my knees every day for these half-dozen
years in hope that the saints would send
us this blessed morning; and he always
took you so kindly, he always took the
world so kindly. When he was a little

one, and I put the bitters on my breast
to wean him, he made a wry mouth at
it, but he took it so kindly, and your
ladyship has given him bitters enough
in this world, and he never made a wry
mouth at you, he always took you so
kindly — which is more than I did, my
lady, more than I did — and he so hand-
some — and bless your sweet face, you
look as beautiful this morning as the very
Madonna her own self — and better late
than never — but come when they will
— then or now — it's all for the best,
come when they will — they are made
by the blessed saints — these marriages.

[*Raises her hands.*]

LADY GIOVANNA.

Marriages? I shall never marry again!

ELISABETTA (*rises and turns*).

Shame on her then!

LADY GIOVANNA.

Where is the Count?

ELISABETTA.

Just gone

To fly his falcon.

LADY GIOVANNA.

Call him back and say
I come to breakfast with him.

ELISABETTA.

Holy mother!

To breakfast! Oh sweet saints! one plate
of prunes!

Well, Madam, I will give your message
to him. [*Exit.*]

LADY GIOVANNA.

His falcon, and I come to ask for his
falcon,

The pleasure of his eyes — boast of his
hand —

Pride of his heart — the solace of his
hours —

His one companion here — nay, I have
heard

That, thro' his late magnificence of living
And this last costly gift to mine own self,

[*Shows diamond necklace.*]

He hath become so beggar'd, that his
falcon

Ev'n wins his dinner for him in the field.

That must be talk, not truth, but truth
or talk,

How can I ask for his falcon ?

[Rises and moves as she speaks.

O my sick boy !

My daily fading Florio, it is thou
Hath set me this hard task, for when I
say

What can I do — what can I get for
thee ?

He answers, "Get the Count to give me
his falcon,
And that will make me well." Yet if I
ask,

He loves me, and he knows I know he
loves me !

Will he not pray me to return his love,
To marry him ? — (pause) — I can never
marry him.

His grandsire struck my grandsire in a
brawl

At Florence, and my grandsire stabb'd
him there.

The feud between our houses is the bar
I cannot cross ; I dare not brave my
brother,

Break with my kin. My brother hates
him, scorns

The noblest-natured man alive, and I —
Who have that reverence for him that I
scarce

Dare beg him to receive his diamonds
back —

How can I, dare I, ask him for his
falcon ?

[Puts diamonds in her casket.

Re-enter COUNT and FILIPPO. COUNT
turns to FILIPPO.

COUNT.

Do what I said ; I cannot do it myself.

FILIPPO.

Why then, my lord, we are pauper'd out
and out.

COUNT.

Do what I said !

[Advances and bows low.

Welcome to this poor cottage, my dear
lady.

LADY GIOVANNA.

And welcome turns a cottage to a palace.

COUNT.

"T is long since we have met !

LADY GIOVANNA.

To make amends

I come this day to break my fast with
you.

COUNT.

I am much honor'd — yes —

[Turns to FILIPPO.

Do what I told thee. Must I do it my
self ?

FILIPPO.

I will, I will. (Sighs.) Poor fellow !
[Exit,

COUNT.

Lady, you bring your light into my cot-
tage

Who never deign'd to shine into my pal-
ace.

My palace wanting you was but a cot-
tage ;

My cottage, while you grace it, is a pal-
ace.

LADY GIOVANNA.

In cottage or in palace, being still
Beyond your fortunes, you are still the
king

Of courtesy and liberality.

COUNT.

I trust I still maintain my courtesy ;
My liberality perforce is dead
'Thro' lack of means of giving.

LADY GIOVANNA.

Yet I come

To ask a gift.

[Moves toward him a little.

COUNT.

It will be hard, I fear,
To find one shock upon the field when all
The harvest has been carried.

LADY GIOVANNA.

But my boy —
(Aside.) No, no ! not yet — I cannot !

COUNT.

Ay, how is he,
That bright inheritor of your eyes —
your boy ?

LADY GIOVANNA.

Alas, my Lord Federigo, he hath fallen
Into a sickness, and it troubles me.

COUNT.

Sick ! is it so ? why, when he came last
year

To see me hawking, he was well enough :
And then I taught him all our hawking-
phrases.

LADY GIOVANNA.

Oh yes, and once you let him fly your
falcon.

COUNT.

How charm'd he was ! what wonder ? —
A gallant boy,
A noble bird, each perfect of the breed.

LADY GIOVANNA (*sinks in chair*).

What do you rate her at ?

COUNT.

My bird ? a hundred
Gold pieces once were offer'd by the
Duke.
I had no heart to part with her for money.

LADY GIOVANNA.

No, not for money.

[COUNT *turns away and sighs.*
Wherefore do you sigh ?

COUNT.

I have lost a friend of late.

LADY GIOVANNA.

I could sigh with you
For fear of losing more than friend, a
son ;
And if he leave me — all the rest of
life —
That wither'd wreath were of more worth
to me.

[*Looking at wreath on wall.*

COUNT.

That wither'd wreath were of more worth
to me
Than all the blossom, all the leaf of this
New-wakening year.

[*Goes and takes down wreath.*

LADY GIOVANNA.

And yet I never saw
The land so rich in blossom as this year.
COUNT (*holding wreath toward her*).

Was not the year when this was gather'd
richer ?

LADY GIOVANNA.

How long ago was that ?

COUNT.

Alas, ten summers !
A lady that was beautiful as day
Sat by me at a rustic festival
With other beauties on a mountain
meadow,
And she was the most beautiful of all.
Then but fifteen, and still as beautiful.
The mountain flowers grew thickly round
about.
I made a wreath with some of these ; I
ask'd
A ribbon from her hair to bind it with ;
I whisper'd, Let me crown you Queen of
Beauty,
And softly placed the chaplet on her
head.
A color, which has color'd all my life,
Flush'd in her face ; then I was call'd
away ;
And presently all rose, and so departed.
Ah ! she had thrown my chaplet on the
grass,
And there I found it.
[*Lets his hands fall, holding wreath
despondingly.*

LADY GIOVANNA (*after pause*).

How long since do you say ?

COUNT.

That was the very year before you mar-
ried.

LADY GIOVANNA.

When I was married you were at the
wars.

COUNT.

Had she not thrown my chaplet on the
grass,
It may be I had never seen the wars.
[*Replaces wreath whence he had taken it.*

LADY GIOVANNA.

Ah, but, my lord, there ran a rumor then
That you were kill'd in battle. I can tell
you
True tears that year were shed for you
in Florence.

COUNT.

It might have been as well for me. Un-
happily
I was but wounded by the enemy there
And then imprison'd.

LADY GIOVANNA.

Happily, however,
I see you quite recover'd of your wound.

COUNT.

No, no, not quite, Madonna, not yet, not yet.

Re-enter FILIPPO.

FILIPPO.

My lord, a word with you.

COUNT.

Pray pardon me!

[LADY GIOVANNA crosses, and passes behind chair and takes down wreath; then goes to chair by table.

COUNT (to FILIPPO).

What is it, Filippo?

FILIPPO.

Spoons, your lordship.

COUNT.

Spoons!

FILIPPO.

Yes, my lord, for was n't my lady born with a golden spoon in her ladyship's mouth, and we have n't never as much as a silver one for the golden lips of her ladyship.

COUNT.

Have we not half a score of silver spoons?

FILIPPO.

Half o' one, my lord!

COUNT.

How half of one?

FILIPPO.

I trod upon him even now, my lord, in my hurry, and broke him.

COUNT.

And the other nine?

FILIPPO.

Sold; but shall I not mount with your lordship's leave to her ladyship's castle, in your lordship's and her ladyship's name, and confer with her ladyship's seneschal, and so descend again with some of her ladyship's own appurtenances?

COUNT.

Why — no, man. Only see your coat be clean.

[Exit FILIPPO]

LADY GIOVANNA.

Ay, ay, this faded ribbon was the mode In Florence ten years back. What 's here? a scroll Pinn'd to the wreath.

My lord, you have said so much Of this poor wreath that I was bold enough To take it down, if but to guess what flowers Had made it; and I find a written scroll That seems to run in rhymings. Might I read?

COUNT.

Ay, if you will.

LADY GIOVANNA.

It should be if you can. (*Reads.*) "Dead mountain." Nay, for who could trace a hand So wild and staggering?

COUNT.

This was penn'd, Madonna, Close to the grating on a winter morn In the perpetual twilight of a prison, When he that made it, having his right hand Lamed in the battle, wrote it with his left.

LADY GIOVANNA.

Oh heavens! the very letters seem to shake With cold, with pain perhaps, poor prisoner! Well, Tell me the words — or better — for I see There goes a musical score along with them, Repeat them to their music.

COUNT.

You can touch No chord in me that would not answer you In music.

LADY GIOVANNA.

That is musically said.

[COUNT takes guitar. LADY GIOVANNA sits listening, with wreath in her hand, and quietly removes scroll and places it on table at the end of the song.]

COUNT (*sings, playing guitar*).

"Dead mountain flowers, dead mountain-
meadow flowers,
Dearer than when you made your moun-
tain gay,
Sweeter than any violet of to-day,
Richer than all the wide world-wealth of
May,
To me, tho' all your bloom has died
away,
You bloom again, dead mountain-meadow
flowers."

Enter ELISABETTA with cloth.

ELISABETTA.

A word with you, my lord!

COUNT (*singing*).

"O mountain flowers!"

ELISABETTA.

A word, my lord! (*Louder.*)

COUNT (*sings*).

"Dead flowers!"

ELISABETTA.

A word, my lord! (*Louder.*)

COUNT.

I pray you pardon me again!

[LADY GIOVANNA *looking at wreath*.

COUNT (*to ELISABETTA.*)

What is it?

ELISABETTA.

My lord, we have but one piece of
earthenware to serve the salad in to my
lady, and that cracked!

COUNT.

Why then, that flower'd bowl my ancestor
Fetch'd from the farthest east — we never
use it
For fear of breakage — but this day has
brought
A great occasion. You can take it,
nurse!

ELISABETTA.

I did take it, my lord, but what with
my lady's coming that had so flurr'd
me, and what with the fear of breaking
it, I did break it, my lord: it is broken!

COUNT.

My one thing left of value in the world!
No matter! see your cloth be white as
snow!

ELISABETTA (*pointing thro' window*).

White? I warrant thee, my son, as the
snow yonder on the very tip-top o' the
mountain.

COUNT.

And yet to speak white truth, my good
old mother,
I have seen it like the snow on the
moraine.

ELISABETTA.

How can your lordship say so? There,
my lord! [*Lays cloth.*
O my dear son, be not unkind to me.
And one word more. [*Going — returns.*

COUNT (*touching guitar*).

Good! let it be but one.

ELISABETTA.

Hath she return'd thy love?

COUNT.

Not yet!

ELISABETTA.

And will she?

COUNT (*looking at LADY GIOVANNA*).

I scarce believe it!

ELISABETTA.

Shame upon her then!

[*Exit.*

COUNT (*sings*).

"Dead mountain flowers" —

Ah well, my nurse has broken
The thread of my dead flowers, as she
has broken

My china bowl. My memory is as dead.
[*Goes and replaces guitar.*

Strange that the words at home with me
so long
Should fly like bosom friends when needed
most.

So by your leave if you would hear the
rest,
The writing

LADY GIOVANNA (*holding wreath toward
him*).

There! my lord, you are a poet,

And can you not imagine that the wreath,

Set, as you say, so lightly on her head,
Fell with her motion as she rose, and she,
A girl, a child, then but fifteen, however
Flatter'd or flatter'd by your notice of
her,

Was yet too bashful to return for it?

COUNT.

Was it so indeed? was it so? was it so?

[Leans forward to take wreath, and touches LADY GIOVANNA'S hand, which she withdraws hastily; he places wreath on corner of chair.]

LADY GIOVANNA (with dignity).

I did not say, my lord, that it was so;
I said you might imagine it was so.

Enter FILIPPO with bowl of salad, which he places on table.

FILIPPO.

Here's a fine salad for my lady, for tho' we have been a soldier, and ridden by his lordship's side, and seen the red of the battle-field, yet are we now drill-sergeant to his lordship's lettuces, and profess to be great in green things and in garden-stuff.

LADY GIOVANNA.

I thank you, good Filippo.

[Exit FILIPPO.]

Enter ELISABETTA with bird on a dish which she places on table.

ELISABETTA (close to table).

Here's a fine fowl for my lady; I had scant time to do him in. I hope he be not underdone, for we be undone in the doing of him.

LADY GIOVANNA.

I thank you, my good nurse.

FILIPPO (re-entering with plate of prunes).

And here are fine fruits for my lady — prunes, my lady, from the tree that my lord himself planted here in the blossom of his boyhood — and so I, Filippo, being, with your ladyship's pardon, and as your ladyship knows, his lordship's own foster-brother, would commend them to your ladyship's most peculiar appreciation.

[Puts plate on table.]

ELISABETTA.

Filippo!

LADY GIOVANNA. (COUNT leads her to table.)

Will you not eat with me, my lord?

COUNT.

I cannot,
Not a morsel, not one morsel. I have
broken

My fast already. I will pledge you.
Wine!

Filippo, wine!

[Sits near table; FILIPPO brings flask, fills the COUNT'S goblet, then LADY GIOVANNA'S; ELISABETTA stands at the back of LADY GIOVANNA'S chair.]

COUNT.

It is but thin and cold,
Not like the vintage blowing round your
castle.

We lie too deep down in the shadow
here.

Your ladyship lives higher in the sun.
[They pledge each other and drink.]

LADY GIOVANNA.

If I might send you down a flask or two
Of that same vintage? There is iron
in it.

It has been much commended as a med-
icine.

I give it my sick son, and if you be
Not quite recover'd of your wound, the
wine

Might help you. None has ever told me
yet

The story of your battle and your
wound.

FILIPPO (coming forward).

I can tell you, my lady, I can tell you.

ELISABETTA.

Filippo; will you take the word out of
your master's own mouth?

FILIPPO.

Was it there to take? Put it there, my
lord.

COUNT.

Giovanna, my dear lady, in this same
battle

We had been beaten — they were ten to
one.

The trumpets of the fight had echo'd
down,
I and Filippo here had done our best,
And, having passed unwounded from the
field,
Were seated sadly at a fountain side,
Our horses grazing by us, when a troop,
Laden with booty and with a flag of ours
Ta'en in the fight —

FILIPPO.

Ay, but we fought for it back,
And kill'd —

ELISABETTA.

Filippo!

COUNT.

A troop of horse —

FILIPPO.

Five hundred!

COUNT.

Say fifty!

FILIPPO.

And we kill'd 'em by the score!

ELISABETTA.

Filippo!

FILIPPO.

Well, well, well! I bite my tongue.

COUNT.

We may have left their fifty less by five.
However, staying not to count how
many,

But anger'd at their flaunting of our flag,
We mounted, and we dashed into the
heart of 'em.

I wore the lady's chaplet round my neck;
It served me for a blessed rosary.

I am sure that more than one brave fel-
low owed

His death to the charm in it.

ELISABETTA.

Hear that, my lady!

COUNT.

I cannot tell how long we strove before
Our horses fell beneath us; down we
went

Crush'd, hack'd at, trampled underfoot.
The night,

As some cold-manner'd friend may
strangely do us

The truest service, had a touch of frost

That help'd to check the flowing of the
blood.

My last sight ere I swoon'd was one sweet
face

Crown'd with the wreath. *That seem'd*
to come and go.

They left us there for dead!

ELISABETTA.

Hear that, my lady!

FILIPPO.

Ay, and I left two fingers there for dead.
See, my lady! (*Showing his hand.*)

LADY GIOVANNA.

I see, Filippo!

FILIPPO.

And I have small hope of the gentleman
gout in my great toe.

LADY GIOVANNA.

And why, Filippo? [*Smiling absently.*]

FILIPPO.

I left him there for dead, too!

ELISABETTA.

She smiles at him — how hard the wo-
man is!

My lady, if your ladyship were not
Too proud to look upon the garland, you
Would find it stain'd —

COUNT (*rising*).

Silence, Elisabetta!

ELISABETTA.

Stain'd with the blood of the best heart
that ever

Beat for one woman.

[*Points to wreath on chair*]

LADY GIOVANNA (*rising slowly*).

I can eat no more!

COUNT.

You have but trifled with our homely
salad,

But dallied with a single lettuce-leaf;
Not eaten anything.

LADY GIOVANNA.

Nay, nay, I cannot
You know, my lord, I told you I was
troubled.

My one child Florio lying still so sick,

I bound myself, and by a solemn vow,
That I would touch no flesh till he were
well

Here, or else well in Heaven, where all is
well.

[*ELISABETTA clears table of bird and
salad: FILIPPO snatches up the plate
of prunes and holds them to* LADY
GIOVANNA.

FILIPPO.

But the prunes, my lady, from the tree
that his lordship —

LADY GIOVANNA.

Not now, Filippo. My lord Federigo,
Can I not speak with you once more
alone?

COUNT.

You hear, Filippo? My good fellow, go!

FILIPPO.

But the prunes that your lordship —

ELISABETTA.

Filippo!

COUNT.

Ay, prune our company of thine own and
go!

ELISABETTA.

Filippo!

FILIPPO (*turning*).

Well, well! the women! [*Exit.*]

COUNT.

And thou too leave us, my dear nurse,
alone.

ELISABETTA (*folding up cloth and going*).

And me too! Ay, the dear nurse will
leave you alone; but, for all that, she
that has eaten the yolk is scarce like to
swallow the shell.

[*Turns and curtseys to LADY GIOVANNA,
then exit. LADY GIOVANNA takes
out diamond necklace from casket.*

LADY GIOVANNA.

I have anger'd your good nurse; these
old-world servants
Are all but flesh and blood with those
they serve.

My lord, I have a present to return you,
And afterwards a boon to crave of you.

COUNT.

No, my most honor'd and long-worshipt
lady,

Poor Federigo degli Alberighi
Takes nothing in return from you except
Return of his affection — can deny
Nothing to you that you require of him.

LADY GIOVANNA.

Then I require you to take back your
diamonds —

[*Offering necklace*

I doubt not they are yours. No other
heart

Of such magnificence in courtesy
Beats — out of heaven. They seem'd too
rich a prize

To trust with any messenger. I came
In person to return them.

[*COUNT draws back.*

If the phrase

“Return” displease you, we will say —
exchange them

For your — for your

COUNT (*takes a step toward her and then
back*).

For mine — and what of mine?

LADY GIOVANNA.

Well, shall we say this wreath and your
sweet rhymes?

COUNT.

But have you ever worn my diamonds?

LADY GIOVANNA.

No!

For that would seem accepting of your
love.

I cannot brave my brother — but be sure
That I shall never marry again, my lord!

COUNT.

Sure?

LADY GIOVANNA.

Yes!

COUNT.

Is this your brother's order?

LADY GIOVANNA.

No!

For he would marry me to the richest man
In Florence; but I think you know the
saying —

“Better a man without riches, than riches
without a man.”

COUNT.

A noble saying — and acted on would
yield

A nobler breed of men and women. Lady,

I find you a shrewd bargainer. The wreath

That once you wore outvalues twenty-fold
The diamonds that you never deign'd to wear.

But lay them there for a moment!

[Points to table. LADY GIOVANNA places necklace on table.

And be you Gracious enough to let me know the boon
By granting which, if aught be mine to grant,

I should be made more happy than I hoped

Ever to be again.

LADY GIOVANNA.

Then keep your wreath,
But you will find me a shrewd bargainer still.

I cannot keep your diamonds, for the gift
I ask for, to my mind and at this present
Outvalues all the jewels upon earth.

COUNT.

It should be like love, that thus outvalues all.

You speak like love and yet you love me not.

I have nothing in this world but love for you.

LADY GIOVANNA.

Love? it is love, love for my dying boy,
Moves me to ask it of you.

COUNT.

What? my time?
Is it my time? Well, I can give my time
To him that is a part of you, your son.
Shall I return to the castle with you?
Shall I

Sit by him, read to him, tell him my tales,

Sing him my songs? You know that I can touch

The ghittern to some purpose.

LADY GIOVANNA.

No, not that!
I thank you heartily for that — and you,
I doubt not from your nobleness of nature,

Will pardon me for asking what I ask.

COUNT.

Giovanna, dear Giovanna, I that once
The wildest of the random youth of Florence

Before I saw you — all my nobleness
Of nature, as you deign to call it, draws
From you, and from my constancy to you.

No more, but speak.

LADY GIOVANNA.

I will. You know sick people,
More specially sick children, have strange
fancies,
Strange longings; and to thwart them in
their mood

May work them grievous harm at times,
may even

Hasten their end. I would you had a son!

It might be easier then for you to make
Allowance for a mother — her — who comes

To rob you of your one delight on earth.
How often has my sick boy yearn'd for this!

I have put him off as often; but to-day
I dared not — so much weaker, so much worse

For last day's journey. I was weeping for him;

He gave me his hand: "I should be well again

If the good Count would give me —"

COUNT.

Give me.

LADY GIOVANNA.

His falcon.

COUNT (starts back).

My falcon!

LADY GIOVANNA.

Yes, your falcon, Federigo!

COUNT.

Alas, I cannot!

LADY GIOVANNA.

Cannot? Even so!

I fear'd as much. Oh, this unhappy world!

How shall I break it to him? how shall I tell him?

The boy may die: more blessed were the rags

Of some pale beggar-woman seeking alms
For her sick son, if he were like to live,
Than all my childless wealth, if mine
must die.

I was to blame — the love you said you bore me —

My lord, we thank you for your entertainment. *[With a stately curtsey.*

And so return — Heaven help him! — to our son. *[Turns.*

COUNT *(rushes forward).*

Stay stay, I am most unlucky, most unhappy.

You never had look'd on me before, And when you came and dipt your sovereign head

Thro' these low doors, you ask'd to eat with me.

I had but emptiness to set before you, No not a draught of milk, no not an egg, Nothing but my brave bird, my noble falcon,

My comrade of the house, and of the field.

She had to die for it — she died for you. Perhaps I thought with those of old, the nobler

The victim was, the more acceptable Might be the sacrifice. I fear you scarce Will thank me for your entertainment now.

LADY GIOVANNA *(returning).*

I bear with him no longer.

COUNT.

No, Madonna!

And he will have to bear with it as he may.

LADY GIOVANNA.

I break with him for ever!

COUNT.

Yes, Giovanna,

But he will keep his love to you for ever!

LADY GIOVANNA.

You? you? not you! My brother! my hard brother!

O Federigo, Federigo, I love you!
Spite of ten thousand brothers, Federigo.
[Falls at his feet.

COUNT *(impetuously).*

Why then the dying of my noble bird Hath served me better than her living — then

[Takes diamonds from table.

These diamonds are both yours and mine — have won

Their value again — beyond all markets — there

I lay them for the first time round your neck.

[Lays necklace round her neck.

And then this chaplet — No more feuds, but peace,

Peace and conciliation! I will make Your brother love me. See, I tear away The leaves were darken'd by the battle —

[Pulls leaves off and throws them down.

— crown you

Again with the same crown my Queen of Beauty.

[Places wreath on her head.

Rise — I could almost think that the dead garland

Will break once more into the living blossom.

Nay, nay, I pray you rise.

[Raises her with both hands.

We two together

Will help to heal your son — your son and mine —

We shall do it — we shall do it.

[Embraces her.

The purpose of my being is accomplish'd,

And I am happy!

LADY GIOVANNA.

And I too, Federigo

TIRESIAS AND OTHER POEMS.

DEDICATION.

TO MY GOOD FRIEND

ROBERT BROWNING,

WHOSE GENIUS AND GENIALITY WILL BEST APPRECIATE WHAT MAY BE BEST,
AND MAKE MOST ALLOWANCE FOR WHAT MAY BE WORST, THIS VOLUME
IS AFFECTIONATELY DEDICATED.

TO E. FITZGERALD.

OLD FITZ, who from your suburb grange,
Where once I tarried for a while,
Glance at the wheeling Orb of change,
And greet it with a kindly smile ;
Whom yet I see as there you sit
Beneath your sheltering garden-tree,
And watch your doves about you flit,
And plant on shoulder, hand, and knee,
Or on your head their rosy feet,
As if they knew your diet spares
Whatever moved in that full sheet
Let down to Peter at his prayers ;
Who live on milk and meal and grass ;
And once for ten long weeks I tried
Your table of Pythagoras,
And seem'd at first " a thing enskied "
(As Shakespeare has it) airy-light
To float above the ways of men,
Then fell from that half-spiritual height
Chill'd, till I tasted flesh again
One night when earth was winter-black,
And all the heavens flash'd in frost ;
And on me, half-asleep, came back
That wholesome heat the blood had
lost,
And set me climbing icy capes
And glaciers, over which there roll'd
To meet me long-arm'd vines with grapes
Of Eshcol hugeness ; for the cold
Without, and warmth within me, wrought
To mould the dream ; but none can say
That Lenten fare makes Lenten thought,
Who reads your golden Eastern lay,
Than which I know no version done
In English more divinely well ;
A planet equal to the sun
Which cast it, that large infidel
Your Omar and your Omar drew
Full-handed plaudits from our best
In modern letters, and from two,
Old friends outvaluing all the rest,

Two voices heard on earth no more ;
But we old friends are still alive,
And I am nearing seventy-four,
While you have touch'd at seventy-
five,
And so I send a birthday line
Of greeting ; and my son, who dipt
In some forgotten book of mine
With sallow scraps of manuscript,
And dating many a year ago,
Has hit on this, which you will take
My Fitz, and welcome, as I know
Less for its own than for the sake
Of one recalling gracious times,
When, in our younger London days,
You found some merit in my rhymes,
And I more pleasure in your praise.

TIRESIAS.

I WISH I were as in the years of old,
While yet the blessed daylight made it-
self
Ruddy thro' both the roofs of sight, and
woke
These eyes, now dull, but then so keen
to seek
The meanings ambush'd under all they
saw,
The flight of birds, the flame of sacrifice,
What omens may foreshadow fate to
man
And woman, and the secret of the Gods.
My son, the Gods, despite of human
prayer,
Are slower to forgive than human kings.
The great God, Arès, burns in anger
still
Against the guiltless heirs of him from
Tyre,
Our Cadmus, out of whom thou art, who
found

Beside the springs of Dircê, smote, and
still'd

Thro' all its folds the multitudinous
beast,

The Dragon, which our trembling fathers
call'd

The God's own son.

A tale, that told to me,
When but thine age, by age as winter-
white

As mine is now, amazed, but made me
yearn

For larger glimpses of that more than
man

Which rolls the heavens, and lifts, and
lays the deep,

Yet loves and hates with mortal hates
and loves

And moves unseen among the ways of
men.

Then, in my wanderings all the lands
that lie

Subjected to the Heliconian ridge
Have heard this footstep fall, altho' my
wont

Was more to scale the highest of the
heights

With some strange hope to see the nearer
God.

One naked peak—the sister of the
sun

Would climb from out the dark, and
linger there

To silver all the valleys with her shafts—
There once, but long ago, five-fold thy
term

Of years, I lay; the winds were dead for
heat;

The noonday crag made the hand burn;
and sick

For shadow—not one hush was near—
I rose

Following a torrent till its myriad falls
Found silence in the hollows under-
neath.

There in a secret olive-glade I saw
Pallas Athene climbing from the bath
In anger: yet one glittering foot dis-
turb'd

The lucid well; one snowy knee was
prest

Against the margin flowers; a dreadful
light

Came from her golden hair, her golden
helm

And all her golden armor on the grass,
And from her virgin breast, and virgin
eyes

Remaining fixt on mine, till mine grew
dark

For ever, and I heard a voice that said
“Henceforth be blind, for thou hast seen
too much,

And speak the truth that no man may
believe.”

Son, in the hidden world of sight, that
lives

Behind this darkness, I behold her still,
Beyond all work of those who carve the
stone,

Beyond all dreams of Godlike woman-
hood,

Ineffable beauty, out of whom, at a
glance,

And as it were, perforce, upon me flash'd
The power of prophesying—but to me

No power—so chain'd and coupled with
the curse

Of blindness and their unbelief, who
heard

And heard not, when I spake of famine,
plague,

Shrine-shattering earthquake, fire, flood,
thunderbolt,

And angers of the Gods for evil done
And expiation lack'd—no power on

Fate,

Theirs, or mine own! for when the
crowd would roar

For blood, for war, whose issue was their
doom,

To cast wise words among the multitude
Was flinging fruit to lions; nor, in hours

Of civil outbreak, when I knew the twain
Would each waste each, and bring on

both the yoke
Of stronger states, was mine the voice to
curb

The madness of our cities and their
kings.

Who ever turn'd upon his heel to hear
My warning that the tyranny of one

Was prelude to the tyranny of all?
My counsel that the tyranny of all

Led backward to the tyranny of one?
This power hath work'd no good to

ought that lives,
And these blind hands were useless in
their wars.

O therefore that the unfulfill'd desire,
The grief for ever born from griefs to

be,
The boundless yearning of the Prophet's
heart—

Could that stand forth, and like a statue,
rear'd

To some great citizen, win all praise
 from all
 Who past it, saying, "That was he!"
 In vain!
 Virtue must shape itself in deed, and
 those
 Whom weakness or necessity have
 cramp'd
 Within themselves, immersing, each, his
 urn
 In his own well, draw solace as he may.
 Menaceus, thou hast eyes, and I can
 hear
 Too plainly what full tides of onset sap
 Our seven high gates, and what a weight
 of war
 Rides on those ringing axles! jingle of
 bits,
 Shouts, arrows, tramp of the hornfooted
 horse
 That grind the glebe to powder! Stony
 showers
 Of that ear-stunning hail of Arès crash
 Along the sounding walls. Above, below,
 Shock after shock, the song-built towers
 and gates
 Reel, bruised and butted with the shud-
 dering
 War-thunder of iron rams; and from
 within
 The city comes a murmur void of joy,
 Lest she be taken captive—maidens,
 wives,
 And mothers with their babblers of the
 dawn,
 And oldest age in shadow from the
 night,
 Falling about their shrines before their
 Gods,
 And wailing "Save us."
 And they wail to thee!
 These eyless eyes, that cannot see thine
 own,
 See this, that only in thy virtue lies
 The saving of our Thebes; for, yester-
 night,
 To me, the great God Arès, whose one
 bliss
 Is war, and human sacrifice—himself
 Blood-red from battle, spear and helmet
 tip
 With stormy light as on a mast at sea,
 Stood out before a darkness, crying
 "Thebes,
 Thy Thebes shall fall and perish, for I
 loathe
 The seed of Cadmus—yet if one of these
 By his own hand—if one of these"—

My son,
 No sound is breathed so potent to coerce,
 And to conciliate, as their names who
 dare
 For that sweet mother land which gave
 them birth
 Nobly to do, nobly to die. Their names,
 Graven on memorial columns, are a
 song
 Heard in the future; few, but more than
 wall
 And rampart, their examples reach a
 hand
 Far thro' all years, and everywhere they
 taect
 And kindle generous purpose, and the
 strength
 To mould it into action pure as theirs.
 Fairer thy fate than mine, if life's best
 end
 Be to end well! and thou refusing this,
 Unvenerable will thy memory be
 While men shall move the lips; but if
 thou dare.—
 Thou, one of these, the race of Cadmus
 — then
 No stone is fitted in yon marble girth
 Whose echo shall not tongue thy glorious
 doom,
 Nor in this pavement but shall ring thy
 name
 To every hoof that clangs it, and the
 springs
 Of Dirce laving yonder battle-plain,
 Heard from the roofs by night, will mur-
 mur thee
 To thine own Thebes, while Thebes thro'
 thee shall stand
 Firm-based with all her Gods.
 The Dragon's cave
 Half hid, they tell me, now in flowing
 vines—
 Where once he dwelt and whence he
 roll'd himself
 At dead of night—thou knowest, and
 that smooth rock
 Before it, altar-fashion'd where of late
 The woman-breasted Sphinx, with wings
 drawn back,
 Folded her lion paws, and look'd to
 Thebes.
 There blanch the bones of whom she
 slew, and these
 Mixt with her own, because the fierce
 beast found
 A wiser than herself, and dash'd herself
 Dead in her rage: but thou art wise
 enough, -

Tho' young, to love thy wiser, blunt the
 curse
 Of Pallas, hear, and tho' I speak the
 truth
 Believe I speak it, let thine own hand
 strike
 Thy youthful pulses into rest and quench
 The red God's anger, fearing not to
 plunge
 Thy torch of life in darkness, rather —
 thou
 Rejoicing that the sun, the moon, the
 stars
 Send no such light upon the ways of
 men
 As one great deed.

Thither, my son, and there
 Thou, that hast never known the em-
 brace of love,
 Offer thy maiden life.

This useless hand !
 I felt one warm tear fall upon it. Gone!
 He will achieve his greatness.

But for me,
 I would that I were gather'd to my
 rest,
 And mingled with the famous kings of
 old,

On whom about their ocean-islands flash
 The faces of the Gods — the wise man's
 word,
 Here trampled by the populace under-
 foot,

There crown'd with worship — and these
 eyes will find
 The men I knew, and watch the chariot
 • whirl

About the goal again, and hunters race
 The shadowy lion, and the warrior-kings,
 In height and prowess more than human,
 strive

Again for glory, while the golden lyre
 Is ever sounding in heroic ears
 Heroic hymns, and every way the vales
 Wind, clouded with the grateful incense-
 fume

Of those who mix all odor to the Gods
 On one far height in one far-shining
 fire

“ONE height and one far-shining fire :”
 And while I fancied that my friend
 For this brief idyll would require
 A less diffuse and opulent end,
 And would defend his judgment well,
 If I should deem it over nice —

The tolling of his funeral bell
 Broke on my Pagan Paradise,
 And mixt the dream of classic times,
 And all the phantoms of the dream,
 With present grief, and made the rhymes,
 That miss'd his living welcome, seem
 Like would-be guests an hour too late,
 Who down the highway moving on
 With easy laughter find the gate
 Is bolted, and the master gone.
 Gone into darkness, that full light
 Of friendship ! past, in sleep, away
 By night, into the deeper night !
 The deeper night ? A clearer day
 Than our poor twilight dawn on earth —
 If night, what barren toil to be !
 What life, so maim'd by night, were
 worth

Our living out ? Not mine to me
 Remembering all the golden hours
 Now silent, and so many dead,
 And him the last ; and laying flowers,
 This wreath, above his honor'd head,
 And praying that, when I from hence
 Shall fade with him into the unknown,
 My close of earth's experience
 May prove as peaceful as his own.

THE WRECK.

I.

HIDE me, Mother ! my Fathers belong'd
 to the church of old,
 I am driven by storm and sin and death
 to the ancient fold,
 I cling to the Catholic Cross once more,
 to the Faith that saves,
 My brain is full of the crash of wrecks,
 and the roar of waves,
 My life itself is a wreck, I have sullied a
 noble name,
 I am flung from the rushing tide of the
 world as a waif of shame,
 I am roused by the wail of a child, and
 awake to a livid light,
 And a ghastlier face than ever has haunted
 a grave by night,
 I would hide from the storm without, I
 would flee from the storm within,
 I would make my life one prayer for a
 soul that died in his sin,
 I was the tempter, Mother, and mine was
 the deeper fall ;
 I will sit at your feet, I will hide my face,
 I will tell you all.

II.

He that they gave me to, Mother, a heed-
 less and innocent bride —
 I never have wrong'd his heart, I have
 only wounded his pride —
 Spain in his blood and the Jew — dark-
 visaged, stately, and tall —
 A princelier - looking man never stept
 thro' a Prince's hall.
 And who, when his anger was kindled,
 would venture to give him the nay ?
 And a man men fear is a man to be loved
 by the women they say.
 And I could have loved him too, if the
 blossom can doat on the blight,
 Or the young green leaf rejoice in the
 frost that sears it at night ;
 He would open the books that I prized,
 and toss them away with a yawn,
 Repell'd by the magnet of Art to the
 which my nature was drawn,
 The word of the Poet by whom the deeps
 of the world are stirr'd,
 The music that robes it in language be-
 neath and beyond the word !
 My Shelley would fall from my hands
 when he cast a contemptuous
 glance
 From where he was poring over his Tables
 of Trade and Finance ;
 My hands, when I heard him coming,
 would drop from the chords or the
 keys,
 But ever I fail'd to please him, however
 I strove to please —
 All day long far-off in the cloud of the
 city, and there
 Lost, head and heart, in the chances of
 dividend, consol, and share —
 And at home if I sought for a kindly
 caress, being woman and weak,
 His formal kiss fell chill as a flake of
 snow on the cheek :
 And so, when I bore him a girl, when I
 held it aloft in my joy,
 He look'd at it coldly, and said to me
 " Pity it isn't a boy."
 The one thing given me, to love and to
 live for, glanced at in scorn !
 The child that I felt I could die for — as
 if she were basely born !
 I had lived a wild-flower life, I was planted
 now in a tomb ;
 The daisy will shut to the shadow I closed
 my heart to the gloom ;
 I threw myself all abroad — I would play
 my part with the young

By the low foot-lights of the world — and
 I caught the wreath that was flung.

III.

Mother, I have not — however their
 tongues may have babbled of me —
 Sinn'd thro' an animal vileness, for all but
 a dwarf was he,
 And all but a hunchback too ; and I
 look'd at him, first, askance
 With pity — not he the knight for an
 amorous girl's romance !
 Tho' wealthy enough to have bask'd in
 the light of a dowerless smile,
 Having lands at home and abroad in a
 rich West-Indian isle ;
 But I came on him once at a ball, the
 heart of a li-tening crowd —
 Why, what a brow was there ! he was
 seated — speaking aloud
 To women, the flower of the time, and
 men at the helm of state —
 Flowing with easy greatness and touching
 on all things great, —
 Science, philosophy, song — till I felt
 myself ready to weep
 For I knew not what, when I heard that
 voice, — as mellow and deep
 As a psalm by a mighty master and peal'd
 from an organ, — roll
 Rising and falling — for, Mother, the
 voice was the voice of the soul,
 And the sun of the soul made day in the
 dark of his wonderful eyes
 Here was the hand that would help me,
 would heal me — the heart that
 was wise !
 And he, poor man, when he learnt that
 I hated the ring I wore,
 He helpt me with death, and he heal'd
 me with sorrow for evermore.

IV.

For I broke the bond. That day my
 nurse had brought me the child.
 The small sweet face was flush'd, but it
 coo'd to the Mother and smiled.
 " Anything ailing," I ask'd her, " with
 baby ?" She shook her head,
 And the Motherless Mother kiss'd it, and
 turr'd in her haste and fled.

V.

Low warm winds had gently breathed us
 away from the land —

Ten long sweet summer days upon deck,
 sitting hand in hand —
 When he clothed a naked mind with the
 wisdom and wealth of his own,
 And I bow'd myself down as a slave to
 his intellectual throne,
 When he coin'd into English gold some
 treasure of classical song,
 When he flouted a statesman's error, or
 flamed at a public wrong,
 When he rose as it were on the wings of
 an eagle beyond me, and past
 Over the range and the change of the
 world from the first to the last,
 When he spoke of his tropical home in
 the canes by the purple tide,
 And the high star-crowns of his palms on
 the deep-wooded mountain-side,
 And cliffs all robed in lianas that dropt
 to the brink of his bay,
 And trees like the towers of a minster,
 the sons of a winterless day.
 "Paradise there!" so he said, but I
 seem'd in Paradise then
 With the first great love I had felt for
 the first and greatest of men,
 Ten long days of summer and sin — if it
 must be so —
 But days of a larger light than I ever
 again shall know —
 Days that will glimmer, I fear, thro' life
 to my latest breath;
 "No frost there," so he said, "as in truest
 Love no Death."

VI.

Mother, one morning a bird with a warble
 plaintively sweet
 Perch'd on the shrouds, and then fell
 fluttering down at my feet;
 I took it, he made it a cage, we fondled
 it, Stephen and I,
 But it died, and I thought of the child
 for a moment, I scarce know why.

VII.

But if sin be sin, not inherited fate, as
 many will say,
 My sin to my desolate little one found me
 at sea on a day,
 When her orphan wail came borne in the
 shriek of a growing wind,
 And a voice rang out in the thunders of
 Ocean and Heaven "Thou hast
 sinn'd."

And down in the cabin were we, for the
 towering crest of the tides
 Plunged on the vessel and swept in a
 cataract off from her sides,
 And ever the great storm grew with a
 howl and a hoot of the blast
 In the rigging, voices of hell — then came
 the crash of the mast.
 "The wages of sin is death," and then I
 began to weep.
 "I am the Jonah, the crew should cast
 me into the deep,
 For ah God, what a heart was mine to
 forsake her even for you."
 "Never the heart among women," he said,
 "more tender and true."
 "The heart! not a mother's heart, when
 I left my darling alone."
 "Comfort yourself, for the heart of the
 father will care for his own."
 "The heart of the father will spurn her,"
 I cried, "for the sin of the wife,
 The cloud of the mother's shame will
 enfold her and darken her life."
 Then his pale face twitch'd; "O Stephen,
 I love you, I love you, and yet" —
 As I lean'd away from his arms — "would
 God, we had never met!"
 And he spoke not — only the storm; till
 after a little, I yearn'd
 For his voice again, and he call'd to me
 "Kiss me!" and there — as I
 turn'd —
 "The heart, the heart!" I kiss'd him, I
 clung to the sinking form,
 And the storm went roaring above us,
 and he — was out of the storm.

VIII.

And then, then, Mother, the ship stag-
 ger'd under a thunderous shock,
 That shook us asunder, as if she had
 struck and crash'd on a rock;
 For a huge sea smote every soul from the
 decks of The Falcon but one;
 All of them, all but the man that was
 lash'd to the helm had gone;
 And I fell — and the storm and the days
 went by, but I knew no more —
 Lost myself — lay like the dead by the
 dead on the cabin floor,
 Dead to the death beside me, and lost to
 the loss that was mine,
 With a dim dream, now and then, of a
 hand giving bread and wine,
 Till I woke from the trance, and the ship
 stood still, and the skies were blue,

But the face I had known, O Mother, was
not the face that I knew.

IX.

The strange mis-featuring mask that I saw
so amazed me, that I
Stumbled on deck, half mad. I would
fling myself over and die!
But one — he was waving a flag — the
one man left on the wreck —
‘Woman’ — he graspt at my arm —
“stay there” — I crouch’d on the
deck —
“We are sinking, and yet there’s hope:
look yonder,” he cried, “a sail,”
In a tone so rough that I broke into pas-
sionate tears, and the wail
Of a beaten babe, till I saw that a boat
was nearing us — then
All on a sudden I thought, I shall look on
the child again.

X.

They lower’d me down the side, and
there in the boat I lay
With sad eyes fixt on the lost sea-home,
as we glided away,
And I sigh’d, as the low dark hull dipt
under the smiling main,
“Had I stay’d with *him*, I had now —
with *him* — been out of my pain.”

XI.

They took us aboard; the crew were
gentle, the captain kind;
But I was the lonely slave of an often-
wandering mind;
For whenever a rougher gust might
tumble a stormier wave,
“O Stephen,” I moan’d, “I am coming to
thee in thine Ocean-grave.”
And again, when a balmier breeze curl’d
over a peacefuller sea,
I found myself moaning again “O child,
I am coming to thee.”

XII.

The broad white brow of the Isle — that
bay with the color’d sand —
Rich was the rose of sunset there, as we
drew to the land;
Ail so quiet the ripple would hardly
blanch into spray

At the feet of the cliff; and I pray’d —
“my child” — for I still could
pray —

“May her life be as blissfully calm, be
never gloom’d by the curse
Of a sin, not hers!”

Was it well with the child?

I wrote to the nurse
Who had borne my flower on her hireling
heart; and an answer came
Not from the nurse — nor yet to the wife
— to her maiden name!

I shook as I open’d the letter — I knew
that hand too well —

And from it a scrap, elipt out of the
“deaths” in a paper, fell.

“Ten long sweet summer days” of fever,
and want of care!

And gone — that day of the storm — O
Mother, she came to me there.

THE ANCIENT SAGE.

A THOUSAND summers ere the time of
Christ

From out his ancient city came a Seer
Whom one that loved, and honor’d him,
and yet

Was no disciple, richly garb’d, but worn
From wasteful living, follow’d — in his
hand

A scroll of verse — till that old man
before

A cavern whence an affluent fountain
pour’d

From darkness into daylight, turn’d and
spoke.

This wealth of waters might but seem to
draw

From yon dark cave, but, son, the source
is higher,

You summit half-a-league in air — and
higher,

The cloud that hides it — higher still, the
heavens

Whereby the cloud was moulded, and
whereout

The cloud descended. Force is from the
heights.

I am wearied of our city, son, and go
To spend my one last year among the
hills.

What hast thou there? Some deathsong
for the Ghouls

To make their banquet relish? let me
read.

“How far thro’ all the bloom and brake
That nightingale is heard!
What power but the bird’s could make
This music in the bird?
How summer-bright are yonder skies,
And earth as fair in hue!
And yet what sign of aught that lies
Behind the green and blue?
But man to-day is fancy’s fool
As man hath ever been.
The nameless Power, or Powers, that rule
Were never heard or seen.”

If thou would’st hear the Nameless, and
wilt dive
Into the Temple-cave of thine own self,
There, brooding by the central altar, thou
May’st haply learn the Nameless hath a
voice,
By which thou wilt abide, if thou be wise,
As if thou knewest, tho’ thou canst not
know;
For Knowledge is the swallow on the lake
That sees and stirs the surface-shadow
there
But never yet hath dipt into the abysm,
The Abysm of all Abysms, beneath,
within
The blue of sky and sea, the green of
earth,
And in the million-millionth of a grain
Which cleft and cleft again for evermore,
And ever vanishing, never vanishes,
To me, my son, more mystic than myself,
Or even than the Nameless is to me.

And when thou sedest thy free soul
thro’ heaven,
Nor understandest bound nor boundless-
ness,
Thou seest the Nameless of the hundred
names.

And if the Nameless should withdraw
from all
Thy frailty counts most real, all thy
world
Might vanish like thy shadow in the
dark

‘And since — from when this earth
began —
The Nameless never came
Among us, never spake with man,
And never named the Name’ —

Thou canst not prove the Nameless, O
my son,
Nor canst thou prove the world thou
movest in,

Thou canst not prove that thou art body
alone,
Nor canst thou prove that thou art spirit
alone,
Nor canst thou prove that thou art both
in one:
Thou canst not prove thou art immortal,
no
Nor yet that thou art mortal — nay my
son,
Thou canst not prove that I, who speak
with thee,
Am not thyself in converse with thyself,
For nothing worthy proving can be
proven,
Nor yet disproven: wherefore thou be
wise,
Cleave ever to the sunnier side of doubt,
And cling to Faith beyond the forms of
Faith!
She reels not in the storm of warring
words,
She brightens at the clash of “Yes” and
“No,”
She sees the Best that glimmers thro’ the
Worst,
She feels the Sun is hid but for a night,
She spies the summer thro’ the winter
bud,
She tastes the fruit before the blossom
falls,
She hears the lark within the songless egg,
She finds the fountain where they wail’d
“Mirage”!

“What Power? aught akin to Mind,
The mind in me and you?
Or power as of the Gods gone blind
Who see not what they do?”

But some in yonder city hold, my son,
That none but Gods could build this
house of ours,
So beautiful, vast, various, so beyond
All work of man, yet, like all work of
man,
A beauty with defect — till That which
knows,
And is not known, but felt thro’ what we
feel
Within ourselves is highest, shall descend
On this half-deed, and shape it at the last
According to the Highest in the Highest

“What Power but the Years that make
And break the vase of clay,
And stir the sleeping earth, and wake
The bloom that fades away?”

What rulers but the Days and Hours
That cancel weal with woe,
And wind the front of youth with flowers,
And cap our age with snow ? ”

The days and hours are ever glancing
by,
And seem to flicker past thro' sun and
shade,
Or short, or long, as Pleasure leads, or
Pain ;
But with the Nameless is nor Day nor
Hour ;
Tho' we, thin minds, who creep from
thought to thought
Break into “ Thens ” and “ Whens ” the
Eternal Now :
This double seeming of the single
world ! —
My words are like the babblings in a
dream
Of nightmare, when the babblings break
the dream.
But thou be wise in this dream-world of
ours,
Nor take thy dial for thy deity,
But make the passing shadow serve thy
will.

“ The years that made the stripling wise
Undo their work again,
And leave him, blind of heart and eyes,
The last and least of men ;
Who elings to earth, and once would
dare
Hell-heat or Arctic cold,
And now one breath of cooler air
Would loose him from his hold ;
His winter chills him to the root,
He withers marrow and mind ;
The kernel of the shrivell'd fruit
Is jutting thro' the rind ;
The tiger spasms tear his chest,
The palsy wags his head ;
The wife, the sons, who love him best
Would fain that he were dead ;
The griefs by which he once was wrung
Were never worth the while ” —

Who knows ? or whether this earth-nar-
row life
Be yet but yolk, and forming in the
shell ?

“ The shaft of scorn that once had stung
But wakes a dotard smile.”

The placid gleam of sunset after storm !

“ The statesman's brain that sway'd the
past
Is feebler than his knees ;
The passive sailor wrecks at last
In ever-silent seas ;
The warrior hath forgot his arms,
The Learned all his lore ;
The changing market frets or charms
The merchant's hope no more ;
The prophet's beacon burn'd in vain,
And now is lost in cloud ;
The ploughman passes, bent with pain
To mix with what he plough'd ;
The poet whom his Age would quote
As heir of endless fame —
He knows not ev'n the book he wrote,
Not even his own name.
For man has overlived his day,
And, darkening in the light,
Scarcely feels the senses break away
To mix with ancient Night.”

The shell must break before the bird can
fly.

“ The years that when my Youth began
Had set the lily and rose
By all my ways where'er they ran,
Have ended mortal foes ;
My rose of love for ever gone,
My lily of truth and trust —
They made her lily and rose in one,
And changed her into dust.
O rose-tree planted in my grief,
And growing, on her tomb,
Her dust is greening in your leaf,
Her blood is in your bloom.
O slender lily waving there,
And laughing back the light,
In vain you tell me ‘ Earth is fair,’
When all is dark as night.”

My son, the world is dark with griefs
and graves,
So dark that men cry out against the
Heavens.
Who knows but that the darkness is ir-
man ?
The doors of Night may be the gates of
Light ;
For wert thou born or blind or deaf, and
then
Suddenly heal'd, how would'st thou glory
in all
The splendors and the voices of the
world !
And we, the poor earth's dying race, and
yet

No phantoms, watching from a phantom shore

Await the last and largest sense to make
The phantom walls of this illusion fade,
And show us that the world is wholly fair.

‘But vain the tears for darken’d years
As laughter over wine,
And vain the laughter as the tears,
O brother, mine or thine,
For all that laugh, and all that weep,
And all that breathe are one
Slight ripple on the boundless deep
That moves, and all is gone.’

But that one ripple on the boundless deep
Feels that the deep is boundless, and
itself
For ever changing form, but evermore
One with the boundless motion of the deep.

“Yet wine and laughter friends! and set
The lamps alight, and call
For golden music, and forget
The darkness of the pall.”

If utter darkness closed the day, my son —
But earth’s dark forehead flings athwart
the heavens
Her shadow crown’d with stars — and
yonder — out
To northward — some that never set, but
pass
From sight and night to lose themselves
in day.
I hate the black negation of the bier,
And wish the dead, as happier than our-
selves
And higher, having climb’d one step be-
yond
Our village miseries, might be borne in
white
To burial or to burning. hymn’d from
hence
With songs in praise of death, and
crown’d with flowers!

“O worms and maggots of to day
Without their hope of wings!”

But louder than thy rhyme the silent
Word
Of that world - prophet in the heart of
man.

“Tho’ some have gleams or so they say
Of more than mortal things.”

To-day? but what of yesterday? for oft
On me, when boy, there came what then
I call’d,

Who knew no books and no philosophies,
In my boy-phrase “The Passion of the
Past.”

The first gray streak of earliest summer-
dawn,

The last long stripe of waning crimson
gloom,

As if the late and early were but one —
A height, a broken grange, a grove, a
flower

Had murmurs “Lost and gone and lost
and gone!”

A breath, a whisper — some divine fare-
well —

Desolate sweetness — far and far away —
What had he loved, what had he lost,
the boy?

I know not and I speak of what has been.

And more, my son! for more than
once when I

Sat all alone, revolving in myself

The word that is the symbol of myself,
The mortal limit of the Self was loosed,
And past into the Nameless, as a cloud
Melts into Heaven. I touch’d my limbs,
the limbs

Were strange not mine — and yet no
shade of doubt,

But utter clearness, and thro’ loss of Self
The gain of such large life as match’d
with ours

Were Sun to spark — unshadowable in
words,

Themselves but shadows of a shadow-
world.

“And idle gleams will come and go,
But still the clouds remain;”

The clouds themselves are children of
the Sun.

“And Night and Shadow rule below
When only Day should reign.”

And Day and Night are children of the
Sun,

And idle gleams to thee are light to me.
Some say, the Light was father of the
Night,

And some, the Night was father of the
Light.

No night no day! — I touch thy world
 again —
 No ill no good! such counter-terms, my
 son,
 Are border-races, holding, each its own
 By endless war; but night enough is
 there
 In yon dark city: get thee back: and
 since
 The key to that weird casket, which for
 thee
 But holds a skull, is neither thine nor
 mine,
 But in the hand of what is more than
 man,
 Or in man's hand when man is more
 than man,
 Let be thy wail and help thy fellow-men,
 And make thy gold thy vassal not thy
 king,
 And fling free alms into the beggar's
 bowl,
 And send the day into the darken'd
 heart;
 Nor list for guerdon in the voice of men,
 A dying echo from a falling wall;
 Nor care — for Hunger hath the Evil
 eye —
 To vex the noon with fiery gems, or fold
 Thy presence in the silk of sumptuous
 looms;
 Nor roll thy viands on a luscious
 tongue,
 Nor drown thyself with flies in honied
 wine;
 Nor thou be rageful, like a handled bee,
 And lose thy life by usage of thy sting;
 Nor harm an adder thro' the lust for
 harm,
 Nor make a snail's horn shrink for wan-
 tonness,
 And more — think well! Do-well will
 follow thought,
 And in the fatal sequence of this world
 An evil thought may soil thy children's
 blood;
 But curb the beast would cast thee in the
 mire,
 And leave the hot swamp of voluptuous-
 ness
 A cloud between the Nameless and thy-
 self,
 And lay thine uphill shoulder to the
 wheel,
 And climb the Mount of Blessing, whence,
 if thou
 Look higher, then — perchance — thou
 mayest — beyond

A hundred ever-rising mountain lines,
 And past the range of Night and Shadow
 — see
 The high-heaven dawn of more than
 mortal day
 Strike on the Mount of Vision!
 So, farewell.

THE FLIGHT.

I.

ARE you sleeping? have you forgotten?
 do not sleep, my sister dear!
 How *can* you sleep? the morning brings
 the day I hate and fear;
 The cock has crow'd already once, he
 crows before his time;
 Awake! the creeping glimmer steals, the
 hills are white with rime.

II.

Ah, clasp me in your arms, sister, ah, fold
 me to your breast!
 Ah, let me weep my fill once more, and
 cry myself to rest!
 To rest? to rest and wake no more were
 better rest for me,
 Than to waken every morning to that
 face I loathe to see:

III.

I envied your sweet slumber, all night so
 calm you lay,
 The night was calm, the morn is calm,
 and like another day;
 But I could wish yon moaning sea would
 rise and burst the shore,
 And such a whirlwind blow these woods,
 as never blew before.

IV.

For, one by one, the stars went down
 across the gleaming pane,
 And project after project rose, and all of
 them were vain;
 The blackthorn-blossom fades and falls
 and leaves the bitter sloe,
 The hope I catch at vanishes and youth
 is turn'd to woe.

V.

Come, speak a little comfort! all night I
 pray'd with tears,
 And yet no comfort came to me, and now
 the morn appears,
 When he will tear me from your side, who
 bought me for his slave:
 This father pays his debt with me, and
 weds me to my grave.

VI.

What father, this or mine, was he, who,
 on that summer day
 When I had fall'n from off the crag we
 clamber'd up in play,
 Found, fear'd me dead, and groan'd, and
 took and kiss'd me, and again
 He kiss'd me; and I loved him then; he
 was my father then.

VII.

No father now, the tyrant vassal of a
 tyrant vice!
 The Godless Jephtha vows his child . . .
 to one cast of the dice.
 These ancient woods, this Hall at last will
 go — perhaps have gone,
 Except his own meek daughter yield her
 life, heart, soul to one —

VIII.

To one who knows I scorn him. O the
 formal mocking bow,
 The cruel smile, the courtly phrase that
 masks his malice now —
 But often in the sidelong eyes a gleam of
 all things ill —
 It is not Love but Hate that weds a bride
 against her will;

IX.

Hate, that would pluck from this true
 breast the locket that I wear,
 The precious crystal into which I braided
 Edwin's hair!
 The love that keeps this heart alive beats
 on it night and day —
 One golden curl, his golden gift, before
 he past away.

X.

He left us weeping in the woods; his
 boat was on the sand;
 How slowly down the rocks he went, how
 loth to quit the land!
 And all my life was darken'd, as I saw
 the white sail run,
 And darken, up that lane of light into the
 setting sun.

XI.

How often have we watch'd the sun fade
 from us thro' the West,
 And follow Edwin to those isles, those
 islands of the Blest!
 Is *he* not there? would I were there, the
 friend, the bride, the wife,
 With him, where summer never dies, with
 Love, the Sun of life!

XII.

O would I were in Edwin's arms — once
 more — to feel his breath
 Upon my cheek — on Edwin's ship, with
 Edwin, ev'n in death,
 Tho' all about the shuddering wreck the
 death-white sea should rave,
 Or if lip were laid to lip on the pillows of
 the wave.

XIII.

Shall I take *him*? I kneel with *him*? I
 swear and swear forsworn
 To love him most, whom most I loathe,
 to honor whom I scorn?
 The Fiend would yell, the grave would
 yawn, my mother's ghost would
 rise —
 To lie, to lie — in God's own house — the
 blackest of all lies

XIV.

Why — rather than that hand in mine,
 tho' every pulse would freeze,
 I'd sooner fold an icy corpse dead of
 some foul disease:
 Wed him? I will not wed him, let them
 spurn me from the doors,
 And I will wander till I die about the
 barren moors.

XV.

The dear, mad bride who stabb'd her
bridegroom on her bridal night —
If mad, then I am mad, but sane, if she
were in the right.
My father's madness makes me mad —
but words are only words!
I am not mad, not yet, not quite — There!
listen how the birds

XVI.

Begin to warble yonder in the budding
orchard trees!
The lark has past from earth to heaven
upon the morning breeze!
How gladly, were I one of those, how
early would I wake!
And yet the sorrow that I bear is sorrow
for *his* sake.

XVII.

They love their mates, to whom they
sing; or else their songs, that
meet
The morning with such music, would
never be so sweet!
And tho' these fathers will not hear, the
blessed Heavens are just,
And Love is fire, and burns the feet would
trample it to dust.

XVIII.

A door was open'd in the house — who?
who? my father sleeps!
A stealthy foot upon the stair! he —
some one — this way creeps!
If he? yes, he . . . lurks, listens, fears
his victim may have fled —
He! where is some sharp-pointed thing?
he comes, and finds me dead.

XIX.

Not he, not yet! and time to act — but
how my temples burn!
And idle fancies flutter me, I know not
where to turn;
Speak to me, sister; counsel me; this
marriage must not be.
You only know the love that makes the
world a world to me!

XX.

Our gentle mother, had *she* lived — but
we were left alone:
That other left us to ourselves; he cared
not for his own;
So all the summer long we roam'd in
these wild woods of ours,
My Edwin loved to call us then "His
two wild woodland flowers."

XXI.

Wild flowers blowing side by side in
God's free light and air,
Wild flowers of the secret woods, when
Edwin found us there,
Wild woods in which we roved with him,
and leard his passionate vow,
Wild woods in which we rove no more, if
we be parted now!

XXII.

You will not leave me thus in grief to
wander forth forlorn;
We never changed a bitter word, not one
since we were born;
Our dying mother join'd our hands; she
knew this father well;
She bade us love, like souls in heaven, and
now I fly from hell,

XXIII.

And you with me; and we shall light
upon some lonely shore,
Some lodge within the waste sea-dunes,
and hear the waters roar,
And see the ships from out the West go
dipping thro' the foam,
And sunshine on that sail at last which
brings our Edwin home.

XXIV.

But look, the morning grows apace, and
lights the old church-tower,
And lights the clock! the hand points
five — O me — it strikes the
hour —
I bide no more, I meet my fate, whatever
ills betide!
Arise, my own true sister, come forth!
the world is wide.

XXV.

And yet my heart is ill at ease, my eyes
are dim with dew,
I seem to see a new-dug grave up yonder
by the yew !
If we should never more return, but
wander hand in hand
With breaking hearts, without a friend,
and in a distant land.

XXVI.

O sweet, they tell me that the world is
hard, and harsh of mind,
But can it be so hard, so harsh, as those
that should be kind ?
That matters not: let come what will ;
at last the end is sure,
And every heart that loves with truth is
equal to endure.

TO-MORROW.

I.

HER, that yer Honor was spakin' to ?
Whin, yer Honor ? last year —
Standin' here be the bridge, when last
yer Honor was here ?
An' yer Honor ye gev her the top of the
mornin', "To-morra," says she.
What did they call her, yer Honor ?
They call'd her Molly Magee.
An' yer Honor's the thruc ould blood
that always manes to be kind,
But there 's rason in all things, yer
Honor, for Molly was out of her
mind.

II.

Shure, an' meself remimbers wan night
comin' down be the shtrame,
An' it seems to me now like a bit of
yisther-day in a dhrame —
Here where yer Honor seen her — there
was but a slip of a moon,
But I hard thin — Molly Magee wid her
batchelor, Danny O'Roon —
"You 've been takin' a dhrop o' the
cratnur," an' Danny says, "Troth,
an' I been

Dhrinkin' yer health wid Shamus O'Shea
at Katty's shebeen ; *
But I must be lavin' ye soon." "Ochone
are ye goin' away ?" —
"Goin' to cut the Sassenach whate," he
says, "over the say" —
"An' whin will ye meet me agin ?" an'
I hard him, "Molly asthore,
I 'll meet you agin to-morra," says he
"be the chapel-door."
"An' whin are ye goin' to lave me ?"
"O' Monday mornin'" says he ;
"An' shure thin ye 'll meet me to-morra ?"
"To-morra, to-morra, Machree !"
Thin Molly's ould mother, yer Honor,
that had no likin' for Dan,
Call'd from her cabin an' tould her to
come away from the man,
An' Molly Magee kem flyin' across me, as
light as a lark,
An' Dan stood there for a minute, an'
thin wint into the dark.
But wirrah ! the storm that night — the
tundher, an' rain that fell,
An' the shtrames runnin' down at the
back o' the glin 'ud 'a dhrownded
hell.

III.

But airth was at pacc nixt mornin', an'
Hiven in its glory smiled,
As the Holy Mother o' Glory that smiles
at her sleepin' child —
Ethen — she stept an the chapel-green,
an' she turnd herself roun'
Wid a diamond dhrop in her eye, for
Danny was not to be foun',
An' many 's the time that I watch'd her
at mass lettin' down the tear,
For the Divil a Danny was there, yer
Honor, for forty year.

IV.

Och, Molly Magee, wid the red o' the
rose an' the white o' the May,
An' yer hair as black as the night, an
yer eyes as bright as the day !
Achora, yer laste little wishper was
sweet as the lilt of a bird !
Acushla, ye set me heart batin' to music
wid ivery word !
An' sorra the Queen wid her sceptre in
sich an illigant han',

* Grog-shop.

An' the fall of yer foot in the dance was
as light as snow an the lan',
An' the sun kem out of a cloud whiniver
ye walkt in the shreet,
An' Shamus O'Shea was yer shadda, an'
laid himself undher yer feet,
An' I loved ye meself wid a heart and a
half, me darlin', and he
'Ud 'a shot his own sowl dead for a kiss
of ye, Molly Magee.

v.

But shure we wor betther frinds whin I
crack'd his skull for her sake,
An' he ped me back wid the best he
could give at onld Donovan's
wake —
For the boys wor about her agin whin
Dan did n't come to the fore,
An' Shamus along wid the rest, but she
put thim all to the door.
An', afther, I thried her meself av the
bird 'ud come to me call,
But Molly, begorrah, 'ud listhen to
naither at all, at all.

vi.

An' her nabours an' frinds 'ud consowl
an' coudowl wid her, airy and
late,
"Your Danny," they says, "niver crasst
over say to the Sassenach whate;
He's gone to the States, aroon, an' he's
married another wife,
An' ye'll niver set eyes an the face of the
thraithur agin in life!
An' to dhrame of a married man, death
alive, is a mortal sin."
But Molly says, "I'd his hand-promise,
an' shure he'll meet me agin."

vii.

An' afther her paärints had inter'd glory,
an' both in wan day,
She began to spake to herself, the cra-
thur, an' wishper, an' say,
"To-morra, To-morra!" an' Father Mo-
lowny he tk her in ban',
"Molly, you're man'n," he says, "me
dear, av I rædherstan',
That ye'll mee' your paärints agin an'
yer Danny O'Roon afore God,

Wid his blessed Marthyrs an' Saints;"
an' she gev him a frindly nod,
"To-morra, To-morra," she says, an' she
did n't intind to desave,
But her wits wor dead, an' her hair was
as white as the snow an a grave.

viii.

Arrah now, here last month they wor
diggin' the bog, an' they fonn'
Dhrownded in black bog-wather a corp
lyin' undher groun'.

ix.

Yer Honor's own agint, he says to me
wanst, at Katty's shebeen,
"The Devil take all the black lan', for a
blessin' 'ud come wid the green!"
An' where 'ud the poor man, thim, cut
his bit o' turf for the fire?
But och! bad scran to the bogs whin
they swallies the man intire!
An' sorra the bog that's in liven wid all
the light an' the glow,
An' there's hate enough, shure, widout
thim in the Devil's kitchen below.

x.

Thim ould blind nagers in Agypt, I hard
his Riverence say,
Could keep their haiten kings in the
flesh for the Jidgemint day,
An', faix, be the piper o' Moses, they kep
the cat an' the dog,
But it 'ud 'a been aisier work av they
lived be an Irish bog.

xi.

How-an-iver they laid this body they
foun' an the grass
Be the chapel-door, an' the people 'ud see
it that went into mass —
But a frish generation had riz, an' most
of the ould was few,
An' I did n't know him meself, an' nōne
of the parish knew.

xii.

But Molly kem limpin' up wid her stick,
she was lamed iv a knee,

Thin a slip of a gossoon call'd, "Div ye
know him, Molly Magee?"
An' she stood up strait as the Queen of
the world — she lifted her head —
"He said he would meet me to-morra!"
an' dhropt down dead an' the dead.

XIII.

Och, Molly, we thought, machree, ye
would start back agin into life,
Whin we laid yez, aich be aich, at yer
wake like husban' an' wife.
Sorra the dhry eye thin but was wet for
the frinds that was gone!
Sorra the silent throat but we hard it
cryin' "Oehone!"
An' Shamus O'Shea that has now ten
childer, handsome an' tall,
Him an' his childer wor keenin' as if he
had lost thim all.

XIV.

Thin his Riverence buried thim both in
wan grave be the deal boor-tree,*
The young man Danny O'Roon wid his
ould woman, Molly Magee.

XV.

May all the flowers o' Jeroosilim blossom
an' spring from the grass,
Imbrashin' an' kissin' aich other — as ye
did — over yer Crass!
An' the lark fly out o' the flowers wid his
song to the Sun an' the Moon,
An' tell thim in Hiven about Molly Magee
an' her Danny O'Roon,
Till Holy St. Pether gets up wid his kays
an' opens the gate!
An' shure, be the Crass, that's bether
nor cuntin' the Sassenach whate
To be there wid the Blessed Mother, an'
Saints an' Marthyrs galore,
An' singin' yer "Aves" an' "Pathers"
for iver an' ivermore.

XVI.

An' now that I tould yer Honor whatever
I hard an' seen,
Yer Honor 'ill give me a thrife to dhrink
yer health in potheen.

* Elder-tree.

THE SPINSTER'S SWEET-ARTS.

I.

MILK for my sweet-arts, Bess: fur it mun
be the time about now
When Molly cooms in fro' the far-end
close wi' her paäils fro' the cow.
Eh! tha be new to the plaäce — thou 're
gaäpin' — does n't tha see
I calls 'em arter the fellers es once was
sweet upo' me?

II.

Naäy to be sewer it be past 'er time.
What maäkes 'er sa laäite?
Goä to the laäne at the back, an' looök
thruf Maddison's gaäite!

III.

Sweet-arts! Molly belike may 'a lighted
to-night upo' one.
Sweet-arts! thanks to the Lord that I
niver not listen'd to noän!
So I sits i' my oän armchair wi' my oän
kettle theere o' the hob,
An' Tommy the fust, an' Tommy the
second, an' Steevie an' Rob.

IV.

Rob, coom oop 'ere o' my knee. Thou
sees that i' spite o' the men
I 'a kep' thruf thick an' thin my two
'oonderd a-year to mysen;
Yis! thaw tha call'd me es pretty es
ony lass i' the Shere,
An' thou be es pretty a Tabby, but Robby
I seed thruf ya theere.

V.

Feyther 'nd saäy I wur ugly as sin, an'
I beänt not vään,
But I niver wur downright hugly, thaw
soom 'nd 'a thowt ma plaäin,
An' I was n't sa plaäin i' pink ribbons, ye
said I wur pretty i' pinks,
An' I liked to 'ear it I did, but I beänt
sieh a fool as ye thinks;
Ye was stroäkin ma down wi' the 'air, as
I be astroäkin o' yon,

But whiniver I looök'd i' the glass I wur
sewer that it could n't be true;
Niver wur pretty, not I, but ye knaw'd
it wur pleasant to 'ear,
Thaw it warn't not me es wur pretty, but
my two 'oonderd a-year.

VI.

D' ya mind the murri'n' when we was
a-walkin' together, an' stood
By the claäy'd-ooop pond, that the föölk
be sa scared at, i' Gigglesby wood,
Wheer the poor wench drownid hersen,
black Sal, es 'ed been disgraaced ?
An' I feel'd thy arm es I stood wur
a-creeäpin' about my wääist ;
An' me es wur allus afeard' of a man's
gittin' ower fond,
I sidled awaäy an' awaäy till I plumpt
foot fast i' the pond ;
And, Robby, I niver 'a liked tha sa well,
as I did that daäy,
Fur tha joompt in thysen, an' tha hoickt
my feet wi' a flop fro' the claäy.
Ay, stiek oop thy back, an' set oop thy
taäil, tha may gie ma a kiss,
Fur I walk'd wi' tha all the way hoam an'
wur niver sa nigh saäyin' Yis.
But wa boäth was i' sich a clat we was
shaämed to cross Gigglesby Greeän,
Fur a cat may looök at a king thou knaws
but the cat mun be cleän.
Sa we boäth on us kep out o' sight o' the
winders o' Gigglesby Hinn —
Naäy, but the claws o' tha ! quiet ! they
pricks cleän thruf to the skin —
An' wa boäth slinkt 'oäm by the brokken
shed i' the laäne at the back,
Wheer the poodle runn'd at tha' once,
an' thou runn'd oop o' the thack ;
An' tha squeeze'd my 'and i' the shed,
fur there we was forced to 'ide,
Fur I seed that Steevie wur coomin', and
one o' the Tommies beside.

VII.

Theere now, what art'a mewin at,
Steevie ? for owt I can tell —
Robby wur fust to be sewer, or I mowt
'a liked tha as well.

VIII.

But, Robby, I thowt o' tha all the while I
wur chaängin' my goun,

An' I thowt shall I chaänge my staäte ?
but, O Lord, upo' coomin' down —
My bran-new carpet es fresh es a midder
o' flowers i' Maäy —
Why 'ed n't tha wiped thy shoes ? it wur
clatted all ower wi' claäy.
An' I could 'a cried ammost, fur I seed
that it could n't be,
An' Robby I gie'd tha a raäin that sattled
thy coortin o' me.
An' Melly an' me was agreed, as we was
a-cleänin' the floor,
That a man be a dirty thing an' a trouble
an' plague wi' indoor.
But I rued it arter a bit, fur I stuck to
tha more na the rest,
But I could n't 'a lived wi' a man an' I
knaws it be all fur the best.

IX.

Naäy — let ma stroök tha down till I
maäkes tha as smooth as silk,
But if I 'ed married tha, Robby, thou 'd
not 'a been worth thy milk,
Thou 'd niver 'a coteh'd ony mice but 'a
left me the work to do,
And 'a taäen to the bottle beside, so es all
that I 'ears be true ;
But I loovs tha to maäke thysen 'appy,
an' soa purr awaäy, my dear,
Thou 'ed wellnigh purr'd ma awaäy fro'
my oän two 'oonderd a-year.

X.

Sweärin agean, you Toms, as ye used to
do twelve years sin' !
Ye niver 'eärd Steevie sweär 'cep' it wur
at a dog coomin' in.
An' boath o' ye mun be fools to be hallus
a-shawin' your claws,
Fur I niver cared nothik for neither —
an' one o' ye deäid ye knaws !
Coom giv hoäver then, weant ye ? I
warrant ye soom fine daäy —
Theere, lig down — I shall hev to gie one
or tother awaäy.
Can't ye taäke pattern by Steevie ? ye
shant hev a drop fro' the paäil.
Steevie be right good manners bang thruf
to the tip o' the taäil.

XI.

Robby, git down wi' tha, wilt tha ? let
Steevie coom oop o' my knee.

Steevie, my lad, thou 'ed very nigh been
the Steevie fur me!
Robby wur bust to be sewer, 'e wur burn
an' fured i' the 'ouse,
But thou be es 'ansom a tabby as iver
patted a mouse

XII.

An' I beänt not vaäin, but I knaws I 'ed
led tha a quieter life
Nor her wi' the hepitaph yonder! "A
faäithful an' loovin' wife!"
An' 'cos o' thy farm by the beck, an' thy
windmill oop o' the croft,
Tha thowt tha would marry ma, did
tha? but that wur a bit ower
soft,
Thaw thou was es soäber as daäy, wi' a
niced red faäce, an' es cleän
Es a shillin' fresh fro' the mint wi' a
bran-new 'eäd o' the Queeän,
An' thy farmin' es cleän es thysen, fur,
Steevie, tha kep' it sa neät
That I niver not spied sa much as a poppy
along wi' the wheät,
An' the wool of a thisle a flyin' an'
seeädin' tha haätet to see;
'T wur as bad as a battle-twig* 'erc i' my
oän blue chamber to me.
Ay, roob thy whiskers ageän ma, fur I
could 'a taäen to tha well,
But fur thy bairns, poor Steevie, a boun-
cin' boy an' a gell.

XIII.

An' thou was es fond o' thy bairns es I
be mysen o' my cats,
But I niver not wish'd fur childer, I
hev n't naw likin' fur brats;
Pretty anew when ya dresses 'em oop, an'
they goäs fur a walk,
Or sits wi' their 'ands afoor 'em, an' does
n't not 'inder the talk!
But their bottles o' pap, an' their mucky
bibs, an' the clats an' the clouts,
An' their mashin' their toys to pieäces
an' maäkin' ma deäf wi' their
shouts,
An' hallus a-joompin' about ma as if they
was set upo' springs,
An' a haxin' ma hawkard questions, an'
saäyin' ondecnt things,

* Earwig.

An' a-callin' ma "hugly" mayhap to my
faäce, or a tearin' my gown —
Dear! dear! dear! I mun part them
Tommies — Steevie git down

XIV.

Ye be wuss nor the men-tommies, you 't
tell'd ya, na moor o' that!
Tom, lig there o' the cushion, an' tother
Tom 'ere o' the mat.

XV.

There! I ha' master'd *them*! Hed I mar-
ried the Tommies — O Lord,
To loove an' obaäy the Tommies! I could
n't 'a stnck by my word.
To be horder'd about, an' waäked, when
Molly 'd put out the light,
By a man 'coomin' in wi' a hiccup at ony
hour o' the night!
An' the taäble staäin'd wi' 'is aäle, an'
the mnd o' 'is boots o' the stairs,
An' the stink o' 'is pipe i' the 'ouse, an'
the mark o' 'is 'eäd o' the chairs!
An' noän o' my four sweet-arts 'ud 'a let
me 'a hed my oän waäy,
Sa I likes 'em best wi' taäils when they
'ev n't a word to saäy.

XVI.

An' I sits i' my oän little parlor, an'
sarved by my oän little lass,
Wi' my oän little garden outside, an' my
oän bed o' sparrow-grass,
An' my oän door-poorch wi' the woodbine
an' jessmine a-dressin' it greeän,
An' my oän fine Jackman i' purple a
roäbin' the 'ouse like a Queeän.

XVII.

An' the little gells bobs to ma hoffens es
I be abroad i' the laänes,
When I goäs to coomfut the poor es be
down wi' their haäches an' their
pääins:
An' a haäf-pot o' jam, or a mossel o' meät
when it beänt too dear,
They maäkes ma a graäter Laädy nor
'er i' the mansion theer.

Hes 'es hallus to hax of a man how much
to spare or to spend;
An' a spiu-ster I be an' I will be, if soä
pleäse God, to the heud.

XVIII.

Mew! mew. — Bess wi' the milk! what
ha maäde our Molly sa laäte?
It should 'a been 'ere by seven, an' there
— it be strikin' height —
“Cushie wur craäzed fur 'er cauf,” well
— I 'eärd 'er a maäkin' 'er moän,
An' I thowt to mysen “thank God that I
hev n't naw cauf o' my oän.”
There!
Set it down!
Now Robby!
You Tommies shall waäit to-night
Till Robby an' Stevie 'es 'ed their lap —
an' it sarves ye right.

BALIN AND BALAN.*

PELLAM the King, who held and lost
with Lot
In that first war, and had his realn re-
stored
But render'd tributary, fail'd of late
To send his tribute; wherefore Arthur
call'd
His treasurer, one of many years, and
spake,
“Go thou with him and him and bring it
to us,
Lest we should set one truer on his
throne.
Man's word is God in man.”

His Baron said
“We go, but harken: there be two
strange knights
Who sit near Camelot at a fountain side,
A mile beneath the forest, challenging
And overthrowing every knight who
comes.

Wilt thou I undertake them as we pass,
And send them to thee?”

Arthur laugh'd upon him.
“Old friend, too old to be so young,
depart,

Delay not thou for ought, but let them
sit,

Until they find a lustier than them-
selves.”

So these departed. Early, one fair
dawn,
The light-wing'd spirit of his youth
return'd
On Arthur's heart; he arm'd himself
and went,
So coming to the fountain-side beheld
Balin and Balan sitting statnelike,
Brethren, to right and left the spring:
that down,
From underneath a plume of lady-fern,
Sang, and the sand danced at the bottom
of it.

And on the right of Balin Balin's horse
Was fast beside an alder, on the left
Of Balan Balan's near a poplartree.
“Fair Sirs,” said Arthur, “wherefore
sit ye here?”

Balin and Balan answer'd, “For the
sake
Of glory; we be mightier men than all
In Arthur's court; that also have we
proved;

For whatsoever knight against us came
Or I or he have casily overthrow’n.”
“I too,” said Arthur, “am of Arthur's
hall,

But rather proven in his P'aynim wars
Than famous jousts; but see, or proven
or not,

Whether me likewise ye can overthrow.”
And Arthur lightly smote the brethren
down,
And lightly so return'd, and no man
knew.

Then Balin rose, and Balan, and be-
side

The carolling water set themselves again,
And spake no word until the shadow
turn'd;

When from the fringe of coppice round
them burst

A spangled pursuivant, and crying “Sirs,
Rise, follow! ye be sent for by the King,”
They follow'd; whom when Arthur see-
ing ask'd

“Tell me your names; why sat ye by the
well?”

Balin the stillness of a minute broke
Saying “An unmelodious name to thee,
Balin, the ‘Savage’ — that additio'n
thine —

My brother and my better, this man
here,

Balan. I smote upon the naked skull
A thrall of thine in open hall, my hand
Was gauntleted, half slew him; for I
heard

* An introduction to “Merlin and Vivien.”

He had spoken evil of me; thy just
 wrath
 Sent me a three-years' exile from thine
 eyes.
 I have not lived my life delightfully :
 For I that did that violence to thy thrall,
 Had often wrought some fury on myself,
 Saving for Balan: those three kingless
 years
 Have past—were wormwood-bitter to
 me. King,
 Methought that if we sat beside the
 well
 And hurl'd to ground what knight soever
 spurrd
 Against us, thou would'st take me glad-
 lier back,
 And make, as ten-times worthier to be
 thine
 Than twenty Balins, Balan knight. I
 have said.
 Not so—not all. A man of thine to-day
 Abash'd us both, and brake my boast.
 Thy will?"
 Said Arthur, "Thou hast ever spoken
 truth;
 Thy too fierce manhood would not let
 thee lie.
 Rise, my true knight. As children learn,
 be thou
 Wiser for falling! walk with me, and
 move
 To music with thine Order and the King.
 Thy chair, a grief to all the brethren,
 stands
 Vacant, but thou retake it, mine again!"
 Thereafter, when Sir Balin enter'd
 hall,
 The Lost one Found was greeted as in
 Heaven
 With joy that blazed itself in woodland
 wealth
 Of leaf, and gavest garlandage of flowers,
 Along the walls and down the board;
 they sat,
 And cup clash'd cup; they drank and
 some one sang,
 Sweet-voiced, a song of welcome, where-
 upon
 Their common shout in chorus, mount-
 ing, made
 Those banners of twelve battles over-
 head
 Stir, as they stir'd of old, when Arthur's
 host
 Proclaim'd him Victor, and the day was
 won.
 Then Balan added to their Order lived

A wealthier life than heretofore with
 these
 And Balin, till their embassy return'd.
 "Sir King," they brought report, "we
 hardly found,
 So bush'd about it is with gloom, the
 hall
 Of him to whom ye sent us, Pellam, once
 A Christless foe of thine as ever dash'd
 Horse against horse; but seeing that thy
 realm
 Hath prosper'd in the name of Christ, the
 King
 Took, as in rival heat, to holy things;
 And finds himself descended from the
 Saint
 Arimathæan Joseph; him who first
 Brought the great faith to Britain over
 seas;
 He boasts his life as purer than thine
 own;
 Eats scarce enow to keep his pulse
 about;
 Hath push'd aside his faithful wife, nor
 lets
 Or dame or damsel enter at his gates
 Lest he should be polluted. This gray
 King
 Show'd us a shrine wherein were wonders
 —yea—
 Rich arks with priceless bones of martyr-
 dom,
 Thorns of the crown and shivers of the
 cross,
 And therewithal (for thus he told us)
 brought
 By holy Joseph hither, that same spear
 Wherewith the Roman pierced the side
 of Christ.
 He much amazed us; after, when we
 sought
 The tribute, answer'd "I have quite fore-
 gone
 All matters of this world: Garlon, mine
 heir
 Of him demand it," which this Garlon
 gave
 With much ado, railing at thine and
 thee.
 But when we left, in those deep woods
 we found
 A knight of thine spear-stricken from
 behind,
 Dead, whom we buried; more than one
 of us
 Cried out on Garlon, but a woodman
 there
 Reported of some demon in the woods

Was once a man, who driven by evil
tongues
From all his fellows, lived alone, and
came
To learn black magic, and to hate his
kind
With such a hate, that when he died, his
soul
Became a Fiend, which, as the man in
life
Was wounded by blind tongues he saw
not whence,
Strikes from behind. This woodman
show'd the cave
From which he sallies, and wherein he
dwelt.
We saw the hoof-print of a horse, no
more."

Then Arthur, "Let who goes before
me, see
He do not fall behind me: foully slain
And villainously! who will hunt for me
This demon of the woods?" Said Balan,
"!"

So claim'd the quest and rode away, but
first,
Embracing Balin, "Good, my brother,
hear!
Let not thy moods prevail, when I am
gone
Who used to lay them! hold them out
fiends,
Who leap at thee to tear thee; shake
them aside,
Dreams ruling when wit sleeps! yea, but
to dream
That any of these would wrong thee,
wrongs thyself.

Witness their flowery welcome. Bound
are they
To speak no evil. Truly save for fears,
My fears for thee, so rich a fellowship
Would make me wholly blest: thou one
of them,

Be one indeed: consider them, and all
Their bearing in their common bond of
love,

No more of hatred than in Heaven itself,
No more of jealousy than in Paradise."

So Balan warn'd, and went; Balin
remain'd:

Who — for but three brief moons had
glanced away
From being knighted till he smote the
thrall,

And faded from the presence into years
Of exile — now would strictlier set him-
self

To learn what Arthur meant by cour-
tesy,
Manhood, and knighthood; wherefore
hover'd round

Lancelot, but when he mark'd his high
sweet smile

In passing, and a transitory word
Make knight or churl or child or damsel
seem

From being smiled at happier in them-
selves —

Sigh'd, as a boy lame-born beneath a
height,

That glooms his valley, sighs to see the
peak

Sun-flush'd, or touch at night the north-
ern star;

For one from out his village lately
climb'd

And brought report of azure lands and
fair,

Far seen to left and right; and he him-
self

Hath hardly scaled with help a hundred
feet

Up from the base: so Balin marvelling
oft

How far beyond him Lancelot seem'd to
move,

Groan'd, and at times would mutter,
"These be gifts,

Born with the blood, not learnable,
divine,

Beyond *my* reach. Well had I foughten
— well —

In those fierce wars, struck hard — and
had I crown'd

With my slain self the heaps of whom I
slew —

So — better! — But this worship of the
Queen,

That honor too wherein she holds him —
this,

This was the sunshine that hath given
the man

A growth, a name that branches o'er the
rest,

And strength against all odds, and what
the King

So prizes — overprizes — gentleness.

Her likewise would I worship an I might.
I never can be close with her, as he

That brought her hither. Shall I pray
the King

To let me bear some token of his Queen
Whereon to gaze, remembering her —
forget

My heats and violences? live afresh?

What, if the Queen disdain'd to grant it !
 nay,

Being so stately-gentle, would she make
 My darkness blackness ? and with how
 sweet grace

She greeted my return ! Bold will I
 be —

Some goodly cognizance of Guinevere,
 In lieu of this rough beast upon my
 shield,

Langued gules, and tooth'd with grinning
 savagery."

And Arthur, when Sir Balin sought
 him, said,

"What wilt thou bear ?" Balin was
 bold, and ask'd

To bear her own crown-royal upon
 shield,

Whereat she smiled and turn'd her to
 the King,

Who answer'd, "Thou shalt put the
 crown to use.

The crown is but the shadow of the
 King,

And this a shadow's shadow, let him
 have it,

So this will help him of his violences !"

"No shadow," said Sir Balin, "O my
 Queen,

But light to me ! no shadow, O my King,
 But golden earnest of a gentler life !"

So Balin bare the crown, and all the
 knights

Approved him, and the Queen, and all
 the world

Made music, and he felt his being move
 In music with his Order, and the King.

The nightingale, full-toned in middle
 May,

Hath ever and anon a note so thin

It seems another voice in other groves ;

Thus, after some quick burst of sudden
 wrath,

The music in him seem'd to change, and
 grow

Faint and far-off.

And once he saw the thrall

His passion half had gauntleted to
 death,

That causer of his banishment and
 shame,

Smile at him, as he deem'd, presumptu-
 ously :

His arm half rose to strike again, but
 fell :

The memory of that cognizance on shield
 Weighted it down, but in himself he
 moan'd :

"Too high this mount of Camelot for
 me :

These high-set courtesies are not for me.
 Shall I not rather prove the worse for
 these ?

Fierier and stormier from restraining,
 break

Into some madness ev'n before the
 Queen ?"

Thus, as a hearth lit in a mountain
 home,

And glancing on the window, when the
 gloom

Of twilight deepens round it, seems a
 flame

That rages in the woodland far below,
 So when his moods were darken'd, court
 and King

And all the kindly warmth of Arthur's
 hall

Shadow'd an angry distance : yet he
 strove

To learn the graces of their Table,
 fought

Hard with himself, and seem'd at length
 in peace.

Then chanced, one morning, that Sir
 Balin sat

Close-bower'd in that garden nigh the
 hall.

A walk of roses ran from door to door ;

A walk of lilies crost it to the bower :

And down that range of roses the great
 Queen

Came with slow steps, the morning on
 her face ;

And all in shadow from the counter door
 Sir Lancelot as to meet her, then at
 once,

As if he saw not, glanced aside, and
 paced

The long white walk of lilies toward the
 bower.

Follow'd the Queen ; Sir Balin heard
 her, "Prince,

Art thou so little loyal to thy Queen,
 As pass without good morrow to thy

Queen ?"

To whom Sir Lancelot with his eyes on
 earth,

"Fain would I still be loyal to the
 Queen."

"Yea so," she said, "but so to pass me
 by —

So loyal scarce is loyal to thyself,
 Whom all men rate the king of courtesy.
 Let be : ye stand, fair lord, as in a
 dream."

Then Lancelot, with his hand among
 the flowers,
 "Yea — for a dream. Last night I
 thought I saw
 That maiden Saint who stands with lily
 in hand
 In yonder shrine. All round her prest
 the dark,
 And all the light upon her silver face
 Flow'd from the spiritual lily that she
 held.
 Lo! these her emblems drew mine eyes
 — away :
 For see, how perfect-pure! As light a
 flush
 As hardly tints the blossom of the quince
 Would mar their charm of stainless
 maidenhood."
 "Sweeter to me," she said, "this gar-
 den rose
 Deep-hued and many-folded! sweeter
 still
 The wild-wood hyacinth and the bloom of
 May,
 Prince, we have ridd'n before among the
 flowers
 In those fair days — not all as cool as
 these,
 Tho' season-earlier. Art thou sad? or
 sick?
 Our noble King will send thee his own
 leech —
 Sick? or for any matter anger'd at
 me?"
 Then Lancelot lifted his large eyes;
 they dwelt
 Deep-tranced on hers, and could not
 fall: her hue
 Changed at his gaze: so turning side by
 side
 They past, and Balin started from his
 bower.
 "Queen? subject? but I see not what I
 see.
 Damsel and lover? hear not what I
 hear.
 My father hath begotten me in his wrath.
 I suffer from the things before me, know,
 Learn nothing; am not worthy to be
 knight;
 A churl, a clown!" and in him gloom on
 gloom
 Deepen'd; he sharply caught his lance
 and shield,
 Nor stay'd to crave permission of the
 King,
 But, mad for strange adventure, dash'd
 away.

He took the selfsame track as Balan,
 saw
 The fountain where they sat together,
 sigh'd
 "Was I not better there with him?" and
 rode
 The skyless woods, but under open blue
 Came on the hoarhead woodman at a
 bough
 Wearily hewing, "Churl, thine axe!"
 he cried,
 Descended, and disjointed it at a blow:
 To whom the woodman utter'd wonder-
 ingly,
 "Lord, thou couldst lay the Devil of
 these woods
 If arm of flesh could lay him." Balin
 cried,
 "Him, or the viler devil who plays his
 part,
 To lay that devil would lay the Devil in
 me."
 "Nay," said the churl, "our devil is a
 truth,
 I saw the flash of him but yestereven.
 And some *do* say that our Sir Garlon
 too
 Hath learn'd black magic, and to ride un-
 seen.
 Look to the cave." But Balin answer'd
 him,
 "Old fabler, these be fancies of the churl,
 Look to thy woodcraft," and so leaving
 him,
 Now with slack rein and careless of him-
 self,
 Now with dug spur and raving at him-
 self,
 Now with droopt brow down the long
 glades he rode;
 So mark'd not on his right a cavern-
 chasm
 Yawn over darkness, where, nor far
 within
 The whole day died, out, dying, gleam'd
 on rocks
 Roof-pendent, sharp; and others from
 the floor,
 TusklIKE, arising, made that mouth of
 night
 Whereout the Demon issued up from
 Hell.
 He mark'd not this, but blind and deaf
 to all
 Save that chain'd rage, which ever yelp'd
 within,
 Past eastward from the falling sun. At
 once

He felt the hollow-beaten mosses thud
 And tremble, and then the shadow of a
 spear,
 Shot from behind him, ran along the
 ground.
 Sideways he started from the path, and
 saw,
 With pointed lance as if to pierce, a shape,
 A light of armor by him flash, and pass
 And vanish in the woods; and follow'd
 this,
 But all so blind in rage that unawares
 He burst his lance against a forest
 bough,
 Dishorsed himself, and rose again, and
 fled
 Far, till the castle of a King, the hall
 Of Pellam, lichen-bearded, grayly draped
 With streaming grass, appear'd, low-built
 but strong;
 The ruinous donjon as a knoll of moss,
 The battlement overtopped with ivytods,
 A home of bats, in every tower an owl.
 Then spake the men of Pellam crying,
 "Lord,
 Why wear ye his crown-royal upon
 shield?"
 Said Balin, "For the fairest and the best
 Of ladies living gave me this to bear."
 So stall'd his horse, and strode across
 the court,
 But found the greetings both of knight
 and King
 Faint in the low dark hall of banquet:
 leaves
 Laid their green faces flat against the
 panes,
 Sprays grated, and the canker'd boughs
 without
 Whined in the wood; for all was hush'd
 within,
 Till when at feast Sir Garlon likewise
 ask'd,
 "Why wear ye that crown-royal?"
 Balin said,
 "The Queen we worship, Lancelot, I,
 and all,
 As fairest, best and purest, granted me
 To bear it!" Such a sound (for Arthur's
 knights
 Were hated strangers in the hall) as
 makes
 The white swan-mother, sitting, when she
 hears
 A strange knee rustle thro' her secret
 reeds,
 Made Garlon, hissing; then he sourly
 smiled.

"Fairest I grant her: I have seen; but
 best,
 Best, purest? *thou* from Arthur's hall,
 and yet
 So simple! hast thou eyes, or if, are
 these
 So far besotted that they fail to see
 This fair wife-worship cloaks a secret
 sinane?
 Truly, ye men of Arthur be but babes."
 A goblet on the board by Balin, boss'd
 With holy Joseph's legend, on his right
 Stood, all of massiest bronze: one side
 had sea
 And ship and sail and angels blowing on
 it:
 And one was rough with pole and scaf-
 foldage
 Of that low church he built at Glaston-
 bury.
 This Balin graspt, but while in act to
 hurl,
 Thro' memory of that token on the shield
 Relax'd his hold: "I will be gentle," he
 thought,
 "And passing gentle" caught his hand
 away,
 Then fiercely to Sir Garlon, "Eyes have I
 That saw to-day the shadow of a spear,
 Shot from behind me, run along the
 ground;
 Eyes too that long have watch'd how
 Lancelot draws,
 From homage to the best and purest,
 might,
 Name, manhood, and a grace, but scanty
 thine,
 Who, sitting in thine own hall, canst
 endure
 To mouth so huge a foulness—to thy
 guest,
 Me, me of Arthur's Table. Felon talk!
 Let be! no more!"
 But not the less by night
 The scorn of Garlon, poisoning all his
 rest,
 Stung him in dreams. At length, and
 dim thro' leaves
 Blinkt the white morn, sprays grated, and
 old boughs
 Whined in the wood. He rose, descended,
 met
 The scorner in the castle court, and
 fain,
 For hate and loathing, would have past
 him by;
 But when Sir Garlon utter'd mocking-
 wise;

"What, wear ye still that same crown-scandalous?"

His countenance blacken'd, and his forehead veins

Bloated, and branch'd; and tearing out of sheath

The brand, Sir Balin with a fiery "Ha! So thou be shadow, here I make thee ghost,"

Hard upon helm smote him, and the blade flew

Splintering in six, and cluik upon the stones.

Then Garlon, reeling slowly backward, fell,

And Balin by the banneret of his helm Dragg'd him, and struck, but from the castle a cry

Sounded across the court, and — men-at-arms,

A score with pointed lances, making at him —

He dash'd the pummel at the foremost face,

Beneath a low door dipt, and made his feet

Wings thro' a glimmering gallery, till he mark'd

The portal of King Pellam's chapel wide And inward to the wall; he stept behind; Thence in a moment heard them pass like wolves

Howling; but while he stared about the shrine,

In which he scarce could spy the Christ for Saints,

Beheld before a golden altar lie

The longest lance his eyes had ever seen, Point-painted red; and seizing thereupon Push'd thro' an open casement down, lean'd on it,

Leapt in a semicircle, and lit on earth; Then hand at ear, and hurkening from what side

The blindfold rummage buried in the walls

Might echo, ran the counter path, and found

His charger, mounted on him and away.

An arrow whizz'd to the right, one to the left,

One overhead; and Pellam's feeble cry, "Stay, stay him! he defileth heavenly things

With earthly uses" — made him quickly dive

Beneath the boughs, and race thro' many a mile

Of dense and open, till his goodly horse, Arising wearily at a fallen oak, Stumbled headlong, and cast him face to ground.

Half-wroth he had not ended, but all glad,

Knightlike, to find his charger yet un-lamed,

Sir Balin drew the shield from off his neck,

Stared at the priceless cognizance, and thought:

"I have shamed thee so that now thou shamest me,

Thee will I bear no more," high on a branch

Hung it, and turn'd aside into the woods, And there in gloom cast himself all along,

Moaning, "My violences, my violences!"

But now the wholesome music of the wood

Was dumb'd by one from out the hall of Mark,

A damsel-errant, warbling, as she rode

The woodland alleys, Vivien, with her Squire.

"The fire of Heaven has kill'd the barren cold,

And kindled all the plain and all the wold.

The new leaf ever pushes off the old.

The fire of Heaven is not the flame of Hell.

Old priest, who mumble worship in your quire —

Old monk and nun, ye scorn the world's desire,

Yet in your frosty cells ye feel the fire!

The fire of Heaven is not the flame of Hell.

The fire of Heaven is on the dusty ways.

The wayside blossoms open to the blaze.

The whole wood-world is one full peal of praise.

The fire of Heaven is not the flame of Hell.

The fire of Heaven is lord of all things good,

And starve not thou this fire within thy blood,

But follow Vivien thro' the fiery flood!

The fire of Heaven is not the flame of Hell!"

Then turning to her Squire, "This fire of Heaven, This old sun-worship, boy, will rise again,

And beat the cross to earth, and break
the King
And all his Table."

Then they reach'd a glade,
Where under one long lane of cloudless
air

Before another wood, the royal crown
Sparkled, and swaying upon a restless
elm

Drew the vague glance of Vivien, and
her Squire;

Amazed were these; "Lo there," she
cried — "a crown —

Borne by some high lord-prince of
Arthur's hall,

And there a horse! the rider? where is
he?

See, yonder lies one dead within the
wood.

Not dead; he stirs! — but sleeping. I
will speak.

Hail, royal knight, we break on thy sweet
rest,

Not, doubtless, all unearn'd by noble
deeds.

But bounden art thou, if from Arthur's
hall,

To help the weak. Behold, I fly from
shame,

A lustful King, who sought to win my
love

Thro' evil ways: the knight, with whom
I rode,

Hath suffer'd misadventure, and my
squire

Hath in him small defence; but thou, Sir
Prince,

Wilt surely guide me to the warrior
King,

Arthur the blameless, pure as any maid,
To get me shelter for my maidenhood.

I charge thee by that crown upon thy
shield,

And by the great Queen's name, arise
and hence."

And Balin rose, "Thither no more!
nor Prince

Nor knight am I, but one that hath de-
famed

The cognizance she gave me: here I
dwell

Savage among the savage woods, here
die —

Die: let the wolves' black maws ensepul-
chre

Their brother beast, whose anger was his
lord.

O me, that such a name as Guinevere's,

Which our high Lancelot hath so lifted
up,

And been thereby uplifted, should thro'
me,

My violence, and my villainy, come to
shame."

Thereat she suddenly laugh'd and
shrill, anon

Sigh'd all as suddenly. Said Balin to
her,

"Is this thy courtesy — to mock me, ha?
Hence, for I will not with thee." Again

she sigh'd,
"Pardon, sweet lord! we maidens often

laugh
When sick at heart, when rather we
should weep.

I knew thee wrong'd. I brake upon thy
rest,

And now full soth am I to break thy
dream,

But thou art man, and canst abide a
truth,

Tho' bitter. Hither, boy — and mark
me well.

Dost thou remember at Caerleon once —
A year ago — nay, then I love thee not —

Ay, thou rememberest well — one sum-
mer dawn —

By the great tower — Caerleon upon
Usk —

Nay, truly we were hidden: this fair
lord,

The flower of all their vestal knight-
hood,

knelt
In amorous homage — knelt — what else?
— O ay

Knelt, and drew down from out his night-
black hair

And mumbled that white hand whose
ring'd caress

Had wander'd from her own King's
golden head,

And lost itself in darkness, till she
cried —

I thought the great tower would crash
down on both —

'Rise, my sweet King, and kiss me on
the lips,

Thou art my King.' This lad, whose
lightest word

Is mere white truth in simple nakedness,
Saw them embrace: he reddens, cannot

speak,
So bashful, he! but all the maiden

Saints,
The deathless mother-maidenhood of

Heaven

Cry out upon her. Up then, ride with me!
 Talk not of shame! thou caust not, an thou would'st,
 Do these more shame than these have done themselves."
 She lied with ease; but horror-stricken he,
 Remembering that dark bower at Camelot,
 Breathed in a dismal whisper, "It is truth."
 Sunnily she smiled, "And even in this lone wood,
 Sweet lord, ye do right well to whisper this.
 Fools prate, and perish traitors. Woods have tongues,
 As walls have ears; but thou shalt go with me,
 And we will speak at first exceeding low.
 Meet is it the good King be not deceived.
 See now, I set thee high on vantage ground,
 From whence to watch the time, and eagle like
 Stoop at thy will on Lancelot and the Queen."
 She ceased; his evil spirit upon him leapt,
 He ground his teeth together, sprang with a yell,
 Tore from the branch, and cast on earth, the shield,
 Drove his mail'd heel athwart the royal crown,
 Stamp'd all into defacement, hurl'd it from him
 Among the forest weeds, and curs'd the tale,
 The told-of, and the teller.
 That weird yell,
 Uncarthlier than all shriek of bird or beast,
 Thrill'd thro' the woods; and Balan lurking there
 (His quest was unaccomplish'd) heard and thought,
 "The scream of that Wood-devil I came to quell!"
 Then nearing, "Lo! he hath slain some brother-knight,
 And tramples on the goodly shield to show
 His loathing of our Order and the Queen.
 My quest, meseems, is here. Or devil or man

Guard thou thine head." Sir Balin spake not word,
 But snatch'd a sudden buckler from the Squire,
 And vaulted on his horse, and so they crash'd
 In onset, and King Pellam's holy spear,
 Reputed to be red with sinless blood,
 Redden'd at once with sinful, for the point
 Across the maiden shield of Balan prick'd
 The hauberk to the flesh; and Balin's horse
 Was wearied to the death, and, when they clash'd,
 Rolling back upon Balin, crush'd the man
 Inward, and either fell, and swoon'd away.
 Then to her Squire mutter'd the damsel,
 "Fools!
 This fellow hath wrought some foulness with his Queen:
 Else never had he borne her crown, nor raved
 And thus foam'd over at a rival name:
 But thou, Sir Chick, that scarce hast broken shell,
 Art yet half-yolk, not even come to down —
 Who never sawest Caerleon upon Usk —
 And yet hast often pleaded for my love —
 See what I see, be thou where I have been,
 Or else Sir Chick — dismount and loose their casques,
 I fain would know what manner of men they be."
 And when the Squire had loosed them,
 "Goodly! — look!
 They might have cropt the myriad flower of May,
 And butt each other here, like brainless bulls,
 Dead for one heifer!"
 Then the gentle Squire
 "I hold them happy, so they died for love:
 And, Vivien, tho' ye beat me like your dog,
 I too could die, as now I live, for thee."
 "Live on, Sir Boy," she cried. "I better prize
 The living dog than the dead lion:
 away!
 I cannot brook to gaze upon the dead."
 Then leapt her palfrey o'er the fallen oak,

And bounding forward, "Leave them to
the wolves."

But when their foreheads felt the cool-
ing air,
Balin first woke, and seeing that true
face,

Familiar up from cradle-time, so wan,
Crawl'd slowly with low moans to where
he lay,

And on his dying brother cast himself
Dying; and *he* lifted faint eyes; he felt
One near him; all at once they found the
world,

Staring wild-wide; then with a childlike
wail,

And drawing down the dim disastrous
brow

That o'er him hung, he kiss'd it, moan'd
and spake;

"O Balin, Balin, I, that fain had died
To save thy life, have brought thee to
thy death.

Why had ye not the shield I knew? and
why

Trampled ye thus on that which bare the
Crown?"

Then Balin told him brokenly, and in
gasps,
All that had chanced, and Balan moan'd
again.

"Brother, I dwelt a day in Pellam's
hall:

This Garlon mock'd me, but I heeded
not.

And one said, 'Eat in peace! a liar is he,
And hates thee for the tribute!' this
good knight

Told me, that twice a wanton damsel
came,

And sought for Garlon at the castle-
gates,

Whom Pellam drove away with holy
heat.

I will believe this damsel, and the one
Who stood beside thee even now, the
same.

'She dwells among the woods,' he said,
'and meets

And dallies with him in the Mouth of
Hell.'

Foul are their lives; foul are their lips;
they lied.

Pure as our own true Mother is our
Queen."

"O brother," answer'd Balin, "Woe is
me!

My madness all thy life has been thy
doom,

Thy curse, and darken'd all thy day;
and now

The night has come. I scarce can see
thee now.

Goodnight! for we shall never bid again
Goodmorrow — Dark my doom was here,
and dark

It will be there. I see thee now no
more.

I would not mine again should darke-
thine,

Goodnight, true brother."

Balan answer'd low.
"Goodnight, true brother here! good-
morrow there!

We two were born together, and we die
Together by one doom:" and while he
spoke

Closed his death-drowsing eyes, and slept
the sleep

With Balin, either lock'd in either's arm.

PROLOGUE TO GENERAL HAMLEY.

OUR birches yellowing and from each
The light leaf falling fast,
While squirrels from our fiery beech
Were bearing off the mast,

You came, and look'd and loved the view
Long-known and loved by me,
Green Sussex fading into blue

With one gray glimpse of sea;
And, gazing from this height alone,
We spoke of what had been

Most marvellous in the wars your own
Crimean eyes had seen;

And now — like old-world inns that take
Some warrior for a sign

That therewithin a guest may make
True cheer with honest wine —

Because you heard the lines I read
Nor utter'd word of blame,

I dare without your leave to head
These rhymings with your name,

Who know you but as one of those
I fain would meet again,

Yet know you, as your England knows
That you and all your men

Were soldiers to her heart's desire,
When, in the vanish'd year,

You saw the league-long rampart-fire
Flare from Tel-el-Kebir

Thro' darkness, and the foe was driven,
And Wolseley overthrew

Arâbi, and the stars in heaven
Paled, and the glory grew.

EPILOGUE

IRENE.

Not this way will you set your name
A star among the stars.

POET.

What way ?

IRENE.

You praise when you should blame
The barbarism of wars.
A juster epoch has begun.

POET.

Yet tho' this cheek be gray,
And that bright hair the modern sun,
Those eyes the blue to-day,
You wrong me, passionate little friend.
I would that wars should cease,
I would the globe from end to end
Might sow and reap in peace,
And some new Spirit o'erbear the old,
Or Trade refrain the Powers
From war with kindly links of gold,
Or Love with wreaths of flowers.
Slav, Teuton, Kelt, I count them all
My friends and brother souls,
With all the peoples, great and small,
That wheel between the poles.
But since, our mortal shadow, Ill
To waste this earth began —
Perchance from some abuse of Will
In worlds before the man
Involving ours — he needs must fight
To make true peace his own,
He needs must combat might with might,
Or Might would rule alone;
And who loves War for War's own sake
Is fool, or crazed, or worse;
But let the patriot-soldier take
His meed of fame in verse;
Nay — tho' that realm were in the wrong
For which her warriors bleed,
It still were right to crown with song
The warrior's noble deed —
A crown the Singer hopes may last,
For so the deed endures;
But Song will vanish in the Vast;
And that large phrase of yours,
"A Star among the stars," my dear,
Is girlish talk at best;
For dare we dally with the sphere
As he did half in jest,
Old Horace? "I will strike," said he,
"The stars with head sublime,"
But scarce could see, as now we see.

The man in Space and Time,
So drew perchance a happier lot
Than ours, who rhyme to-day.
The fires that arch this dusky dot —
You myriad-work'd way —
The vast sun-clusters' gather'd blaze,
World-isles in lonely skies,
Whole heavens within themselves, amazè
Our brief humanities;
And so does Earth; for Homer's fame,
Tho' carved in harder stone —
The falling drop will make his name
As mortal as my own.

IRENE.

No!

POET.

Let it live then — ay, till when?
Earth passes, all is lost
In what they prophesy, our wise men,
Sun flame or sunless frost,
And deed and song alike are swept
Away, and all in vain
As far as man can see, except
The man himself remain;
And tho', in this lean age forlorn,
Too many a voice may cry
That man can have no after-morn,
Not yet of these am I.
The man remains, and whatso'er
He wrought of good or brave
Will mould him thro' the cycle-year
That dawns behind the grave.

And here the Singer for his Art
Not all in vain may plead,
"The song that nerves a nation's heart
Is in itself a deed."

Note. — The Prologue and Epilogue refer to the Charge of the Heavy Brigade, p. 631.

THE DEAD PROPHET.

182—.

I.

DEAD!

And the Muses cried with a stormy cry
"Send them no more, for evermore.
Let the people die."

II.

Dead!

"Is it *he* then brought so low?"
And a careless people flock'd from the
fields
With a purse to pay for the show

III.

Dead, who had served his time,
Was one of the people's kings,
Had labor'd in lifting them out of slime,
And showing them, souls have wings!

IV.

Dumb on the winter heath he lay.
His friends had stript him bare,
And roll'd his nakedness every way
That all the crowd might stare.

V.

A storm-worn signpost not to be read,
And a tree with a moulder'd nest
On its barkless boues, stood stark by the
dead ;
And behind him, low in the West,

VI.

With shifting ladders of shadow and
light,
And blurr'd in color and form,
The sun hung over the gates of Night,
And glared at a coming storm.

VII.

Then glided a vulturous Beldam forth,
That on dumb death had thriven ;
They call'd her " Reverence " here upon
earth,
And " The Curse of the Prophet " in
Heaven.

VIII.

She knelt — " We worship him " — all
but wept —
" So great so noble was he ! "
She clear'd her sight, she arose, she
swept
The dust of earth from her knee.

IX.

" Great ! for he spoke and the people
heard,
And his eloquence caught like a flame

From zone to zone of the world, till his
Word
Had won him a noble name.

X.

" Noble ! he sung, and the sweet sound ran
Thro' palace and cottage door,
For he touch'd on the whole sad plane
of man,
The kings and the rich and the poor ;

XI.

" And he sung not alone of an old sun set,
But a sun coming up in his youth !
Great and noble — O yes — but yet —
For man is a lover of Truth,

XII.

" And bound to follow, wherever she go
Stark-naked, and up or down,
Thro' her high hill-passes of stainless
snow,
Or the foulest sewer of the town —

XIII.

" Noble and great — O ay — but then,
Tho' a prophet should have his due,
Was he noblier-fashion'd than other
men ?
Shall we see to it, I and you ?

XIV.

" For since he would sit on a Prophet's
seat,
As a lord of the Human soul,
We needs must scan him from head to
feet
Were it but for a wart or a mole ? "

XV.

His wife and his child stood by him in
tears,
But she — she push'd them aside.
" Tho' a name may last for a thousand
years,
Yet a truth is a truth," she cried.

XVI.

And she that had haunted his pathway
still,
Had often truckled and cower'd
When he rose in his wrath, and had
yielded her will
To the master, as overpower'd,

XVII.

She tumbled his helpless corpse about.
"Small blemish upon the skin!
But I think we know what is fair without
Is often as foul within."

XVIII.

She crouch'd, she tore him part from
part,
And out of his body she drew
The red "Blood-eagle"* of liver and
heart!
She held them up to the view;

XIX.

She gabbled, as she groped in the dead,
And all the people were pleased;
"See, what a little heart," she said,
"And the liver is half-diseased!"

XX.

She tore the Prophet after death,
And the people paid her well.
Lightnings flicker'd along the heath;
One shriek'd, "The fires of Hell!"

PREFATORY POEM TO MY
BROTHER'S SONNETS.

Midnight, June 30, 1879.

I.

MIDNIGHT — in no midsummer tune
The breakers lash the shores:
The cuckoo of a joyless June
Is calling out of doors:

* Old Viking term for lungs, liver, etc., when
torn by the conqueror out of the body of the con-
quered.

And thou hast vanish'd from thine own
To that which looks like rest,
True brother, only to be known
By those who love thee best. .

II.

Midnight — and joyless June gone by
And from the deluged park
The cuckoo of a worse July
Is calling thro' the dark .

But thou art silent underground,
And o'er thee streams the rain,
True poet, surely to be found
When Truth is found again.

III.

And, now to these unsummer'd skies
The summer bird is still,
Far off a phantom cuckoo cries
From out a phantom hill;

And thro' this midnight breaks the sun
Of sixty years away,
The light of days when life begun,
The days that seem to-day,

When all my griefs were shared with
thee,
As all my hopes were thine —
As all thou wert was one with me,
May all thou art be mine!

HELEN'S TOWER.†

HELEN'S TOWER, here I stand,
Dominant over sea and land.
Son's love built me, and I hold
Mother's love engrav'n in gold.
Love is in and out of time,
I am mortal stone and lime.
Would my granite girth were strong
As either love, to last as long!
I should wear my crown entire
To and thro' the Doomsday fire,
And be found of angel eyes
In earth's recurring Paradise.

† Written at the request of my friend, Lord
Dufferin

EPITAPH ON LORD STRATFORD
DE REDCLIFFE.

IN WESTMINSTER ABBEY.

THOU third great Canning, stand among
our best
And noblest, now thy long day's work
hath ceased,
Here silent in our Minster of the West
Who wert the voice of England in the
East.

EPITAPH ON GENERAL GORDON.

FOR A CENOTAPH.

WARRIOR of God, man's friend, not laid
below,
But somewhere dead far in the waste
Soudan,
Thou livest in all hearts, for all men
know
This earth has borne no simpler, nobler
man.

EPITAPH ON CAXTON.

IN ST. MARGARET'S, WESTMINSTER.

FIAT LUX (his motto).

THY prayer was "Light — more Light
— while Time shall last!"
Thou sawest a glory growing on the
night,
But not the shadows which that light
would cast,
Till shadows vanish in the Light of
Light.

TO THE DUKE OF ARGYLL.

O PATRIOT Statesman, be thou wise to
know
The limits of resistance, and the bounds
Determining concession; still be bold
Not only to slight praise but suffer
scorn;
And be thy heart a fortress to main-
tain
The day against the moment, and the
year
Against the day; thy voice, a music
heard

Thro' all the yells and counter-yells of
fend
And faction, and thy will, a power to
make
This ever-changing world of circum-
stance,
In changing, chime with never-changing
Law.

FREEDOM.

I.

O THOU so fair in summers gone,
While yet thy fresh and virgin soui
Inform'd the pillar'd Parthenon,
The glittering Capitol;

II.

So fair in southern sunshine bathed,
But scarce of such majestic mien
As here with forehead vapour-swathed
In meadows ever green;

III.

For thou — when Athens reign'd and
Rome,
Thy glorious eyes were dimm'd with
pain
To mark in many a freeman's home
The slave, the scourge, the chain;

IV.

O follower of the Vision, still
In motion to the distant gleam,
How'er blind force and brainless will
May jar thy golden dream

V.

Of Knowledge fusing class with class,
Of civic Hate no more to be,
Of Love to leaven all the mass,
Till every Soul be free;

VI.

Who yet, like Nature, wouldst not mar
By changes all too fierce and fast

This order of Her Human Star,
This heritage of the past,

VII.

O scorner of the party cry
That wanders from the public good,
Thou — when the nations rear on high
Their idol smear'd with blood,

VIII.

And when they roll their idol down —
Of saner worship sanely proud;
Thou loather of the lawless crown
As of the lawless crowd;

IX.

How long thine ever-growing mind
Hath still'd the blast and strown the
wave,
Tho' some of late would raise a wind
To sing thee to thy grave,

X.

Men loud against all forms of power —
Unfurnish'd brows, tempestuous
tongues —
Expecting all things in an hour —
Brass mouths and iron lungs!

TO H. R. H. PRINCESS BEATRICE.

Two Suns of Love make day of human
life,
Which else with all its pains, and griefs,
and deaths,
Were utter darkness — one, the Sun of
dawn
That brightens thro' the Mother's tender
eyes,
And warms the child's awakening world
— and one
The later-rising Sun of spousal Love,
Which from her household orbit draws
the child
To move in other spheres. The Mother
weeps

At that white funeral of the single life,
Her maiden daughter's marriage; and
her tears
Are half of pleasure, half of pain — the
child
Is happy — ev'n in leaving *her*! but
Thou,
True daughter, whose all-faithful, filial
eyes
Have seen the loneliness of earthly
thrones,
Wilt neither quit the widow'd Crown, nor
let
This later light of Love have risen in
vain,
But moving thro' the Mother's home,
between
The two that love thee, lead a summer
life,
Sway'd by each Love, and swaying to
each Love,
Like some conjectured planet in mid
heaven
Between two Suns, and drawing down
from both
The light and genial warmth of double
day.

SONNET.

OLD poets foster'd under friendlier skies,
Old Virgil who would write ten lines,
they say,
At dawn, and lavish all the golden
day
To make them wealthier in his readers'
eyes;
And you, old popular Horace, you the
wise
Adviser of the nine-years-ponder'd lay,
And you, that wear a wreath of sweeter
bay,
Catullus, whose dead songster never dies;
If, glancing downward on the kindly
sphere
That once had roll'd you round and
round the Sun,
You see your Art still shrined in hu-
man shelves,
You should be jubilant that you flourish'd
here
Before the Love of Letters, overdone,
Had swamp'd the sacred poets with them-
selves.

VASTNESS.

I.

MANY a hearth upon our dark globe
sighs after many a vanish'd
face,
Many a planet by many a sun may roll
with the dust of a vanish'd race.

II.

Raving politics, never at rest — as this
poor earth's pale history runs, —
What is it all but a trouble of ants in
the gleam of a million million of
suns?

III.

Lies upon this side, lies upon that side,
truthless violence mourn'd by the
Wise,
Thousands of voices drowning his own
in a popular torrent of lies upon
lies;

IV.

Stately purposes, valor in battle, glorious
annals of army and fleet,
Death for the right cause, death for the
wrong cause, trumpets of victory,
groans of defeat;

V.

Innocence seethed in her mother's milk,
and Charity setting the martyr
aflake;
Thralldom who walks with the banner of
Freedom, and recks not to ruin a
realm in her name.

VI.

Faith at her zenith, or all but lost in the
gloom of doubts that darken the
schools;
Craft with a bunch of all-heal in her
hand, follow'd up by her vassal
legion of fools;

VII.

Trade flying over a thousand seas with
her spice and her vintage, her silk
and her corn;
Desolate offing, sailorless harbors, fam-
ishing populace, wharves forlorn;

VIII.

Star of the morning, Hope in the sunrise;
gloom of the evening, Life at a
close;
Pleasure who flaunts on her wide down-
way with her flying robe and her
poison'd rose;

IX.

Pain, that has crawl'd from the corpse of
Pleasure, a worm which writhes all
day, and at night
Stirs up again in the heart of the sleeper,
and stings him back to the curse
of the light;

X.

Wealth with his wines and his wedded
harlots; honest Poverty, bare to
the bone;
Opulent Avarice, lean as Poverty; Flat-
tery gilding the rift of a throne;

XI.

Fame blowing out from her golden trum-
pet a jubilant challenge to Time
and to Fate;
Slander, her shadow, sowing the nettle on
all the laurel'd graves of the
Great;

XII.

Love for the maiden, crown'd with mar-
riage, no regrets for aught that has
been,
Household happiness, gracious children,
debtless competence, golden mean:

XIII.

National hatreds of whole generations,
and pigmy spites of the village
spire;
Vows that will last to the last death-
ruckle, and vows that are suapt in
a moment of fire;

XIV.

He that has lived for the lust of the min-
ute, and died in the doing it, flesh
without mind;
He that has nail'd all faith to the Cross,
till Self died out in the love of his
kind;

XV.

Spring and Summer and Autumn and
Winter, and all these old revolu-
tions of earth;
All new-old revolutions of Empire —
change of tide — what is all of it
worth ?

XVI.

What the philosophies, all the sciences,
poesy, varying voices of prayer ?
All that is noblest, all that is basest, all
that is filthy with all that is fair ?

XVII.

What is it all, if we all of us end but in
being our own corpse-collins at
last,
Swallow'd in Vastness, lost in Silence,
drown'd in the deeps of a mean-
ingless Past ?

XVIII.

What but a murmur of gnats in the
gloom, or a moment's anger of
bees in their hive ? —

.

Peace, let it be! for I loved him, and
love him for ever: the dead are
not dead but alive.

ON CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY.

THEREFORE your Halls, your ancient
Colleges,
Your portals statued with old kings and
queens,
Your gardens, myriad-volumed libra-
ries,
Wax-lighted chapels, and rich carven
screens,
Your doctors and your proctors, and
your deans
Shall not avail you, when the Daybeam
sports
New-risen o'er awaken'd Albion — No!
Nor yet your solem organ-pipes that
blow
Melodious thunders thro' your vacant
courts
At morn and eve — because your man-
ner sorts
Not with this age wherefrom ye stand
apart —
Because the lips of little children preach
Against you, you that do profess to
teach
And teach us nothing, feeding not the
heart.

SONNET.

THERE are three things which fill my
heart with sighs,
And steep my soul in laughter (when I
view
Fair maiden-forms moving like melo-
dies) —
Dimples, roselips, and eyes of any hue.
There are three things beneath the
blessed skies
For which I live — black eyes and brown
and blue:
I hold them all most dear; but oh!
black eyes,
I live and die, and only die in you.
Of late such eyes looked at me — while
I mused,
At sunset, underneath a shadowy plane.
In old Bayona nigh the southern sea —
I saw no more — only those eyes — con-
fused
And dazzled to the heart with glorious
pain.

LINES.

HERE often, when a child, I lay re-
clined,

I took delight in this locality.

Here stood the infant Iliou of the mind,
And here the Grecian ships did seem
to be.

And here again I come, and only find
The drain-cut levels of the marshy
lea, —

Gray sand-banks, and pale sunsets, —
dreary wind,

Dim shores, dense rains, and heavy-
clouded sea!

ADDITIONAL VERSES

To "God Save the Queen!" written for the
marriage of the Princess Royal of England
with the Crown Prince of Prussia, January
25, 1858.

GOD bless our Prince and Bride!

God keep their lands allied,

God save the Queen!

Clothe them with righteousness,

Crown them with happiness,

Them with all blessings bless,

God save the Queen!

Fair fall this hallow'd hour,

Farewell, our England's flower,

God save the Queen!

Farewell, first rose of May!

Let both the peoples say,

God bless thy marriage-day,

God bless the Queen!

ODE.

Written for the opening of the Colonial and In-
dian Exhibition, May 4, 1886.

I.

WELCOME, welcome with one voice!
In your welfare we rejoice,

Sons and brothers, that have sent,
From isle and cape and continent,
Produce of your field and flood,
Mount, and mine, and primal wood,
Works of subtle brain and hand,
And splendors of the Morning Land,
Gifts from every British zone!
Britons, hold your own!

II.

May we find, as ages run,
The mother featured in the son,
And may yours for ever be
That old strength and constancy,
Which has made your fathers great
In our ancient island-state!
And — where'er her flag may fly
Glorying between sea and sky —
Makes the might of Britain known!
Britons, hold your own!

III.

Britain fought her sons of yore,
Britain fail'd; and, never more,
Careless of our growing kin,
Shall we sin our father's sin,
Men that in a narrower day —
Unprophetic rulers they —
Drove from out the Mother's nest
That Young Eagle of the West,
To forage for herself alone!
Britons, hold your own!

IV.

Sharers of our glorious past,
Brothers, must we part at last?
Shall not we thro' good and ill
Cleave to one another still?
Britain's myriad voices call:
"Sons, be welded, each and all,
Into one Imperial whole,
One with Britain heart and soul!
One life, one flag, one fleet, one Throne!"
Britons, hold your own!
And God guard all!

BECKET.

TO THE LORD CHANCELLOR,

THE RIGHT HONORABLE EARL OF SELBORNE.

MY DEAR SELBORNE,—To you, the honored Chancellor of our own day, I dedicate this dramatic memorial of your great predecessor:—which, altho' not intended in its present form to meet the exigencies of our modern theatre, has nevertheless—for so you have assured me—won your approbation.

Ever yours,

TENNYSON.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

HENRY II. (*son of the Earl of Anjou*).
 THOMAS BECKET, *Chancellor of England, afterwards Archbishop of Canterbury*.
 GILBERT FOLIOT, *Bishop of London*
 ROGER, *Archbishop of York*.
 Bishop of Hereford.
 HILARY, *Bishop of Chichester*.
 JOCELYN, *Bishop of Salisbury*.
 JOHN OF SALISBURY, } *Friends of Becket*.
 HERBERT OF BOSHAM, }
 WALTER MAP, *reputed author of "Galias," Latin poems against the priesthood*.
 KING LOUIS OF FRANCE.
 GEOFFREY, *son of Rosamund and Henry*.
 GRIM, *a monk of Cambridge*.
 SIR REGINALD FITZURSE, }
 SIR RICHARD DE BRITO, } *the four knights of the King's household, enemies of Becket*.
 SIR WILLIAM DE TRACY, }
 SIR HUGH DE MORVILLE, }
 DE BROG OF SALTWOOD CASTLE.
 LORD LEICESTER.
 PHILIP DE ELEEMOSYNA.
 TWO KNIGHT TEMPLARS.
 JOHN OF OXFORD (*called the Swearer*).
 ELEANOR OF AQUITAINE, *Queen of England (divorced from Louis of France)*.
 ROSAMUND DE CLIFFORD.
 MARGERY.

Knights, Monks, Beggars, etc.

PROLOGUE.

△ *Castle in Normandy. Interior of the Hall. Roofs of a City seen thro' Windows.*

HENRY and BECKET at chess.

Henry. So then our good Archbishop
Theobald

Lies dying.

Becket. I am grieved to know as
much.

Henry. But we must have a mightier
man than he

For his successor.

Becket. Have you thought of one?
Henry. A cleric lately poison'd his
own mother,
And being brought before the courts of
the Church,
They but degraded him. I hope they
whipt him.
I would have hang'd him.
Becket. It is your move.
Henry. Well—there. [Moves.
The Church in the pell-mell of Stephen's
time

Hath climb'd the throne and almost
clutch'd the crown ;

But by the royal customs of our realm
The Church should hold her baronies of
me,

Like other lords amenable to law.

I'll have them written down and made
the law.

Becket. My liege, I move my bishop.

Henry. And if I live,

No man without my leave shall excom-
municate

My tenants or my household.

Becket. Look to your king.

Henry. No man, without my leave,
shall cross the seas

To set the Pope against me—I pray
your pardon.

Becket. Well—will you move ?

Henry. There.

[*Moves.*

Becket. Check—you move so wildly.

Henry. There then! [*Moves.*

Becket. Why—there then, for you
see my bishop

Hath brought your king to a standstill.
You are beaten.

Henry (kicks over the board). Why,
there then—down go bishop and
king together.

I loathe being beaten ; had I fixt my
fancy

Upon the game I should have beaten
thee,

But that was vagabond.

Becket. Where, my liege ? With
Phryne,

Or Lais, or thy Rosamund, or another ?

Henry. My Rosamund is no Lais,
Thomas Becket ;

And yet she plagues me too—no fault
in her—

But that I fear the Queen would have
her life.

Becket. Put her away, put her away,
my liege !

I put her away into a nunnery !

Safe enough there from her to whom
thou art bound

By Holy Church. And wherefore should
she seek

The life of Rosamund de Clifford more
Than that of other paramours of thine ?

Henry. How dost thou know I am
not wedded to her ?

Becket. How should I know ?

Henry. That is my secret, Thomas.

Becket. State secrets should be patent
to the statesman

Who serves and loves his king, and
whom the king

Loves not as statesman, but true lover
and friend.

Henry. Come, come, thou art but
deacon, not yet bishop,

No, nor archbishop, nor my confessor
yet.

I would to God thou wert, for I should
find

An easy father confessor in thee.

Becket. St. Denis, that thou shouldst
not. I should beat

Thy kingship as my bishop hath beaten
it.

Henry. Hell take thy bishop then,
and my kingship too !

Come, come, I love thee and I know
thee, I know thee,

A doter on white pheasant-flesh at
feasts,

A sauce-deviser for thy days of fish,

A dish-designer, and most amorous

Of good old red sound liberal Gascon
wine :

Will not thy body rebel, man, if thou
flatter it ?

Becket. That palate is insane which
cannot tell

A good dish from a bad, new wine from
old.

Henry. Well, who loves wine loves
woman.

Becket. So I do.

Men are God's trees, and women are
God's flowers ;

And when the Gascon wine mounts to
my head,

The trees are all the statelier, and the
flowers

Are all the fairer.

Henry. And thy thoughts, thy fan-
cies ?

Becket. Good dogs, my liege, well
train'd, and easily called

Off from the game.

Henry. Save for some once or twice,
When they ran down the game and
worried it.

Becket. No, my liege, no !—not once
—in God's name, no !

Henry. Nay, then, I take thee at thy
word—believe thee

The veriest Galahad of old Arthur's
hall.

And so this Rosamund, my true heart-
wife,

Not Eleanor — she whom I love in-
deed

As a woman should be loved — Why
dost thou smile

So dolorously ?

Becket. My good liege, if a man
Wastes himself among women, how
should he love

A woman, as a woman should be
loved ?

Henry. How shouldst thou know
that never hast loved one ?

Come, I would give her to thy care in
England

When I am out in Normandy or Anjou.

Becket. My lord, I am your subject,
not your —

Henry. Pander.

God's eyes ! I know all that — not my
purveyor

Of pleasures, but to save a life — her
life ;

Ay, and the soul of Eleanor from hell-
fire.

I have built a secret bower in England,
Thomas,

A nest in a bush.

Becket. And where, my liege ?

Henry (whispers). Thine ear.

Becket. That 's lone enough.

Henry (laying paper on table). This
chart here mark'd "*Her Bower,*"

Take, keep it, friend. See, first, a cir-
cling wood,

A hundred pathways running every
way,

And then a brook, a bridge ; and after
that

This labyrinthine brickwork maze in
maze,

And then another wood, and in the midst
A garden and my Rosamund. Look,
this line —

The rest you see is color'd green — but
this

Draws thro' the chart to her.

Becket. This blood-red line ?

Henry. Ay ! blood, perchance, ex-
cept thou see to her.

Becket. And where is she ? There
in her English nest ?

Henry. Would God she were — no,
here within the city.

We take her from her secret bower in
Anjou

And pass her to her secret bower in
England.

She is ignorant of all but that I love her.

Becket. My liege, I pray thee let me
hence : a widow

And orphan child, whom one of thy
wild barons —

Henry. Ay, ay, but swear to see to
her in England.

Becket. Well, well, I swear, but not
to please myself.

Henry. Whatever come between us ?

Becket. What should come
Between us, Henry ?

Henry. Nay — I know not, Thomas.

Becket. What need then ? Well —
whatever come between us.

[*Going.*

Henry. A moment ! thou didst help
me to my throne

In Theobald's time, and after by thy
wisdom

Hast kept it firm from shaking ; but
now I,

For my realm's sake, myself must be
the wizard

To raise that tempest which will set it
trembling

Only to base it deeper. I, true son
Of Holy Church — no croucher to the

Gregories

That tread the kings their children un-
derheel —

Must curb her ; and the Holy Father,
while

This Barbarossa butts him from his
chair,

Will need my help — be facile to my
hands.

Now is my time. Yet — lest there should
be flashes

And fulminations from the side of
Rome,

An interdict on England — I will have
My young son Henry crown'd the King

of England,

That so the Papal bolt may pass by
England,

As seeming his, not mine, and fall
abroad.

I'll have it done — and now.

Becket. Surely too young
Even for this shadow of a crown ; and
tho'

I love him heartily, I can spy already
A strain of hard and headstrong in him.

Say,

The Queen should play his kingship
against thine!

Henry. I will not think so, Thomas.

Who shall crown him?

Canterbury is dying.

Becket. The next Canterbury.

Henry. And who shall he be, my
friend Thomas? Who?

Becket. Name him; the Holy Father
will confirm him.

Henry (*lays his hand on Becket's
shoulder*). Here!

Becket. Mock me not. I am not
even a monk.

Thy jest — no more. Why — look —
is this a sleeve

For an archbishop?

Henry. But the arm within
Is Becket's, who hath beaten down my
foes.

Becket. A soldier's, not a spiritual
arm.

Henry. I lack a spiritual soldier,
Thomas —

A man of this world and the next to
boot.

Becket. There's Gilbert Foliot.

Henry. He! too thin, too thin.
Thou art the man to fill out the Church
robe;

Your Foliot fasts and fawns too much
for me.

Becket. Roger of York.

Henry. Roger is Roger of York.
King, Church, and State to him but foils
wherein

To set that precious jewel, Roger of
York.

No.

Becket. Henry of Winchester?

Henry. Him who crown'd Stephen —
King Stephen's brother! No; too royal
for me.

And I'll have no more Anselms.

Becket. Sire, the business
Of thy whole kingdom waits me: let
me go.

Henry. Answer me first.

Becket. Then for thy barren jest
Take thou mine answer in bare com-
monplace —

Nolo episcopari.

Henry. Ay, but *Nolo
Archiepiscopari*, my good friend,
Is quite another matter.

Becket. A more awful one.

Make *me* archbishop! Why, my liege, I
know

Some three or four poor priests a thou-
sand times

Fitter for this grand function. *Me* arch-
bishop!

God's favor and king's favor might so
clash

That thou and I — That were a jest in-
deed!

Henry. Thou angerest me, man: I
do not jest.

Enter ELEANOR and SIR REGINALD
FITZURSE.

Eleanor (*singing*).

Over! the sweet summer closes,
The reign of the roses is done —

Henry (*to Becket, who is going*). Thou
shalt not go. I have not ended
with thee.

Eleanor (*seeing chart on table*). This
chart with the red line! her bower!
whose bower?

Henry. The chart is not mine, but
Becket's: take it, Thomas.

Eleanor. Becket! O — ay — and
these chessmen on the floor — the king's
crown broken! Becket hath beaten thee
again — and thou hast kicked down the
board. I know thee of old.

Henry. True enough, my mind was
set upon other matters.

Eleanor. What matters? State mat-
ters? love matters?

Henry. My love for thee, and thine
for me.

Eleanor.

Over! the sweet summer closes,
The reign of the roses is done;
Over and gone with the roses,
And over and gone with the sun.

Here; but our sun in Aquitaine lasts
longer. I would I were in Aquitaine
again — your north chills me.

Over! the sweet summer closes,
And never a flower at the close:
Over and gone with the roses,
And winter again and the snows.

That was not the way I ended it first —
but unsymmetrically, preposterously,
illogically, out of passion, without art
— like a song of the people. Will you
have it? The last Parthian shaft of a
forlorn Cupid at the King's left breast,
and all left-handedness and under-hand-
edness.

And never a flower at the close,
Over and gone with the roses,
Not over and gone with the rose.

True, one rose will outblossom the rest, one rose in a bower. I speak after my fancies, for I am a Troubadour, you know, and won the violet at Toulouse; but my voice is harsh here, not in tune, a nightingale out of season; for marriage, rose or no rose, has killed the golden violet.

Becket. Madam, you do ill to scorn wedded love.

Eleanor. So I do. Louis of France loved me, and I dreamed that I loved Louis of France; and I loved Henry of England, and Henry of England dreamed that he loved me; but the marriage-garland withers even with the putting on, the bright link rusts with the breath of the first after-marriage kiss, the harvest moon is the ripening of the harvest, and the honeymoon is the gall of love; he dies of his honeymoon. I could pity this poor world myself that it is no better ordered.

Henry. Dead is he, my Queen? What, altogether? Let me swear nay to that by this cross on thy neck. God's eyes! what a lovely cross! what jewels!

Eleanor. Doth it please you? Take it and wear it on that hard heart of yours — there. [*Gives it to him.*]

Henry (puts it on). On this left breast before so hard a heart,
To hide the scar left by thy Parthian dart.

Eleanor. Has my simple song set you jingling? Nay, if I took and translated that hard heart into our Provençal facilities, I could so play about it with the rhyme —

Henry. That the heart were lost in the rhyme and the matter in the metre. May we not pray you, Madam, to spare us the hardness of your facility?

Eleanor. The wells of Castaly are not wasted upon the desert. We did but jest.

Henry. There's no jest on the brows of Herbert there. What is it, Herbert?

Enter HERBERT OF BOSHAM.

Herbert. My liege, the good Archbishop is no more.

Henry. Peace to his soul!

Herbert. I left him with peace on his

face — that sweet other-world smile, which will be reflected in the spiritual body among the angels. But he longed much to see your Grace and the Chancellor ere he past, and his last words were a commendation of Thomas Becket to your Grace as his successor in the archbishopric.

Henry. Ha, Becket! thou rememberest our talk!

Becket. My heart is full of tears — I have no answer.

Henry. Well, well, old men must die, or the world would grow mouldy, would only breed the past again. Come to me to-morrow. Thou hast but to hold out thy hand. Meanwhile the revenues are mine. A-hawking, a-hawking! If I sit, I grow fat.

[*Leaps over the table and exit.*]

Becket. He did prefer me to the chancellorship, Believing I should ever aid the Church — But have I done it? He commends me now From out his grave to this archbishopric.

Herbert. A dead man's dying wish should be of weight.

Becket. His should. Come with me, Let me learn at full The manner of his death, and all he said.

[*Exeunt HERBERT and BECKET.*]

Eleanor. Fitzurse, that chart with the red line — thou sawest it — her bower.

Fitzurse. Rosamund's?

Eleanor. Ay — there lies the secret of her whereabouts, and the King gave it to his Chancellor.

Fitzurse. To this son of a London merchant — how your Grace must hate him.

Eleanor. Hate him? as brave a soldier as Henry and a goodlier man; but thou — dost thou love this Chancellor, that thou hast sworn a voluntary allegiance to him?

Fitzurse. Not for my love toward him, but because he had the love of the King. How should a baron love a beggar on horseback, with the retinue of three kings behind him, outroyalling royalty? Besides, he help the King to break down our castles, for the which I hate him.

Eleanor. For the which I honor him. Statesman not Churchman he. A great and sound policy that: I could embrace him for it: you could not see the King for the kinglings

Fitzurse. Ay, but he speaks to a noble as tho' he were a churl, and to a churl as if he were a noble.

Eleanor. Pride of the plebeian!

Fitzurse. And this plebeian like to be Archbishop!

Eleanor. True, and I have an inherited loathing of these black sheep of the Papacy. Archbishop? I can see further into a man than our hot-headed Henry, and if there ever come feud between Church and Crown, and I do not then charm this secret out of our loyal Thomas, I am not Eleanor.

Fitzurse. Last night I followed a woman in the city here. Her face was veiled, but the back methought was Rosamund—his paramour, thy rival. I can feel for thee.

Eleanor. Thou feel for me!—paramour—rival! King Louis had no paramours, and I loved him none the more. Henry had many, and I loved him none the less—now neither more nor less—not at all; the cup's empty. I would she were but his paramour, for men tire of their fancies; but I fear this one fancy hath taken root, and borne blossom too, and she, whom the King loves indeed, is a power in the State. Rival!—ay, and when the King passes, there may come a crash and embroilment as in Stephen's time; and her children—canst thou not—that secret matter which would heat the King against thee (*whispers him and he starts*). Nay, that is safe with me as with thyself: but canst thou not—thou art drowned in debt—thou shalt have our love, our silence, and our gold—canst thou not—if thou light upon her—free me from her?

Fitzurse. Well, Madam, I have loved her in my time.

Eleanor. No, my bear, thou hast not. My Courts of Love would have held thee guiltless of love—the fine attractions and repulses, the delicacies, the subtleties.

Fitzurse. Madam, I loved according to the main purpose and intent of nature.

Eleanor. I warrant thee! thou wouldst hug thy Cupid till his ribs cracked—enough of this. Follow me this Rosamund day and night, whithersoever she goes; track her, if thou canst, even into the King's lodging, that I may (*clenches her fist*)—may at least have my cry against him and her,—and thou in thy way shouldst be jealous of the King, for thou in thy way didst once, what shall I call it, affect her thine own self.

Fitzurse. Ay, but the young roll winced and whinnied and flung up her heels; and then the King came honeying about her, and this Becket, her father's friend, like enough staved us from her.

Eleanor. Us!

Fitzurse. Yea, by the Blessed Virgin! There were more than I buzzing round the blossom—De Tracy—even that flint De Brito.

Eleanor. Carry her off among you; run in upon her and devour her, one and all of you; make her as hateful to herself and to the King, as she is to me.

Fitzurse. I and all would be glad to wreak our spite on the rosefaced minion of the King, and bring her to the level of the dust, so that the King—

Eleanor. Let her eat it like the serpent, and be driven out of her paradise.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—BECKET'S *House in London.*
Chamber barely furnished. BECKET
unrobing. HERBERT OF BOSHAM and
SERVANT.

Servant. Shall I not help your lordship to your rest?

Becket. Friend, am I so much better than thyself

That thou shouldst help me? Thou art wearied out

With this day's work, get thee to thine own bed.

Leave me with Herbert, friend.

[*Exit SERVANT.*]

Help me off, Herbert, with this—and this.

Herbert. Was not the people's blessing as we past

Heart-comfort and a balsam to thy blood?

Becket. The people know their Church
a tower of strength,
A bulwark against Throne and Baronage.
Too heavy for me, this; off with it,
Herbert!

Herbert. Is it so much heavier than
thy Chancellor's robe?

Becket. No; but the Chancellor's and
the Archbishop's

Together more than mortal man can bear.

Herbert. Not heavier than thine armor
at Toulouse?

Becket. O Herbert, Herbert, in my
chancellor-ship
I more than once have gone against the
Church.

Herbert. To please the King?

Becket. Ay, and the King of kings,
Or justice; for it seem'd to me but just
The Church should pay her scutage like
the lords.

But hast thou heard this cry of Gilbert
Foliot

That I am not the man to be your Pri-
mate,

For Henry could not work a miracle —
Make an Archbishop of a soldier?

Herbert. Ay,
For Gilbert Foliot held himself the man.

Becket. Am I the man? My mother,
ere she bore me,
Dream'd that twelve stars fell glittering
out of heaven
Into her bosom.

Herbert. Ay, the fire, the light,
The spirit of the twelve Apostles enter'd
Into thy making.

Becket. And when I was a child,
The Virgin, in a vision of my sleep,
Gave me the golden keys of Paradise
Dream,

Or prophecy, that?

Herbert. Well, dream and prophecy
both.

Becket. And when I was of Theobald's
household, once —
The good old man would sometimes
have his jest —

He took his mitre off, and set it on me,
And said, "My young Archbishop —
thou wouldst make
A stately Archbishop!" Jest or proph-
ecy there?

Herbert. Both, Thomas, both.

Becket. Am I the man? That rang
Within my head last night, and when I
slept

Methought I stood in Canterbury Min-
ster,

And spake to the Lord God, and said,
"O Lord,

I have been a lover of wines, and delicate
meats,

And secular splendors, and a favorer
Of players, and a courtier, and a feeder
Of dogs and hawks, and apes, and lions,
and lynxes.

Am I the man?" And the Lord an-
swer'd me,

"Thou art the man, and all the more
the man."

And then I asked again, "O Lord my
God,

Henry the King hath been my friend,
my brother,

And mine uplifter in this world, and
chosen me

For this thy great archbishopric, believ-
ing

That I should go against the Church
with him,

And I shall go against him with the
Church,

And I have said no word of this to him:
Am I the man?" And the Lord an-
swer'd me,

"Thou art the man, and all the more the
man."

And thereupon, methought, He drew to-
ward me,

And smote me down upon the Minster
floor.

I fell.

Herbert. God make not thee, but thy
foes, fall.

Becket. I fell. Why fall? Why did
He smite me? What?

Shall I fall off — to please the King once
more?

Not fight — tho' somehow traitor to the
King —

My truest and mine utmost for the
Church?

Herbert. Thou canst not fall that way.
Let traitor be;

For how have fought thine utmost for the
Church,

Save from the throne of thine archbish-
opric?

And how been made Archbishop hadst
thou told him,

"I mean to fight mine utmost for the
Church,

Against the King?"

Becket. But dost thou think the King
Forced mine election ?

Herbert. I do think the King
Was potent in the election, and why
not ?

Why should not Heaven have so inspired
the King ?

Be comforted. Thou art the man — be
thou

A mightier Anselm.

Becket. I do believe thee, then. I am
the man.

And yet I seem appall'd — on such a
sudden

At such an eagle-height I stand and
see

The rift that runs between me and the
King.

I served our Theobald well when I was
with him ;

I served King Henry well as Chancel-
lor ;

I am his no more, and I must serve the
Church.

This Canterbury is only less than Rome,
And all my doubts I fling from me like
dust,

Winnow and scatter all scruples to the
wind,

And all the puissance of the warrior,
And all the wisdom of the Chancellor,

And all the heap'd experiences of life,
I cast upon the side of Canterbury —

Our holy mother Canterbury, who sits
With tatter'd robes. Laics and barons,
thro'

The random gifts of careless kings, have
graspt

Her livings, her advowsons, granges,
farms,

And goodly acres — we will make her
whole ;

Not one rood lost. And for these Royal
customs,

These ancient Royal customs, — they are
Royal,

Not of the Church — and let them be
anathema,

And all that speak for them anathema.

Herbert. Thomas, thou art moved too
much.

Becket. O Herbert, here
I gash myself asunder from the King,
Tho' leaving each, a wound ; mine own,
a grief

To show the scar forever — his, a hate
Not ever to be heal'd.

*Enter ROSAMUND DE CLIFFORD, flying
from SIR REGINALD FITZURSE. Drops
her veil.*

Becket. Rosamund de Clifford !
Rosamund. Save me, father, hide me
— they follow me — and I must
not be known.

Becket. Pass in with Herbert there.
[*Exeunt ROSAMUND and HERBERT
by side door.*

Enter FITZURSE.

Fitzurse. The Archbishop !

Becket. Ay ! what wouldst thou, Re-
ginald ?

Fitzurse. Why — why, my lord, I fol-
low'd — follow'd one —

Becket. And then what follows ? Let
me follow thee.

Fitzurse. It much imports me I should
know her name.

Becket. What her ?

Fitzurse. The woman that I follow'd
hither.

Becket. Perhaps it may import her all
as much

Not to be known.

Fitzurse. And what care I for that ?
Come, come, my lord Archbishop ; I saw
that door

Close even now upon the woman.

Becket. Well ?

Fitzurse (making for the door). Nay, let
me pass, my lord, for I must know.

Becket. Back, man !

Fitzurse. Then tell me who and what
she is.

Becket. Art thou so sure thou fol-
lowedst anything ?

Go home, and sleep thy wine off, for thine
eyes

Glare stupid-wild with wine.

Fitzurse (making to the door). I must
and will.

I care not for thy new archbishopric.

Becket. Back, man, I tell thee ! What !
Shall I forget my new archbishopric

And smite thee with my crozier on the
skull ?

'Fore God, I am a mightier man than
thou.

Fitzurse. It well befits thy new arch-
bishopric

To take the vagabond woman of the
street

Into thine arms !

Becket. O drunken ribaldry!
Out, beast! out, bear!

Fitzurse. I shall remember this.

Becket. Do, and begone!

[*Exit FITZURSE.*

(*Going to the door, sees DE TRACY.*)
Tracy, what dost thou here?

De Tracy. My lord, I follow'd Reginald Fitzurse.

Becket. Follow him out!

De Tracy. I shall remember this

Discourtesy. [*Exit.*

Becket. Do. These be those baron-brutes

That havock'd all the land in Stephen's day.

Rosamund de Clifford.

Reënter ROSAMUND and HERBERT.

Rosamund. Here am I.

Becket. Why here?

We gave thee to the charge of John of Salisbury,

To pass thee to thy secret bower to-morrow.

Wast thou not told to keep thyself from sight?

Rosamund. Poor bird of passage! so I was; but, father,

They say that you are wise in winged things,

And know the ways of Nature. Bar the bird

From following the fled summer—a chink—he's out,

Gone! And there stole into the city a breath

Full of the meadows, and it minded me Of the sweet woods of Clifford, and the walks

Where I could move at pleasure, and I thought

Lo! I must out or die.

Becket. Or out and die.

And what hast thou to do with this Fitzurse?

Rosamund. Nothing. He sued my hand. I shook at him.

He found me once alone.—Nay—nay—I cannot

Tell you: my father drove him and his friends,

De Tracy and De Brito, from our castle. I was but fourteen and an April then.

I heard him swear revenge.

Becket. Why will you court it

By self-exposure? flutter out at night? Make it so hard to save a moth from the fire?

Rosamund. I have saved many of 'em. You catch 'em, so,

Softly, and fling them out to the free air. They burn themselves *within-door*.

Becket. Our good John Must speed you to your bower at once.

The child

Is there already.

Rosamund. Yes—the child—the child—

O rare, a whole long day of open field.

Becket. Ay, but you go disguised.

Rosamund. O rare again! We'll baffle them, I warrant. What shall it be?

I'll go as a nun.

Becket. No.

Rosamund. What, not good enough Even to play at nun?

Becket. Dan John with a nun, That Map, and these new railers at the Church

May plaister his clean name with scurrilous rhymes!

No!

Go like a monk, cowling and clouding up That fatal star, thy Beauty, from the squint

Of lust and glare of malice. Good night! good night!

Rosamund. Father, I am so tender to all hardness!

Nay, father, first thy blessing.

Becket. Wedded?

Rosamund. Father!

Becket. Well, well! I ask no more, Heaven bless thee! hence!

Rosamund. O, holy father, when thou seest him next,

Commend me to thy friend.

Becket. What friend?

Rosamund. The King.

Becket. Herbert, take out a score of armed men

To guard this bird of passage to her cage;

And watch Fitzurse, and if he follow thee,

Make him thy prisoner. I am Chancellor yet.

[*Reënter HERBERT and ROSAMUND.*

Poor soul! poor soul!

My friend, the King! . . . O thou Great Seal of England,

Given me by my dear friend the King of
England —

We long have wrought together, thou
and I —

Now must I send thee as a common
friend

To tell the King, my friend, I am against
him.

We are friends no more: he will say
that, not I.

The worldly bond between us is dissolved,
Not yet the love: can I be under him

As Chancellor? as Archbishop over him?
Go therefore like a friend slighted by
one

That hath climb'd up to nobler company.
Not slighted — all but moan'd for: thou
must go.

I have not dishonor'd thee — I trust I
have not;

Not mangled justice. May the hand that
next

Inherits thee be but as true to thee
As mine hath been! O, my dear friend,
the King!

O brother! — I may come to martyr-
dom.

I am martyr in myself already. — Her-
bert!

Herbert (reëntering). My lord, the town
is quiet, and the moon

Divides the whole long street with light
and shade.

No footfall — no Fitzurse. We have seen
her home.

Becket. The hog hath tumbled him-
self into some corner,

Some ditch, to snore away his drunken-
ness

Into the sober headache, — Nature's
moral

Against excess. Let the Great Seal be
sent

Back to the King to-morrow.

Herbert. Must that be?
The King may rend the bearer limb from
limb.

Think on it again.

Becket. Against the moral excess
No physical ache, but failure it may be
Of all we aim'd at. John of Salisbury

Hath often laid a cold hand on my
heats,

And Herbert hath rebuked me even now.
I will be wise and wary, not the soldier

As Foliot swears it. — John, and out of
breath!

Enter JOHN OF SALISBURY.

John of Salisbury. Thomas, thou wast
not happy taking charge

Of this wild Rosamund to please the
King,

Nor am I happy having charge of
her —

The included Danaë has escaped again
Her tower, and her Acrisius — where to
seek?

I have been about the city.

Becket. Thou wilt find her
Back in her lodging. Go with her — at
once —

To-night — my men will guard you to
the gates.

Be sweet to her, she has many enemies.
Send the Great Seal by daybreak. Both,
good night!

SCENE II. — *Street in Northampton, lead-
ing to the Castle.* ELEANOR'S RETAIN-
ERS and BECKET'S RETAINERS *fight-
ing.* *Enter ELEANOR and BECKET
from opposite streets.*

Eleanor. Peace, fools!

Becket. Peace, friends! what idle
brawl is this?

Retainer of Becket. They said —
her Grace's people — thou wast
found —

Liars! I shame to quote 'em — caught,
my lord,

With a wanton in thy lodging — Hell
requite 'em!

Retainer of Eleanor. My liege, the
Lord Fitzurse reported this

In passing to the Castle even now.

Retainer of Becket. And then they
mock'd us and we fell upon 'em,

For we would live and die for thee, my
lord,

However kings and queens may frown on
thee.

Becket to his Retainers. Go, go — no
more of this!

Eleanor to her Retainers. Away! —
(*Exit RETAINERS*) Fitzurse —

Becket. Nay, let him be.

Eleanor. No, no, my Lord Archbishop,
'T is known you are midwinter to all
women,

But often in your chancellorship you
served

The follies of the King.

Becket. No, not these follies!

Eleanor. My lord, Fitzurse beheld her
in your lodging.

Becket. Whom?

Eleanor. Well — you know — the minion,
Rosamund.

Becket. He had good eyes!

Eleanor. Then, hidden in the street,
He watch'd her pass with John of Salisbury

And heard her cry "Where is this bower
of mine?"

Becket. Good ears too!

Eleanor. You are going to the Castle,
Will you subscribe the customs?

Becket. I leave that,
Knowing how much you reverence Holy
Church,

My liege, to your conjecture.

Eleanor. I and mine —
And many a baron holds along with
me —

Are not so much at feud with Holy
Church

But we might take your side against the
customs —

So that you grant me one slight favor.

Becket. What?

Eleanor. A sight of that same chart
which Henry gave you
With the red line — "her bower,"

Becket. And to what end?

Eleanor. That Church must scorn her-
self whose fearful Priest

Sits winking at the license of a king,
Altho' we grant when kings are dangerous
The Church must play into the hands of
kings;

Look! I would move this wanton from
his sight

And take the Church's danger on myself.

Becket. For which she should be duly
grateful.

Eleanor. True!

Tho' she that binds the bond, herself
should see

That kings are faithful to their marriage
vow.

Becket. Ay, Madam, and queens also.

Eleanor. And queens also!

What is your drift?

Becket. My drift is to the Castle,
Where I shall meet the Barons and my
King. *[Exit.]*

DE BROC, DE TRACY, DE BRITO, DE
MORVILLE *(passing)*

Eleanor. To the Castle?

De Broc. Ay!

Eleanor. Stir up the King, the Lords!
Set all on fire against him!

De Brito. Ay, good Madam!
[Exeunt.]

Eleanor. Fool! I will make thee hate-
ful to thy King.

Churl! I will have thee frightened into
France,

And I shall live to trample on thy grave.

SCENE III. — *The Hall in Northamp-
ton Castle.*

*On one side of the stage the doors of an inner
Council-chamber, half-open. At the
bottom, the great doors of the Hall.
ROGER ARCHBISHOP OF YORK, FO-
LIOT BISHOP OF LONDON, HILARY OF
CHICHESTER, BISHOP OF HEREFORD,
RICHARD DE HASTINGS (Grand Prior
of Templars) PHILIP DE ELEEMOSINA
(the Pope's Almoner), and others. DE
BROC, FITZURSE, DE BRITO, DE
MORVILLE, DE TRACY, and other
BARONS assembled — a table before
them. JOHN OF OXFORD, President
of the Council.*

*Enter BECKET and HERBERT OF
BOSHAM.*

Becket. Where is the King?

Roger of York. Gone hawking on the
Nene,

His heart so gall'd with thine ingratitude,
He will not see thy face till thou hast
sign'd

These ancient laws and customs of the
realm.

Thy sending back the Great Seal mad-
den'd him,

He all but pluck'd the bearer's eyes
away.

Take heed, lest he destroy thee utterly.

Becket. Then shalt thou step into my
place and sign.

Roger of York. Didst thou not promise
Henry to obey

These ancient laws and customs of the
realm?

Becket. Saving the honor of my order
— ay.

Customs, traditions, — clouds that come
and go;

The customs of the Church are Peter's
rock.

Roger of York. Saving thine order!
But King Henry sware

That, saving his King's kingship he
would grant thee

The crown itself. Saving thine order,
Thomas,

Is black and white at once, and comes to
nought.

O bolster'd up with stubbornness and
pride,

Wilt thou destroy the Church in fighting
for it,

And bring us all to shame ?

Becket. Roger of York,
When I and thou were youths in Theo-
bald's house,

Twice did thy malice and thy calumnies

Exile me from the face of Theobald.

Now I am Canterbury and thou art York.

Roger of York. And is not York the
peer of Canterbury ?

Did not Great Gregory bid St. Austin
here

Found two archbishoprics, London and
York ?

Becket. What came of that ? The
first archbishop fled,

And York lay barren for a hundred years.
Why, by this rule, Foliot may claim the

For London too.

Foliot. And with good reason too,
For London had a temple and a priest

When Canterbury hardly bore a name.

Becket. The pagan temple of a pagan
Rome!

The heathen priesthood of a heathen
creed!

Thou goest beyond thyself in petulancy !
Who made thee London ? Who, but

Canterbury ?

John of Oxford. Peace, peace, my
lords ! these customs are no longer

As Canterbury calls them, wandering
clouds,

But by the King's command are written
down,

And by the King's command, I, John of
Oxford,

The President of this Council, read them.

Becket. Read !

John of Oxford (reads). "All causes
of advowsons and presentations, whether
between laymen or clerics, shall be tried
in the King's court."

Becket. But that I cannot sign : for
that would drag

The cleric before the civil judgment-seat,
And on a matter wholly spiritual.

John of Oxford. "If any cleric be ac-
cused of felony, the Church shall not pro-
tect him ; but he shall answer to the sum-
mons of the King's court to be tried
therein."

Becket. And that I cannot sign.
Is not the Church the visible Lord on

earth ?

Shall hands that do create the Lord be
bound

Behind the back like laymen-criminals ?
The Lord be judged again by Pilate ?

No !

John of Oxford. "When a bishopric
falls vacant, the King, till another be
appointed, shall receive the revenues
thereof."

Becket. And that I cannot sign. Is
the King's treasury

A fit place for the moneys of the Church,
That be the patrimony of the poor ?

John of Oxford. "And when the va-
cancy is to be filled up, the King shall

summon the chapter of that church to
court, and the election shall be made in

the Chapel Royal, with the consent of
our lord the King, and by the advice of

his Government."

Becket. And that I cannot sign : for
that would make

Our island-Church a schism from Chris-
tendom,

And weight down all free choice beneath
the throne.

Foliot. And was thine own election so
canonical,

Good father ?

Becket. If it were not, Gilbert Foliot,
I mean to cross the sea to France and

lay
My crozier in the Holy Father's hands,
And bid him recreate me, Gilbert Fo-

liot.

Foliot. Nay ; by another of these cus-
toms thou

Wilt not be suffer'd so to cross the seas
Without the license of our lord the King.

Becket. That, too, I cannot sign.
De Broc, De Brito, De Tracy, Fitzurse,

*De Morville, start up — a clash of
swords. Sign and obey !*

Becket. My lords, is this a combat or
a council ?

Are ye my masters, or my lord the King ?
Ye make this clashing for no love o' the

customs
Or constitutions, or whate'er ye call them,

But that there be among you those that
hold

Lands reft from Canterbury.

De Broc. And mean to keep them,
In spite of thee!

Lords (shouting). Sign, and obey the
crown!

Becket. The crown? Shall I do less
for Canterbury

Than Henry for the crown? King Ste-
phen gave

Many of the crown lands to those that
help'd him;

So did Matilda, the King's mother. Mark,
When Henry came into his own again,
Then he took back not only Stephen's
gifts,

But his own mother's, lest the crown
should be

Shorn of ancestral splendor. This did
Henry.

Shall I do less for mine own Canterbury?
And thou, De Broc, that holdest Salt-
wood Castle —

De Broc. And mean to hold it, or —

Becket. To have my life.

De Broc. The King is quick to anger;
if thou anger him,

We wait but the King's word to strike
thee dead.

Becket. Strike, and I die the death of
martyrdom;

Strike, and ye set these customs by my
death

Ringing their own death-knell thro' all
the realm.

Herbert. And I can tell you, lords, ye
are all as like

To lodge a fear in Thomas Becket's heart
As find a hare's form in a lion's cave.

John of Oxford. Ay, sheathe your
swords, ye will displeas the King.

De Broc. Why down then thou! but
an he come to Saltwood,

By God's death, thou shalt sick him like
a calf! [*Sheathing his sword.*]

Hilary. O my good lord, I do entreat
thee — sign.

Save the King's honor here before his
barons.

He hath sworn that thou shouldst sign,
and now but shuns

The semblance of defeat; I have heard
him say

He means no more; so if thou sign, my
lord,

That were but as the shadow of an assent.

Becket. 'T would seem too like the
substance, if I sign'd.

Philip de Eleemosyna. My lord, thine
ear! I have the ear of the Pope.

As thou hast honor for the Pope our
master,

Have pity on him, sorely prest upon
By the fierce Emperor and his Antipope.

Thou knowest he was forced to fly to
France;

He pray'd me to pray thee to pacify
Thy King; for if thou go against thy

King,

Then must he likewise go against thy
King,

And then thy King might join the Anti-
pope,

And that would shake the Papacy as it
stands.

Besides, thy King swore to our cardinals
He meant no harm nor damage to the

Church.

Smooth thou his pride — thy signing is
but form;

Nay, and should harm come of it, it is
the Pope

Will be to blame — not thou. Over and
over

He told me thou shouldst pacify the King,
Lest there be battle between Heaven and

Earth,
And Earth should get the better — for
the time.

Cannot the Pope absolve thee if thou
sign?

Becket. Have I the orders of the Holy
Father?

Philip de Eleemosyna. Orders, my lord
— why, no; for what am I?

The secret whisper of the Holy Father.
Thou, that hast been a statesman, couldst

thou always
Blurt thy free mind to the air?

Becket. If Rome be feeble, then should
I be firm.

Philip. Take it not that way — balk
not the Pope's will.

When he hath shaken off the Emperor,
He heads the Church against the King

with thee.

Richard de Hastings (kneeling). Becket,
I am the oldest of the Templars;

I knew thy father; he would be mine age
Had he lived now; think of me as thy

father!
Behold thy father kneeling to thee,
Becket.

Submit; I promise thee on my salvation
That thou wilt hear no more o' the cus-
toms.

Becket. What!

Hath Henry told thee? hast thou talk'd
with him?

Another Templar (kneeling). Father, I
am the youngest of the Templars,
Look on me as I were thy bodily son,
For, like a son, I lift my hands to thee.

Philip. Wilt thou hold out for ever,
Thomas Becket?

Dost thou not hear?

Becket (signs). Why — there then —
there — I sign,

And swear to obey the customs.

Foliot. Is it thy will,
My lord Archbishop, that we too should
sign?

Becket. O ay, by that canonical obedi-
ence

Thou shalt hast owed thy father, Gilbert
Foliot.

Foliot. Loyally and with good faith,
my lord Archbishop?

Becket. O ay, with all that loyalty
and good faith

Thou still hast shown thy primate, Gilbert
Foliot.

[*Becket draws apart with HERBERT.*
Herbert, Herbert, have I betray'd the
Church?

I'll have the paper back — blot out my
name.

Herbert. Too late, my lord: you see
they are signing there.

Becket. False to myself — it is the
will of God

To break me, prove me nothing of my-
self!

This Almoner hath tasted Henry's gold.
The cardinals have finger'd Henry's gold.
And Rome is venal ev'n to rottenness.
I see it, I see it.

I am no soldier, as he said — at least
No leader. Herbert, till I hear from the
Pope

I will suspend myself from all my func-
tions.

If fast and prayer, the lacerating
scourge —

Foliot (from the table). My lord Arch-
bishop, thou hast yet to seal.

Becket. First, Foliot, let me see what
I have sign'd. [*Goes to the table.*

What, this! and this! — what! new and
old together!

Seal? If a seraph shouted from the sun,
And bade me seal against the rights of the
Church,

I would anathematize him. I will not
seal. [*Exit with HERBERT.*

Enter KING HENRY.

Henry. Where's Thomas? hath he
sign'd? show me the papers!
Sign'd and not seal'd! How's that?

John of Oxford. He would not seal.
And when he sign'd, his face was stormy
red —

Shame, wrath, I know not what. He sat
down there

And dropt it in his hands, and then a
paleness,

Like the wan twilight after sunset, crept
Up even to the tonsure, and he groan'd,
"False to myself! It is the will of God!"

Henry. God's will be what it will, the
man shall seal,

Or I will seal his doom. My burgher's
son —

Nay, if I cannot break him as the prelate,
I'll crush him as the subject. Send for
him back. [*Sits on his throne.*

Barons and bishops of our realm of Eng-
laud,

After the nineteen winters of King Ste-
phen —

A reign which was no reign, when none
could sit

By his own hearth in peace; when mur-
der common

As nature's death, like Egypt's plague,
had fill'd

All things with blood; when every door-
way blush'd,

Dash'd red with that unhallow'd passover;
When every baron ground his blade in
blood;

The household dough was kneaded up
with blood;

The millwheel turn'd in blood; the
wholesome plough

Lay rusting in the furrow's yellow weeds,
Till famine dwarf'd the race — I came,
your King!

Nor dwell alone, like a soft lord of the
East,

In mine own hall, and sucking thro' fools'
ears

The flatteries of corruption — went
abroad

Thro' all my counties, spied my people's
ways;

Yea, heard the churl against the baron —
 yea,
 And did him justice; sat in mine own
 courts
 Judging my judges, that had found a King
 Who ranged confusions, made the twi-
 light day,
 And struck a shape from out the vague,
 and law
 From madness. And the event — our
 fallows till'd,
 Much corn, re-peopled towns, a realm
 again.
 So far my course, albeit not glassy-
 smooth,
 Had prosper'd in the main, but suddenly
 Jarr'd on this rock. A cleric violated
 The daughter of his host, and murder'd
 him.
 Bishops — York, London, Chichester,
 Westminster —
 Ye hale'd this tonsured devil into your
 courts;
 But since your canon will not let you
 take
 Life for a life, ye but degraded him
 Where I had hang'd him. What doth
 hard murder care
 For degradation? and that made me
 muse,
 Being bounden by my coronation oath
 To do men justice. Look to it, your own
 selves!
 Say that a cleric murder'd an archbi-
 shop,
 What could ye do? Degrade, imprison
 him —
 Not death for death.
John of Oxford. But I, my liege, could
 swear,
 To death for death.
Henry. And, looking thro' my reign,
 I found a hundred ghastly murders done
 By men, the scum and offal of the Church;
 Then, glancing thro' the story of this
 realm,
 I came on certain wholesome usages,
 Lost in desuetude, of my grandsire's
 day,
 Good royal customs — had them written
 fair
 For John of Oxford here to read to
 you.
John of Oxford. And I can easily swear
 to these as being
 The King's will and God's will and jus-
 tice; yet
 I could but read a part to-day, because —

Fitzurse. Because my lord of Canter-
 bury —
De Tracy. Ay,
 This lord of Canterbury —
De Brito. As is his wont
 Too much of late whene'er your royal
 rights
 Are mooted in our councils —
Fitzurse. — made an uproar.
Henry. And Becket had my bosom on
 all this;
 If ever man by bonds of gratefulness —
 I raised him from the puddle of the gut-
 ter,
 I made him porcelain from the clay of
 the city —
 Thought that I knew him, err'd thro'
 love of him,
 Hoped, were he chosen archbishop,
 Church and Crown,
 Two sisters gliding in an equal dance,
 Two rivers gently flowing side by side —
 But no!
 The bird that moults sings the same song
 again,
 The snake that sloughs comes out a
 snake again.
 Snake — ay, but he that lookt a fangless
 one,
 Issnes a venomous adder.
 For he, when having dofft the Chancel-
 lor's robe —
 Flung the Great Seal of England in my
 face —
 Claim'd some of our crown lands for
 Canterbury —
 My comrade, boon companion, my co-
 reveller,
 The master of his master, the King's
 king. —
 God's eyes! I had meant to make him
 all but king.
 Chancellor - Archbishop, he might well
 have sway'd
 All England under Henry, the young
 King,
 When I was hence. What did the traitor
 say?
 False to himself, but ten-fold false to me!
 The will of God — why, then it is my
 will —
 Is he coming?
Messenger (entering). With a crowd of
 worshippers,
 And holds his cross before him thro' the
 crowd.
 As one that puts himself in sanctuary

Henry. His cross!

Roger of York. His cross! I'll front him, cross to cross.

[Exit ROGER OF YORK.]

Henry. His cross! it is the traitor that inputes

Treachery to his King!

It is not safe for me to look upon him.

Away — with me!

[Goes in with his BARONS to the Council Chamber, the door of which is left open.]

Enter BECKET, holding his cross of silver before him. The BISHOPS come round him.

Hereford. The King will not abide thee with thy cross.

Permit me, my good lord, to bear it for thee,

Being thy chaplain.

Becket. No: it must protect me.

Herbert. As once he bore the standard of the Angles,

So now he bears the standard of the angels.

Foliot. I am the Dean of the province: let me bear it.

Make not thy King a traitorous murderer.

Becket. Did not your barons draw their swords against me?

Enter ROGER OF YORK, with his cross, advancing to BECKET.

Becket. Wherefore dost thou presume to bear thy cross,

Against the solemn ordinance from Rome,

Out of thy province?

Roger of York. Why dost thou presume,

Arm'd with thy cross, to come before the King?

If Canterbury bring his cross to court, Let York bear his to mate with Canterbury.

Foliot (seizing hold of BECKET'S cross).

Nay, nay, my lord, thou must not brave the King.

Nay, let me have it. I will have it!

Becket. Away!

[Flinging him off.]

Foliot. He fasts, they say, this mitred Hercules!

He fast! is that an arm of fast? My lord,

Hadst thou not sign'd, I had gone along with thee;

But thou the shepherd hast betray'd the sheep,

And thou art perjured, and thou wilt not seal.

As Chancellor thou wast against the Church,

Now as Archbishop goest against the King;

For, like a fool, thou knowst no middle way.

Ay, ay! but art thou stronger than the King?

Becket. Strong — not in mine own self, but Heaven; true

To either function, holding it; and thou

Fast, scourge thyself, and mortify thy flesh,

Not spirit — thou remainest Gilbert Foliot,

A worldly follower of the worldly strong.

I, bearing this great ensign, make it clear

Under what Prince I fight.

Foliot. My lord of York, Let us go in to the Council, where our

bishops And our great lords will sit in judgment on him.

Becket. Sons sit in judgment on their father! — then

The spire of Holy Church may prick the graves —

Her crypt among the stars. Sign? seal? I promised

The King to obey these customs, not yet written,

Saving mine order; true too, that when written,

I sign'd them — being a fool, as Foliot call'd me.

I hold not by my signing. Get ye hence, Tell what I say to the King.

[Exit HEREFORD, FOLIOT, and other BISHOPS.]

Roger of York. The Church will hate thee. [Exit.]

Becket. Serve my best friend and make him my worst foe;

Fight for the Church, and set the Church against me!

Herbert. To be honest is to set all knives against thee.

Ah! Thomas, excommunicate them all!

Hereford (reëntering). I cannot brook
the turmoil thou hast raised.

I would, my lord Thomas of Canter-
bury

Thou wert plain Thomas and not Can-
terbury,

Or that thou wouldst deliver Canter-
bury

To our King's hands again, and be at
peace.

Hilary (reëntering). For hath not
thine ambition set the Church
This day between the hammer and the
anvil —

Fealty to the King, obedience to thy-
self !

Herbert. What say the bishops !

Hilary. Some have pleaded for him,
But the King rages — most are with the
King ;

And some are reeds, that one time sway
to the current,

And to the wind another. But we hold
Thou art forsworn ; and no forsworn

Archbishop
Shall helm the Church. We therefore
place ourselves

Under the shield and safeguard of the
Pope,

And cite thee to appear before the
Pope

And answer thine accusers. . . . Art
thou deaf ?

Becket. I hear you. [*Clash of arms.*]

Hilary. Dost thou hear those others ?

Becket. Ay !

Roger of York (reëntering). The
King's "God's eyes!" come now
so thick and fast,

We fear that he may reave thee of thine
own.

Come on, come on ! it is not fit for us
To see the proud Archbishop mutilated.

Say that he blind thee and tear out thy
tongue.

Becket. So be it. He begins at top
with me :

They crucified St. Peter downward.

Roger of York. Nay,

But for their sake who stagger betwixt
thine

Appeal, and Henry's anger, yield.

Becket. Hence, Satan !

[*Exit ROGER OF YORK.*]

Fitzurse (reëntering). My lord, the
King demands three hundred
marks,

Duc from his castles of Berkhamstead
and Eye

When thou thereof wast warden.

Becket. Tell the King
I spent thrice that in fortifying his cas-
tles.

De Tracy (reëntering). My lord, the
King demands seven hundred
marks,

Lent at the siege of Toulouse by the
King.

Becket. I led seven hundred knights
and fought his wars.

De Brito (reëntering). My lord, the
King demands five hundred marks,
Advanced thee at his instance by the
Jews,

For which the King was bound security.

Becket. I thought it was a gift ; I
thought it was a gift.

*Enter Lord LEICESTER (followed by
BARONS and BISHOPS).*

Leicester. My lord, I come unwillingly.
The King

Demands a strict account of all those
revenues

From all the vacant sees and abbaies,
Which came into thy hands when Chan-
cellor.

Becket. How much might that
amount to, my lord Leicester ?

Leicester. Some thirty — forty thou-
sand silver marks.

Becket. Are these your customs ? O
my good lord Leicester,

The King and I were brothers. All I had
I lavish'd for the glory of the King ;

I shone from him, for him, his glory,
his

Reflection : now the glory of the Church
Hath swallow'd up the glory of the
King ;

I am his no more, but hers. Grant me
one day

To ponder these demands.

Leicester. Hear first thy sentence !
The King and all his lords —

Becket. Son, first hear me !

Leicester. Nay, nay, canst thou, that
holdest thine estates

In fee and barony of the King, decline
The judgment of the King ?

Becket. The King ! I hold
Nothing in fee and barony of the King.

Whatever the Church owns — she holds
it in

Free and perpetual alms, unsubject to
One earthly sceptre.

Leicester. Nay, but hear thy judgment.

The King and all his barons —

Becket. Judgment! Barons!

Who but the bridegroom dares to judge
the bride,

Or he the bridegroom may appoint?
Not he

That is not of the house, but from the
street

Stain'd with the mire thereof.

I had been so true

To Henry and mine office that the King
Would throne me in the great Arch-
bishopric:

And I, that knew mine own infirmity,
For the King's pleasure rather than
God's cause

Took it upon me — err'd thro' love of
him.

Now therefore God from me withdraws
Himself,

And the King too.

What! forty thousand marks!

Why thou, the King, the Pope, the
Saints, the world,

Know that when made Archbishop I was
freed,

Before the Prince and chief Justiciary,
From every bond and debt and obliga-
tion

Incurr'd as Chancellor.

Hear me, son.

As gold

Outvalues dross, light darkness, Abel
Cain,

The soul the body, and the Church the
Throne,

I charge thee, upon pain of mine anath-
ema,

That thou obey, not me, but God in
me,

Rather than Henry. I refuse to stand
By the King's censure, make my cry to
the Pope,

By whom I will be judged; refer my-
self,

The King, these customs, all the Church,
to him,

And under his authority — I depart.

[*Going.*

[*LEICESTER looks at him doubtingly.*

Am I a prisoner?

Leicester. By St. Lazarus, no!

I am confounded by thee. Go in peace.

De Broc. In peace now — but after.
Take that for earnest.

[*Flings a bone at him from the rushes.*

De Brito, Fitzurse, De Tracy, and others
(*flinging wisps of rushes*). Ay, go in peace,
caitiff, caitiff! And that too, perjured
prelate — and that, turncoat shaveling!
There, there, there! traitor, traitor, traitor!

Becket. Mannerless wolves!

[*Turning and facing them.*

Herbert. Enough, my lord, enough!

Becket. Barons of England and of

Normandy,

When what ye shake at doth but seem
to fly,

True test of coward, ye follow with a
yell.

But I that threw the mightiest knight of
France.

Sir Engelram de Trie, —

Herbert. Enough, my lord.

Becket. More than enough. I play
the fool again.

Enter HERALD.

Herald. The King commands you,
upon pain of death,

That none should wrong or injure your
Archbishop.

Foliot. Deal gently with the young
man Absalom.

[*Great doors of the Hall at the back open,*
and discover a crowd. They shout:

Blessed is he that cometh in the name of
the Lord!

SCENE IV. — *Refectory of the Monastery*
at Northampton. A Banquet on the
Tables.

Enter BECKET. BECKET'S RETAINERS.

First Retainer. Do thou speak first.

Second Retainer. Nay, thou! Nay,
thou! Hast not thou drawn the short
straw?

First Retainer. My lord Archbishop,
wilt thou permit us —

Becket. To speak without stammering
and like a free man? Ay.

First Retainer. My lord, permit us
then to leave thy service.

Becket. When?

First Retainer. Now.

Becket. To-night?

First Retainer. To-night, my lord.

Becket. And why?

First Retainer. My lord, we leave thee not without tears.

Becket. Tears? Why not stay with me then?

First Retainer. My lord, we cannot yield thee an answer altogether to thy satisfaction.

Becket. I warrant you, or your own either. Shall I find you one? The King hath frowned upon me.

First Retainer. That is not altogether our answer, my lord.

Becket. No; yet all but all. Go, go! Ye have eaten of my dish and drunken of my cup for a dozen years.

First Retainer. And so we have. We mean thee no wrong. Wilt thou not say, "God bless you," ere we go!

Becket. God bless you all! God redder your pale blood! But mine is human-red; and when ye shall hear it is poured out upon earth, and see it mounting to Heaven, my God bless you, that seems sweet to you now, will blast and blind you like a curse.

First Retainer. We hope not, my lord. Our humblest thanks for your blessing. Farewell! [Exit RETAINERS.]

Becket. Farewell, friends! farewell, swallows! I wrong the bird; she leaves only the nest she built, they leave the builder. Why? Am I to be murdered to-night? [Knocking at the door.]

Attendant. Here is a missive left at the gate by one from the castle.

Becket. Cornwall's hand or Leicester's: they write marvellously alike.

[Reading.]

"Fly at once to France, to King Louis of France: there be those about our King who would have thy blood."

Was not my lord of Leicester bidden to our supper?

Attendant. Ay, my lord, and divers other earls and barons. But the hour is past, and our brother, Master Cook, he makes moan that all be a-getting cold.

Becket. And I make my moan along with him. Cold after warm, winter after summer, and the golden leaves, these earls and barons, that elung to me, frosted off me by the first cold frown of the King. Cold, but look how the table steams, like a heathen altar; nay, like the altar at Jerusalem. Shall God's good gifts be wasted? None of them here! Call in the poor from the streets, and let them feast.

Herbert. That is the parable of our blessed Lord.

Becket. And why should not the parable of our blessed Lord be acted again? Call in the poor! The Church is ever at variance with the kings, and ever at one with the poor. I marked a group of lazars in the market-place — half-rag, half-sore — beggars, poor rogues (Heaven bless 'em) who never saw nor dreamed of such a banquet. I will amaze them. Call them in, I say. They shall henceforward be my earls and barons — our lords and masters in Christ Jesus.

[Exit HERBERT.]

If the King hold his purpose, I am myself a beggar. Forty thousand marks! forty thousand devils — and these craven bishops!

A Poor Man (entering) with his dog. My lord Archbishop, may I come in with my poor friend, my dog? The King's verdurer caught him a-hunting in the forest, and cut off his paws. The dog followed his calling, my lord. I ha' carried him ever so many miles in my arms, and he licks my face and moans and cries out against the King.

Becket. Better thy dog than thee. The King's courts would use thee worse than thy dog — they are too bloody. Were the Church king, it would be otherwise. Poor beast! poor beast! set him down. I will bind up his wounds with my napkin. Give him a bone, give him a bone! Who misuses a dog would misuse a child — they cannot speak for themselves. Past help! his paws are past help. God help him!

Enter the BEGGARS (and scat themselves at the Tables). BECKET and HERBERT wait upon them.

First Beggar. Swine, sheep, ox — here's a French supper. When thieves fall out, honest men —

Second Beggar. Is the Archbishop a thief who gives thee thy supper?

First Beggar. Well, then, how does it go? When honest men fall out, thieves — no, it can't be that.

Second Beggar. Who stole the widow's one sitting hen o' Sunday, when she was at mass?

First Beggar. Come, come! thou hadst thy share on her. Sitting hen! Our Lord Becket's our great sitting-hen cock,

and we should n't ha' been sitting here if the barons and bishops had n't been a-sitting on the Archbishop.

Becket. Ay, the princes sat in judgment against me, and the Lord hath prepared your table — *Sederunt principes, ederunt pauperes.*

A Voice. Becket, beware of the knife!

Becket. Who spoke?

Third Beggar. Nobody, my lord. What's that, my lord?

Becket. Venison.

Third Beggar. Venison?

Becket. Buck; deer, as you call it.

Third Beggar. King's meat! By the Lord, won't we pray for your lordship!

Becket. And, my children, your prayers will do more for me in the day of peril that dawns darkly and drearily over the house of God — yea, and in the day of judgment also, than the swords of the craven sycophants would have done had they remained true to me whose bread they have partaken. I must leave you to your banquet. Feed, feast, and be merry. Herbert, for the sake of the Church itself, if not for my own, I must fly to France to-night. Come with me.

[*Exit with HERBERT.*]

Third Beggar. Here — all of you — my lord's health (*they drink*). Well — if that is n't goodly wine —

First Beggar. 'Then there is n't a goodly wench to serve him with it: they were fighting for her to-day in the street.

Third Beggar. Peace!

First Beggar.

The black sheep baaed to the miller's ewe-lamb,
The miller's away for to-night.
Black sheep, quoth she, too black a sin for me.

And what said the black sheep, my masters?

We can make a black sin white.

Third Beggar. Peace!

First Beggar. "Ewe lamb, ewe lamb,
I am here by the dam."

But the miller came home that night,
And so dusted his back with the meal in his sack,

That he made the black sheep white.

Third Beggar. Be we not of the family? be we not a-supping with the head of the family? be we not in my lord's own refractory? Out from among us; thou art our black sheep.

Enter the four KNIGHTS.

Fitzurse. Sheep, said he? And sheep without the shepherd, too. Where is my lord Archbishop? Thou the lustiest and lousiest of this Cain's brotherhood, answer.

Third Beggar. With Cain's answer, my lord. Am I his keeper? Thou shouldst call him Cain, not me.

Fitzurse. So I do, for he would murder his brother the State.

Third Beggar (rising and advancing). No my lord; but because the Lord hath set his mark upon him that no man should murder him.

Fitzurse. Where is he? where is he?

Third Beggar. With Cain belike in the land of Nod, or in the land of France for aught I know.

Fitzurse. France! Ha! De Morville, Tracy, Brito — fled is he? Cross swords all of you! swear to follow him! Remember the Queen!

[*The four KNIGHTS cross their swords.*]

De Brito. They mock us; he is here.

[*All the BEGGARS rise and advance upon them.*]

Fitzurse. Come, you filthy knaves, let us pass.

Third Beggar. Nay, my lord, let us pass. We be a-going home after our supper in all humbleness, my lord; for the Archbishop loves humbleness, my lord; and though we be fifty to four, we daren't fight you with our crutches, my lord. There now, if thou hast not laid hands upon me! and my fellows know that I am all one scale like a fish. I pray God I have n't given thee my leprosy, my lord.

[*FITZURSE shrinks from him and another presses upon DE BRITO.*]

De Brito. Away, dog!

Fourth Beggar. And I was bit by a mad dog o' Friday, an' I be half dog already by this token, that tho' I can drink wine I cannot bide water, my lord; and I want to bite, I want to bite, and they do say the very breath catches.

De Brito. Insolent clown. Shall I smite him with the edge of the sword?

De Morville. No, nor with the flat of it either. Smite the shepherd and the sheep are scattered. Smite the sheep and the shepherd will excommunicate thee.

De Brito. Yet my fingers itch to beat him into nothing.

Fifth Beggar. So do mine, my lord. I was born with it, and sulphur won't bring it out o' me. But for all that the Archbishop washed my feet o' Tuesday. He likes it, my lord.

Sixth Beggar. And see here, my lord, this rag fro' the gangrene i' my leg. It's humbling -- it smells o' human natur'. Wilt thou smell it, my lord? for the Archbishop likes the smell on it, my lord; for I be his lord and master i' Christ, my lord.

De Morville. Faugh! we shall all be poisoned. Let us go.

[They draw back, BEGGARS following.]

Seventh Beggar. My lord, I ha' three sisters a-dying at home o' the sweating sickness. They be dead while I be a-supping.

Eighth Beggar. And I ha' nine darters i' the spital that be dead ten times o'er i' one day wi' the putrid fever; and I bring the taint on it along wi' me, for the Archbishop likes it, my lord.

[Pressing upon the KNIGHTS till they disappear through the door.]

Third Beggar. Crutches, and itches, and leprosy, and ulcers, and gangrenes, and running sores, praise ye the Lord, for to-night ye have saved our Archbishop!

First Beggar. I'll go back again. I hain't half done yet.

Herbert of Bosham (entering). My friends, the Archbishop bids you good-night. He hath retired to rest, and being in great jeopardy of his life, he hath made his bed between the altars, from whence he sends me to bid you this night pray for him who hath fed you in the wilderness.

Third Beggar. So we will -- so we will, I warrant thee. Becket shall be king, and the Holy Father shall be king, and the world shall live by the King's venison and the bread o' the Lord, and there shall be no more poor forever. Hurrah! Vive le Roy! That's the English of it.

ACT II.

SCENE I. — ROSAMUND'S Bower. A Garden of Flowers. In the midst a bank of wild-flowers with a bench before it.

Voices heard singing among the trees.

Duet.

1. Is it the wind of the dawn that I hear in the pine overhead?
2. No; but the voice of the deep as it hollows the cliffs of the land.
1. Is there a voice coming up with the voice of the deep from the strand, One coming up with a song in the flush of the glimmering red?
2. Love that is born of the deep coming up with the sun from the sea.
1. Love that can shape or can shatter a life till the life shall have fled?
2. Nay, let us welcome him, Love that can lift up a life from the dead.
1. Keep him away from the lone little isle. Let us be, let us be.
2. Nay, let him make it his own, let him reign in it -- he, it is he, Love that is born of the deep coming up with the sun from the sea.

Enter HENRY and ROSAMUND.

Rosamund. Be friends with him again -- I do beseech thee.

Henry. With Becket? I have but one hour with thee --

Sceptre and crozier clashing, and the mitre

Grappling the crown -- and when I flee from this

For a gasp of freer air, a breathing-while

To rest upon thy bosom and forget him -- Why thou, my bird, thou pipest Becket, Becket --

Yea, thou my golden dream of Love's own bower,

Must be the nightmare breaking on my peace

With "Becket."

Rosamund. O my life's life, not to smile

Is all but death to me. My sun, no cloud!

Let there not be one frown in this one hour.

Out of the many thine, let this be mine! Look rather thou all-royal as when first I met thee.

Henry. Where was that?

Rosamund. Forgetting that Forgets me too.

Henry. Nay, I remember it well. There on the moor.

Rosamund. And in a narrow path.
A plover flew before thee. Then I
saw
Thy high black steed among the flaming
furze,
Like sudden night in the main glare of
day.
And from that height something was said
to me
I knew not what.

Henry. I ask'd the way.

Rosamund. I think so.
So I lost mine.

Henry. Thou wast too shamed to answer.

Rosamund. Too scared — so young!

Henry. The rosebud of my rose! —
Well, well, no more of *him* — I have sent
his folk,

His kin, all his belongings, overseas;
Age, orphans, and babe-breasting mothers — all

By hundreds to him — there to beg,
starve, die —

So that the fool King Louis fed them
not.

The man shall feel that I can strike him
yet.

Rosamund. Babes, orphans, mothers!
is that royal, Sire?

Henry. And I have been as royal with
the Church.

He shelter'd in the Abbey of Pontigny.
There wore his time studying the canon
law

To work it against me. But since he
cursed

My friends at Veselay, I have let them
know,

That if they keep him longer as their
guest,

I scatter all their cowls to all the hells.

Rosamund. And is that altogether
royal?

Henry. Traitress!
Rosamund. A faithful traitress to thy
royal fame.

Henry. Fame! what care I for fame?
Spite, ignorance, envy,

Yea, honesty too, paint her what way
they will.

Fame of to-day is infamy to-morrow;
Infamy of to-day is fame to-morrow;

And round and round again. What
matters? Royal —

I mean to leave the royalty of my crown
Unlessen'd to mine heirs.

Rosamund. Still — thy fame too
I say that should be royal.

Henry. And I say,
I care not for thy saying.

Rosamund. And I say,
I care not for *thy* saying. A greater

King
Than thou art, Love, who cares not for
the word,

Makes "care not" — care. There have I
spoken true?

Henry. Care dwell with me forever
when I cease

To care for thee as ever!
Rosamund. No need! no need! . . .

There is a bench. Come, wilt thou sit?
. . . My bank

Of wild-flowers [*he sits*]. At thy feet!
[*She sits at his feet.*]

Henry. I bade them clear
A royal pleasure for thee, in the wood,
Not leave these countryfolk at court.

Rosamund. I brought them
In from the wood, and set them here. I

love them
More than the garden flowers, that seem

at most
Sweet guests, or foreign cousins, not half

speaking
The language of the land. I love *them*

too,
Yes. But, my liege, I am sure, of all

the roses —
Shame fall on those who gave it a dog's

name —
This wild one (*picking a brier-rose*) — nay,

I shall not prick myself —
Is sweetest. Do but smell!

Henry. Thou rose of the world!
Thou rose of all the roses! [*Muttering.*]

I am not worthy of her — this beast-body
That God has plunged my soul in — I,

that taking
The Fiend's advantage of a throne, so

long
Have wander'd among women, — a foul

stream
Thro' fever-breeding levels, — at her side.

Among these happy dales, run clearer,
drop

The mud I carried, like yon brook, and
glass

The faithful face of heaven —
[*Looking at her, and unconsciously aloud*

— thine! thine!
Rosamund. I know it

Henry (*muttering*). Not hers. We

have but one bond, her hate of Becket.

Rosamund (half-hearing). Nay! nay! what art thou muttering? I hate Becket?

Henry (muttering). A sane and natural loathing for a soul Purer, and truer and nobler than herself;

And mine a bitterer illegitimate hate, A bastard hate born of a former love.

Rosamund. My fault to name him!

O let the hand of one To whom thy voice is all her music, stay it But for a breath.

[*Puts her hand before his lips.*
Speak only of thy love.

Why there — like some loud beggar at thy gate —

The happy boldness of this hand hath won it

Love's alms, thy kiss (*looking at her hand*) — Sacred! I'll kiss it too.

[*Kissing it.*

There! wherefore dost thou so peruse it? Nay,

There may be crosses in my line of life.

Henry. Not half her hand — no hand to mate with her,

If it should come to that.

Rosamund. With her? with whom?

Henry. Life on the hand is naked gipsy-stuff;

Life on the face, the brows — clear innocence!

Vein'd marble — not a furrow yet — and hers

[*Muttering.*

Crost and recrost, a venomous spider's web —

Rosamund (springing up). Out of the cloud, my Sun — out of the eclipse Narrowing my golden hour!

Henry. O Rosamund, I would be true — would tell thee all — and something

I had to say — I love thee none the less — Which will so vex thee.

Rosamund. Something against me?

Henry. No, no, against myself.

Rosamund. I will not hear it.

Come, come, mine hour! I bargain for mine hour.

I'll call thee little Geoffrey.

Henry. Call him!

Rosamund. Geoffrey!

Enter GEOFFREY.

Henry. How the boy grows!

Rosamund. Ay, and his brows are thine;

The mouth is only Clifford, my dear father.

Geoffrey. My liege, what hast thou brought me?

Henry. Venal imp!

What say'st thou to the Chancellorship of England?

Geoffrey. O yes, my liege.

Henry. "O yes, my liege!" He speaks

As if it were a cake of gingerbread.

Dost thou know, my boy, what it is to be Chancellor of England?

Geoffrey. Something good, or thou wouldst not give it me.

Henry. It is, my boy, to side with the King when Chancellor, and then to be made Archbishop and go against the King who made him, and turn the world upside down.

Geoffrey. I won't have it then. Nay, but give it me, and I promise thee not to turn the world upside down.

Henry (giving him a ball). Here is a ball, my boy, thy world, to turn any way and play with as thou wilt — which is more than I can do with mine. Go try it, play. [*Exit GEOFFREY.*

A pretty lusty boy.

Rosamund. So like to thee; Like to be liker.

Henry. Not in my chin, I hope! That threatens double.

Rosamund. Thou art manlike perfect.

Henry. Ay, ay, no doubt; and were I humpt behind,

Thou'dst say as much — the goodly way of women

Who love, for which I love them. May God grant

No ill befall or him or thee when I Am gone.

Rosamund. Is he thy enemy?

Henry. He? who? ay!

Rosamund. Thine enemy knows the secret of my bower.

Henry. And I could tear him asunder with wild horses

Before he would betray it. Nay — no fear!

More like is he to excommunicate me.

Rosamund. And I would creep, crawl
over knife-edge flint
Barefoot, a hundred leagues, to stay his
hand
Before he flash'd the bolt.

Henry. And when he flash'd it
Shrink from me, like a daughter of the
Church.

Rosamund. Ay, but he will not.

Henry. Ay! but if he did?

Rosamund. O then! O then! I almost
fear to say

That my poor heretic heart would ex-
communicate

His excommunication, clinging to thee
Closer than ever.

*Henry (raising ROSAMUND and kissing
her).* My brave-hearted Rose!
Hath he ever been to see thee?

Rosamund. Here? not he.
And it is so lonely here — no confessor.

Henry. Thou shalt confess all thy
sweet sins to me.

Rosamund. Besides, we came away in
such a heat,

I brought not ev'n my crucifix.

Henry. Take this.

[Giving her the Crucifix which ELEANOR gave him.

Rosamund. O beautiful! May I have
it as mine, till mine
Be mine again?

Henry (throwing it round her neck).

Thine — as I am — till death!

Rosamund. Death? no! I'll have it
with me in my shroud,
And wake with it, and show it to all the
Saints.

Henry. Nay — I must go; but when
thou layest thy lip

To this, remembering One who died for
thee,

Remember also one who lives for thee
Out there in France; for I must hence
to brave

The Pope, King Louis, and this turbulent
priest.

Rosamund (kneeling). O by thy love
for me, all mine for thee,

Fling not thy soul into the flames of
hell;

I kneel to thee — be friends with him
again.

Henry. Look, look! if little Geoffrey
have not tost

His ball into the brook! makes after it
too

To find it. Why, the child will drown
himself.

Rosamund. Geoffrey! Geoffrey!
[Exit.

SCENE II. — *Montmirail.* "The Meeting
of the Kings." JOHN OF OXFORD and
HENRY. *Crowd in the distance.*

John of Oxford. You have not crown'd
young Henry yet, my liege?

Henry. Crown'd! by God's eyes, we
will not have him crown'd.

I spoke of late to the boy, he answer'd
me,

As if he wore the crown already — No,
We will not have him crown'd.

'T is true what Becket told me, that the
mother

Would make him play his kingship
against mine.

John of Oxford. Not have him crown'd?

Henry. Not now — not yet! and
Becket —

Becket should crown him were he crown'd
at all:

But, since we would be lord of our own
manor,

This Canterbury, like a wounded deer,
Has fled our presence and our feeding-
grounds.

John of Oxford. Cannot a smooth
tongue lick him whole again

To serve your will?

Henry. He hates my will, not me.

John of Oxford. There's York, my
liege.

Henry. But England scarce would hold
Young Henry king, if only crown'd by
York,

And that would stilt up York to twice
himself.

There is a movement yonder in the
crowd —

See if our pious — what shall I call him,
John? —

Husband-in-law, our smooth-shorn suze-
rain,

Be yet within the field.

John of Oxford. I will. [Exit.

Henry. Ay! Ay!

Mince and go back! his politic Holiness
Hath all but climb'd the Roman perch
again,

And we shall hear him presently with
clapt wing

Crow over Barbarossa — at last tongue
free

To blast my realms with excommunication
 And interdict. I must patch up a peace —
 A picce in this long-tugged at, thread-
 bare-worn
 Quarrel of Crown and Church — to rend
 again.
 His Holiness cannot steer straight thro'
 shoals,
 Nor I. The citizen's heir hath conquer'd
 me
 For the moment. So we make our peace
 with him.

Enter LOUIS.

Brother of France what shall be done
 with Becket ?

Louis. The holy Thomas! Brother,
 you have traffick'd
 Between the Emperor and the Pope, be-
 tween

The Pope and Antipope — a perilous game
 For men to play with God.

Henry. Ay, ay, good brother,
 They call you the Monk-King.

Louis. Who calls me ? she
 That was my wife, now yours ? You
 have her Duchy,
 The point you aim'd at, and pray God
 she prove

True wife to you. You have had the
 better of us

In secular matters.

Henry. Come, confess, good brother,
 You did your best or worst to keep her
 Duchy.

Only the golden Leopard printed in it
 Such hold-fast claws that you perforce
 again

Shrank into France. Tut, tut! did we
 convene

This conference but to babble of our
 wives ?

They are plagues enough in-door.

Louis. We fought in the East,
 And felt the sun of Antioch scald our
 mail,
 And push'd our lances into Saracen
 hearts.

We never hounded on the State at home
 To spoil the Church.

Henry. How should you see this
 rightly ?

Louis. Well, well, no more! I am
 proud of my "Monk-King,"
 Whoever named me ; and, brother, Holy
 Church

May rock, but will not wreck, nor our
 Archbishop

Stagger on the slope decks for any rough
 sea

Blown by the breath of kings. We do
 forgive you

For aught you wrought against us.

[HENRY *holds up his hand*

Nay, I pray you,

Do not defend yourself. You will do
 much

To rake out all old dying heats, if you,
 At my requesting, will but look into
 The wrongs you did him, and restore his
 kin,

Rescat him on his throne of Canterbury,
 Be, both, the friends you were.

Henry. The friends we were!
 Co-mates we were, and had our sport to-
 gether,

Co-kings we were, and made the laws to-
 gether.

The world had never seen the like before.
 You are too cold to know the fashion of it.
 Well, well, we will be gentle with him,
 gracious —

Most gracious.

*Enter BECKET, after him, JOHN OF OX-
 FORD, ROGER OF YORK, GILBERT
 FOLIOT, DE BROC, FITZURSE, etc.*

Only that the rift he made
 May close between us, here I am wholly
 king.

The word should come from him.

Becket (kneeling). Then, my dear liege,
 I here deliver all this controversy
 Into your royal hands.

Henry. Ah, Thomas, Thomas,
 Thou art thyself again, Thomas again.

Becket (rising). Saving God's honor!

Henry. Out upon thee, man!
 Saving the Devil's honor, his yes and no.
 Knights, bishops, earls, this London
 spawn — by Mahound,

I had sooner have been born a Mussul-
 man —

Less clashing with their priests —

I am half-way down the slope — will no
 man stay me ?

I dash myself to pieces — I stay myself —
 Puff — it is gone. You, Master Becket,
 you

That owe to me your power over me —
 Nay, nay —

Brother of France, you have taken, cher-
 ish'd him

Who thief-like fled from his own church
 by night,
 No man pursuing. I would have had
 him back.
 Take heed he do not turn and rend you
 too :
 For whatsoever may displease him —
 that
 Is clean against God's honor — a shift, a
 trick
 Whereby to challenge, face me out of all
 My regal rights. Yet, yet — that none
 may dream
 I go against God's honor — ay, or him-
 self
 In any reason, choose
 A hundred of the wisest heads from Eng-
 land,
 A hundred, too, from Normandy and
 Anjou :
 Let these decide on what was customary
 In olden days, and all the Church of
 France
 Decide on their decision, I am content.
 More, what the mightiest and the holiest
 Of all his predecessors may have done
 Ev'n to the least and meanest of my own,
 Let him do the same to me — I am con-
 tent.

Louis. Ay, ay! the King humbles
 himself enough.

Becket (aside). Words! he will wrig-
 gle out of them like an eel

When the time serves. (*Aloud.*) My
 lieges and my lords,
 The thanks of Holy Church are due to
 those
 That went before us for their work,
 which we
 Inheriting reap an easier harvest. Yet —

Louis. My lord, will you be greater
 than the Saints,
 More than St. Peter? whom — what is it
 you doubt?

Behold your peace at hand.

Becket. I say that those
 Who went before us did not wholly clear
 The deadly growths of earth, which
 Hell's own heat
 So dwell on that they rose and darken'd
 Heaven.
 Yet they did much. Would God they
 had torn up all
 By the hard root, which shoots again;
 our trial
 Had so been less; but, seeing they were
 men

Defective or excessive, must we follow
 All that they overdid or underdid?
 Nay, if they were defective as St. Peter
 Denying Christ, who yet defied the ty-
 rant.
 We hold by his defiance, not his defect.
 O good son Louis, do not counsel me,
 No, to suppress God's honor for the
 sake
 Of any king that breathes. No, God
 forbid!

Henry. No! God forbid! and turr
 me Mussulman!

No God but one, and Mahound is his
 prophet.
 But for your Christian, look you, you
 shall have
 None other God but me — me, Thomas,
 son
 Of Gilbert Becket, London merchant.
 Out!

I hear no more. [*Exit.*]

Louis. Our brother's anger puts him,
 Poor man, beside himself — not wise.
 My lord,
 We have clapt your cause, believing
 that our brother
 Had wrong'd you; but this day he pro-
 fer'd peace.
 You will have war; and tho' we grant the
 Church
 King over this world's kings, yet, my
 good lord,
 We that are kings are something in this
 world,
 And so we pray you, draw yourself from
 under
 The wings of France. We shelter you
 no more. [*Exit.*]

John of Oxford. I am glad that France
 hath scouted him at last:

I told the Pope what manner of man he
 was. [*Exit.*]

Roger of York. Yea, since he flouts the
 will of either realm,
 Let either cast him away like a dead
 dog! [*Exit.*]

Foliot. Yea, let a stranger spoil his
 heritage,
 And let another take his bishopric! [*Exit.*]

De Broc. Our castle, my lord, belongs
 to Canterbury.

I pray you come and take it. [*Exit*
Fitzurse. When you will. [*Exit*
Becket. Cursed be John of Oxford,
 Roger of York,

And Gilbert Foliot! cursed those De
Brocs
That hold our Saltwood Castle from our
see!
Cursed Fitzurse, and all the rest of
them
That sow this hate between my lord and
me!

Voices from the Crowd. Blessed be the
Lord Archbishop, who hath withstood
two Kings to their faces for the honor
of God.

Becket. Out of the mouths of babes
and sucklings, praise!
I thank you, sons; when kings but hold
by crowns,
The crowd that hungers for a crown in
Heaven
Is my true king.

Herbert. Thy true King bade thee
be
A fisher of men; thou hast them in thy
net.

Becket. I am too like the King here;
both of us
Too headlong for our office. Better have
been
A fisherman at Bosham, my good Her-
bert,
Thy birthplace — the sea-creek — the
petty rill
That falls into it — the green field — the
gray church —
The simple lobster-basket, and the
mesh —
The more or less of daily labor done —
The pretty gaping bills in the home-
nest
Piping for bread — the daily want sup-
plied —
The daily pleasure to supply it.

Herbert. Ah, Thomas,
You had not borne it, no, not for a day.

Becket. Well, maybe, no.

Herbert. But bear with Walter Map,
For here he comes to comment on the
time.

Enter WALTER MAP.

Walter Map. Pity, my lord, that you
have quenched the warmth of France
toward you, tho' His Holiness, after
much smouldering and smoking, be kind-
led again upon your quarter.

Becket. Ay, if he do not end in smoke
again.

Walter Map. My lord, the fire, when

first kindled, said to the smoke, "Go up,
my son, straight to Heaven." And the
smoke said, "I go;" but anon the North-
east took and turned him Southwest,
then the Southwest turned him North-
east, and so of the other winds; but it
was in him to go up straight if the time
had been quieter. Your lordship affects
the unwavering perpendicular; but His
Holiness, pushed one way by the Empire
and another by England, if he move at
all, Heaven stay him, is fain to diag-
onalize.

Herbert. Diagonalize! thou art a
word-monger!
Our Thomas never will diagonalize.
Thou art a jester and a verse-maker.
Diagonalize!

Walter Map. Is the world any the
worse for my verses if the Latin rhymes
be rolled out from a full mouth? or any
harm done to the people if my jest be in
defence of the Truth?

Becket. Ay, if the jest be so done that
the people
Delight to wallow in the grossness of it,
Till Truth herself be shamed of her de-
fender.

Non defensoribus istis, Walter Map.

Walter Map. Is that my case? so if
the city be sick, and I cannot call the
kennel sweet, your lordship would sus-
pend me from verse-writing, as you sus-
pended yourself after sub-writing to the
customs.

Becket. I pray God pardon mine infir-
mity!

Walter Map. Nay, my lord, take heart;
for tho' you suspended yourself, the Pope
let you down again; and tho' you sus-
pend Foliot or another, the Pope will not
leave them in suspense, for the Pope him-
self is always in suspense, like Mahound's
coffin hung between heaven and earth —
always in suspense, like the scales, till the
weight of Germany or the gold of Eng-
land brings one of them down to the dust
— always in suspense, like the tail of the
horologe — to and fro — tick - tack — we
make the time, we keep the time, ay, and
we serve the time; for I have heard say
that if you boxed the Pope's ears with a
purse, you might stagger him, but he
would pocket the purse. No saying of
mine — Jocelyn of Salisbury. But the
King hath bought half the College of
Red-hats. He warmed to you to-day, and

you have chilled him again. Yet you both love God. Agree with him quickly again, even for the sake of the Church. My one grain of good counsel which you will not swallow. I hate a split between old friendships as I hate the dirty gap in the face of a Cistercian monk, that will swallow anything. Farewell. *[Exit.]*

Becket. Map scoffs at Rome. I all but hold with Map.

Save for myself no Rome were left in England,

All had been his. Why should this Rome, this Rome,

Still choose Barabbas rather than the Christ,

Absolve the left-hand thief and damn the right?

Take fees of tyranny, wink at sacrilege, Which even Peter had not dared? condemn

The blameless exile? —

Herbert. Thee, thou holy Thomas! I would that thou hadst been the Holy Father.

Becket. I would have done my most to keep Rome holy,

I would have made Rome know she still is Rome —

Who stands agl'ast at her eternal self And shakes at mortal kings — her vacillation,

Avarice, craft — O God, how many an innocent

Has left his bones upon the way to Rome Unwept, uncared for. Yea — on mine own self

The King had had no power except for Rome.

'T is not the King who is guilty of mine exile,

But Rome, Rome, Rome!

Herbert. My lord, I see this Louis Returning, ah! to drive thee from his realm.

Becket. He said as much before. Thou art no prophet,

Nor yet a prophet's son.

Herbert. Whatever he say, Deny not thou God's honor for a king. The King looks troubled.

Reënter KING LOUIS.

Louis. My dear lord Archbishop, I learn but now that those poor Poitevins, That in thy cause were stirr'd against King Henry,

Have been, despite his kingly promise given

To our own self of pardon, evilly used And put to pain. I have lost all trust in him.

The Church alone hath eyes — and now I see

That I was blind — suffer the phrase — surrendering

God's honor to the pleasure of a man.

Forgive me and absolve me, holy father. *[Kneels.]*

Becket. Son, I absolve thee in the name of God.

Louis (rising). Return to Sens, where we will care for you.

The wine and wealth of all our France are yours;

Rest in our realm, and be at peace with all. *[Exeunt.]*

Voices from the Crowd. Long live the good King Louis! God bless the great Archbishop!

Reënter HENRY and JOHN OF OXFORD.

Henry (looking after KING LOUIS and BECKET). Ay, there they go — both backs are turned to me —

Why then I strike into my former path

For England, crown young Henry there, and make

Our waning Eleanor all but love me!

John,

Thou hast served me heretofore with Rome — and well.

They call thee John the Swearer.

John of Oxford. For this reason, That, being ever dutious to the King, I evermore have sworn upon his side, And ever mean to do it.

Henry (claps him on the shoulder). Hon est John!

To Rome again! the storm begins again.

Spare not thy tongue! be lavish with our coins,

Threaten our junction with the Emperor — flatter

And fright the Pope — bribe all the Cardinals — leave

Lateran and Vatican in one dust of gold —

Swear and unswear, state and misstate thy best!

I go to have young Henry crown'd by York.

ACT III.

SCENE I.—*The Bower.*

HENRY and ROSAMUND.

Henry. All that you say is just. I cannot answer it
Till better times, when I shall put away —

Rosamund. What will you put away?

Henry. That which you ask me
Till better times. Let it content you now

There is no woman that I love so well.

Rosamund. No woman but should be content with that —

Henry. And one fair child to fondle!

Rosamund. O yes, the child
We waited for so long — Heaven's gift at last —

And how you doated on him then! Today

I almost fear'd your kiss was colder — yes —

But then the child *is* such a child. What chance

That he should ever spread into the man
Here in our silence? I have done my best.

I am not learn'd.

Henry. I am the King, his father.
And I will look to it. Is our secret ours?
Have you had any alarm? no stranger?

Rosamund. No.
The warder of the bower hath given himself

Of late to wine. I sometimes think he sleeps

When he should watch; and yet what fear? the people

Believe the wood enchanted. No one comes,

Nor foe nor friend; his fond excess of wine

Springs from the loneliness of my poor bower,

Which weighs even on me.

Henry. Yet these tree-towers,
Their long bird-echoing minster-aisles, — the voice

Of the perpetual brook, these golden slopes

Of Solomon-shaming flowers — that was your saying,

All pleased you so at first.

Rosamund. Not now so much.
My Anjou bower was scarce as beautiful.

But you were oftener there. I have none but you.

The brook's voice is not yours, and no flower, not

The sun himself, should he be changed to one,

Could shine away the darkness of that gap

Left by the lack of love.

Henry. The lack of love!

Rosamund. Of one we love. Nay, I would not be bold,

Yet hoped ere this you might —

[*Looks earnestly at him.*]

Henry. Anything further?

Rosamund. Only my best bower-maiden died of late,

And that old priest whom John of Salisbury trusted

Hath sent another.

Henry. Secret?

Rosamund. I but ask'd her

One question, and she primm'd her mouth and put

Her hands together — thus — and said, God help her,

That she was sworn to silence.

Henry. What did you ask her?

Rosamund. Some daily something-nothing.

Henry. Secret, then?

Rosamund. I do not love her. Must you go, my liege,

So suddenly?

Henry. I came to England suddenly, and on a great occasion sure to wake

As great a wrath in Becket —

Rosamund. Always Becket! He always comes between us.

Henry. — And to meet it I needs must leave as suddenly. It is

raining, Put on your hood and see me to the bounds.

[*Exeunt.*]

Margery (*singing behind scene*).

Babble in bower
Under the rose!
Bee must n't buzz,
Whoop — but he knows.

Kiss me, little one,
Nobody near!
Grasshopper, grasshopper,
Whoop — you can hear.

Kiss in the bower,
Tit on the tree!
Bird must n't tell,
Whoop — he can see.

Enter MARGERY.

I ha' been but a week here and I ha' seen what I ha' seen, for to be sure it's no more than a week since our old Father Philip that has confessed our mother for twenty years, and she was hard put to it, and to speak truth, nigh at the end of our last crust, and that mouldy, and she cried out on him to put me forth in the world and to make me a woman of the world, and to win my own bread, whereupon he asked our mother if I could keep a quiet tongue i' my head, and not speak till I was spoke to, and I answered for myself that I never spoke more than was needed, and he told me he would advance me to the service of a great lady, and took me ever so far away, and gave me a great pat o' the cheek for a pretty wench, and said it was a pity to blindfold such eyes as mine, and such to be sure they be, but he blinded 'em for all that, and so brought me no-hows as I may say, and the more shame to him after his promise, into a garden and not into the world, and bade me whatever I saw not to speak one word, an' it 'ud be well for me in the end, for there were great ones who would look after me, and to be sure I ha' seen great ones to-day — and then not to speak one word, for that's the rule o' the garden, tho' to be sure if I had been Eve i' the garden I should n't ha' minded the apple, for what's an apple, you know, save to a child, and I'm no child, but more a woman o' the world than my lady here, and I ha' seen what I ha' seen — tho' to be sure if I had n't minded it we should all on us ha' had to go, bless the Saints, wi' bare backs, but the backs 'ud ha' countenanced one another, and belike it 'ud ha' been always summer, and anyhow I am as well-shaped as my lady here, and I ha' seen what I ha' seen, and what's the good of my talking to myself, for here comes my lady (*Enter ROSAMUND*), and, my lady, tho' I should n't speak one word, I wish you joy o' the King's brother.

Rosamund. What is it you mean?

Margery. I mean your goodman, your husband, my lady, for I saw your ladyship a-parting wi' him even now i' the coppice, when I was a-getting o' bluebells for your ladyship's nose to smell on — and I ha' seen the King once at Oxford, and he's as like the King as finger-nail to finger-

nail, and I thought at first it was the King, only you know the King's married, for King Louis —

Rosamund. Married!

Margery. Years and years, my lady, for her husband, King Louis —

Rosamund. Hush!

Margery. — And I thought if it were the King's brother he had a better bride than the King, for the people do say that his is bad beyond all reckoning, and —

Rosamund. The people lie.

Margery. Very like, my lady, but most on 'em know an honest woman and a lady when they see her, and besides they say, she makes songs, and that's against her, for I never knew an honest woman that could make songs, tho' to be sure our mother 'ill sing me old songs by the hour, but then, God help her, she had 'em from her mother, and her mother from her mother back and back for ever so long, but none on 'em ever made songs, and they were all honest.

Rosamund. Go, you shall tell me of her some other time.

Margery. There's none so much to tell on her, my lady, only she kept the seventh commandment better than some I know on, or I could n't look your ladyship i' the face, and she brew'd the best ale in all Glo'ster, that is to say in her time when she had the "Crown."

Rosamund. The crown! who?

Margery. Mother.

Rosamund. I mean her whom you call — faney — my husband's brother's wife.

Margery. Oh, Queen Eleanor. Yes, my lady; and tho' I be sworn not to speak a word, I can tell you all about her, if —

Rosamund. No word now. I am faint and sleepy. Leave me. Nay — go. What! will you anger me?

[*Exit MARGERY.*]

He charged me not to question any of those

About me. Have I? no! she question'd me.

Did she not slander *him*? Should she stay here?

May she not tempt me, being at my side,

To question *her*? Nay, can I send her hence

Without his kingly leave! I am in the dark.

I have lived, poor bird, from cage to cage,
and known
Nothing but him — happy to know no
more,
So that he loved me — and he loves me
— yes,
And bound me by his love to secrecy
Till his own time.

Eleanor, Eleanor, have I
Not heard ill things of her in France?
Oh, she 's
The Queen of France. I see it — some
confusion,
Some strange mistake. I did not hear
aright,
Myself confused with parting from the
King.

Margery (behind scene).

Bee must n't buzz,
Whoop — but he knows.

Rosamund. Yet her — what her? he
hinted of some her —
When he was here before —
Something that would displease me.
Hath he stray'd
From love's clear path into the common
bush,
And, being scratch'd, returns to his true
rose,
Who hath not thorn enough to prick him
for it,
Ev'n with a word?

Margery (behind scene).

Bird must n't tell,
Whoop — he can see.

Rosamund. I would not hear him. Nay
— there's more — he frowned
"No mate for her, if it should come to
that" —
To that — to what?

Margery (behind scene).

Whoop — but he knows,
Whoop — but he knows.

Rosamund. O God! some dreadful
truth is breaking on me —
Some dreadful thing is coming on me.

Enter GEOFFREY.

Geoffrey!
Geoffrey. What are you crying for,
when the sun shines?

Rosamund. Hath not thy father left us
to ourselves?

Geoffrey. Ay, but he's taken the rain
with him. I hear Margery: I'll go play
with her.

[Exit GEOFFREY.]

Rosamund.

Rainbow, stay,
Gleam upon gloom,
Bright as my dream,
Rainbow, stay!
But it passes away,
Gloom upon gleam,
Dark as my doom —
O rainbow, stay.

SCENE II. — *Outside the Woods near
ROSAMUND'S Bower.*

ELEANOR. FITZURSE.

Eleanor. Up from the salt lips of the
land we two
Have track'd the King to this dark inland
wood;
And somewhere hereabouts he vanish'd.
Here

His turtle builds: his exit is our adit:
Watch! he will out again, and presently,
Seeing he must to Westminster and
crown
Young Henry there to-morrow.

Fitzurse. We have watch'd
So long in vain, he hath pass'd out again,
And on the other side.

*[A great horn winded.
Hark! Madam!*

Eleanor. Ay,
How ghostly sounds that horn in the black
wood! *[A Countryman flying.]*
Whither away, man? what are you flying
from?

Countryman. The witch! the witch!
she sits naked by a great heap of gold in
the middle of the wood, and when the horn
sounds she comes out as a wolf. Get you
hence! a man passed in there to-day: I
holla'd to him, but he did n't hear me:
he'll never out again, the witch has got
him. I dare n't stay — I dare n't stay!

Eleanor. Kind of the witch to give thee
warning tho'. *[Man flies.]*
Is not this wood-witch of the rustic's
fear
Our woodland Circe that hath witch'd the
King?

[Horn sounded. Another flying.]
Fitzurse. Again! stay, fool, and tell me
why thou fliest.

Countryman. Fly thou too. The King
keeps his forest head of game here, and
when that horn sounds, a score of wolf-
dogs are let loose that will tear thee
piecemeal. Linger not till the third
horn. Fly!

[Exit.]

Eleanor. This is the likelier tale. We have lit the place.
Now let the King's fine game look to itself. [Horn.

Fitzurse. Again!—
And far on in the dark heart of the wood
I hear the yelping of the hounds of hell.

Eleanor. I have my dagger here to still their throats.

Fitzurse. Nay, Madam, not to-night—
the night is falling.

What can be done to-night?

Eleanor. Well—well—away.

SCENE III.—*Traitor's Meadow at Fréteval. Pavilions and tents of the English and French Baronage.*

BECKET AND HERBERT OF BOSHAM.

Becket. See here!

Herbert. What's here?

Becket. A notice from the priest,
To whom our John of Salisbury committed

The secret of the bower, that our wolf-Queen

Is prowling round the fold. I should be back

In England ev'n for this.

Herbert. These are by-things
In the great cause.

Becket. The by-things of the Lord
Are the wrong'd innocences that will cry
From all the hidden by-ways of the world
In the great day against the wronger. I know

Thy meaning. Perish she, I, all, before
The Church should suffer wrong!

Herbert. Do you see, my lord,
There is the King talking with Walter
Map?

Becket. He hath the Pope's last letters,
and they threaten

The immediate thunder-blast of interdict:
Yet he can scarce be touching upon those,
Or scarce would smile that fashion.

Herbert. Winter sunshine!
Beware of opening out thy bosom to it,
Lest thou, myself, and all thy flock should catch

An after ague-fit of trembling. Look!
He bows, he bares his head, he is coming
hither,
Still with a smile.

Enter KING HENRY and WALTER MAP.

Henry. We have had so many hours
together, Thomas,

So many happy hours alone together,
That I would speak with you once more
alone.

Becket. My liege, your will and happiness are mine.

[*Exit* KING and BECKET.

Herbert. The same smile still.

Walter Map. Do you see that great
black cloud that hath come over the sun
and cast us all into shadow?

Herbert. And feel it too.

Walter Map. And see you yon side-
beam that is forced from under it, and
sets the church-tower over there all
a-hell-fire, as it were?

Herbert. Ay.

Walter Map. It is this black, bell-silencing, anti-marrying, burial-hindering interdict that hath squeezed out this side-smile upon Canterbury, whereof may come conflagration. Were I Thomas, I would n't trust it. Sudden change is a house on sand; and tho' I count Henry honest enough, yet when fear creeps in at the front, honesty steals out at the back and the King at last is fairly scared by this cloud—this interdict. I have been more for the King than the Church in this matter—yea, even for the sake of the Church: for, truly, as the case stood, you had safer a man slain an archbishop than a she-goat: but our recoverer and upholder of customs hath in this crowning of young Henry by York and London so violated the immemorial usage of the Church, that, like the grave-digger's child I have heard of, trying to ring the bell, he hath half-hanged himself in the rope of the Church, or rather pulled all the Church with the Holy Father astride of it down upon his own head.

Herbert. Were you there?

Walter Map. In the church rope?—no. I was at the crowning, for I have pleasure in the pleasure of crowds, and to read the faces of men at a great show.

Herbert. And how did Roger of York comport himself?

Walter Map. As magnificently and archiepiscopally as our Thomas would have done: only there was a dare-devil in his eye—I should say a dare-Becket. He thought less of two kings than of one Roger, the king of the occasion. Foliot is the holier man, perhaps the better. Once or twice there ran a twitch across his face, as who should say what's to follow? but

Salisbury was a calf cowed by Mother Church, and every now and then glancing about him like a thief at night when he hears a door open in the house and thinks "the master."

Herbert. And the father-king ?

Walter Map. The father's eye was so tender it would have called a goose off the green, and once he strove to hide his face, like the Greek king when his daughter was sacrificed, but he thought better of it: it was but the sacrifice of a kingdom to his son, a smaller matter; but as to the young crowning himself, he looked so malapert in the eyes, that had I fathered him I had given him more of the rod than the sceptre. Then followed the thunder of the captains and the shouting, and so we came on to the banquet, from whence there puffed out such an incense of unctuousity into the nostrils of our Gods of Church and State, that Lucullus or Apicius might have sniffed it in their Hades of heathenism, so that the smell of their own roast had not come across it —

Herbert. Map, tho' you make your butt too big, you overshoot it.

Walter Map. — For as to the fish, they de-miracled the miraculous draught, and might have sunk a navy —

Herbert. There again, Goliazing and Goliathizing!

Walter Map. — And as for the flesh at table, a whole Peter's sheet, with all manner of game, and four-footed things, and fowls —

Herbert. And all manner of creeping things too?

Walter Map. — Well, there were Abots — but they did not bring their women; and so we were dull enough at first, but in the end we flourished out into a merriment; for the old King would act servitor and hand a dish to his son; whereupon my Lord of York — his finest face bowing and beaming with all that courtesy which hath less loyalty in it than the backward scrape of the clown's heel — "great honor," says he, "from the King's self to the King's son." Did you hear the young King's quip?

Herbert. No, what was it?

Walter Map. Glancing at the days when his father was only Earl of Anjou, he answered: "Should not an earl's son wait on a king's son?" And when the cold corners of the King's mouth began

to thaw, there was a great motion of laughter among us, part real, part child-like, to be freed from the dulness — part royal, for King and kingling both laughed, and so we could not but laugh, as by a royal necessity — part childlike again — when we felt we had laughed too long and could not stay ourselves — many midriff-shaken even to tears, as springs gush out after earthquakes — but from those, as I said before, there may come a conflagration — tho', to keep the figure moist and make it hold water, I should say rather, the lachrymation of a lamentation; but look if Thomas have not flung himself at the King's feet. They have made it up again — for the moment.

Herbert. 'T hanks to the blessed Magdalen, whose day it is.

Reënter HENRY and BECKET. (*During their conference the BARONS and BISHOPS of FRANCE and ENGLAND come in at back of stage.*)

Becket. Ay, King! for in thy kingdom, as thou knowest,

The spouse of the Great King, thy King; hath fallen —

The daughter of Zion lies beside the way —

The priests of Baal tread her underfoot —
The golden ornaments are stolen from her —

Henry. Have I not promised to restore her, Thomas,
And send thee back again to Canterbury?

Becket. Send back again those exiles of my kin
Who wander famiue-wasted thro' the world.

Henry. Have I not promised, man, to send them back?

Becket. Yet one thing more. Thou hast broken thro' the pales
Of privilege, crowning thy young son by York,

London, and Salisbury — not Canterbury.

Henry. York crown'd the Conqueror — not Canterbury.

Becket. There was no Canterbury in William's time.

Henry. But Hereford, you know, crown'd the first Henry.

Becket. But Anselm crown'd this Henry o'er again.

Henry. And thou shalt crown my Henry
o'er again.

Becket. And is it then with thy good-
will that I

Proceed against thine evil councillors,
And hurl the dread ban of the Church on
those

Who made the second mitre play the first,
And acted me?

Henry. Well, well, then — have thy
way!

It may be they were evil councillors.

What more, my lord Archbishop? What
more, Thomas?

I make thee full amends. Say all thy say,
But blaze not out before the Frenchmen
here.

Becket. More? Nothing, so thy prom-
ise be thy deed.

Henry (*holding out his hand*). Give
me thy hand. My Lords of France
and England,

My friend of Canterbury and myself
Are now once more at perfect amity.

Unkingly should I be, and most un-
knightly,

Not striving still, however much in vain,
To rival him in Christian charity.

Herbert. All praise to Heaven, and
sweet St. Magdalen!

Henry. And so farewell until we meet
in England.

Becket. I fear, my liege, we may not
meet in England.

Henry. How, do you make me a trai-
tor?

Becket. No, indeed!

That be far from thee.

Henry. Come, stay with us, then,
Before you part for England.

Becket. I am bound
For that one hour to stay with good King
Louis,

Who helpt me when none else.

Herbert. He said thy life
Was not one hour's worth in England
save

King Henry gave thee first the kiss of
peace.

Henry. He said so? Louis, did he?
look you, Herbert.

When I was in mine anger with King
Louis,

I swear I would not give the kiss of
peace,

Not on French ground, nor any ground
but English,

Where his cathedral stands. Mine old
friend, Thomas,

I would there were that perfect trust be-
tween us,

That health of heart, once ours, ere Pope
or King

Had come between us! Even now —
who knows? —

I might deliver all things to thy hand —
If . . . but I say no more . . . farewell,
my lord.

Becket. Farewell, my liege!

[*Exit HENRY, then the BARONS
and BISHOPS.*]

Walter Map. There again! when the
full fruit of the royal promise might have
dropt into thy mouth hadst thou but
opened it to thank him.

Becket. He fenced his royal promise
with an *if*.

Walter Map. And is the King's *if* too
high a stile for your lordship to over-
step and come at all things in the next
field?

Becket. Ay, if this *if* be like the
Devil's "*if*"

Thou wilt fall down and worship me."

Herbert. Oh, Thomas,
I could fall down and worship thee, my
Thomas,

For thou hast trodden this wine-press
alone

Becket. Nay, of the people there are
many with me.

Walter Map. I am not altogether
with you, my lord, tho' I am none of
those that would raise a storm between
you, lest ye should draw together like
two ships in a calm. You wrong the
King: he meant what he said to-day.
Who shall vouch for his to-morrows?
One word further. Doth not the *fewness*
of anything make the fulness of it in es-
timation? Is not virtue prized mainly
for its rarity, and great baseuess loathed
as an exception: for were all, my lord,
as noble as yourself, who would look up
to you? and were all as base as — who
shall I say — Fitzurse and his following
— who would look down upon them?
My lord, you have put so many of the
King's household out of communion, that
they begin to smile at it.

Becket. At their peril, at their peril —

Walter Map. — For tho' the drop
may hollow out the dead stone, doth not
the living skin thicken against perpetual

whippings? This is the second grain of good counsel I ever proffered thee, and so cannot suffer by the rule of frequency. Have I sown it in salt? I trust not, for before God I promise you the King hath many more wolves than he can tame in his woods of England, and if it suit their purpose to howl for the King, and you still move against him, you may have no less than to die for it; but God and his free wind grant your lordship a happy home-return and the King's kiss of peace in Kent. Farewell! I must follow the King. *[Exit.]*

Herbert. Ay, and I warrant the customs. Did the King

Speak of the customs?

Becket. No! — to die for it — I live to die for it, I die to live for it. The State will die, the Church can never die.

The King's not like to die for that which dies;

But I must die for that which never dies. It will be so — my visions in the Lord:

It must be so, my friend! the wolves of England

Must murder her one shepherd, that the sheep

May feed in peace. False figure, Map would say.

Earth's falses are heaven's truths. And when my voice

Is martyr'd mute, and this man disappears,

That perfect trust may come again between us,

And there, there, there, not here, I shall rejoice

To find my stray sheep back within the fold.

The crowd are scattering, let us move away!

And thence to England. *[Exeunt.]*

ACT IV.

SCENE I. — *The Outskirts of the Bower.*

Geoffrey (coming out of the wood). Light again! light again! Margery? no, that's a finer thing there. How it glitters!

Eleanor (entering). Come to me, little one. How earnest thou hither?

Geoffrey. On my legs.

Eleanor. And mighty pretty legs, too.

Thou art the prettiest child I ever saw. Wilt thou love me!

Geoffrey. No; I only love mother.

Eleanor. Ay; and who is thy mother?

Geoffrey. They call her — But she lives secret, you see.

Eleanor. Why?

Geoffrey. Don't know why.

Eleanor. Ay, but some one comes to see her now and then. Who is he?

Geoffrey. Can't tell.

Eleanor. What does she call him?

Geoffrey. My liege.

Eleanor. Pretty one, how earnest thou?

Geoffrey. There was a bit of yellow silk here and there, and it looked pretty like a glowworm, and I thought if I followed it I should find the fairies.

Eleanor. I am the fairy, pretty one, a good fairy to thy mother. Take me to her.

Geoffrey. There are good fairies and bad fairies, and sometimes she cries, and can't sleep sound o' nights, because of the bad fairies.

Eleanor. She shall cry no more; she shall sleep sound enough if thou wilt take me to her. I am her good fairy.

Geoffrey. But you don't look like a good fairy. Mother does. You are not pretty, like mother.

Eleanor. We can't all of us be as pretty as thou art — (*a ide*) little bastard. Come, here is a golden chain I will give thee if thou wilt lead me to thy mother.

Geoffrey. No — no gold. Mother says gold spoils all. Love is the only gold.

Eleanor. I love thy mother, my pretty boy. Show me where thou earnest out of the wood.

Geoffrey. By this tree; but I don't know if I can find the way back again.

Eleanor. Where's the warden?

Geoffrey. Very bad. Somebody struck him.

Eleanor. Ay? who was that?

Geoffrey. Can't tell. But I heard say he had had a stroke, or you'd have heard his horn before now. Come along, then; we shall see the silk here and there, and I want my supper. *[Exeunt.]*

SCENE II. — *ROSAMUND'S BOWER.*

Rosamund. The boy so late; pray God, he be not lost.

I sent this Margery, and she comes not back:

I sent another, and she comes not back ;
I go myself — so many alleys, crossings,
Paths, avenues — nay, if I lost him, now
The folds have fallen from the mystery,
And left all naked, I were lost indeed.

Enter GEOFFREY and ELEANOR.

Geoffrey, the pain thou hast put me to !
[*Seeing ELEANOR.*

Ha, you !

How came you hither ?

Eleanor. Your own child brought me
hither !

Geoffrey. You said you could n't trust
Margery, and I watched her and followed
her into the woods, and I lost her and
went on and on till I found the light and
the lady, and she says she can make you
sleep o' nights.

Rosamund. How dared you ? Know
you not this bower is secret,
Of and belonging to the King of Eng-
land,
More sacred than his forests for the
chase ?

Nay, nay, Heaven help you ; get you
hence in haste

Lest worse befall you.

Eleanor. Child, I am mine own self
Of and belonging to the King. The King
Hath divers ofs and ous, ofs and belong-
ings,

Almost as many as your true Mussul-
man —

Belongings, paramours, whom 't pleases
him

To call his wives ; but so it chances, child,
That I am his main paramour, his sul-
tana.

But since the fondest pair of doves will
jar,

Ev'n in a cage of gold, we had words of
late,

And thereupon he call'd my children
bastards.

Do you believe that you are married to
him ?

Rosamund. I should believe it.

Eleanor. You must not believe it,
Because I have a wholesome medicine
here

Puts that belief asleep. Your answer,
beauty !

Do you believe that you are married to
him ?

Rosamund. Geoffrey, my boy, I saw
the ball you lost in the fork of the great

willow over the brook. Go. See that you
do not fall in. Go.

Geoffrey. And leave you alone with
the good fairy. She calls you beauty, but
I don't like her looks. Well, you bid me
go, and I'll have my ball anyhow. Shall
I find you asleep when I come back ?

Rosamund. Go. [*Exit GEOFFREY.*
Eleanor. He is easily found again. Do
you believe it ?

I pray you then to take my sleeping-
draught ;

But if you should not care to take it —
see ! [*Draws a dagger.*

What ! have I scared the red rose from
your face

Into your heart ? But this will find it
there.

And dig it from the root forever.

Rosamund. Help ! help !

Eleanor. They say that walls have
ears ; but these, it seems,
Have none ! and I have none — to pity
thee.

Rosamund. I do beseech you — my
child is so young,

So backward too ; I cannot leave him yet.
I am not so happy I could not die myself,

But the child is so young. You have
children — his ;

And mine is the King's child ; so, if you
love him —

Nay, if you love him, there is great wrong
done

Somehow ; but if you do not — there are
those

Who say you do not love him — let me go
With my young boy, and I will hide my
face,

Blacken and gipsyfy it ; none shall know
me ;

The King shall never hear of me again,
But I will beg my bread along the world

With my young boy, and God will be our
guide.

I never meant you harm in any way.

See, I can say no more.

Eleanor. Will you not say you are not
married to him ?

Rosamund. Ay, Madam, I can say it,
if you will.

Eleanor. Then is thy pretty boy a bas-
tard ?

Rosamund. No.

Eleanor. And thou thyself a proven
wanton ?

Rosamund. No.

I am none such. I never loved but one.
I have heard of such that range from
love to love,

Like the wild beast — if you can call it
love.

I have heard of such — yea, even among
those

Who sit on thrones — I never saw any
such,

Never knew any such, and howsoever

You do misname me, match'd with any
such,

I am snow to mud.

Eleanor. The more the pity then
That thy true home — the heavens — cry
out for thee

Who art too pure for earth.

Enter FITZURSE.

Fitzurse. Give her to me.

Eleanor. The Judas-lover of our pas-
sion-play

Hath track'd us hither.

Fitzurse. Well, why not? I follow'd
You and the child: he babbled all the way.
Give her to me to make my honeymoon.

Eleanor. Ay, as the bears love honey.
Could you keep her

Indungeon'd from one whisper of the
wind,

Dark even from a side glance of the
moon,

And oublietted in the centre — No!

I follow out my hate and thy revenge.

Fitzurse. You bade me take revenge
another way —

To bring her to the dust. . . . Come with
me, love,

And I will love thee. . . . Madam, let
her live.

I have a far-off burrow where the King
Would miss her and forever.

Eleanor. How sayst thou, sweetheart?
Wilt thou go with him? he will marry
thee.

Rosamund. Give me the poison; set
me free of him!

[*ELEANOR offers the vial.*

No, no! I will not have it.

Eleanor. Then this other,
The wiser choice, because my sleeping-
draught

May bloat thy beauty out of shape, and
make

Thy body loath-some even to thy child;

While this but leaves thee with a broken
heart,

A doll-face blanch'd and bloodless, over
which

If pretty Geoffrey do not break his own,
It must be broken for him.

Rosamund.

O I see now

Your purpose is to fright me — a trouba-
dour

You play with words. You had never
used so many,

Not if you meant it, I am sure. The
child . . .

No . . . merev! No!

[*Kneels.*

Eleanor. Play! . . . that bosom never
Heaved under the King's hand with such
true passion

As at this loveless knife that stirs the
riot,

Which it will quench in blood! Slave, if
he love thee,

Thy life is worth the wrestle for it: arise,
And dash thyself against me that I may
slay thee!

The worm! shall I let her go? But ha!
what 's here?

By very God, the cross I gave the King!
His village darling in some lewd caress

Has wheedled it off the King's neck to
her own.

By thy leave, beauty. Ay, the same! I
warrant

Thou hast sworn on this my cross a hun-
dred times

Never to leave him — and that merits
death,

False oath on holy cross — for thou must
leave him

To-day, but not quite yet. My good
Fitzurse,

The running down the chase is kindlier
sport

Ev'n than the death. Who knows but
that thy lover

May plead so pitifully, that I may spare
thee?

Come hither, man; stand there. (*To
Rosamund.*) Take thy one chance;

Catch at the last straw. Kneel to thy
lord *Fitzurse*;

Crouch even because thou hatest him;
fawn upon him

For thy life and thy son's.

Rosamund (rising). I am a Clifford,
My son a Clifford and Plantagenet.

I am to die then, tho' there stand beside
thee

One who might grapple with thy dagger,
if he

Had aught of man, or thou of woman;
or I

Would how to such a baseness as would
make me

Most worthy of it: both of us will die,
And I will fly with my sweet boy to
heaven,

And shriek to all the saints among the
stars:

"Eleanor of Aquitaine, Eleanor of Eng-
land!

Murder'd by that adulteress Eleanor,
Whose doings are a horror to the east,
A hissing in the west!" Have we not
heard

Raymond of Poitou, thine own uncle —
nay,

Geoffrey Plantagenet, thine own hus-
band's father —

Nay, ev'n the accursed heathen Salad-
deen —

Strike!

I challenge thee to meet me before God.
Answer me there.

Eleanor (raising the dagger). This in
thy bosom, fool,

And after in thy bastard's!

*Enter BECKET from behind. Catches hold
of her arm.*

Becket. Murderess!

[The dagger falls; they stare at one another. After a pause.]

Eleanor. My lord, we know you proud
of your fine hand,

But having now admired it long enough,
We find that it is mightier than it seems —
At least mine own is frailer: you are
laming it.

Becket. And lamed and main'd to dis-
location, better

Than raised to take a life which Henry
bade me

Guard from the stroke that dooms thee
after death

To wail in deathless flame.

Eleanor. Nor you, nor I
Have now to learn, my lord, that our
good Henry

Says many a thing in sudden heats, which
he

Gainsays by next sunrising — often ready
To tear himself for having said as much.
My lord, Fitzurse —

Becket. He too! what dost thou here?
Dares the bear slouch into the lion's

den?

One downward plunge of his paw would
rend away

Eyesight and manhood, life itself, from
thee.

Go, lest I blast thee with anathema,
And make thee a world's horror.

Fitzurse. My lord, I shall

Remember this.

Becket. I do remember thee;
Lest I remember thee to the lion, go.

[Exit FITZURSE.]

Take up your dagger; put it in the
sheath.

Eleanor. Might not your courtesy
stoop to hand it me?

But crowns must bow when mitres sit so
high.

Well — well — too costly to be left or lost.
[Picks up the dagger.]

I had it from an Arab soldan, who,
When I was there in Antioch, marvell'd

at
Our unfamiliar beauties of the west;

But wonder'd more at my much con-
stancy

To the monk-king, Louis, our former
burden,

From whom, as being too kin, you know,
my lord,

God's grace and Holy Church deliver'd
us.

I think, time given, I could have talk'd
him out of

His ten wives into one. Look at the hilt.
What excellent workmanship. In our

poor west
We cannot do it so well.

Becket. We can do worse.
Madam, I saw your dagger at her throat;

I heard your savage cry.

Eleanor. Well acted, was it?
A comedy meant to seem a tragedy —

A feint, a farce. My honest lord, you
are known

Thro' all the courts of Christendom as
one

That mars a cause with over-violence.
You have wrong'd Fitzurse. I speak not

of myself.
We thought to scare this minion of the
King

Back from her churchless commerce with
the King

To the fond arms of her first love, Fitz-
urse,

Who swore to marry her. You have
spoil'd the farce.

My savage cry? Why, she — she — when
I strove

To work against her license for her good,
Bark'd out at me such monstrous charges,
that

The King himself, for love of his own
sons,

If hearing, would have spurn'd her;
whereupon

I menaced her with this, as when we
threaten

A yelper with a stick. Nay, I deny not
That I was somewhat anger'd. Do you
hear me?

Believe or no, I care not. You have lost
The ear of the King. I have it. . . . My

Lord Paramount,

Our great High-priest, will not your
Holiness

Vouchsafe a gracious answer to your
Queen?

Becket. Rosamund hath not answer'd
you one word;

Madam, I will not answer you one word.
Daughter, the world hath trick'd thee.

Leave it, daughter,

Come thou with me to Godstow nunnery,
And live what may be left thee of a life

Saved as by miracle alone with Him
Who gave it.

Reënter GEOFFREY.

Geoffrey. Mother, you told me a great
fib: it was n't in the willow.

Becket. Follow us, my son, and we
will find it for thee —

Or something manlier.

[*Exeunt* BECKET, ROSAMUND and
GEOFFREY.]

Eleanor. The world hath trick'd her
— that's the King; if so,

There was the farce, the feint — not mine.
And yet

I am all but sure my dagger was a feint
Till the worm turn'd — not life shot up

in blood,
But death drawn in; — (*looking at the rial*)
this was no feint then? no.

But can I swear to that, had she but given
Plain answer to plain query? nay, methinks

Had she but bow'd herself to meet the
wave

Of humiliation, worshipt whom she
loathed

I should have let her be, scorn'd her too
much

To harm her. Henry — Becket tells him
this —

To take my life might lose him Aquit-
taine.

Too politic for that. Imprison me?

No, for it came to nothing — only a feint.
Did she not tell me I was playing on

her?

I'll swear to mine own self it was a
feint.

Why should I swear, Eleanor, who am,
or was,

A sovereign power? The King plucks
out their eyes

Who anger him, and shall not I, the
Queen,

Tear out her heart — kill, kill with knife
or venom

One of his slanderous harlots? "None of
such?"

I love her none the more. Tut, the
chance gone,

She lives — but not for him; one point is
gain'd.

O I, that thro' the Pope divorced King
Louis,

Scorning his monkery, — I that wedded
Henry,

Honoring his manhood — will he not mock
at me

The jealous fool balk'd of her will —
with *him*?

But he and he must never meet again.
Reginald Fitzurse!

Reënter FITZURSE.

Fitzurse. Here, Madam, at your pleas-
ure.

Eleanor. My pleasure is to have a man
about me.

Why did you slink away so like a cur?

Fitzurse. Madam, I am as much man
as the King.

Madam, I fear Church-censures like your
King.

Eleanor. He grovels to the Church
when he's black-blooded,

But kinglike fought the proud archbishop,
— kinglike

Defied the Pope, and, like his kingly sires,
The Normans, striving still to break or

bind
The spiritual giant with our island laws

And customs, made me for the moment
proud

Ev'n of that stale Church-bond which
link'd me with him

To bear him kingly sons. I am not so
 sure
 But that I love him still. Thou as much
 man!
 No more of that; we will to France and
 be
 Beforehand with the King, and brew from
 out
 This Godstow-Becket intermeddling such
 A strong hate-philtre as may madden him
 — madden
 Against his priest beyond all hellebore.

ACT V.

SCENE I. — *Castle in Normandy. King's Chamber.*

HENRY, ROGER OF YORK, FOLIOT, JOCELYN OF SALISBURY.

Roger of York. Nay, nay, my liege,
 He rides abroad with armed followers,
 Hath broken all his promises to thyself,
 Cursed and anathematized us right and
 left,
 Stirr'd up a party there against your
 son —

Henry. Roger of York, you always
 hated him,
 Even when you both were boys at Theobald's.

Roger of York. I always hated boundless
 arrogance.
 In mine own cause I strove against him
 there,
 And in thy cause I strive against him
 now.

Henry. I cannot think he moves
 against my son,
 Knowing right well with what a tenderness
 He loved my son.

Roger of York. Before you made him
 king.
 But Becket ever moves against a king.
 The Church is all — the crime to be a
 king.

We trust your Royal Grace, lord of more
 land
 Than any crown in Europe, will not yield
 To lay your neck beneath your citizen's
 heel.

Henry. Not to a Gregory of my throning!
 No.

Foliot. My royal liege, in aiming at
 your love,
 It may be sometimes I have overshot

My duties to our Holy Mother Church,
 Tho' all the world allows I fall no inch
 Behind this Becket, rather go beyond
 In scourgings, macerations, mortifyings,
 Fasts, disciplines that clear the spiritual
 eye,
 And break the soul from earth. Let all
 that be.

I boast not: but you know thro' all this
 quarrel

I still have cleaved to the crown, in hope
 the crown

Would cleave to me that but obey'd the
 crown,

Crowning your son; for which our loyal
 service,

And since we likewise swore to obey the
 customs,

York and myself, and our good Salisbury
 here,

Are push'd from out communion of the
 Church.

Jocelyn of Salisbury. Becket hath trodden
 on us like worms, my liege;

Trodden one half dead; one half, but
 half alive,

Cries to the King.

Henry (aside). Take care o' thyself,
 O King.

Jocelyn of Salisbury. Being so crush'd
 and so humiliated

We scarcely dare to bless the food we eat
 Because of Becket.

Henry. What would ye have me do?

Roger of York. Summon your barons;
 take their counsel: yet

I know — could swear — as long as
 Becket breathes,

Your Grace will never have one quiet
 hour.

Henry. What? . . . Ay . . . but pray
 you do not work upon me.

I see your drift . . . it may be so . . .
 and yet

You know me easily anger'd. Will you
 hence?

He shall absolve you . . . you shall have
 redress.

I have a dizzying headache. Let me rest.
 I'll call you by and by.

[*Exeunt* ROGER OF YORK, FOLIOT,
 and JOCELYN OF SALISBURY.

Would he were dead! I have lost all
 love for him.

If God would take him in some sudden
 way —

Would he were dead.

[*Lies down*

- Page (entering).* My liege, the Queen of England.
- Henry.* God's eyes! [*Starting up.*]
- Enter ELEANOR.*
- Eleanor.* Of England? Say of Aquitaine.
- I am no Queen of England. I had dream'd I was the bride of England, and a queen.
- Henry.* And, — while you dream'd you were the bride of England, — Stirring her baby-king against me? ha!
- Eleanor.* The brideless Becket is thy king and mine;
- I will go live and die in Aquitaine.
- Henry.* Except I clap thee into prison here,
- Lest thou shouldst play the wanton there again.
- Ha, you of Aquitaine! O you of Aquitaine!
- You were but Aquitaine to Louis — no wife;
- You are only Aquitaine to me — no wife.
- Eleanor.* And why, my lord, should I be wife to one That only wedded me for Aquitaine?
- Yet this no wife — her six and thirty sail Of Provence blew you to your English throne;
- And this no wife has borne you four brave sons,
- And one of them at least is like to prove Bigger in our small world than thou art.
- Henry.* Ay — Richard, if he be mine — I hope him mine.
- But thou art like enough to make him thine.
- Eleanor.* Becket is like enough to make all his.
- Henry.* Methought I had recover'd of the Becket,
- That all was planed and bevell'd smooth again,
- Save from some hateful cantrip of thine own.
- Eleanor.* I will go live and die in Aquitaine.
- I dream'd I was the consort of a king,
- Not one whose back his priest has broken.
- Henry.* What!
- Is the end come? You, will you crown my foe
- My victor in mid-battle? I will be Sole master of my house. The end is mine.
- What game, what juggle, what devilry are you playing?
- Why do you thrust this Becket on me again?
- Eleanor.* Why? for I am true wife, and have my fears
- Lest Becket thrust you even from your throne.
- Do you know this cross, my liege?
- Henry (turning his head).* Away! not I.
- Eleanor.* Not ev'n the central diamond, worth, I think,
- Half of the Antioch whence I had it?
- Henry.* That?
- Eleanor.* I gave it you, and you your paramour;
- She sends it back, as being dead to earth, So dead henceforth to you.
- Henry.* Dead! you have murder'd her, Found out her secret bower and murder'd her.
- Eleanor.* Your Becket knew the secret of your bower.
- Henry (calling out).* Ho there! thy rest of life is hopeless prison.
- Eleanor.* And what would my own Aquitaine say to that?
- First free thy captive from her hopeless prison.
- Henry.* O devil, can I free her from the grave?
- Eleanor.* You are too tragic: both of us are players
- In such a comedy as our court of Provence
- Had laugh'd at. That's a delicate Latin lay
- Of Walter Map: the lady holds the cleric Lovelier than any soldier, his poor torsure
- A crown of Empire. Will you have it again?
- (*Offering the cross. He dashes it down.*)
- St. Cupid, that is too irreverent.
- Then mine once more. (*Puts it on.*)
- Your cleric hath your lady.
- Nay, what uncomely faces, could he see you!
- Foam at the mouth because King Thomas, lord
- Not only of your vassals but amours, Thro' chastest honor of the Decalogue.
- Hath used the full authority of his Church
- To put her into Godstow nunnery.

Henry. To put her into Godstow nunnery!
He dared not—liar! yet, yet I remember—

I do remember.

He bade me put her into a nunnery—
Into Godstow, into Hellstow, Devilstow!
The Church! the Church!

God's eyes! I would the Church were
down in hell! [*Exit.*]

Eleanor. Aha!

Enter the four KNIGHTS.

Fitzurse. What made the King cry
out so furiously?

Eleanor. Our Becket, who will not
absolve the Bishops.

I think ye four have cause to love this
Becket.

Fitzurse. I hate him for his insolence
to all.

De Tracy. And I for all his insolence
to thee.

De Brito. I hate him for I hate him
is my reason,

And yet I hate him for a hypocrite.

De Morville. I do not love him, for he
did his best

To break the barons, and now braves the
King.

Eleanor. Strike, then, at once; the
King would have him—See!

Reënter HENRY.

Henry. No man to love me, honor me,
obey me!

Sluggards and fools!

The slave that eat my bread has kick'd
his King!

The dog I cramm'd with dainties worried
me!

The fellow that on a lame jade came to
court,

A ragged cloak for saddle—he, he, he,
To shake my throne, to push into my
chamber—

My bed, where ev'n the slave is private—
he—

I'll have her out again, he shall absolve
The Bishops—they but did my will—

not you—

Sluggards and fools, why do you stand
and stare?

You are no king's men—you—you—
you are Becket's men.

Down with King Henry! up with the
Archbishop!

Will no man rid me from this pestilent
priest? [*Exit.*]

[*The KNIGHTS draw their swords*

Eleanor. Are ye king's men? I am
king's woman, I.

The Knights. King's men! King's
men!

SCENE II.—*A Room in Canterbury Mon-
astery.*

BECKET and JOHN OF SALISBURY.

Becket. York said so?

John of Salisbury. Yes: a man may
take good counsel

Ev'n from his foe.

Becket. York will say anything.

What is he saying now? gone to the
King

And taken our anathema with him.
York!

Can the King de-anathematize this York?

John of Salisbury. Thomas, I would
thou hadst return'd to England,

Like some wise prince of this world from
his wars,

With more of olive-branch and amnesty
For foes at home—thou hast raised the
world against thee.

Becket. Why, John, my kingdom is
not of this world.

John of Salisbury. If it were more of
this world it might be

More of the next. A policy of wise par-
don

Wins here as well as there. To bless
thine enemies—

Becket. Ay, mine, not Heaven's.

John of Salisbury. And may there not
be something

Of this world's leaven in thee too, when
crying

On Holy Church to thunder out her
rights

And thine own wrong so pitilessly. Ah,
Thomas,

The lightnings that we think are only
Heaven's

Flash sometimes out of earth against the
heavens.

The soldier, when he lets his whole self go
Lost in the common good, the common

wrong,

Strikes truest ev'n for his own self. I
crave

Thy pardon—I have still thy leave to
speak.

Thou hast waged God's war against the
King; and yet
We are self-uncertain creatures, and we
may,
Yea, even when we know not, mix our
spites
And private hates with our defence of
Heaven.

Enter EDWARD GRIM.

Becket. Thou art but yesterday from
Cambridge, Grim;

What say ye there of Becket?

Grim. I believe him
The bravest in our roll of Primates down
From Austin — there are some — for
there are men

Of canker'd judgment everywhere —

Becket. Who hold
With York, with York against me.

Grim. Well, my lord,
A stranger monk desires access to you.

Becket. York against Canterbury, York
against God!

I am open to him.

[*Exit GRIM.*]

Enter ROSAMUND as a Monk.

Rosamund. Can I speak with you
Alone, my father?

Becket. Come you to confess?

Rosamund. Not now.

Becket. Then speak; this is my other
self,

Who like my conscience never lets me be.

Rosamund (throwing back the cowl). I
know him; our good John of Salis-
bury.

Becket. Breaking already from thy
novitiate

To plunge into this bitter world again —
These wells of Marah. I am grieved, my
daughter.

I thought that I had made a peace for
thee.

Rosamund. Small peace was mine in
my novitiate, father.

Thro' all closed doors a dreadful whisper
crept

That thou wouldst excommunicate the
King.

I could not eat, sleep, pray: I had with
me

The monk's disguise thou gavest me for
my bower:

I think our Abbess knew it and allow'd it
I fled, and found thy name a charm to get
me

Food, roof, and rest. I met a robber
once,

I told him I was bound to see the Arch-
bishop;

"Pass on," he said, and in thy name I
pass'd

From house to house. In one a son stone-
blind

Sat by his mother's hearth: he had gone
too far

Into the King's own woods; and the poor
mother,

Soon as she learnt I was a friend of thine,
Cried out against the cruelty of the King.

I said it was the King's courts, not the
King;

But she would not believe me, and she
wish'd

The Church were king: she had seen the
Archbishop once,

So mild, so kind. The people love thee,
father.

Becket. Alas! when I was Chancellor
to the King,

I fear I was as cruel as the King.

Rosamund. Cruel? Oh, no — it is
the law, not he;

The customs of the realm.

Becket. The customs! customs!

Rosamund. My lord, you have not ex-
communicated him?

Oh, if you have, absolve him!

Becket. Daughter, daughter,

Deal not with things you know not.

Rosamund. I know him.

Then you have done it, and I call you
cruel.

John of Salisbury. No, daughter, you
mistake our good Archbishop;

For once in France the King had been so
harsh,

He thought to excommunicate him —
Thomas,

You could not — old affection master'd
you,

You falter'd into tears.

Rosamund. God bless him for it.

Becket. Nay, make me not a woman,
John of Salisbury,

Nor make me traitor to my holy office.

Did not a man's voice ring along the aisle,
"The King is sick and almost unto death,"

How could I excommunicate him then?

Rosamund. And wilt thou excommu-
nicate him now?

Becket. Daughter, my time is short,
I shall not do it.

And were it longer — well — I should not do it.

Rosamund. Thanks in this life, and in the life to come.

Becket. Get thee back to thy nunnery with all haste;

Let this be thy last trespass. But one question —

How fares thy pretty boy, the little Geoffrey?

No fever, cough, croup, sickness?

Rosamund. No, but saved from all that by our solitude. The plagues

That smite the city spare the solitudes.

Becket. God save him from all sickness of the soul!

Thee too, thy solitude among thy nuns. May that save thee! Doth he remember me?

Rosamund. I warrant him.

Becket. He is marvellously like thee.

Rosamund. Likier the King.

Becket. No, daughter.

Rosamund. Ay, but wait till his nose rises; he will be very king.

Becket. Ev'n so: but think not of the King: farewell!

Rosamund. My lord, the city is full of armed men.

Becket. Ev'n so: farewell!

Rosamund. I will but pass to vespers, and breathe one prayer for my liege-lord the King, His child and mine own soul, and so return.

Becket. Pray for me too: much need of prayer have I.

[*ROSAMUND kneels and goes.*]

Dan John, how much we lose, we celibates,

Lacking the love of woman and of child.

John of Salisbury. More gain than loss; for of your wives you shall

Find one a slut whose fairest linen seems foul as her dust-cloth, if she used it — one so charged with tongue, that every thread of thought

Is broken ere it joins — a shrew to boot, whose evil song far on into the night Thrills to the topmost tile — no hope but death;

One slow, fat, white, a burden of the hearth;

And one that being thwarted ever swoons and weeps herself into the place of power;

And one an *uxor pauperis Ibyci.*

So rare the household honey-making bee, Man's help! but we, we have the Blessed Virgin

For worship, and our Mother Church for bride;

And all the souls we saved and father'd here

Will greet us as our babes in Paradise. What noise was that? she told us of arm'd men

Here in the city. Will you not withdraw?

Becket. I once was out with Henry in the days

When Henry loved me, and we came upon

A wild-fowl sitting on her nest, so still I reach'd my hand and touch'd; she did not stir;

The snow had frozen round her, and she sat

Stone-dead upon a heap of ice-cold eggs.

Look! how this love, this mother, runs thro' all

The world God made — even the beast — the bird!

John of Salisbury. Ay, still a lover of the beast and bird?

But these arm'd men — will you not hide yourself?

Perchance the fierce De Brocs from Saltwood Castle,

To assail our Holy Mother lest she brood

Too long o'er this hard egg, the world, and send

Her whole heart's heat into it, till it break into young angels. Pray you, hide yourself.

Becket. There was a little fair-hair'd Norman maid

Lived in my mother's house: if Rosamund is

The world's rose, as her name imports her — she

Was the world's lily.

John of Salisbury. Ay, and what of her?

Becket. She died of leprosy.

John of Salisbury. I know not why you call these old things back again, my lord.

Becket. The drowning man, they say, remembers all

The chances of his life, just ere he dies.

John of Salisbury. Ay — but these

arm'd men — will you drown your-
self?

He loses half the meed of martyrdom
Who will be martyr when he might es-
cape.

Becket. What day of the week? Tues-
day?

John of Salisbury. Tuesday, my lord.

Becket. On a Tuesday was I born, and
on a Tuesday

Baptized; and on a Tuesday did I fly
Forth from Northampton; on a Tuesday
pass'd

From England into bitter banishment;
On a Tuesday at Pontigny came to me
The ghostly warning of my martyrdom;
On a Tuesday from mine exile I return'd,
And on a Tuesday —

[*TRACY enters, then FITZURSE, DE
BRITO, and DE MORVILLE. MONKS
following.*

— on a Tuesday — Tracy!

*A long silence, broken by FITZURSE saying,
contemptuously,*

God help thee!

John of Salisbury (aside). How the
good Archbishop reddens!

He never yet could brook the note of scorn.

Fitzurse. My lord, we bring a message
from the King

Beyond the water; will you have it alone,
Or with these listeners near you?

Becket. As you will.

Fitzurse. Nay, as you will.

Becket. Nay, as you will

John of Salisbury. Why then
Better perhaps to speak with them apart.
Let us withdraw.

[*All go out except the four KNIGHTS
and BECKET.*

Fitzurse. We are all alone with him.
Shall I not smite him with his own cross-
staff?

De Morville. No, look! the door is
open: let him be.

Fitzurse. The King condemns your
excommunicating —

Becket. This is no secret, but a public
matter.

In here again!

[*JOHN OF SALISBURY and MONKS
return*

Now, sirs, the King's commands!

Fitzurse. The King beyond the water,
thro' our voices,

Commands you to be dutiful and leal
To your young King on this side of the
water,

Not scorn him for the foibles of his youth.
What! you would make his coronation
void

By cursing those who crown'd him. Out
upon you!

Becket. Reginald, all men know I
loved the Prince.

His father gave him to my care, and I
Became his second father: he had his
faults,

For which I would have laid mine own
life down

To help him from them, since indeed I
loved him,

And love him next after my lord his
father.

Rather than dim the splendor of his
crown

I fain would treble and quadruple it
With revenues, realms, and golden prov-
inces

So that were done in equity.

Fitzurse. You have broken

Your bond of peace, your treaty with the
King —

Wakening such brawls and loud disturb-
ances

In England, that he calls you oversea
To answer for it in his Norman courts.

Becket. Prate not of bonds, for never,
oh, never again

Shall the waste voice of the bond-break-
ing sea

Divide me from the mother church of
England,

My Canterbury. Loud disturbances!

Oh, ay — the bells rang out even to deaf-
ening,

Organ and pipe, and dulcimer, chants
and hymns

In all the churches, trumpets in the halls,
Sobs, laughter, cries: they spread their
raiment down

Before me — would have made my path-
way flowers,

Save that it was mid-winter in the street,
But full mid-summer in those honest
hearts.

Fitzurse. The King commands you
to absolve the bishops

Whom you have excommunicated.

Becket. I? Not I, the Pope. Ask him
for absolution.

Fitzurse. But you advised the Pope.

- Becket.* And so I did. They stood on Dover beach to murder me,
They have but to submit. They slew my stags in mine own manox here,
The Four Knights. The King commands you. Mutilated, poor brute, my sumpter-mule,
We are all King's men. Pluuder'd the vessel full of Gascon wine,
Becket. King's men at least should know The old King's present, carried off the casks,
That their own King closed with me last July Kill'd half the crew, dungeon'd the other half
That I should pass the censures of the Church In Pevenshire Castle —
On those that crown'd young Henry in *De Morville.* Why not rather then,
this realm, If this be so, complain to your young King,
And trampled on the rights of Canterbury. Not punish of your own authority ?
Fitzurse. What ! dare you charge the *Becket.* Mine enemies barr'd all access
King with treachery ? to the boy.
He sanction thee to excommunicate They knew he loved me.
The prelates whom he chose to crown his Hugh, Hugh, how proudly you exalt your
son ! head !
Becket. I spake no word of treachery, Nay, when they seek to overturn our
Reginald. rights,
But for the truth of this I make appeal I ask no leave of king, or mortal man,
To all the archbishops, bishops, prelates, To set them straight again. Alone I do
barons, it.
Monks, knights, five hundred, that were Give to the King the things that are the
there and heard. King's,
Nay, you yourself were there: you heard And those of God to God.
yourself. *Fitzurse.* Threats ! threats ! ye hear
Fitzurse. I was not there. him.
Becket. I saw you there. What ! will he excommunicate all the
Fitzurse. I was not. world ?
Becket. You were. I never forget [The KNIGHTS come round BECKET.
anything. *De Tracy.* He shall not.
Fitzurse. He makes the King a traitor, me a liar. *De Brito.* Well, as yet — I should be
grateful —
How long shall we forbear him ? He hath not excommunicated me.
John of Salisbury (*drawing BECKET aside*). O my good lord, *Becket.* Because thou wast born excommunicate.
Speak with them privately on this here- I never spied in thee one gleam of
after. grace.
You see they have been revelling, and I *De Brito.* Your Christian's Christian
fear charity !
Are braced and brazen'd up with Christmas wines *Becket.* By St. Denis —
For any murderous brawl. *De Brito.* Ay, by St. Denis, now will
Becket. And yet they prate he flame out,
Of mine, my brawls, when those, that And lose his head as old St. Denis did.
name themselves *Becket.* Ye think to scare me from
Of the King's part, have broken down my loyalty
our barns, To God and to the Holy Father. No !
Wasted our diocese, outraged our tenants Tho' all the swords in England flashed
above me
Lifted our produce, driven our clerics Ready to fall at Henry's word or yours —
out — Tho' all the loud-lung'd trumpets upon
earth
Why they, your friends, those ruffians, Blared from the heights of all the thrones
the De Brocs, of her kings,

Blowing the world against me, I would stand

Clothed with the full authority of Rome,
Mail'd in the perfect panoply of faith,
First of the foremost of their files, who die
For God, to people heaven in the great
day

When God makes up his jewels. Once I
fled —

Never again, and you — I marvel at
you —

Ye know what is between us. Ye have
sworn

Yourselves my men when I was Chan-
cellor —

My vassals — and yet threaten your Arch-
bishop

In his own house.

Knights. Nothing can be between us
That goes against our fealty to the King.

Fitzurse. And in his name we charge
you that ye keep

This traitor from escaping.

Becket. Rest you easy,
For I am easy to keep. I shall not fly.

Here, here, here will you find me.

De Morville. Know you not
You have spoken to the peril of your life ?

Becket. As I shall speak again.

Fitzurse, De Tracy, and De Brito. To
arms !

[*They rush out, DE MORVILLE lingers.*

Becket. De Morville,
I had thought so well of you ; and even
now

You seem the least assassin of the four.
Oh, do not damn yourself for company !
Is it too late for me to save your soul ?

I pray you for one moment stay and
speak.

De Morville. Becket, it is too late.

Becket. [Exit.
Is it too late ?

Too late on earth may be too soon in hell.

Knights (in the distance). Close the
great gate — ho, there — upon the
town.

Becket's Retainers. Shut the hall-doors.
[A pause.

Becket. You hear them, brother John ;
Why do you stand so silent, brother John ?

John of Salisbury. For I was musing
on an ancient saw,

Suaviter in modo, fortiter in re,
Is strength less strong when hand-in-hand
with grace ?

Gratior in pulchro corpore virtus. Thomas,

Why should you heat yourself for such
as these ?

Becket. Methought I answer'd mod-
erately enough.

John of Salisbury. As one that blows
the coal to cool the fire.

My lord, I marvel why you never lean
On any man's advising but your own.

Becket. Is it so, Dan John ? well, what
should I have done ?

John of Salisbury. You should have
taken counsel with your friends

Before these bandits brake into your
presence.

They seek — you make — occasion for
your death.

Becket. My counsel is already taken,
John.

I am prepared to die.

John of Salisbury. We are sinners all,
The best of all not all-prepared to die.

Becket. God's will be done !

John of Salisbury. Ay, well. God's
will be done !

Grim (reëntering). My lord, the knights
are arming in the garden

Beneath the sycamore.

Becket. Good ! let them arm.

Grim. And one of the De Broes is
with them, Robert,

The apostate monk that was with Ran-
dulf here.

He knows the twists and turnings of the
place.

Becket. No fear !

Grim. No fear, my lord.
[Crashes on the hall-doors. *The*

MONKS flee.

Becket (rising). Our dovecote flown !
I cannot tell why monks should all be
cowards.

John of Salisbury. Take refuge in
your own cathedral, Thomas.

Becket. Do they not fight the Great
Fiend day by day ?

Valor and holy life should go together.
Why should all monks be cowards ?

John of Salisbury. Are they so ?
I say, take refuge in your own cath-
edral.

Becket. Ay, but I told them I would
wait them here.

Grim. May they not say you dared
not show yourself

In your old place ? and vespers are be-
ginning

[*Bell rings for vespers till end of scene,*

You should attend the office, give them heart.

They fear you slain: they dread they know not what.

Becket. Ay, monks, not men.

Grim. I am a monk, my lord.

Perhaps, my lord, you wrong us.

Some would stand by you to the death.

Becket. Your pardon.

John of Salisbury. He said "Attend the office."

Becket. Attend the office?

Why then — The Cross! — who bears my Cross before me?

Methought they would have brain'd me with it, John. [*GRIM takes it.*]

Grim. I! Would that I could bear thy cross indeed!

Becket. The Mitre!

John of Salisbury. Will you wear it? — there!

[*BECKET puts on the mitre.*]

Becket. The Pall!

I go to meet my King! [*Puts on the pall.*]

Grim. To meet the King?

[*Crashes on the doors as they go out.*]

John of Salisbury. Why do you move with such a stateliness?

Can you not hear them yonder like a storm,

Pattering the doors, and breaking thro' the walls?

Becket. Why do the heathen rage?

My two good friends,

What matters murder'd here, or murder'd there?

And yet my dream foretold my martyrdom

In mine own church. It is God's will. Go on.

Nay, drag me not. We must not seem to fly.

SCENE III. — *North Transept of Canterbury Cathedral. On the right hand a flight of steps leading to the Choir, another flight on the left, leading to the North Aisle. Winter afternoon slowly darkening. Low thunder now and then of an approaching storm. MONKS heard chanting the service. ROSAMUND kneeling.*

Rosamund. O blessed saint, O glorious Benedict, —

These arm'd men in the city, these fierce faces —

Thy holy follower founded Canterbury —

Save that dear head which now is Canterbury,

Save him, he saved my life, he saved my child,

Save him, his blood would darken Henry's name;

Save him till all as saintly as thyself

He miss the searching flame of purgatory. And pass at once perfect to Paradise.

[*Noise of steps and voices in the cloisters.*]
Hark! Is it they? Coming! He is not here —

Not yet, thank Heaven. O save him!

[*Goes up steps leading to choir.*]

Becket (entering, forced along by JOHN OF SALISBURY and GRIM). No, I tell you!

I cannot bear a hand upon my person, Why do you force me thus against my will?

Grim. My lord, we force you from your enemies.

Becket. As you would force a king from being crown'd.

John of Salisbury. We must not force the crown of martyrdom.

[*Service stops. MONKS come down from the stairs that lead to the choir.*]

Monks. Here is the great Archbishop! He lives! he lives!

Die with him, and be glorified together.

Becket. Together? . . . get you back! go on with the office.

Monks. Come, then, with us to vespers.

Becket. How can I come When you so block the entry? Back, I say!

Go on with the office. Shall not Heaven be served

Tho' earth's last earthquake clash'd the minster-bells,

And the great deeps were broken up again,

And hiss'd against the sun?

[*Noise in the cloisters.*]

Monks. The murderers, hark! Let us hide! let us hide!

Becket. What do these people fear?

Monks. Those arm'd men in the cloister.

Becket. Be not such cravens!

I will go out and meet them.

Grim and others. Shut the doors! We will not have him slain before our face.

[*They close the doors of the transept. Knocking.*]

Fly, fly, my lord, before they burst the doors!

[Knocking.]
Becket. Why, these are our own monks who follow'd us!

And will you bolt them out, and have them slain?

Undo the doors: the church is not a castle:

Knock, and it shall be open'd. Are you deaf?

What, have I lost authority among you?

Stand by, make way!

[Opens the doors. Enter MONKS from cloister.]

Come in, my friends, come in!

Nay, faster, faster!

Monks. Oh, my lord Archbishop, A score of knights all arm'd with swords and axes —

To the choir, to the choir!

[MONKS divide, part flying by the stairs on the right, part by those on the left. The rush of these last bears BECKET along with them some way up the steps, where he is left standing alone.]

Becket. Shall I too pass to the choir, And die upon the patriarchal throne Of all my predecessors?

John of Salisbury. No, to the crypt! Twenty steps down. Stumble not in the darkness,

Lest they should seize thee.

Grim. To the crypt? no — no, To the chapel of St. Blaise beneath the roof!

John of Salisbury (pointing upward and downward). That way, or this! Save thyself either way.

Becket. Oh, no, not either way, nor any way

Save by that way which leads thro' night to light.

Not twenty steps, but one.

And fear not I should stumble in the darkness,

Not tho' it be their hour, the power of darkness,

But my hour too, the power of light in darkness!

I am not in the darkness but the light, Seen by the Church in Heaven, the Church on earth —

The power of life in death to make her free!

[Enter the four KNIGHTS. JOHN OF SALISBURY flies to the altar of St. Benedict.]

Fitzurse. Here, here, King's men!

[Catches hold of the last flying MONK.]
Where is the traitor Becket?

Monk. I am not he! I am not he, my lord.

I am not he indeed!

Fitzurse. Hence to the fiend!
[Pushes him away.]

Where is this treble traitor to the King? De Tracy. Where is the Archbishop, Thomas Becket?

Becket. Here.

No traitor to the King, but Priest of God, Primate of England.

[Descending into the transept.]
I am he ye seek.

What would ye have of me?

Fitzurse. Your life.

De Tracy. Your life.

De Morville. Save that you will absolve the bishops.

Becket. Never, —

Except they make submission to the Church.

You had my answer to that cry before.

De Morville. Why, then you are a dead man; flee!

Becket. I will not.

I am readier to be slain, than thou to slay.

Hugh, I know well thou hast but half a heart

To bathe this sacred pavement with my blood.

God pardon thee and these, but God's full curse

Shatter you all to pieces if ye harm

One of my flock!

Fitzurse. Was not the great gate shut?

They are thronging in to vesper — half the town.

We shall be overwhelm'd. Seize him and carry him!

Come with us — nay — thou art our prisoner — come!

De Morville. Ay, make him prisoner, do not harm the man.

[FITZURSE lays hold of the ARCHBISHOP'S pall.]

Becket. Touch me not!

De Brito. How the good priest gods himself!

He is not yet ascended to the Father.

Fitzurse. I will not only touch, but drag thee hence.

Becket. Thou art my man, thou art
 my vassal. Away!
 [*Flings him off till he reels, almost to
 falling.*]
De Tracy (*lays hold of the pall*). Come;
 as he said, thou art our prisoner.
Bècket. Down!
 [*Throws him headlong.*]
Fitzurse (*advances with drawn sword*). I
 told thee that I should remember
 thee!
Becket. Profligate pander!
Fitzurse. Do you hear that? strike,
 strike!
 [*Strikes off the ARCHBISHOP'S mitre,
 and wounds him in the forehead.*]
Becket (*covers his eyes with his hand*). I
 do commend my cause to God, the
 Virgin,
 St. Denis of France and St. Alphege of
 England,
 And all the tutelur Saints of Canterbury.
 [*GRIM wraps his arms about the ARCH-
 BISHOP.*]
 Spare this defence, dear brother.
 [*TRACY has arisen, and approaches,
 hesitatingly, with his sword raised.*]
Fitzurse. Strike him, Tracy!
Rosamund (*rushing down steps from the
 choir*). No, No, No, No!
Fitzurse. This wanton here. De Mor-
 ville,
 Hold her away.
De Morville. I hold her.
Rosamund (*held back by DE MORVILLE,
 and stretching out her arms*). Mercy,
 mercy,
 As you would hope for mercy.
Fitzurse. Strike, I say.
Grim. O God, O noble knights, O
 sacrilege!
 Strike our Archbishop in his own cath-
 edral!

The Pope, the King, will curse you — the
 whole world
 Abhor you; ye will die the death of dogs!
 Nay, nay, good Tracy. [*Lifts his arm.*]
Fitzurse. Answer not, but strike.
De Tracy. There is my answer then.
 [*Sword falls on GRIM'S arm, and
 glances from it, wounding BECKET.*]
Grim. Mine arm is sever'd.
 I can no more — fight out the good fight
 — die
 Conqueror.
 [*Staggers into the chapel of St. Bened-
 dict.*]
Becket (*falling on his knees*). At the
 right hand of Power —
 Power and great glory — for thy Church,
 O Lord —
 Into Thy hands, O Lord — into Thy
 hands! — [*Sinks prone.*]
De Brito. This last to rid thee of a
 world of brawls! [*Kills him.*]
 The traitor's dead, and will arise no
 more.
Fitzurse. Nay, have we still'd him?
 What! the great Archbishop!
 Does he breathe? No?
De Tracy. No, Reginald, he is dead.
 (*Storm bursts.*)*
De Morville. Will the earth gape and
 swallow us?
De Brito. The deed's done —
 Away!
 [*DE BRITO, DE TRACY, FITZURSE,
 rush out, crying "King's men!"*]
DE MORVILLE follows slowly.
*Flashes of lightning thro' the Cath-
 edral. ROSAMUND seen kneeling by
 the body of BECKET.*

*A tremendous thunderstorm actually broke over
 the Cathedral as the murderers were leaving it.

LOCKSLEY HALL SIXTY YEARS AFTER.

<p>LATE, my grandson! half the morning have I paced these sandy tracts, Watch'd again the hollow ridges roaring into cataracts,</p> <p>Wander'd back to living boyhood while I I heard the curlews call, I myself so close on death, and death it- self in Locksley Hall.</p> <p>So — your happy suit was blasted — she the faultless, the divine; And you liken — boyish babble — this boy-love of yours with mine.</p> <p>I myself have often babbled doubtless of a foolish past; Babble, babble; our old England may go down in babble at last.</p> <p>'Curse him!' curse your fellow-victim? call him dotard in your rage? Eyes that lured a doting boyhood well might fool a dotard's age.</p> <p>Jilted for a wealthier! wealthier? yet per- haps she was not wise; I remember how you kiss'd the miniature with those sweet eyes.</p> <p>In the hall there hangs a painting — Amy's arms about my neck — Happy children in a sunbeam sitting on the ribs of wreck.</p> <p>In my life there was a picture, she that clasp'd my neck had flown; I was left within the shadow sitting on the wreck alone.</p> <p>Yours has been a slighter ailment, will you sicken for her sake? You, not you! your modern amourist is of easier, earthlier make.</p> <p>Amy loved me, Amy fail'd me, Amy was a timid child; But your Judith — but your worldling — <i>she</i> had never driven me wild</p>	<p>She that holds the diamond necklace dearer than the golden ring, She that finds a winter sunset fairer than a morn of Spring.</p> <p>She that in her heart is brooding on his briefer lease of life, While she vows "till death shall part us," she the would-be-widow wife.</p> <p>She the worldling born of worldlings — father, mother — be content, Ev'n the homely farm can teach us there is something in descent.</p> <p>Yonder in that chapel, slowly sinking now into the ground, Lies the warrior, my forefather, with his feet upon the hound.</p> <p>Cross'd! for once he sail'd the sea to crush the Moslem in his pride; Dead the warrior, dead his glory, dead the cause in which he died.</p> <p>Yet how often I and Amy in the moulder- ing aisle have stood, Gazing for one pensive moment on that founder of our blood.</p> <p>There again I stood to-day, and where of old we knelt in prayer, Close beneath the casement crimson with the shield of Locksley — there,</p> <p>All in white Italian marble, looking still as if she smiled, Lies my Amy dead in child-birth, dead the mother, dead the child.</p> <p>Dead — and sixty years ago, and dead her aged husband now, I this old white-headed dreamer stoop'd and kiss'd her marble brow.</p> <p>Gone the fires of youth, the follies, furies, curses, passionate tears, Gone like fires and floods and earthquakes of the planet's dawning years</p>
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Fires that shook me once, but now to
 silent ashes fall'n away.
 Cold upon the dead volcano sleeps the
 gleam of dying day.
 Gone the tyrant of my youth, and mute
 below the chancel stones,
 All his virtues — I forgive them — black
 in white above his bones.
 Gone the comrades of my bivouac, some
 in fight against the foe,
 Some thro' age and slow diseases, gone as
 all on earth will go.
 Gone with whom for forty years my life
 in golden sequence ran,
 She with all the charm of woman, she
 with all the breadth of man,
 Strong in will and rich in wisdom, Edith,
 loyal, lowly, sweet,
 Feminine to her inmost heart, and femi-
 nine to her tender feet,
 Very woman of very woman, nurse of
 ailing body and mind,
 She that link'd again the broken chain
 that bound me to my kind.
 Here to-day was Amy with me, while I
 wander'd down the coast,
 Near us Edith's holy shadow, smiling at
 the slighter ghost.
 Gone our sailor son thy father, Leonard
 early lost at sea;
 Thou alone, my boy, of Amy's kin and
 mine art left to me.
 Gone thy tender-natured mother, weary-
 ing to be left alone,
 Pining for the stronger heart that once
 had beat beside her own.
 Truth, for Truth is Truth, he worshipt,
 being true as he was brave;
 Good, for Good is Good, he follow'd, yet
 he look'd beyond the grave,
 Wiser there than you, that crowning bar-
 ren Death as lord of all,
 Deem this over-tragic drama's closing
 curtain is the pall!
 Beautiful was death in him who saw the
 the death but kept the deck,
 Saving women and their babes, and sink-
 ing with the sinking wreck,
 Gone for ever! Ever? no — for since
 our dying race began,
 Ever, ever, and for ever was the leading
 light of man.
 Those that in barbarian burials kill'd the
 slave, and slew the wife,
 Felt within themselves the sacred passion
 of the second life.
 Indian warriors dream of ampler hunting
 grounds beyond the night,
 Ev'n the black Australian dying hopes
 he shall return, a white.
 Truth for truth, and good for good! The
 Good, the True, the Pure, the Just;
 Take the charm "For ever" from them,
 and they crumble into dust.
 Gone the cry of "Forward, Forward,"
 lost within a growing gloom;
 Lost, or only heard in silence from the
 silence of a tomb.
 Half the marvels of my morning, triumphs
 over time and space,
 Staled by frequency, shrunk by usage
 into commonest commonplace!
 "Forward" rang the voices then, and of
 the many mine was one.
 Let us hush this cry of "Forward" till
 ten thousand years have gone.
 Far among the vanish'd races, old Assyr-
 ian kings would flay
 Captives whom they caught in battle —
 iron-hearted victors they.
 Ages after, while in Asia, he that led the
 wild Moguls,
 Timur built his ghastly tower of eighty
 thousand human skulls,
 Then, and here in Edward's time, an age
 of noblest English names,
 Christian conquerors took and flung the
 conquer'd Christian into flames.
 Love your enemy, bless your haters, said
 the Greatest of the great;
 Christian love among the Churches look'd
 the twin of heathen hate.

- From the golden alms of Blessing man
had coin'd himself a curse :
- Rome of Cæsar, Rome of Peter, which
was crueller? which was worse?
- France had shown a light to all men,
preach'd a Gospel, all men's good ;
Celtic Demos rose a Demon, shriek'd and
slaked the light with blood.
- Hope was ever on her mountain, watching
till the day begun
Crown'd with sunlight — over darkness —
from the still unrisen sun.
- Have we grown at last beyond the pas-
sion of the primal clan ?
" Kill your enemy, for you hate him,"
still, " your enemy " was a man.
- Have we sunk below them? peasants
maim the helpless horse, and drive
Innocent cattle under thatch, and burn
the kindlier brutes alive.
- Brutes, the brutes are not your wrongers
— burnt at midnight, found at
morn,
Twisted hard in mortal agony with their
offspring, born-unborn,
- Clinging to the silent Mother! Are we
devils? are we men ?
Sweet St. Francis of Assisi, would that
he were here again,
- He that in his Catholic wholeness used to
call the very flowers
Sisters, brothers — and the beasts —
whose pains are hardly less than
ours !
- Chaos, Cosmos! Cosmos, Chaos! who can
tell how all will end !
Read the wide world's annals, you, and
take their wisdom for your friend.
- Hope the best, but hold the Present fatal
daughter of the Past,
Shape your heart to front the hour,
but dream not that the hour will
last.
- Ay, if dynamite and revolver leave you
courage to be wise :
When was age so cramm'd with menace ?
madness? written, spoken lies ?
- Envy wears the mask of Love, and, laugh-
ing sober fact to scorn,
Cries to Weakest as to Strongest, " Ye
are equals, equal-born."
- Equal-born? O yes, if yonder hill be
level with the flat.
Charm us, Orator, till the Lion look no
larger than the Cat.
- Till the Cat thro' that mirage of over-
heated language loom
Larger than the Lion, — Demos end in
working its own doom.
- Russia bursts our Indian barrier, shall we
fight her? shall we yield ?
Pause, before you sound the trumpet, hear
the voices from the field.
- Those three hundred millions under one
Imperial sceptre now,
Shall we hold them? shall we loose them?
take the suffrage of the plow.
- Nay, but these would feel and follow
Truth if only you and you,
Rivals of realm-ruining party, when you
speak were wholly true.
- Plowmen, Shepherds, have I found, and
more than once, and still could find,
Sons of God, and kings of men in utter
nobleness of mind,
- Truthful, trustful, looking upward to the
practised hustings-liar ;
So the Higher wields the Lower, while
the Lower is the Higher.
- Here and there a cotter's babe, is royal-
born by right divine ;
Here and there my lord is lower than his
oxen or his swine.
- Chaos, Cosmos! Cosmos, Chaos! once
again the sickening game ;
Freedom, free to slay herself, and dying
while they shout her name.
- Step by step we gain'd a freedom known
to Europe, known to all ;
Step by step we rose to greatness, — thro'
the tonguesters we may fall.
- You that woo the Voices — tell them " old
experience is a fool,"

- Teach your flattered kings that only those
who cannot read can rule.
- Pluck the mighty from their seat, but set
no meek ones in their place ;
Pillory Wisdom in your markets pelt your
offal at her face.
- Tumble Nature heel o'er head, and, yell-
ing with the yelling street,
Set the feet above the brain and swear
the brain is in the feet.
- Bring the old dark ages back without the
faith, without the hope,
Break the State, the Church, the Throne,
and roll their ruins down the slope.
- Authors — atheist, essayist, novelist, real-
ist, rhymester, play your part,
Paint the mortal shame of Nature with the
living hues of Art.
- Rip your brothers' vices open, strip your
own foul passions bare ;
Down with Reticence, down with Rever-
ence—forward — naked — let them
stare.
- Feed the budding rose of boyhood with
the drainage of your sewer ;
Send the drain into the fountain, lest the
stream should issue pure.
- Set the maiden fancies wallowing in the
troughs of Zolaism, —
Forward, forward, ay and backward,
downward too into the abysm.
- Do your best to charm the worst, to lower
the rising race of men ;
Have we risen from out the beast, then
back into beast again ?
- Only "dust to dust" for me that sicken
at your lawless din,
Dust in wholesome old-world dust before
the newer world begin.
- Heated am I ? you — you wonder — well,
it scarce becomes mine age —
Patience ! let the dying actor mouth his
last upon the stage.
- Cries of unprogressive dotage ere the dot-
ard fall asleep ?
- Noises of a current narrowing, not the
music of a deep ?
- Ay, for doubtless I am old, and think
gray thoughts, for I am gray ;
After all the stormy changes shall we find
a changeless May ?
- After madness, after massacre, Jacobin-
ism and Jacquerie,
Some diviner force to guide us thro' the
days I shall not see ?
- When the schemes and all the systems,
Kingdoms and Republics fall,
Something kindlier, higher, holier — all
for each and each for all ?
- All the full-brain half-brain races, led by
Justice, Love, and Truth ;
All the millions one at length, with all the
visions of my youth ?
- All diseases quenched by Science, no man
halt, or deaf, or blind ;
Stronger ever born of weaker, lustier body,
larger mind ?
- Earth at last a warless world, a single
race, a single tongue,
I have seen her far away — for is not
Earth as yet so young ? —
- Every tiger madness muzzled, every ser-
pent passion kill'd,
Every grim ravine a garden, every blaz-
ing desert till'd,
- Robed in universal harvest up to either
pole she smiles,
Universal ocean softly washing all her
warless Isles.
- Warless ? when her tens are thousands
and her thousands millions, then—
All her harvest all too narrow — who can
fancy warless men ?
- Warless ? war will die out late then.
Will it ever ? late or soon ?
Can it, till this outworn earth be dead as
you dead world the moon ?
- Dead the new astronomy calls her. . . .
On this day and at this hour,
In this gap between the sandhills, whence
you see the Locksley tower,

<p>Here we met our latest meeting — Amy — sixty years ago — She and I—the moon was falling green- ish thro' a rosy glow,</p> <p>Just above the gateway tower, and even where you see her now — Here we stood and claspt each other, swore the seeming-deathless vow. . . .</p> <p>Dead, but how her living glory lights the hall, the dune, the grass! Yet the moonlight is the sunlight, and the sun himself will pass.</p> <p>Venus near hei! smiling downward at this earthlier earth of ours, Closer on the Sun, perhaps a world of never fading flowers.</p> <p>Hesper, whom the poet call'd the Bringer home of all good things. All good things may move in Hesper, perfect peoples, perfect kings.</p> <p>Hesper — Venus — were we native to that splendor, or in Mars, We should see the Globe we groan in, fairest of their evening stars.</p> <p>Could we dream of wars and carnage, craft and madness, lust and spite, Roaring London, raving Paris, in that point of peaceful light?</p> <p>Might we not in glancing heavenward on a star so silver-fair, Xearn, and clasp the hands and murmur, “Would to God that we were there”?</p> <p>Forward, backward, backward, forward, in the immeasurable sea, Sway'd by vaster ebbs and flows than can be known to you or me.</p> <p>All the suns—are these but symbols of innumerable man, Man or Mind that sees a shadow of the planner or the plan?</p> <p>Is there evil but on earth? or pain in every peopled sphere? Well be grateful for the sounding watch- word, “Evolution” here</p>	<p>Evolution ever climbing after some ideal good, And Reversion ever dragging Evolution in the mud.</p> <p>What are men that He should heed us? cried the king of sacred song; Insects of an hour, that hourly work their brother insect wrong,</p> <p>While the silent Heavens roll, and Suns along their fiery way, All their planets whirling round them, flash a million miles a day.</p> <p>Many an Æon moulded earth before her highest, man, was born, Many an Æon too may pass when earth is manless and forlorn,</p> <p>Earth so huge and yet so bounded — pools of salt, and plots of land — Shallow skin of green and azure — chains of mountain, grains of sand!</p> <p>Only That which made us, meant us to be mightier by and by, Set the sphere of all the boundless Heav- ens within the human eye,</p> <p>Sent the shadow of Himself, the bound- less, thro' the human soul, Boundless inward, in the atom, boundless outward, in the Whole.</p> <p>Here is Locksley Hall, my grandson, here the lion-guarded gate. Not to-night in Locksley Hall — to-mor- row — you, you come so late.</p> <p>Wreck'd — your train — or all but wreck'd? a shattered wheel? a vi- cious boy!</p> <p>Good, this forward you that preach it, is it well to wish you joy?</p> <p>Is it well that while we range with Sci- ence, glorying in the Time, City children soak and blacken soul and sense in city slime?</p> <p>There among the glooming alleys Prog- ress halts on palsied feet, Crime and hunger cast our maidens by the thousand on the street.</p>
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There the Master scrimps his haggard
sempstress of her daily bread,
There a single sordid attic holds the liv-
ing and the dead.

There the smouldering fire of fever creeps
across the rotted floor,
And the crowded couch of incest in the
warrens of the poor.

Nay, your pardon, cry your "forward,"
yours are hope and youth, but I —
Eighty winters leave the dog too lame to
follow with the cry,

Lame and old, and past his time, and pass-
ing now into the night;
Yet I would the rising race were half as
eager for the light.

Light the fading gleam of Even! light
the glimmer of the dawn?
Aged eyes may take the growing glimmer
for the gleam withdrawn.

Far away beyond her myriad coming
changes earth will be
Something other than the wildest modern
guess of you and me.

Earth may reach her earthly-worst, or if
she gain her earthly-best,
Would she find her human offspring this
ideal man at rest?

Forward then, but still remember how
the course of Time will swerve,
Crook and turn upon itself in many a
backward streaming curve.

Not the Hall to-night, my grandson!
Death and Silence hold their own.
Leave the Master in the first dark hour
of his last sleep alone.

Worthier soul was he than I am, sound
and honest, rustic Squire,
Kindly landlord, boon companion—youth-
ful jealousy is a liar.

Cast the poison from your bosom, oust
the madness from your brain.
Let the trampled serpent show you that
you have not lived in vain.

Youthful! youth and age are scholars yet
but in the lower school,

Nor is he the wisest man who never proved
himself a fool.

Yonder lies our young sea-village — Art
and Grace are less and less:
Science grows and Beauty dwindles —
roofs of slated hideousness!

There is one old Hostel left us where they
swing the Locksley shield.
Till the peasant cow shall butt the "Lion
passant" from his field.

Poor old Heraldry, poor old History, poor
old Poetry, passing hence,
In the common deluge drowning old polit-
ical common-sense!

Poor old voice of eighty crying after
voices that have fled!
All I loved are vanish'd voices all my
steps are on the dead.

All the world is ghost to me, and as the
phantom disappears,
Forward far and far from here is all the
hope of eighty years.

In this Hostel — I remember — I repent
it o'er his grave —
Like a clown — by chance he met me —
I refused the hand he gave.

From that casement where the trailer man-
tles all the mouldering bricks —
I was then in early boyhood, Edith but a
child of six —

While I shelter'd in this archway from a
day of driving showers —
Peep't the winsome face of Edith like a
flower among the flowers.

Here to-night! the Hall to-morrow, when
they toll the Chapel bell!
Shall I hear in one dark room a wailing,
"I have loved thee well."

Then a peal that shakes the portal — one
has come to claim his bride,
Her that shrank, and put me from her.
shriek'd, and started from my
side —

Silent echoes! you, my Leonard, use and
not abuse your day,

Move among your people, know them,
follow him who led the way,

Strove for sixty widow'd years to help
his homelier brother men,
Served the poor, and built the cottage,
raised the school, and drain'd the
fen.

Hears he now the Voice that wrong'd
him? who shall swear it cannot
be?

Earth would never touch her worst, were
one in fifty such as he.

Ere she gain her Heavenly-best, a God
must mingle with the game:

Nay, there may be those about us whom
we neither see nor name,

Felt within us as ourselves, the Powers
of Good, the Powers of Ill,
Strowing balm, or shedding poison in the
fountains of the Will.

Follow you the Star that lights a desert
pathway, yours or mine.

Forward, till you see the highest Human
Nature is divine.

Follow Light, and do the Right — for
man can half-control his doom —

Till you find the deathless Angel seated
in the vacant tomb.

Forward, let the stormy moment fly and
mingle with the Past.

I that loathed, have come to love him.
Love will conquer at the last.

Gone at eighty, mine own age, and I and
you will bear the pall;

Then I leave thee Lord and Master, latest
Lord of Locksley Hall.

THE FLEET.¹

I.

You, you, if you shall fail to understand
What England is, and what her all-in-
all,

¹ The speaker said that "he should like to be assured that other outlying portions of the Empire, the Crown colonies, and important coaling stations, were being as promptly and as thoroughly fortified as the various capitals of the self-governing colonies. He was credibly informed this was not so. It was impossible, also, not to

On you will come the curse of all the land,
Should this old England fall,
Which Nelson left so great.

II.

His isle, the mightiest Ocean-power on
earth,

Our own fair isle, the lord of every sea —
Her fuller franchise — what would that
be worth —

Her ancient fame of Free —

Were she . . . a fallen state?

III.

Her dauntless army scatter'd, and so
small,

Her island-myriads fed from alien
lands —

The fleet of England is her all-in-all;

Her fleet is in your hands,
And in her fleet her Fate.

IV.

You, you, that have the ordering of her
fleet,

If you should only compass her disgrace,
When all men starve, the wild mob's mil-
lion feet

Will kick you from your place,

But then too late, too late.

feel some degree of anxiety about the efficacy of present provision to defend and protect, by means of swift, well-armed cruisers, the immense mercantile fleet of the Empire. A third source of anxiety, so far as the colonies were concerned, was the apparently insufficient provision for the rapid manufacture of armaments and their prompt despatch when ordered to their colonial destination. Hence the necessity for manufacturing appliances equal to the requirements, not of Great Britain alone, but of the whole Empire. But the keystone of the whole was the necessity for an overwhelmingly powerful fleet and efficient defence for all necessary coaling stations. This was as essential for the colonies as for Great Britain. It was the one condition for the continuance of the Empire. All that Continental Powers did with respect to armies England should effect with her navy. It was essentially a defensive force, and could be moved rapidly from point to point, but it should be equal to all that was expected from it. It was to strengthen the fleet that colonists would first readily tax themselves, because they realized how essential a powerful fleet was to the safety, not only of that extensive commerce sailing in every sea, but ultimately to the security of the distant portions of the Empire. Who could estimate the loss involved in even a brief period of disaster to the Imperial Navy? Any amount of money timely expended in preparation would be quite insignificant when compared with the possible calamity he had referred to." — *From Sir Graham Berry's Speech at the Colonial Institute, 9th November, 1886.*

THE PROMISE OF MAY.

"A SURFACE MAN OF THEORIES, TRUE TO NONE."

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

FARMER DOBSON.
 MR. PHILIP EDGAR (*afterwards Mr. HAROLD*).
 FARMER STEER (*DORA and EVA'S Father*).
 MR. WILSON (*a Schoolmaster*).
 HIGGINS,
 JAMES,
 DAN SMITH, } *Farm Laborers.*
 JACKSON,
 ALLEN,
 DORA STEER.
 EVA STEER.
 SALLY ALLEN, } *Farm Servants.*
 MILLY, } *Farm Servants, Laborers, etc.*

ACT I.

SCENE.—BEFORE FARMHOUSE.

Farming Men and Women. Farming Men carrying forms, &c., Women carrying baskets of knives and forks, &c.

1st *Farming Man*. Be thou a-gawin' to the long barn?

2d *Farming Man*. Ay, to be sewer! Be thou?

1st *Farming Man*. Why, o' coorse, fur it be the owd man's birthdaäy. He be heighty this very daäy, and 'e telled all on us to be i' the long barn by one o'clock, fur he'll gie us a big dinner, and haäfe th' parish 'll be theer, an' Miss Dora, an' Miss Eva, an' all!

2d *Farming Man*. Miss Dora be coomed back, then?

1st *Farming Man*. Ay, haäfe an hour ago. She be in theer now. (*Pointing to house.*) Owd Steer wur afeärd she would n't be back i' time to keep his birthdaäy, and he wur in a tew about it all the murnin'; and he sent me wi' the gig to Littlechester to fetch 'er; and 'er an' the owd man they fell a kissin' o' one another like two sweet'arts i' the poorch as soon as he clapt eyes of 'er.

2d *Farming Man*. Foälks says he likes Miss Eva the best.

1st *Farming Man*. Naäy I knaws nowt o' what foälks says, an' I caäres nowt neither. Foälks does n't hallus know thessens; but sewer I be, they be two o' the purtiest gels ye can see of a summer murnin'.

2d *Farming Man*. Beänt Miss Eva gone off a bit of 'er good looks o' laäte?

1st *Farming Man*. Noä, not a bit.

2d *Farming Man*. Why coöm awaäy, then, to the long barn. [*Exeunt.*]

DORA *looks out of window.* Enter DOBSON.

Dora (*singing*). The town lay still in the low sunlight,
 The hen cluckt late by the white farm gate,
 The maid to her dairy came in from the cow,

The stock-dove coo'd at the fall of night,
 The blossom had open'd on every bough;
 O joy for the promise of May, of May,

O joy for the promise of May.
 (*Nodding at Dobson.*) I'm coming down, Mr. Dobson. I have n't seen Eva yet. Is she anywhere in the garden?

Dobson. Noä, Miss. I ha'n't seed 'er neither.

Dora (*enters singing*). But a red fire woke in the heart of the town,

And a fox from the glen ran away with
the hen,
And a cat to the cream, and a rat to the
cheese ;
And the stock-dove coo'd, till a kite dropt
down,
And a salt wind burnt the blossoming
trees ;
O grief for the promise of May, of
May,
O grief for the promise of May
i don't know why I sing that song ; I
don't love it.

Dobson. Blessings on your pretty voice,
Miss Dora. Wheer did they larn ye
that ?

Dora. In Cumberlan, Mr. Dobson.

Dobson. An' how did ye leäve the owd
uncle i' Coomerland ?

Dora. Getting better, Mr. Dobson.
But he 'll never be the same man again.

Dobson. An' how d'ye find the owd
man 'ere ?

Dora. As well as ever. I came back
to keep his birthday.

Dobson. Well, I be coomed to keep his
birthdaäy an' all. The owd man be
heighty to-daäy, beänt he ?

Dora. Yes, Mr. Dobson. And the
day's bright like a friend, but the wind
east like an enemy. Help me to move
this bench for him into the sun. (*They
move bench.*) No, not that way — here,
under the apple tree. Thank you. Look
how full of rosy blossom it is.

[*Pointing to apple tree.*]

Dobson. Theer be redder blossoms nor
them, Miss Dora.

Dora. Where do they blow, Mr. Dob-
son ?

Dobson. Under your eyes, Miss Dora.

Dora. Do they ?

Dobson. And your eyes be as blue
as —

Dora. What, Mr. Dobson ? A butch-
er's frock ?

Dobson. Noä, Miss Dora ; as blue as —

Dora. Bluebell, harebell, speedwell,
bluebottle, succory, forget-me-not ?

Dobson. Noä, Miss Dora ; as blue as —

Dora. The sky ? or the sea on a blue
day ?

Dobson. Naäy then. I meän'd they
be as blue as violets.

Dora. Are they ?

Dobson. Theer ye goäs ageän, Miss,
niver believing owt I says to ye — hallus

a-fobbing ma off, tho' ye knaws I love ye.
I warrants ye 'll think moor o' this young
Squire Edgar as ha' coomed among us —
the Lord knaws how — ye 'll think more
on 'is little finger than hall my hand at
the haltar.

Dora. Perhaps, Master Dobson, I can't
tell, for I have never seen him. But my
sister wrote that he was mighty pleasant,
and had no pride in him.

Dobson. He 'll be arter you now, Miss
Dora

Dora. Will he ? How can I tell ?

Dobson. He's been arter Miss Eva,
haänt he ?

Dora. Not that I know.

Dobson. Did'n't I spy 'em a-sitting i'
the woodbine harbor together ?

Dora. What of that ? Eva told me
that he was taking her likeness. He's
an artist.

Dobson. What's a hartist ? I doänt
believe he's iver a 'eart under his waist-
coat. And I tells ye what, Miss Dora :
he's no respect for the Queen, or the par-
son, or the justice o' peace, or owt. I ha'
heärd 'im a gawin' on 'ud make your 'air
— God bless it ! — stan' on end. And
wuss nor that. When their wur a meet-
ing o' farmers at Littlechester t'other
daäy and they was all a-crying out at the
bad times, he cooms up, and he calls out
among our oän men, "The land belongs
to the people !"

Dora. And what did you say to that ?

Dobson. Well, I says, s'pose my pig's
the land, and you says it belongs to the
pari-h, and theer be a thousand i' the
pari-h, taäkin' in the women and childer ;
and s'pose I kills my pig, and g'ies it
among 'em, why there wud n't be a dinner
for nawbody, and I should ha' lost the
pig.

Dora. And what did he say to that ?

Dobson. Nowt — what could he saäy ?
But I taäkes 'im fur a bad lot and a burn
fool, and I haätes the very sight on him.

Dora (*looking at Dobson*). Master
Dobson, you are a comely man to look at.

Dobson. I thank you for that, Miss
Dora, onyhow.

Dora. Ay, but you turn right ugly
when you're in an ill temper ; and I prom-
ise you that if you forget yourself in your
behavior to this gentleman, my father's
friend, I will never change word with you
again.

Enter FARMING MAN from barn.

Farming Man. Miss, the farming men 'ull hev their dinner i' the long barn, and the master 'ud be straiinge an' pleased if you 'd step in fust, and see that all be right and reg'lar fur 'em afoor he coom.

[Exit.

Dora. I go. Master Dobson, did you hear what I said?

Dobson. Yeas, yeas! I'll not meddle wi' 'im if he doant meddle wi' meü. (*Exit DORA.*) Coomly, says she. I niver thowt o' mysen i' that waäy; but if she 'd taäke to ma i' that waäy, or ony waäy, I 'd slaäve out my life fur 'er. "Coomly to look at," says she — but she said it spiteful-like. To look at — yeas, "coomly"; and she may n't be so fur out theer. But if that be nowt to she, then it be nowt to me. (*Looking off stage.*) Schoolmaster! Why if Steer han't haxed schoolmaster to dinner, thaw 'e knaws I was hallus ageän heving sehoolmaster i' the parish! fur him as be handy wi' a book beän't but haäfe a hand at a pitchfork.

Enter WILSON.

Well, Wilson. I seed that one cow o' thine i' the pinfold ageän as I wur a-coomin' 'ere.

Wilson. Very likely, Mr. Dobson. She will break fence. I can't keep her in order.

Dobson. An' if tha can't keep thy one cow i' horder, how can tha keep all thy scholards i' horder? But let that goä by. What dost a knaw o' this Mr. Hedgar as be a-lodgin' wi' ye? I coom'd upon 'im t'other daäy lookin' at the cuntry, then a-scrattin upon a bit o' paäper, then a-lookin' agean; and I taäked 'im fur soom sort of a land-surveyor — but a beänt.

Wilson. He's a Somersetshire man, and a very civil-spoken gentleman.

Dobson. Gentleman! What be he a-doing here ten mile an' moor fro' a raäil? We laäys out o' the waäy fur gentlefoälk altogither — leästwaäys they niver cooms 'ere but fur the trout i' our beck, fur they be knaw'd as far as Littlechester. But 'e doänt fish neither.

Wilson. Well, it's no sin in a gentleman not to fish.

Dobson. Noä, but I haätes 'im.

Wilson. Better step out of his road,

then, for he's walking to us, and with a book in his hand.

Dobson. An' I haätes booöks an' all, fur they puts foälk off the owd waäys.

Enter EDGAR, reading — not seeing DOBSON and WILSON.

Edgar. This author, with his charm of simple style

And close dialectic, all but proving man
An automatic series of sensations,
Has often numb'd me into apathy
Against the unpleasant jolts of this rough road

That breaks off short into the abysses —
made me

A Quietist taking all things easily.

Dobson (aside). There mun be summat wrong theer, Wilson, fur I doänt understand' it.

Wilson (aside). Nor I either, Mr. Dobson.

Dobson (s.ornfully). An' thou doänt understand' it neither — and thou schoolmaster an' all.

Edgar. What can a man, then, live for but sensations,

Pleasant ones? men of old would undergo

Unpleasant for the sake of pleasant ones
Hereafter, like the Moslem beauties waiting

To clasp their lovers by the golden gates.
For me, whose cheerless Houris after death

Are Night and Silence, pleasant ones —
the while —

If possible, here! to crop the flower and pass.

Dobson. Well, I never 'eärd the likes o' that afoor.

Wilson (aside). But I have, Mr. Dobson. It's the old Scripture text, "Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die." I'm sorry for it, for, tho' he never comes to church, I thought better of him.

Edgar. "What are we," says the blind old man in Lear?

"As flies to the Gods; they kill us for their sport."

Dobson (aside). Then the owd man i' Lear should be shaämed of hissen, but noän o' the parishes goäs by that naäme 'ereabouts.

Edgar. The Gods! but they, the shadows of ourselves,

Have passed for ever. It is Nature kills,

And not for *her* sport either. She knows nothing.

Man only knows, the worse for him! for why

Cannot *he* take his pastime like the flies? And if my pleasure breed another's pain, Well — is not that the course of Nature too,

From the dim dawn of Being — her main law

Whereby she grows in beauty — that her flies

Must massacre each other? this poor Nature!

Dobson. Natur! Natur! Well, it be i' my natur to knock 'im o' the 'eäd now; but I weänt.

Edgar. A Quietist taking all things easily — why —

Have I been dipping into this again To steel myself against the leaving her?

(*Closes book, seeing WILSON.*)

Good day!

Wilson. Good day, sir.

(*DOBSON looks hard at EDGAR.*)

Edgar (to *DOBSON*). Have I the pleasure, friend, of knowing you?

Dobson. Dobson.

Edgar. Good day, then, Dobson.

[*Exit.*]

Dobson. "Good daäy then, Dobson!" Civil-spoken i'deed! Why, *Wilson*, tha 'eärd 'im thysen — the feller could n't find a Mister in his mouth fur me, as farms five hoondred haäere.

Wilson. You never find one for me, Mr. Dobson.

Dobson. Noäi for thou be nobbut schoolmaster; but I taäkes 'im fur a Lunnun swindler, and a burn fool.

Wilson. He can hardly be both, and he pays me regular every Saturday.

Dobson. Yeas; but I haätes 'im.

Enter STEER, FARM MEN and WOMEN.

Steer. (*Goes and sits under apple tree.*) Hev' ony o' ye seen *Eva*?

Dobson. Noäi, Mr. Steer.

Steer. Well I reckons they 'll hev' a fine cider-crop to-year if the blossom 'owds. Good murnin', neighbors, and the saärne to you my men. I taäkes it kindly of all o' you that you be coomed — what's the newspäpper word, *Wilson*? — celebrate — to celebrate my birthdaäy i' this fashion. Niver man 'ed better friends, and I will saäy niver master 'ed better men: fur

thaw I may ha' fallen out wi' ye sometimes, the fault, mebbe, wnr as much mine as yours; and, thaw I says it mysen, niver men 'ed a better master — and I knaws what men be, and what masters be, fur I wur nobbut a laäborer, and now I be a landlord — burn a plowman, and now, as far as money goäs, I be a gentleman, thaw I beänt naw scholard, fur I 'ed n't naw time to maäke mysen a scholard while I wur maäkin' mysen a gentleman, but I ha taäens good care to turn out boäth my darters right down fine laädies.

Dobson. And soäi they be.

1st Farming Man. Soäi they be! soäi they be!

2d Farming Man. The Lord bless boäth on 'em!

3d Farming Man. And the saärne to you, Master.

4th Farming Man. An' long life to boäth on 'em. An' the saärne to you Master Steer, likewise.

Steer. Thank ye!

Enter *EVA*.

Wheer 'asta been?

Eva (*timidly*). Many happy returns of the day, father.

Steer. They can't be many, my dear, but I oäpes they 'll be 'appy.

Dobson. Why tha looks haäle anew to last to a hoonderd.

Steer. An' why should n't I last to a hoonderd? Haäle! why should n't I be haäle? fur thaw I be heightly this very daäy, I niver 'es sa much as one pin's prick of pään; an' I can taäke my glass along wi' the youngest, fur I niver touched a drop of owt till my oän wedding-daäy, and then I wur turned hup-pads o' sixty. Why should n't I be haäle? I ha' plowed the ten-aäere — it be mine now — afoor ony o' ye wur burn — ye all knaws the ten-aäere — I mun ha' plowed it moor nor a hoondred times; hallus hup at sunrise, and I 'd drive the plow sträüt as a line right i' the faäice o' the sun, then back ageän, a-follering my oän shadder — then hup ageän i' the faäice o' the sun. Eh! how the sun 'nd shine, and the larks 'nd sing i' them daäys, and the smell o' mou'd an' all. Eh! if I could ha' gone on wi' the plowin' nobbut the smell o' the mou'd 'ud ha' maäde ma live as long w' Jerusalem.

Eva. Methusaleh, father.

Steer. Ay, lass, but when thou be as owd as me thou'll put one word fur another as I does.

Dobson. But, Steer, thaw thou be haälle anew I seed tha a-limpin' up just now wi' the roomatics i' the knee.

Steer. Roomatics! Noä; I laäme't my knee last night running arter a thief. Beänt there house-breakers down i' Littlechester, Dobson — doänt ye hear of any?

Dobson. Ay, that there be. Immanuel Goldsmiths was broke into o' Monday night, and ower a hoonderd pounds worth o' rings stolen.

Steer. So I thowt, and heärd the winder — that's the winder at the end o' the passage, that goäs by thy chamber. (*Turning to EVA.*) Why, lass, what maäkes tha sa red? Did 'e git into thy chamber?

Eva. Father!

Steer. Well, I runned arter thief i' the dark, and fell ageän coalscuttle and my kneecä gev waäy, or I'd ha' cotched 'im, but afoor I coomed up he got thruff the winder ageän.

Eva. Got thro' the window again?

Steer. Ay, but he left the mark o' 'is foot i' the flower-bed; now theer be noän o' my men, thinks I to mysen, 'ud ha' done it 'cep' it were Dan Smith, fur I cotched 'im once ä-steälin' coäls, an' I sent fur 'im, an' I measured his foot wi' the mark i' the bed, but it would'n't fit — seeäms to me the mark wur maäde by a Lunnun boot. (*Looks at EVA.*) Why, now, what maäkes tha sa white?

Eva. Fright, father!

Steer. Maäke thysen eäsy. I'll hev the winder nääiled up, and put Towser under it.

Eva (clasping her hands). No, no, father! Towser'll tear him all to pieces.

Steer. Let him keep awaäy, then; but coom, coom! let's be gawin. They ha' broached a barrel of aäle i' the long barn, and the fiddler be theer, and the lads and lasses 'ull hev a dance.

Eva (aside). Dance! small heart have I to dance. I should seem to be dancing upon a grave.

Steer. Wheer be Mr. Edgar? about the premises?

Dobson. Hallus about the premises!

Steer. So much the better, so much the better. I likes 'im, and Eva likes 'im.

Eva can do owt wi' 'im; look for 'im, Eva, and bring 'im to the barn. He 'ant naw pride in 'im, and we'll git 'im to speechify for us arter dinner.

Eva. Yes, father!

[*Exit.*

Steer. Coom along then, all the rest o' ye! Churchwarden be a coomin, thaw me and 'im we niver 'grees about the tithe; and Parson mebbe, thaw he niver mended that gap i' the glebe fence as I telled 'im; and Blacksmith, thaw he niver shoes a horse to my likings; and Bäiker, thaw I stieks to hoämmaäde — but all on 'em welcome, all on 'em welcome; and I've hed the long barn cleared out of all the machines, and the sacks, and the tääters, and the mangles, and theer 'll be room anew for all o' ye. Foller me.

All. Yeas, yeas! Three cheers for Mr. Steer!

[*All exeunt, except DOBSON, into barn.*

Enter EDGAR.

Dobson (who is going, turns). Squire! — if so be you be a squire.

Edgar. Dobbins, I think.

Dobson. Dobbins, you thinks; and I thinks ye weärs a Lunnun boot.

Edgar. Well?

Dobson. And I thinks I'd like to tääke the measure o' your foot.

Edgar. Ay, if you'd like to measure your own length upon the grass.

Dobson. Coom, coom, that's a good un. Why, I could throw four o' ye; but I promised one of the Misses I would'n't meddle wi' ye, and I weänt.

[*Exit into barn.*

Edgar. Jealous of me with Eva! Is it so?

Well, tho' I grudge the pretty jewel, that I

Have worn, to such a clod, yet that might be

The best way out of it, if the child could keep

Her counsel. I am sure I wish her happy.

But I must free myself from this entangle-

ment. I have all my life before me — so has she —

Give her a month or two, and her affec-

tions Will flower toward the light in some new

face. Still I am half-afraid to meet her now.

She will urge marriage on me. I hate
tears.

Marriage is but an old tradition. I hate
Traditions, ever since my narrow father,
After my frolic with his tenant's girl
Made younger elder son, violated the
whole

Tradition of our land, and left his heir,
Born, happily, with some sense of art, to
live

By brush and pencil. By and by, when
Thought

Comes down among the crowd, and man
perceives that

The lost gleam of an after-life but leaves
him

A beast of prey in the dark, why then
the crowd

May wreak my wrongs upon my wrongers.
Marriage!

That fine, fat, hook-nosed uncle of mine,
old Harold,

Who leaves me all his land at Little-
chester,

He, too, would oust me from his will if I
Made such a marriage. And marriage
in itself—

The storm is hard at hand will sweep
away

Thrones, churches, ranks, traditions, cus-
toms, marriage

One of the feeblest! Then the man, the
woman,

Following their best affinities, will each
Bid their old bond farewell with smiles,
not tears;

Good wishes, not reproaches; with no fear
Of the world's gossiping clamor, and no
need

Of veiling their desires.

Conventionalism,
Who shrieks by day at what she does by
night,

Would call this vice; but one time's vice
may be

The virtue of another; and Vice and
Virtue

Are but two masks of self; and what
hereafter

Shall mark out Vice from Virtue in the
gulf

Of never-dawning darkness?

Enter Eva.

My sweet Eva,
Where have you lain in ambush all the
morning?

They say your sister, Dora, has return'd,
And that should make you happy, if you
love her!

But you look troubled.

Eva. Oh, I love her so,
I was afraid of her, and I hid myself.

We never kept a secret from each other;
She would have seen at once into my
trouble,

And ask'd me what I could not answer.

Oh, Philip,
Father heard you last night. Our sav-
age mastiff,

That all but kill'd the beggar will be
placed

Beneath the window, Philip.

Edgar. Savage, is he?
What matters? Come, give me your
hand and kiss me

This beautiful May-morning.

Eva. The most beautiful
May we have had for many years!

Edgar. And here
Is the most beautiful morning of this
May.

Nay, you must smile upon me! There
— you make

The May and morning still more beauti-
ful,

You, the most beautiful blossom of the
May.

Eva. Dear Philip, all the world is
beautiful

If we were happy, and could chime in
with it.

Edgar. True; for the senses, love, are
for the world;

That for the senses.

Eva. Yes.

Edgar. And when the man,
The child of evolution, flings aside

His swaddling-bands, the morals of the
tribe,

He, following his own instincts as his
God,

Will enter on the larger golden age;

No pleasure then taboo'd: for when the
tide

Of full democracy has overwhelm'd

This Old world, from that flood will rise
the New,

Like the Love-goddess with no bridal
veil,

Ring, trinket of the Church, but naked
Nature

In all her loveliness.

Eva. What are you saying?

Edgar. That, if we did not strain to
make ourselves
Better and higher than Nature, we might
be

As happy as the bees there at their honey
In these sweet blossoms.

Eva. Yes; how sweet they smell!

Edgar. There! let me break some off
for you. [*Breaking branch off.*]

Eva. My thanks.

But, look, how wasteful of the blossom
you are!

One, two, three, four, five, six — you
have robb'd poor father

Of ten good apples. Oh, I forgot to tell
you

He wishes you to dine along with us,
And speak for him after — you that are
so clever!

Edgar. I grieve I cannot; but, in-
deed —

Eva. What is it?

Edgar. Well, business. I must leave
you, love, to-day.

Eva. Leave me, to-day! And when
will you return?

Edgar. I cannot tell precisely; but —

Eva. But what?

Edgar. I trust, my dear, we shall be
always friends.

Eva. After all that has gone between
us — friends!

What, only friends? [*Drops branch.*]

Edgar. All that has gone between us
Should surely make us friends.

Eva. But keep us lovers.

Edgar. Child, do you love me now?

Eva. Yes, now and ever.

Edgar. Then you should wish us both
to love for ever.

But, if you will bind love to one for
ever,

Altho' at first he take his bonds for
flowers,

As years go on, he feels them press upon
him,

Begins to flutter in them, and at last
Breaks thro' them, and so flies away for
ever;

While, had you left him free use of his
wings,

Who knows that he had ever dream'd of
flying?

Eva. But all that sounds so wicked
and so strange;

"Till death us part" -- those are the
only words,

The true ones — nay, and those not true
enough,

For they that love do not believe that
death

Will part them. Why do you jest with
me, and try

To frighten me? Tho' you are a gentle-
man,

I but a farmer's daughter —

Edgar. Tut! you talk
Old feudalism. When the great Democ-
racy

Makes a new world —

Eva. And if you be not jesting,
Neither the old world, nor the new, nor
father,

Sister, nor you, shall ever see me more.

Edgar (moved). Then — (*aside*) Shall
I say it? — (*aloud*) fly with me to-
day.

Eva. No! Philip, Philip, if you do
not marry me,

I shall go mad for utter shame and die.

Edgar. Then, if we needs must be
conventional,

When shall your parish-parson bawl our
banns

Before your gaping clowns?

Eva. Not in our church —
I think I scarce could hold my head up
there.

Is there no other way?

Edgar. Yes, if you cared

To fee an over-opulent superstition,

Then they would grant you what they call
a licence

To marry. Do you wish it.

Eva. Do I wish it?

Edgar. In London.

Eva. You will write to me?

Edgar. I will

Eva. And I will fly to you thro' the
night, the storm —

Yes, tho' the fire should run along the
ground,

As once it did in Egypt. Oh, you see,
I was just out of school, I had no
mother —

My sister far away — and you, a gentle-
man,

Told me to trust you: yes, in every-
thing —

That was the only true love; and I
trusted —

Oh, yes, indeed, I would have died for you,
How could you — Oh, how could you? —
nay, how could I?

But now you will set it all right again,
and I

Shall not be made the laughter of the vil-
lage,

And poor old father not die miserable.

Dora (singing in the distance). "O joy
for the promise of May, of May,
O joy for the promise of May."

Edgar. Speak not so loudly; that must
be your sister.

You never told her, then, of what has past
Between us.

Eva. Never!

Edgar. Do not till I bid you.

Eva. No, Philip, no. [*Turns away.*]

Edgar (moved). How gracefully there
she stands

Weeping — the little Niobe! What! we
prize

The statue or the picture all the more
When we have made them ours! Is she

Less lovable,

Less lovely being wholly mine! To
stay —

Follow my art among these quiet fields,
Live with these honest folk —

And play the fool!

No! she that gave herself to me so easily
Will yield herself as easily to another.

Eva. Did you speak, Philip?

Edgar. Nothing more, farewell.
[*They embrace.*]

Dora (coming nearer). "O grief for the
promise of May, of May,

O grief for the promise of May."

Edgar (still embracing her). Keep up
your heart until we meet again?

Eva. If that should break before we
meet again?

Edgar. Break! nay, call for Philip
when you will,

And he returns.

Eva. Heaven hears you, Philip Edgar!

Edgar (moved). And he would hear
you even from the grave.

Heaven curse him if he come not at your
call! [*Exit.*]

Enter DORA.

Dora. Well, Eva!

Eva. Oh, Dora, Dora, how long you
have been away from home! Oh, how
often I have wished for you! It seemed
to me that we were parted for ever.

Dora. For ever you foolish child!
What's come over you? We parted like
the brook yonder about the alder island,
to come together again in a moment and

to go on together again, till one of us
be married. But where is this Mr.
Edgar whom you praised so in your first
letters? You have n't even mentioned
him in your last?

Eva. He has gone to London.

Dora. Ay, child; and you look thin
and pale. Is it for his absence? Have
you fancied yourself in love with him?
'That's all nonsense, you know, such a
baby as you are. But you shall tell me
all about it.

Eva. Not now — presently. Yes, I
have been in trouble, but I am happy —
I think, quite happy now.

Dora (taking Eva's hand). Come,
then, and make them happy in the long
barn, for father is in his glory, and there
is a piece of beef like a house-side, and a
plum-pudding as big as the round hay-
stack. But see they are coming out for
the dance already. Well, my child, let
us join them.

Enter all from barn laughing. *EVA* sits re-
luctantly under apple tree. *STEER* enters
smoking, sits by *EVA*.

Dance.

ACT II.

Five years have elapsed between Acts I. and II.

SCENE. — A meadow. On one side a path-
way going over a rustic bridge. At back
the farmhouse among trees. In the dis-
tance a church spire.

DOBSON and DORA.

Dobson. So the owd uncle i' Coomber-
land be dead, Miss Dora, beänt he?

Dora. Yes, Mr. Dobson, I've been at-
tending on his death-bed and his burial.

Dobson. It be five years sin' ye went
afoor to him, and it seems to me nobbut
t'other day. Hes n't he left ye nowt?

Dora. No, Mr. Dobson.

Dobson. But he were mighty fond o'
ye, war n't he?

Dora. Fonder of poor Eva — like
everybody else.

Dobson. (*Handing DORA basket of
roses.*) Not like me, Miss Dora; and I
ha' browt these roses to ye — I forgits
what they calls 'em, but I hallus g'ied
soom on 'em to Miss Eva at this time o'
year. Will ya taäke 'em, fur Miss Eva,
she set the bush by my dairy winder afoor

she went to school at Littlechester — so I allus browt soom on 'em ta her; and now she be gone, will ye taäke 'em, Miss Dora?

Dora. I thank you. They tell me that yesterday you mentioned her name too suddenly before my father. See that you do not do so again!

Dobson. Noä; I knaws a deäl better now. I seed how the owd man wur vext.

Dora. I take them, then, for Eva's sake.

[Takes basket, places some in her dress.]

Dobson. Eva's saäke. Yeas. Poor gel, poor gel! I can't abear to think on 'er now, fur I'd ha' done owt fur 'er mysen; an' ony o' Steer's men, an' ony o' my men u'd ha' done owt fur 'er, an' all the parish 'ud ha' done owt fur 'er, fur we was all on us proud on 'er, an' them theer be some of her oän roses, an' she wur as sweet as ony on 'em — the Lord bless 'er — 'er oän sen; an' weänt ye taäke 'em now, Miss Dora, fur 'er saäke an' fur my saäke an' all?

Dora. Do you want them back again?

Dobson. Noä, Noä! Keep 'em. But I hed a word to saäy to ye.

Dora. Why, Farmer, you should be in the hayfield looking after your men; you could n't have more splendid weather.

Dobson. I be a going theer; but I thowt I'd bring tha them roses fust. The weather's well anew, but the glass be a bit shaäky. S'iver we've led moäst on it.

Dora. Ay! but you must not be too sudden with it either, as you were last year, when you put it in green, and your stack caught fire.

Dobson. I were insured, Miss, an' I lost nowt by it. But I weänt be too sudden wi' it; and I feel sewer, Miss Dora, I ha' been noän too sudden wi' you, fur I ha' sarved for ye well nigh as long as the man sarved for 'is sweet'art i' Scriptur'. Weänt ye gi'e me a kind auswer at last?

Dora. I have no thought of marriage, my friend. We have been in such grief these five years, not only on my sister's account, but the ill success of the farm, and the debts, and my father's breaking down, and his blindness! How could I think of leaving him?

Dobson. Eh, but I be well to do; and if ye would nobbt hev me, I would taäke the owd blind man to my oän fire-side. You should have him allus wi' ye.

Dora. You are generous, but it cannot be. I cannot love you; nay, I think I never can be brought to love any man. It seems to me that I hate men, ever since my sister left us. Oh, see here. *(Pulls out a letter.)* I wear it next my heart. Poor sister, I had it five years ago. "Dearest Dora, — I have lost myself, and am lost for ever to you and my poor father. I thought Mr. Edgar the best of men, and he has proved himself the worst. Seek not for me or you may find me at the bottom of the river. — EVA."

Dobson. Be that my fault?

Dora. No; but how should I, with this grief still at my heart, take to the milking of your cows, the fattening of your calves, the making of your butter, and the managing of your poultry?

Dobson. Naäy, but I have an owd woman as 'ud see to all that; and you should sit i' your oän parlor quite like a laädy, ye should!

Dora. It cannot be.

Dobson. And pläy the pianner, if ye liked, all day long, like a laädy, you should an' all.

Dora. It cannot be.

Dobson. And I would loove tha moor nor ony gentleman 'ud loove tha.

Dora. No, no; it cannot be.

Dobson. And p'raps ye hears 'at I soomtimes taäkes a drop too much; but that be all along o' you, Miss, because ye weänt hev me; but, if ye would, I could put all that o' one side eäsy anew.

Dora. Cannot you nnderstand plain words, Mr. Dobson? I tell you it cannot be.

Dobson. Eh, lass! Thy feyther eddicated his darters to marry gentlefoälk, and see what's soomed on it.

Dora. That is enough, Farmer Dobson. You have shown me that, though fortune had born you into the estate of a gentleman, you would still have been Farmer Dobson. You had better attend to your hayfield. Good afternoon. *[Exit.]*

Dobson. "Farmer Dobson!" Well, I be Farmer Dobson; but I thinks Farmer Dobson's dog 'ud ha' knaw'd better nor to cast her sister's misfortin inter 'er teeth arter she'd been a-reädin' me the letter wi' 'er voice a-shaäkin', and the drop in 'er eye. Theer she goäs! Shall I foler 'er and ax 'er to mäake it up? Noä, not yet. Let 'er cool upon it; I likes 'er

all the better for taäkin' me down, like a laädy, as she be. Farmer Dobson? I be Farmer Dobson, sever anew; but if iver I cooms upo' Gentleman Hedgar ageän and doänt lay my cartwhip athurt 'is shou'ders, why then I beänt Farmer Dobson, but summun else—blaäme't if I beänt!

Enter HAYMAKERS with a load of hay.

The last on it, eh?

1st *Haymaker*. Yeas.

Dobson. Hoäm wi' it, then.

1st *Haymaker*. Well, it be the last loäd hoäm.

2d *Haymaker*. Yeas, an' owd Dobson should be glad on it. What maäkes 'im allus sa glum?

Sally Allen. Glum! he be wus nor glum. He coom'd up to me yisterdaäy i' the haäyfield when meä and my sweet'art was a workin' along o' one side wi' one another, and he sent 'im awaäy to t' other end o' the field; and when I axed 'im why, he telled me 'at sweet'arts niver worked well together; and I telled 'im 'at sweet'arts allus worked best together; and then he called me a rude naäme, and I can't abide 'im.

James. Why, lass, doänt tha know he be sweet upo' Dora Steer, and she weänt sa much as look at 'im? And whenever 'e sees two sweet'arts together like thou and me, Sally, he be fit to bust hissen wi' spites and jalousies.

Sally. Let 'im bust hissen, then, for owt I cares.

1st *Haymaker*. Well but, as I said afoor, it be the last loäd hoäm; do thou and thy sweet'art sing us hoäm to supper—“The Last Loäd Hoäm.”

All. Ay! “The Last Loäd Hoäm.”

Song.

What did ye do, and what did ye saäy,
Wi' the wild white rose, and the wood-
bine sa gaäy,

An' the midders all mow'd, and the sky
sa blue—

What did ye saäy, and what did ye do,
When ye thowt there were nawbody
watchin' o' yon,

And you and your Sally was forkin' the
haäy,

At the end of the daäy,
• For the last loäd hoäm?

What did we do, and what did we saäy,
Wi' the brier sa green and the willer sa
graäy,

An' the midders all mow'd and the sky
sa blue—

Do ye think I be gawin' to tell it to you,
What we mowt saäy, and what we mowt
do,

When me and my Sally was forkin' the
haäy,

At the end of the daäy,
For the last loäd hoäm?

But what did ye saäy, and what did ye do,
Wi' the butterflies out, and the swallers
at plaäy,

An' the midders all mow'd, and sky sa
blue!

Why, coom then, owd feller, I'll tell it to
you;

For me and my Sally we sweär'd to be
true,

To be true to each other, let 'appen what
maäy,

Till the end of the daäy,
And the last loäd hoäm.

All. Well sung!

James. Fanny be the naäme i' the
song, but I swopt it fur *she*.

[*Pointing to SALLY.*]

Sally. Let ma aloän afoor foälk, wilt
tha?

1st *Haymaker*. Ye shall sing that
ageän to-night, fur owd Dobson 'll gi'e
us a bit o' supper.

Sally. I weänt goä to owd Dobson; he
wur rude to me i' tha haäyfield, and he 'll
be rude to me ageän to-night. Owd
Steer's gotten all his grass down and
wants a hand, and I 'll goä to him.

1st *Haymaker*. Owd Steer gi'es nubbut
cowl tea to 'is men, and owd Dobson
gi'es beer.

Sally. But I'd like owd Steer's cowl
tea better nor Dobson's beer. Good-bye.

[*Going.*]

James. Gi'e us a buss fust, lass.

Sally. I tell'd tha to let ma aloän!

James. Why, was nt' thou and me
a-bussin' o' one another t'other side o' the
haäycoek, when owd Dobson coom'd upo'
us? I can't let tha aloän if I would,
Sally.

[*Offering to kiss her.*]

Sally. Git along wi' ye, do! [*Exit.*]

[*All laugh; exeunt singing.*]

“To be true to each other, let 'appen
what maäy,

Till the end o' the daäy
An' the last loäd hoäm."

Enter HAROLD.

Harold. Not Harold! "Philip Edgar,
Philip Edgar!"
Her phantom call'd me by the name she
loved.
I told her I should hear her from the
grave.
Ay! yonder is her casement. I remember
Her bright face beaming starlike down
upon me
Thro' that rich cloud of blossom. Since
I left her
Here weeping, I have ranged the world,
and sat
Thro' every sensual course of that full
feast
That leaves but emptiness.

Song.

"To be true to each other, let 'appen
what maäy,
To the end o' the daäy
An' the last loäd hoäm."

Harold. Poor Eva! O my God if man
be only
A willy-nilly current of sensations —
Reaction needs must follow revel — yet —
Why feel remorse, he, knowing that he
must have
Moved in the iron grooves of Destiny?
Remorse then is a part of Destiny,
Nature a liar, making us feel guilty
Of her own faults.

My grandfather — of him
They say, that women —

O this mortal house,
Which we are born into, is haunted by
The ghosts of the dead passions of dead
men;
And these take flesh again with our own
flesh,
And bring us to confusion.

He was only
A poor philosopher who call'd the mind
Of children a blank page, a *tabula rasa*.
There, there, is written in invisible inks
"Lust, Prodigality, Covetousness, Craft,
Cowardice, Murder" — and the heat and
fire
Of life will bring them out, and black
enough,
So the child grow to manhood: better
death
With our first wail than life —

Song (further off).

"Till the end o' the daäy
An' the last loäd hoäm,
Loäd hoäm."

This bridge again! (*Steps on the bridge.*)
How often have I stood
With Eva here! The brook among its
flowers!
Forget-me-not, meadow-sweet, willow
herb.
I had some smattering of science then,
Taught her the learned names, anat-
omized
The flowers for her — and now I only
wish
This pool were deep enough, that I might
plunge
And lose myself for ever.

Enter DAN SMITH (*singing*).

Dan Smith. Gee oop! whoä! Gee
oop! whoä!
Scizzars an' Pumpy was good uns to goä
Thruf slush an' squad
When roäds was bad,
But hallus ud stop at the Vine-an'-the-
Hop,
Fur boäth on 'em knaw'd as well as
mysen
That beer be as good fur 'erses as
men.
Gee oop! whoä! Gee oop! whoä!
Scizzars an' Pumpy was good uns to goä.
The beer's gotten oop into my 'eäd.
S'iver I mun giv along back to the farm,
fur she tell'd ma to taäke the cart to Lit-
tlechester.

Enter DORA.

Dora. Half an hour late! why are you
loitering here?
Away with you at once.

[Exit DAN SMITH.
(*Seeing HAROLD on bridge.*)

Some madman, is it
Gesticulating there upon the bridge?
I am half afraid to pass.
Harold. Sometimes I wonder,
When man has surely learnt at last that all
His old-world faith, the blossom of his
youth,
Has faded, falling fruitless — whether
then
All of us, all at once, may not be seized
With some fierce passion, not so much for
Death

As against Life ! all, all, into the dark —
No more ! — and science now could drug
and balm us

Back into nescience with as little pain
As it is to fall asleep.

This poor, flat, hedged-in field — no dis-
tance — this

Hollow Pandora-box,

With all the pleasures flown, not even
Hope

Left at the bottom !

Superstitious fool,
What brought me here ? To see her
grave ? her ghost ?

Her ghost is everyway about me here.

Dora (coming forward). Allow me, sir,
to pass you.

Harold. Eva !

Dora. Eva !

Harold. What are you ? Where do
you come from ?

Dora. From the farm

Here, close at hand.

Harold. Are you — you are — that
Dora,

The sister, I have heard of you. The
likeness

Is very striking.

Dora. You knew Eva, then ?

Harold. Yes — I was thinking of her
when — O yes,

Many years back, and never since have
met

Her equal for pure innocence of nature,
And loveliness of feature.

Dora. No, nor I.

Harold. Except, indeed, I have frunt it
once again

In your own self.

Dora. You flatter me. Dear Eva
Was always thought the prettier.

Harold. And her charm
Of voice is also yours ; and I was brood-
ing

Upon a great unhappiness when you
spoke.

Dora. Indeed, you seem'd in trouble,
sir.

Harold. And you
Seem my good angel who may help me
from it.

Dora (aside). How worn he looks, poor
man ! who is it, I wonder.

How can I help him ? (*Aloud.*) Might I
ask your name ?

Harold. Harold.

Dora. I never heard her mention you.

Harold. I met her first at a farm in
Cumberland —

Her uncle's.

Dora. She was there six years ago.

Harold. And if she never mention'd
me, perhaps

The painful circumstances which I
heard —

I will not vex you by repeating them —

Only last week at Littlechester, drove me
From out her memory. She has disap-
pear'd,

They told me, from the farm — and
darker news.

Dora. She has disappear'd, poor dar-
ling, from the world —

Left but one dreadful line to say, that we
Should find her in the river ; and we
dragg'd

The Littlechester river all in vain :

Have sorrow'd for her all these years in
vain.

And my poor father, utterly broken down
By losing her — she was his favorite
child —

Has let his farm, all his affairs, I fear,

But for the slender help that I can give,

Fall into ruin. Ah ! that villain, Edgar,
If he should ever show his face among us,

Our men and boys would hoot him, stone
him, hunt him

With pitchforks off the farm, for all of
them

Loved her, and she was worthy of all
love.

Harold. They say, we should forgive
our enemies.

Dora. Ay, if the wretch were dead I
might forgive him ;

We know not whether he be dead or
living.

Harold. What Edgar ?

Dora. Philip Edgar of Toft Hall
in Somerset. Perhaps you know him ?

Harold. Slightly.

(*Aside.*) Ay, for how slightly have I
known myself.

Dora. This Edgar, then, is living ?

Harold. Living ? well —
One Philip Edgar of Toft Hall in Som-
erset

Is lately dead.

Dora. Dead ! — is there more than
one ?

Harold. Nay — now — not one, (*aside*)
for I am Philip Harold.

Dora. That one, is he then — dead!

Harold (aside). My father's death,
Let her believe it mine; this, for the moment,
Will leave me a free field.

Dora. Dead! and this world
Is brighter for his absence as that other
Is darker for his presence.

Harold. Is not this
To speak too pitilessly of the dead?

Dora. My five-years' anger cannot die
at once,
Not all at once with death and him. I
trust
I shall forgive him — by-and-by — not
now.

O sir, you seem to have a heart; if you
Had seen us that wild morning when we
found

Her bed unslept in, storm and shower
lashing

Her casement, her poor spaniel wailing
for her,

That desolate letter, blotted with her
tears,

Which told us we should never see her
more —

Our old nurse crying as if for her own
child,

My father stricken with his first paralysis,
And then with blindness — had you been
one of us

And seen all this, then you would know
it is not

So easy to forgive — even the dead.

Harold. But sure am I that of your
gentleness

You will forgive him. She, you mourn
for, seem'd

A miracle of gentleness — would not blur
A moth's wing by the touching; would
not crush

The fly that drew her blood; and, were
she living,

Would not — if penitent — have denied
him *her*

Forgiveness. And perhaps the man him-
self,

When hearing of that piteous death, has
suffer'd

More than we know. But wherefore
waste your heart

In looking on a chill and changeless
Past?

Iron will fuse, and marble melt; the Past
Remains the Past. But you are young,
and — pardon me —

As lovely as your sister. Who can tell
What golden hours, with what full hands,
may be

Waiting you in the distance? Might I
call

Upon your father — I have seen the
world —

And cheer his blindness with a traveller's
tales?

Dora. Call if you will, and when you
will. I cannot

Well answer for my father; but if you
Can tell me anything of our sweet Eva
When in her brighter girlhood, I at least
Will bid you welcome, and will listen to
you.

Now I must go.

Harold. But give me first your hand:
I do not dare, like an old friend, to shake
it.

I kiss it as a prelude to that privilege
When you shall know me better.

Dora (aside) How beautiful
His manners are, and how unlike the
farmer's!

You are staying here?

Harold. Yes, at the wayside inn
Close by that alder-island in your brook,
"The Angler's Home."

Dora. Are you one?

Harold. No, but I
Take some delight in sketching, and the
country

Has many charms, altho' the inhabitants
Seem semi-barbarous.

Dora. I am glad it pleases you;
Yet I, born here, not only love the country,
But its inhabitants too; and you, I doubt
not,

Would take to them as kindly, if you
cared

To live some time among them.

Harold. If I did,
Then one at least of its inhabitants
Might have more charm for me than all
the country.

Dora. That one, then, should be grate-
ful for your preference.

Harold. I cannot tell, tho' standing in
her presence.

(*Aside.*) She colors!

Dora. Sir!

Harold. Be not afraid of me,
For these are no conventional flourishes.
I do most earnestly assure you that
Your likeness —

[*Shouts and cries without.*

Dora. What was that? my poor blind father —

Enter FARMING MAN.

Farming Man. Miss Dora, Dan Smith's cart hes runned ower a laädy i' the holler laäne, and they ha' ta'en the body up in-ter your chaamber, and they be all a-call-in' for ye.

Dora. The body! — Heavens! I come!

Harold. But you are trembling. Allow me to go with you to the farm. [*Exeunt.*]

Enter DOBSON.

Dobson. What feller wur it as 'a' been a talkin' fur haäfe an hour wi' my Dora? (*Looking after him.*) Seeäms I ommost knaws the back on 'im — drest like a gentleman, too. Damn all gentlemen, says I! I should ha' thowt they 'd hed anew of gentlefoälk, as I telled 'er to-däy when she fell foul upo' me.

Minds ma o' summun. I could swäär to that; but that be all one, fur I haätes 'im afoor I knaws what 'e be. Theer! he turns round. Philip Hedgar o' Soomer-set! Philip Hedgar o' Soomer-set! — Noä — yeas — thaw the feller 's gone and mäide such a litter of his faäce.

Eh lad, if it be thou, I'll Philip tha! a-pläyvin' the saäme gaäme wi' my Dora — I'll Soomer-set tha.

I'd like to drag 'im thruff the herse-pond, and she to be a-lookin' at it. I'd like to leather 'im black and blue, and she to be a-laughin' at it. I'd like to fell 'im as dead as a bullock! (*Clenching his fist.*)

But what 'ud she saäy to that? She telled me once not to meddle wi' 'im, and now she be fallen out wi' ma, and I can't coom at 'er.

It mun be *him*. Noä! Fur she'd niver 'a been talkin' haäfe an hour wi' the devil 'at killed her oän sister, or she beänt Dora Steer.

Yea! Fur she niver knawed 'is faäce when 'e wur 'ere afoor; but I'll määke 'er knaw! I'll määke 'er knaw!

Enter HAROLD.

Naäy, but I mun git out on 'is waäy now, or I shall be the death on 'im.

[*Exit.*]

Harold. How the clown glared at me! that Dobbins, is it,

With whom I used to jar? but can he trace me

Thro' five years' absence, and my change of name,

The tan of southern summers and the beard.

I may as well avoid him.

Ladylike!

Lilylike in her stateliness and sweetness!

How came she by it? — a daughter of the fields,

This Dora!

She gave her hand, unask'd, at the farm-gate;

I almost think she half-return'd the pressure

Of mine. What, I that held the orange blossom

Dark as the yew? but may not those, who march

Before their age, turn back at times, and make

Courtesy to custom? and now the stronger motive,

Misnamed free-will — the crowd would call it conscience —

Moves me — to what? I am dreaming; for the past

Look'd thro' the present, Eva's eyes thro' her's —

A spell upon me! Surely I loved Eva

More than I knew! or is it bnt the past

That brightens in retiring? Oh, last night,

Tired, pacing my new lands at Littlechester,

I dozed upon the bridge, and the black river

Flow'd thro' my dreams — if dreams they were. She rose

From the foul flood and pointed toward the farm,

And her cry rang to me across the years,

“I call you, Philip Edgar, Philip Edgar! Come, you will set all right again, and

father

Will not die miserable.” I could make his age

A comfort to him — so be more at peace With mine own self. Some of my former friends

Would find my logic faulty; let them. Color

Flows thro' my life again, and I have lighted

On a new pleasure. Anyhow we must

Move in the line of least resistance when
The stronger motive rules.

But she hates Edgar.

May not this Dobbins, or some other, spy
Edgar in Harold? Well then, I must
make her

Love Harold first, and then she will for-
give

Edgar for Harold's sake. She said her-
self

She would forgive him, by-and-by, not
now —

For her own sake *then*, if not for mine —
not now —

But by-and-by.

Enter DOBSON behind.

Dobson. By-and-by — eh, lad, dosta
know this paäper? Ye dropt it upo' the
road. "Philip Edgar, Esq." Ay, you
be a pretty squire. I ha' fun' ye out, I
hev. Eh, lad, dosta know what tha means
wi' by-and-by? Fur if ye be goin' to sarve
our Dora as ye sarved our Eva — then,
by-and-by, if she weänt listen to me when
I be a-tryin' to saäve 'er — if she weänt
— look to thysen, for, by the Lord, I'd
think na moor o' maäkin' an end o' tha
nor a carrion crow — noä — thaw they
hanged ma at 'Size fur it.

Harold. Dobbins, I think!

Dobson. I beänt Dobbins.

Harold. Nor am I Edgar, my good
fellow.

Dobson. Tha lies! What hasta been
saäyin' to my Dora?

Harold. I have been telling her of the
death of one Philip Edgar of Toft Hall,
Somerset.

Dobson. Tha lies!

Harold (*pulling out a newspaper*). Well,
my man, it seems that you can read.
Look there — under the deaths.

Dobson. "O' the 17th, Philip Edgar,
o' Toft Hall Soomerset." How coom
thou to be sa like 'im, then?

Harold. Naturally enough; for I am
closely related to the dead man's family.

Dobson. An 'ow coom thou by the let-
ter to 'im?

Harold. Naturally again; for as I used
to transact all his business for him, I had
to look over his letters. Now then, see
these (*takes out letters*). Half a score of
them, all directed to me — Harold.

Dobson. 'Arold! 'Arold! 'Arold, so
they be.

Harold. My name is Harold! Good
day, Dobbins! [*Exit.*]

Dobson. 'Arold! The feller's cleän
daäzed, an' maäzed, an' maäted, an' mud-
dled ma. Deäd! It mun be true, fur it
wur i' print as black as owt. Naäy, but
"Good daäy, Dobbins." Why, that wur
the very twang on 'im. Eh, lad, but
whether thou be Hedgar, or Hedgar's
business man, thou hes n't naw business
'ere wi' my Dora, as I knaws on, an'
whether thou calls thysen Hedgar or
Harold, if thou stick to she I 'll stick to
thee — stick to tha like a weasel to a
rabbit, I will. Ay! and I'd like to shoot
tha like a rabbit an' all. "Good daäy,
Dobbins." Dang tha!

ACT III.

SCENE. — *A room in STEER'S House.*
Door leading into bedroom at the back.

Dora (*ringing a handbell*). Milly!

Enter MILLY.

Milly. The little 'ymn? Yeäs, Miss;
but I wur so ta'en up wi' leädin' the owd
man about all the blessed murnin' 'at I
ha' nobbut larned mysen haäfe on it.

"O man, forgive thy mortal foe.

Nor ever strike him blow for blow;

For all the souls on earth that live

To be forgiven must forgive.

Forgive him seventy times and seven:

For all the blessed souls iu Heaven

Are both forgivers and forgiven."

But I'll git the book ageän, and larn
mysen the rest, and saäy it to ye afoor
dark; ye ringed fur that, Miss, didn't ye?

Dora. No, Milly; but if the farming-
men be come for their wages, to send
them up to me.

Milly. Yeäs, Miss.

[*Exit.*]

Dora (*sitting at desk counting money*).

Enough at any rate for the present.

(*Enter FARMING MEN.*) Good afternoon,
my friends. I am sorry Mr. Steer still
continues too unwell to attend to you,
but the schoolmaster looked to the pay-
ing you your wages when I was away,
did n't he?

Men. Yeäs; and thanks to ye.

Dora. Some of our workmen have left
us, but he sent me an alphabetical list of
those that remain, so, Allen, I may as
well begin with you.

Allen (with his hand to his ear). Half-abitical! 'Taäke one o' the young ones fust, Miss, fur I be a bit deaf, and I wur hallus scaëred by a big word; leästwäys, I should be wi' a lawyer.

Dora. I spoke of your names, Allen, as they are arranged here (*shows book*) — according to their first letters.

Allen. Letters! Yeas, I sees now. Them be what they larns the childer' at school, but I were burn afoor schoolin'-time.

Dora. But, Allen, tho' you can't read, you could whitewash that cottage of yours where your grandson had the fever.

Allen. I'll hev it done o' Monday.

Dora. Else if the fever spread, the parish will have to thank you for it.

Allen. Meä? why, it be the Lord's do-in', noän o' mine; d' ye think I'd gi'e 'em the fever? But I thanks ye all the saäme, Miss. (*Takes money.*)

Dora (calling out names). Higgins, Jackson, Luscombe, Nokes, Oldham, Skipworth! (*All take money.*) Did you find that you worked at all the worse upon the cold tea than you would have done upon the beer?

Higgins. Noä, Miss; we worked naw wuss upo' the cowl tea; but we'd ha' worked better upo' the beer.

Dora. Come, come, you worked well enough, and I am much obliged to all of you. There's for you, and you, and you. Count the money and see if it's all right.

Men. All right, Miss; and thank ye kindly.

[*Éxeunt LUSCOMBE, NOKES, OLDHAM, SKIPWORTH.*]

Dora. Dan Smith, my father and I forgave you stealing our ecals.

[*DAN SMITH advances to DORA.*]

Dan Smith (bellowing). Whoy, O lor, Miss! that wur sa long back, and the walls sa thin, and the winders brokken, and the weather sa cowl, and my missus a-gittin' ower 'er lyin'-in.

Dora. Did n't I say that we had forgiven you? But, Dan Smith, they tell me that you — and you have six children — spent all your last Saturday's wages at the ale-house; that you were stupid drunk all Sunday, and so ill in consequence all Monday, that you did not come into the hayfield. Why should I pay you your full wages?

Dan Smith. I be ready to taäke the pledge.

Dora. And as ready to break it again. Besides it was you that were driving the cart — and I fear you were tipsy then, too — when you lamed the lady in the hollow lane.

Dan Smith (bellowing). O lor, Miss! noä, noä, noä! Ye sees the holler laäne be hallus sa dark, i' the arternoon, and wheere the big eshtree cuts athurt it, it gi'es a turn like, and 'ow should I see to laäme the laädy, and meä coomin' along pretty sharp an' all?

Dora. Well, there are your wages; the next time you waste them at a pot-house you get no more from me. [*Exit DAN SMITH.*] Sally Allen, you worked for Mr. Dobson, did n't you?

Sally (advancing). Yeäs Miss; but he wur so rough wi' ma, I could n't abide 'im.

Dora. Why should he be rough with you? You are as good as a man in the hayfield. What's become of your brother?

Sally. 'Listed for a soädger, Miss, i' the Queen's Real Hard Tillery.

Dora. And your sweetheart — when are you and he to be married?

Sally. At Michaelmas, Miss, please God.

Dora. You are an honest pair. I will come to your wedding.

Sally. An' I thanks ye fur that, Miss, moor nor for the wäage.

(*Going — returns.*)

'A cotched ma about the wääst, Miss, when 'e wur 'ere afoor, an' axed ma to be 'is little sweet-art, an' soä I knaw'd 'im when I seed 'im ageän an I telled feyther on 'im.

Dora. What is all this, Allen?

Allen. Why, Miss Dora, meä and my maätes, us three, we wants to hev three words wi' ye.

Higgins. That be 'im, and meä, Miss.

Jackson. An' meä, Miss.

Allen. An' we weänt mention naw naämes, we 'd as lief talk o' the divil afoor ye as 'im, fur they says the master goäs eleän off his 'eäd when he 'eärs the naäme on 'im; but us three, arter Sally 'd telled us on 'im, we fun' 'im out a-walkin' i' West Field wi' a white 'at, nine o'clock, 'upo' Tuesday murnin', and all on us, wi' your leave, we wants to leather 'im.

Dora. Who ?

Allen. Him as doue the mischief here, five year' sin'.

Dora. Mr. Edgar ?

Allen. Theer, Miss ! You ha' naamed 'im — not me.

Dora. He's dead, man — dead ; gone to his account — dead and buried.

Allen. I beänt sa sewer o' that fur Sally knaw'd 'im ; Now then ?

Dora. Yes ; it was in the Somersetshire papers.

Allen. Then you mun be his brother, an' we'll leather 'im.

Dora. I never heard that he had a brother. Some foolish mistake of Sally's ; but what ! would you beat a man for his brother's fault ? That were a wild justice indeed. Let by-gones be by-gones. Go home ! Good-night ! [*All exeunt.*] I have once more paid them all. The work of the farm will go on still, but for how long ? We are almost at the bottom of the well : little more to be drawn from it — and what then ? Encumbered as we are, who would lend us anything ? We shall have to sell all the land, which Father, for a whole life, has been getting together, again, and that, I am sure, would be the death of him. What am I to do ? Farmer Dobson, were I to marry him, has promised to keep our heads above water ; and the man has doubtless a good heart, and a true and lasting love for me : yet — though I can be sorry for him — as the good Sally says, " I can't abide him " — almost brutal, and matched with my Harold is like a hedge thistle by a garden rose. But then, he, too — will he ever be of one faith with his wife ? which is my dream of a true marriage. Can I fancy him kneeling with me and uttering the same prayer ; standing up side by side with me and singing the same hymn ? I fear not. Have I done wisely then in accepting him ? But may not a girl's love-dream have too much romance in it to be realized all at once, or altogether, or anywhere but in Heaven ? And yet I had once a vision of a pure and perfect marriage, where the man and the woman, only differing as the stronger and the weaker, should walk hand in hand together down this valley of tears, as they call it so truly, to the grave at the bottom, and lie down there together in the darkness which would seem but for a moment,

to be wakened again together by the light of the resurrection, and no more partings for ever and for ever. (*Walks up and down. She sings.*)

" O happy lark that warblest high
Above thy lowly nest,
O brook, that brawlest merrily by
Thro' fields that once were blest,
O tower spiring to the sky,
O graves in daisies drest,
O Love and Life, how weary am I,
And how I long for rest."

There, there, I am a fool ! Tears ! I have sometimes been moved to tears by a chapter of fine writing in a novel ; but what have I to do with tears now ? All depends on me — Father, this poor girl, the farm, everything ; and they both love me — I am all in all to both ; and he loves me too, I am quite sure of that. Courage, courage ! and all will go well. (*Goes to bedroom door ; opens it.*) How dark your room is ! Let me bring you in here where there is still full daylight. (*Brings EVA forward.*) Why, you look better.

Eva. And I feel so much better that I trust I may be able by-and-by to help you in the business of the farm ; but I must not be known yet. Has anyone found me out, Dora ?

Dora. Oh, no ; you kept your veil too close for that when they carried you in ; since then, no one has seen you but myself.

Eva. Yes — this Milly.

Dora. Poor blind Father's little guide, Milly, who came to us three years after you were gone, how should she know you ? But now that you have been brought to us as it were from the grave, dearest Eva, and have been here so long, will you not speak with father to-day ?

Eva. Do you think that I may ? No, not yet. I am not equal to it yet.

Dora. Why ? Do you still suffer from your fall in the hollow lane ?

Eva. Bruised ; but no bones broken.

Dora. I have always told Father that the huge old ash-tree there would cause an accident some day ; but he would never cut it down, because one of the Steers had planted it there in former times.

Eva. If it had killed one of the Steers there the other day, it might have been better for her, for him, and for you.

Dora. Come, come, keep a good heart! Better for me! That's good. How better for me?

Eva. You tell me you have a lover. Will he not fly from you if he learn the story of my shame and that I am still living?

Dora. No; I am sure that when we are married he will be willing that you and Father should live with us; for, indeed, he tells me that he met you once in the old times, and was much taken with you, my lear.

Eva. Taken with me; who was he? Have you told him I am here?

Dora. No; do you wish it?

Eva. See, Dora; you yourself are ashamed of me (*weeps*), and I do not wonder at it.

Dora. But I should wonder at myself if it were so. Have we not been all in all to one another from the time when we first peeped into the bird's nest, waded in the brook, ran after the butterflies, and prattled to each other that we would marry fine gentlemen, and played at being fine ladies?

Eva. That last was my Father's fault, poor man. And this lover of yours—this Mr. Harold—is a gentleman?

Dora. That he is, from head to foot. I do believe I lost my heart to him the very first time we met, and I love him so much—

Eva. Poor Dora!

Dora. That I dare not tell him how much I love him.

Eva. Better not. Has he offered you marriage, this gentleman?

Dora. Could I love him else?

Eva. And are you quite sure that after marriage this gentleman will not be shamed of his poor farmer's daughter among the ladies in his drawing-room?

Dora. Shamed of me in a drawing-room! Was n't Miss Vavasour, our schoolmistress at Littlechester, a lady born? Were not our fellow-pupils all ladies? Was n't dear mother herself at least by one side a lady? Can't I speak like a lady; pen a letter like a lady; talk a little French like a lady; play a little like a lady? Can't a girl when she loves her husband, and he her, make herself anything he wishes her to be? Shamed of me in a drawing-room, indeed! See here! "I hope your Lordship is quite re-

covered of your gout?" (*Curtsies.*) "Will your Ladyship ride to cover to-day?" (*Curtsies.*) I can recommend our Voltigeur." "I am sorry that we could not attend your Grace's party on the 10th!" (*Curtsies.*) There, I am glad my nonsense has made you smile!

Eva. I have heard that "your Lordship," and your "Ladyship," and "your Grace" are all growing old-fashioned!

Dora. But the love of sister for sister can never be old-fashioned. I have been unwilling to trouble you with questions, but you seem somewhat better to-day. We found a letter in your bedroom torn into bits. I could n't make it out. What was it?

Eva. From him! from him! He said we had been most happy together, and he trusted that some time we should meet again, for he had not forgotten his promise to come when I called him. But that was a mockery, you know, for he gave me no address, and there was no word of marriage; and, O Dora, he signed himself "Yours gratefully"—faucy, Dora, "gratefully"! "Yours gratefully"!

Dora. Infamous wretch! (*Aside.*) Shall I tell her he is dead? No; she is still too feeble.

Eva. Hark! Dora, some one is coming. I cannot and I will not see anybody.

Dora. It is only Milly.

Enter MILLY, with basket of roses.

Dora. Well, Milly, why do you come in so roughly? The sick lady here might have been asleep.

Milly. Pleiise, Miss, Mr. Dobson telled me to saüy he's browt some of Miss Eva's roses for the sick laädy to smell on.

Dora. Take them, dear. Say that the sick lady thanks him! Is he here?

Milly. Yeäs, Miss; and he wants to speak to ye partic'lar.

Dora. Tell him I cannot leave the sick lady just yet.

Milly. Yeäs, Miss; but he says he wants to tell ye summut very partic'lar.

Dora. Not to-day. What are you staying for?

Milly. Why, Miss, I be afeard I shall set him a-sweäring like onythink.

Dora. And what harm will that do you, so that you do not copy his bad manners? Go, child. [*L'xit MILLY.*]

But, Eva, why did you write "Seek me at the bottom of the river"?

Eva. Why? because I meant it! — that dreadful night! that lonely walk to Littlechester, the rain beating in my face all the way, dead midnight when I came upon the bridge; the river, black, slimy, swirling under me in the lamplight, by the rotten wharfs — but I was so mad, that I mounted upon the parapet —

Dora. You make me shudder!

Eva. To fling myself over, when I heard a voice, "Girl, what are you doing there?" It was a Sister of Mercy, come from the death-bed of a pauper, who had died in his misery blessing God, and the Sister took me to her house, and bit by bit — for she promised secrecy — I told her all.

Dora. And what then?

Eva. She would have persuaded me to come back here, but I could n't. Then she got me a place as nursery governess, and when the children grew too old for me, and I asked her once more to help me, once more she said, "Go home;" but I had n't the heart or face to do it. And then — what would Father say? I sank so low that I went into service — the drudge of a lodging-house — and when the mistress died, and I appealed to the Sister again, her answer — I think I have it about me — yes, there it is!

Dora (reads). "My dear Child, — I can do no more for you. I have done wrong in keeping your secret; your Father must be now in extreme old age. Go back to him and ask his forgiveness before he dies. — SISTER AGATHA." Sister Agatha is right. Don't you long for Father's forgiveness?

Eva. I would almost die to have it!

Dora. And he may die before he gives it; may drop off any day, any hour. You must see him at once. (*Rings bell. Enter MILLY.*) Milly, my dear, how did you leave Mr. Steer?

Milly. He's been a-moänin' and a-groän-in' in 'is sleep, but I thinks he be wakken-in' oop.

Dora. Tell him that I and the lady here wish to see him. You see she is lamed, and cannot go down to him.

Milly. Yeäs, Miss, I will.

[*Exit MILLY.*]

Dora. I ought to prepare you. You must not expect to find our Father as he

was five years ago. He is much altered, but I trust that your return — for you know, my dear, you were always his favorite — will give him, as they say, a new lease of life.

Eva (clinging to Dora.) Oh, Dora, Dora!

Enter STEER, led by MILLY.

Steer. Hes the cow cawwed?

Dora. No, father.

Steer. Be the colt deäd?

Dora. No, father.

Steer. He wur sa bellows'd out wi' the wind this murnin', 'at I tell'd 'em to gallop 'im. Be he deäd?

Dora. Not that I know.

Steer. What hasta sent fur me then, fur?

Dora (taking Steer's arm). Well, Father, I have a surprise for you.

Steer. I ha niver been surprised but once i' my life, and I went blind upon it.

Dora. Eva has come home.

Steer. Hoäm? fro' the bottom o' the river?

Dora. No, Father, that was a mistake. She's here again.

Steer. The Steers was all gentlefoälks i' the owd times, an' I worked early an' laäte to maäke 'em all gentlefoälks ageän. The land belonged to the Steers i' the owd times, an' it belongs to the Steers ageän: I bowt it back ageän; but I could n't buy my darter back ageän when she lost hersen, could I? I eddicated boäth on 'em to marry gentlemen, an' one on 'em went an' lost hersen i' the river.

Dora. No, father, she's here.

Steer. Here! she moänt coom here. What would her mother saäy? If it be her ghoäst, we mun abide it. We can't keep a ghoäst out.

Eva (falling at his feet). O forgive me! forgive me!

Steer. Who said that? Taäke me awaäy, little gell. It be one o' my bad daäys. [*Exit STEER led by MILLY.*]

Dora (smoothing EVA's forehead). Be not so cast down, my sweet Eva. You heard him say it was one of his bad days. He will be sure to know you to-morrow.

Eva. It is almost the last of my bad days, I think. I am very faint. I must lie down. Give me your arm. Lead me back again. [*DORA takes EVA into inner room.*]

Enter MILLY.

Milly. Miss Dora! Miss Dora!

Dora (*returning and leaving the bedroom door ajar*). Quiet! quiet! What is it?

Milly. Mr. 'Arold, Miss.

Dora. Below?

Milly. Yeäs, Miss. He be saäyin' a word to the owd man, but he 'll coom up if ye lets 'im.

Dora. Tell him, then, that I 'm waiting for him.

Milly. Yeäs, Miss.

[*Exit. DORA sits pensively and waits.*]

Enter HAROLD.

Harold. You are pale, my Dora! but the ruddiest cheek

That ever charm'd the plowman of your wolds

Might wish its rose a lily, could it look
But half as lovely. I was speaking with
Your father, asking his consent — you wish'd me —

That we should marry: he would answer nothing,

I could make nothing of him; but my flower,

You look so weary and so worn! What is it

Has put you out of heart!

Dora. It puts me in heart
Again to see you; but indeed the state
Of my poor father puts me out of heart.

Is yours yet living?

Harold. No — I told you.

Dora. When?

Harold. Confusion! — Ah well, well!
the state we all

Must come to in our spring-and-winter world

If we live long enough! and poor Steer looks

The very type of Age in a picture,
bow'd

To the earth he came from, to the grave
he goes to,

Beneath the burden of years.

Dora. More like the picture
Of Christian in my "Pilgrim's Progress"
here,

Bow'd to the dust beneath the burden of
sin.

Harold. Sin! What sin?

Dora. Not his own.

Harold. That nursery-tale
Still read, then?

Dora. Yes; our carters and our shepherds

Still find a comfort there.

Harold. Carters and shepherds!

Dora. Scorn! I hate scorn. A soul
with no religion —

My mother used to say that such a one
Was without rudder, anchor, compass —
might be

Blown everyway with every gust and
wreck

On any rock; and tho' you are good and
gentle,

Yet if thro' any want —

Harold. Of this religion?
Child, read a little history, you will find

The common brotherhood of man has
been

Wrong'd by the cruelties of his religions
More than could ever have happen'd thro'
the want

Of any or all of them.

Dora. — But, O dear friend
If thro' the want of any — I mean the
true one —

And pardon me for saying it — you
should ever

Be tempted into doing what might seem
Not altogether worthy of you, I think
That I should break my heart, for you
have taught me

To love you.

Harold. What is this? some one been
stirring

Against me? he, your rustic amonrist,
The polish'd Damon of your pastoral
here,

This Dobson of your idyll?

Dora. No, Sir, no!
Did you not tell me he was crazed with
jealousy,

Had threaten'd ev'n your life, and would
say anything?

Did I not promise not to listen to him,
Not ev'n to see the man?

Harold. Good; then what is it
That makes you talk so dolefully?

Dora. I told you —
My father. Well, indeed, a friend just
now,

One that has been much wrong'd, whose
griefs are mine,

Was warning me that if a gentleman
Should wed a farmer's daughter he
would be

Sooner or later shamed of her among
The ladies, born his equals.

Harold. More fool he!
What I that have been call'd a Socialist,
A Communist, a Nihilist — what you
will! —

Dora. What are all these?

Harold. Utopian idioteities.
They did not last three Junes. Such
rampant weeds

Strangle each other, die and make the soil
For Cæsars, Cromwells, and Napoleons
To root their power in. I have freed
myself

From all such dreams, and some will say
because

I have inherited my Uncle. Let them.
But — shamed of you, my Empress! I
should prize

The pearl of Beauty, even if I found it
Dark with the soot of slums.

Dora. But I can tell you,
We Steers are of old blood, tho' we be
fallen.

See there our shield. (*Pointing to arms
on mantel-piece.*) For I have heard
the Steers

Had land in Saxon times; and your own
name

Of Harold sounds so English and so old
I am sure you must be proud of it.

Harold. Not I!
As yet I scarcely feel it mine. I took it
For some three thousand acres. I have
land now

And wealth, and lay both at your feet.

Dora. And *what* was
Your name before?

Harold. Come, come, my girl, enough
Of this strange talk. I love you and
you me.

True, I have held opinions, hold some still,
Which you would scarce approve of: for
all that,

I am a man not prone to jealousies,
Caprices, humors, moods; but very ready
To make allowances, and mighty slow
To feel offences. Nay, I do believe
I could forgive — well, almost anything —
And that more freely than your formal
priest,

Because I know more fully than *he* can
What poor earthworms are all and each
of us.

Here crawling in this boundless Nature.

Dora.
If marriage ever brought a woman happi-
ness

I doubt not I can make you happy.

Dora. You make me
Happy already.

Harold. And I never said
As much before to any woman living.

Dora. No?

Harold. No! by this true kiss, *you*
are the first
I ever have loved truly.

[*They kiss each other.*

Eva (*with a wild cry*). Philip Edgar!
Harold. The phantom cry! *You* — did
you hear a cry?

Dora. She must be crying out "Ed-
gar" in her sleep.

Harold. Who must be crying out
"Edgar" in her sleep?

Dora. Your pardon for a minute.
She must be waked.

Harold. Who must be waked?

Dora. I am not deaf: you fright me.
What ails you?

Harold. Speak.

Dora. You know her, *Eva*.

Harold. *Eva*!

[*EVA opens the door and stands in the entry.*
She!

Eva. Make her happy, then, and I
forgive you. [*Falls dead.*

Dora. Happy! What? Edgar? Is
it so? Can it be?

They told me so. Yes, yes! I see it all
now.

O she has fainted. Sister, *Eva*, sister!
He is yours again — he will love *you*
again;

I give him back to you again. Look up!
One word, or do but smile! Sweet, do
you hear me?

[*Puts her hand on EVA's heart.*
There, there — the heart, O God! — the
poor young heart

Broken at last — all still — and nothing
left

To live for. [*Falls on body of her sister.*

Harold. Living . . . dead . . . *She*
said "all still.

Nothing to live for."

She — she knows me — now . . .

(*A pause.*)

She knew me from the first, she juggled
with me,

She hid this sister, told me she was
dead —

I have wasted pity on her — not dead
now —

No! acting, playing on me, both of them.

They drag the river for her ! no, not they !
 Playing on me — not dead now — a swoon
 — a sceue —
 Yet — how she made her wail as for the
 dead !

Enter MILLY.

Milly. Pleäse, Mister 'Arold —

Harold (roughly). Well ?

Milly. The owd man's coom'd ageän
 to 'issen, an' wants

To hev a word wi' ye about the marriage.

Harold. The what ?

Milly. The marriage.

Harold. The marriage ?

Milly. Yeäs, the marriage.

Granty says marriages be maide i' 'eaven.

Harold. She lies ! They are made in
 Hell. Child, can't you see ?

Tell them to fly for a doctor.

Milly. O law — yeäs, Sir !

I'll run fur 'im mysen.

Harold. All silent there,

Yes, deathlike ! Dead ? I dare not look :
 if dead,

Were it best to steal away, to spare my-
 self,

And her too, pain, pain, pain ?

My curse on all
 This world of mud, on all its idiot gleams
 Of pleasure, all the foul fatalities
 That blast our natural passions into
 pains !

Enter DOBSON.

Dobson. You, Master Hedgar, Harold,
 or whativ'er

They calls ye, for I warrants that ye
 goäs

By haäfe a scoor o' naäimes — out o' the
 chaumber.

[Dragging him past the body.]

Harold. Not that way, man ! Curse
 on your brntal strength !

I cannot pass that way.

Dobson. Out o' the chaumber !

I'll mash tha into nowt.

Harold. The mere wild-beast !

Dobson. Out o' the chaumber, dang
 tha !

Harold. Lout, churl, clown !

*[While they are shouting and struggling
 DORA rises and comes between them.]*

Dora (to DOBSON). Peace, let him be :
 it is the chaumber of Death !

Sir, you äre tenfold more a gentleman,

A hundred times more worth a woman's
 love,

Than this, this — but I waste no words
 upon him :

His wikedness is like my wretchedness —
 Beyond all language.

(To HAROLD.)

You — you see her there !

Only fifteen when first you came on her,
 And then the sweetest flower of all the
 wolds,

So lovely in the promise of her May,
 So winsome in her grace and gayety,
 So loved by all the village people here,
 So happy in herself and in her home —

Dobson (agitated). Theer, theer ! ha'
 done. I can't abear to see her.

[Exit.]

Dora. A child, and all as trustful as a
 child !

Five years of shame and suffering broke
 the heart

That only beat for you ; and he, the fa-
 ther,

Thro' that dishonor which you brought
 upon us,

Has lost his health, his eyesight, even his
 mind.

Harold (covering his face). Enough !

Dora. It seem'd so ; only there was left
 A second daughter, and to her you came
 Veiling one sin to act another.

Harold. No !

You wrong me there ! hear, hear me ! I
 wish'd, if you — *[Pauses.]*

Dora. If I —

Harold. Could love me, could be
 brought to love me

As I loved you —

Dora. What then ?

Harold. I wish'd. I hoped

To make, to make —

Dora. What did you hope to make ?

Harold. 'T were best to make an end
 of my lost life.

O Dora, Dora !

Dora. What did you hope to make ?

Harold. Make, make ! I cannot find
 the word — forgive it —

Amends.

Dora. For what ? to whom ?

Harold. To him, to you :
[Falling at her feet.]

Dora. 'To him ! to me !

No, not with all your wealth,

Your land, your life! Out in the fiercest
 storm
 That ever made earth tremble — he,
 nor I —
 The shelter of *your* roof — not for one
 moment —
 Nothing from *you*!
 Sunk in the deepest pit of pauperism,
 Push'd from all doors as if we bore the
 plague,
 Smitten with fever in the open field,

Laid famine-stricken at the gates of
 Death —
 Nothing from you!
 But she there -- her last word
 Forgave — and I forgive you. If you
 ever
 Forgive yourself, you are even lower and
 baser
 Than even I can well believe you. Go!
 [*He lies at her feet. Curtain falls.*]

DEMETER AND OTHER POEMS.

TO THE MARQUIS OF DUFFERIN
AND AVA.

I.

At times our Britain cannot rest,
At times her steps are swift and rash;
She moving, at her girdle clash
The golden keys of East and West.

II.

Not swift or rash, when late she lent
The sceptres of her West, her East,
To one, that ruling has increased
Her greatness and her self-content.

III.

Your rule has made the people love
Their ruler. Your viceregal days
Have added fulness to the phrase
Of 'Gauntlet in the velvet glove.'

IV.

But since your name will grow with Time,
Not all, as honoring your fair fame
Of Statesman, have I made the name
A golden portal to my rhyme:

V.

But more, that you and yours may know
From me and mine, how dear a debt
We owed you, and are owing yet
To you and yours, and still would owe.

VI.

For he — your India was his Fate,
And drew him over sea to you —
He fain had ranged her thro' and thro',
To serve her myriads and the State, —

VII.

A soul that, watch'd from earliest youth,
And on thro' many a brightening year,
Had never swerved for craft or fear,
By one side-path, from simple truth;

VIII.

Who might have chased and claspt Re-
nown
And caught her chaplet here — and
there

In haunts of jungle-poison'd air
The flame of life went wavering down,

IX.

But ere he left your fatal shore,
And lay on that funereal boat,
Dying, 'Unspeakable,' he wrote
'Their kindness,' and he wrote no more;

X.

And sacred is the latest word;
And now The was, the Might-have-been,
And those lone rites I have not seen,
And one drear sound I have not heard,

XI.

Are dreams that scarce will let me be,
Not there to bid my boy farewell,
When That within the coffin fell,
Fell and flash'd into the Red Sea,

XII.

Beneath a hard Arabian moon
And alien stars. To question, why
The sons before the fathers die,
Not mine! and I may meet him soon;

XIII.

But while my life's late eve endures,
Nor settles into hueless gray,
My memories of his briefer day
Will mix with love for you and yours.

ON THE JUBILEE OF QUEEN
VICTORIA.

I.

FIFTY times the rose has flower'd and
faded,
Fifty times the golden harvest fallen,
Since our Queen assumed the globe, the
sceptre.

II.

She beloved for a kindliness
Rare in Fable or History,
Queen, and Empress of India,
Crown'd so long with a diadem

Never worn by a worthier,
Now with prosperous auguries
Comes at last to the bounteous
Crowning year of her Jubilee.

III.

Nothing of the lawless, of the Despot,
Nothing of the vulgar, or vainglorious,
All is gracious, gentle, great and Queenly.

IV.

You then joyfully, all of you,
Set the mountain aflame to-night,
Shoot your stars to the firmament,
Deck your houses, illuminate
All your towns for a festival,
And in each let a multitude
Loyal, each, to the heart of it,
One full voice of allegiance,
Hail the fair Ceremonial
Of this year of her Jubilee.

V.

Queen, as true to womanhood as Queen-
hood,
Glorying in the glories of her people,
Sorrowing with the sorrows of the lowest!

VI.

You, that wanton in affluence,
Spare not now to be bountiful,
Call your poor to regale with you,
All the lowly, the destitute,
Make their neighborhood healthful;
Give your gold to the Hospital,
Let the weary be comforted,
Let the needy be banqueted,
Let the maim'd in his heart rejoice
At this glad Ceremonial,
And this year of her Jubilee.

VII.

Henry's fifty years are all in shadow,
Gray with distance Edward's fifty sum-
mers,
Ev'n her Grandsire's fifty half forgotten.

VIII.

You, the Patriot Architect,
You that shape for Eternity,
Raise a stately memorial,
Make it regally gorgeous,
Some Imperial Institute,
Rich in symbol, in ornament,
Which may speak to the centuries,

All the centuries after us,
Of this great Ceremonial,
And this year of her Jubilee.

IX.

Fifty years of ever-broadening Com-
merce!
Fifty years of ever-brightening Science!
Fifty years of ever-widening Empire!

X.

You, the Mighty, the Fortunate,
You, the Lord-territorial,
You, the Lord-manufacturer,
You, the hardy, laborious,
Patient children of Albion,
You, Canadian, Indian,
Australasian, African,
All your hearts be in harmony,
All your voices in unison,
Singing 'Hail to the glorious
Golden year of her Jubilee!'

XI.

Are there thunders moaning in the dis-
tance?
Are there spectres moving in the dark-
ness?
Trust the Hand of Light will lead her
people,
Till the thunders pass, the spectres vanish,
And the Light is Victor, and the darkness
Dawns into the Jubilee of the Ages.

TO PROFESSOR JEBB,

WITH THE FOLLOWING POEM.

FAIR things are slow to fade away,
Bear witness you, that yesterday¹
From out the Ghost of Pindar in you
Roll'd an Olympian; and they say²

That here the torpid mummy wheat
Of Egypt bore a grain as sweet
As that which gilds the glebe of
England,
Sunn'd with a summer of milder heat.
So may this legend for awhile,
If greeted by your classic smile,
Tho' dead in its Trinacrian Enna,
Blossom again on a colder isle.

¹ In Bologna. ² They say, for the fact is doubtful.

DEMETER AND PERSEPHONE.

(IN ENNA.)

FAINT as a climate-changing bird that
 flies
 All night across the darkness, and at
 dawn
 Falls on the threshold of her native land,
 And can no more, thou camest, O my
 child,
 Led upward by the God of ghosts and
 dreams,
 Who laid thee at Elusis, dazed and dumb
 With passing thro' at once from state to
 state,
 Until I brought thee hither, that the day,
 When here thy hands let fall the gather'd
 flower,
 Might break thro' clouded memories once
 again
 On thy lost self. A sudden nightingale
 Saw thee, and flash'd into a frolic of song
 And welcome; and a gleam as of the
 moon,
 When first she peers along the tremulous
 deep,
 Fled wavering o'er thy face, and chased
 away
 That shadow of a likeness to the king
 Of shadows, thy dark mate. Persephone!
 Queen of the dead no more — my child!
 Thine eyes
 Again were human-godlike, and the Sun
 Burst from a swimming fleece of winter
 gray,
 And robed thee in his day from head to
 feet —
 'Mother!' and I was folded in thine
 arms.

 Child, those imperial, disimpassion'd
 eyes
 Awed even me at first, thy mother — eyes
 That oft had seen the serpent-wandèd
 power
 Draw downward into Hades with his drift
 Of flickering spectres, lighted from below
 By the red race of fiery Phlegethon;
 But when before have Gods or men beheld
 The Life that had descended re-arise,
 And lighted from above him by the Sun?
 So mighty was the mother's childless cry.
 A cry that rang thro' Hades, Earth, and
 Heaven!

So in this pleasant vale we stand again,
 The field of Enna, now once more ablaze
 With flowers that brighten as thy foot-
 step falls,
 All flowers — but for one black blur of
 earth
 Left by that closing chasm, thro' which
 the car
 Of dark Aidoneus risit'g rapt thee hence.
 And here, my child, tho' folded in thine
 arms,
 I feel the deathless heart of motherhood
 Within me shudder, lest the naked glebe
 Should yawn once more into the gulf, and
 thence
 The shrilly whinnings of the team of
 Hell,
 Ascending, pierce the glad and songful
 air,
 And all at once their arch'd necks, mid-
 night-maned,
 Jet upward thro' the mid-day blossom.
 No!
 For, see, thy foot has touch'd it; all the
 space
 Of blank earth-baldness clothes itself
 afresh,
 And breaks into the crocus-purple hour
 That saw thee vanish.

Child, when thou wert gone,
 I envied human wives, and nested birds,
 Yea, the cubb'd lioness; went in search
 of thee
 Thro' many a palace, many a cot, and
 gave
 Thy breast to ailing infants in the night,
 And set the mother waking in amaze
 To find her sick one whole; and forth
 again
 Among the wail of midnight winds, and
 cried,
 'Where is my loved one? Wherefore do
 ye wail?'
 And out from out all the night an answer
 shrill'd,
 'We know not, and we know not why we
 wail.'
 I climb'd on all the cliffs of all the
 seas,
 And ask'd the waves that moan about the
 world
 'Where? do ye make your moaning for
 my child?'
 And round from all the world the voices
 came

"We know not, and we know not why we
moan."

"Where"? and I stared from every eagle-
peak,

I thridded the black heart of all the woods,
I peer'd thro' tomb and cave, and 'n the
storms

Of Autumn swept across the city, and
heard

The murmur of their temples chanting me,
Me, me, the desolate Mother! "Where"?

— and turn'd,

And fled by many a waste, forlorn of
man,

And grieved for man thro' all my grief
for thee, —

The jungle rooted in his shatter'd hearth,
The serpent coil'd about his broken shaft,
The scorpion crawling over naked
skulls; —

I saw the tiger in the ruin'd fane
Spring from his fallen God, but trace of
thee

I saw not; and far on, and, following out
A league of labyrinthine darkness, came
On three gray heads beneath a gleaming
rift.

"Where"? and I heard one voice from
all the three

"We know not, for we spin the lives of
men,

And not of Gods, and know not why we
spin!

There is a Fate beyond us." Nothing
knew.

Last as the likeness of a dying man,
Without his knowledge, from him flits to
warn

A far-off friendship that he comes no more,
So he, the God of dreams, who heard my
cry,

Drew from thyself the likeness of thyself
Without thy knowledge, and thy shadow
past

Before me, crying "The Bright one in the
highest

Is brother of the Dark one in the lowest,
And Bright and Dark have sworn that I,
the child

Of thee, the great Earth-Mother, thee,
the Power

That lifts her buried life from gloom to
bloom,

Should be for ever and for evermore
The Bride of Darkness."

So the Shadow wail'd.

Then I, Earth-Goddess, cursed the Gods
of Heaven.

I would not mingle with their feasts; to
me

Their nectar smack'd of hemlock on the
lips,

Their rich ambrosia tasted aconite.

The man, that only lives and loves an
hour

Seem'd nobler than their hard Eternities.
My quick tears kill'd the flower, my rav-
ings hush'd

The bird, and lost in utter grief I fail'd
To send my life thro' olive-yard and
vine

And golden grain, my gift to helpless
man.

Rain-rotten died the wheat, the barley-
spears

Were hollow-husk'd, the leaf fell, and the
sun,

Pale at my grief, drew down before his
time

Sickening, and Ætna kept her winter
snow.

Then He, the brother of this Darkness,
He

Who stil is highest, glancing from his
height

On earth a fruitless fallow, when he miss'd
The wonted steam of sacrifice, the praise
And prayer of men, decreed that thou
should'st dwell

For nine white moons of each whole year
with me,

Three dark ones in the shadow with thy
King.

Once more the reaper in the gleam of
dawn

Will see me by the landmark far away,
Blessing his field, or seated in the dusk
Of even, by the lonely threshing-floor,
Rejoicing in the harvest and the grange.

Yet I, Earth-Goddess, am but ill-content
With them, who still are highest. Those
gray heads,

What meant they by their "Fate beyond
the Fates"

But younger kindlier Gods to bear us
down,

As we bore down the Gods before us?
Gods,

To quench, not hurl the thunderbolt, to
stay,

Not spread the plague, the famine; Gods
indeed,
To send the noon into the night and
break
The sunless halls of Hades into Heaven?
Till thy dark lord accept and love the Sun,
And all the Shadow die into the Light,
When thou shalt dwell the whole bright
year with me,
And souls of men, who grew beyond their
race,
And made themselves as Gods against the
fear
Of Death and Hell; and thou that hast
from men,
As Queen of Death, that worship which is
Fear,
Henceforth, as having risen from out the
dead,
Shalt ever send thy life along with mine
From buried grain thro' springing blade,
and bless
Their garner'd Autumn also, reap with
me,
Earth-mother, in the harvest hymns of
Earth
The worship which is Love, and see no
more
The Stone, the Wheel, the dimly-glim-
mering lawns
Of that Elysium, all the hateful fires
Of torment, and the shadowy warrior
glide
Along the silent field of Asphodel.

OWD ROÄ.¹

NAÄY, noä mander² o' use to be callin' 'im
Roä, Roä, Roä,
Fo' the dog's stoän-deäif, an' e's blind, 'e
can neither stan' nor goä.
But I meäns fur to maäke 'is owd ääge as
'appy as iver I can,
Fur I owäs owd Roäver moor nor I iver
owäd mottal man.
Thou's rode of 'is back when a babby,
afoor thou was gotten too owd,
For 'e 'd fetch an' carry like owt, 'e was
allus as good as gowd.
Eh, but 'e 'd fight wi' a will *when* 'e fowt;
'e could howd³ 'is oan,

¹ Old Rover. ² Manner. ³ Hold.

An' Roä was the dog as knaw'd when an'
where to bury his boane.
An' 'e kep his heäd hoop like a king, an'
'e 'd niver not down wi' 'is täail,
Fur 'e 'd niver done nowt to be shäameä
on, when we was i' Howlaby Daäle
An' 'e sarved me sa well when 'e lived,
that, Dick, when 'e cooms to be
deäd,
I thinks as I 'd like fur to hev soom soort
of a sarvice reäd.
Fur 'e's moor good sense na the Parlia-
ment man 'at stans fur us 'ere,
An' I 'd voät fur 'im, my oän sen, if 'e
could but stan fur the Shere.
"Faäithful an' True" — them words be i'
Scriptur — an' Faäithful an' True
Ull be fun'⁴ upo' four short legs ten times
fur one upo' two.
An' mäiybe they 'll walk upo' two but I
knaws they runs upo' four,⁵ —
Bedtime, Dieky! but waäit till tha 'eärs
it be strikin' the hour.
Fur I wants to tell tha o' Roä when we
lived i' Howlaby Daäle,
Ten year sin — Näiy — näiy! tha mun
nobbut hev' one glass of ääle.
Straänge an' owd-farran'd⁶ the 'ouse, an'
belt⁷ long afoor my daäy
Wi' haäfe o' the chimleys a-twizen'd⁸ an'
twined like a band o' haäy.
The fellers as maäkes them picturs, 'uä
coom at the fall o' the year,
An' sattle their ends upo stools to pictur
the door-poorch there,
An' the Heagle 'as hed two heäds stan-
nin' theree o' the brokken stiek;⁹
An' they niver 'ed seed sich ivin'¹⁰ a
graw'd hall ower the briek;
An' theree i' the 'ouse one night — but
it's down, an' all on it now

⁴ Found. ⁵ "Ou" as in "house."
⁶ "Owd-farran'd," old-fashioned.
⁷ Built. ⁸ "Twizen'd" twisted.
⁹ On a staff *ragulé*. ¹⁰ Ivy.

Goan into mangles an' tonups,¹ an' raäved slick thruf by the plow —

There, when the 'ouse wur a house, one night I wur sittin' aloän,
Wi' Roäver athurt my feeät, an' sleeäpin still as a stoän,

Of a Christmas Eäve, an' as cowl as this, an' the midders² as white,
An' the fences all on 'em bolster'd oop wi' the windle³ that night;

An' the cat wur a-sleeäpin alongside Roäver, but I wur awaäke,
An' smoäkin' an' thinkin' o' things — Doänt maäke thysen sick wi' the caäke.

Fur the men ater supper 'ed sung their songs an' 'ed 'ed their beer,
An' 'ed goän their wäüys; ther was nobbut three, an noän on 'em there.

They was all on 'em fear'd o' the Ghoäst an' dussn't not sleeäp i' the 'ouse,
But Dicky, the Ghoäst moästlin⁴ was nobbut a rat or a mouse.

An' I looökt out wonst⁵ at the night, an' the daäle was all of a thaw,
Fur I seed the beck coomin' down like a long black snaäke i' the snaw,

An' I heärd greät heäps o' the snaw slushin' down fro' the bank to the beck,

An' then as I stood i' the doorwaäy, I feeäld it drip o' my neck.

Saw I turn'd in ageän, an' I thowt o' the good owd times 'at was goän,
An' the munney they maäde by the war, an' the times 'at was eoomin' on;

Fur I thowt if the Staäte was a gawin' to let in furriners wheät,
Howiver was British farmers to stan' ageän o' their feeät.

Howiver was I fur to find my rent an' to päy my men?

¹ Mangolds and turnips.

² Meadows.

³ Drifted snow.

⁴ "Moästlin," for the most part, generally.

⁵ Once.

An' all along o' the feller⁶ as turn'd 'is back of hissen.

Thou slep i' the chaumber above us, we could n't ha' 'eärd tha call,
Sa Moother 'ed tell'd ma to bring tha down, an' thy craädle an' all;

Fur the gell o' the farm 'at slep wi' tha then 'ed gotten wer leäve,
Fur to goä that night to 'er foälk by cause o' the Christmas Eäve;

But I cleän forgot tha, my lad, when Moother 'ed gotten to bed,
An' I slep i' my chair hup-on-end, an' the Frecä Traäde runn'd i' my 'ead,

Till I dreäm'd 'at Squire walkt in, an' I says to him "Squire, ya're laate,"
Then I seed at 'is faäce wur as red as the Yule-block theer i' the graäte.

An' 'e says "can ya päy me the rent to-night?" an' I says to 'im "Noä,"
An' 'e cotch'd howd hard o' my hairm,⁷ "Then hout to-night tha shall goä."

"Tha 'll niver," says I, "be a-turmiu' ma hout upo' Christmas Eäve" ?
Then I waäked an' I fun it was Roäver a-tuggin' an' teärin' my sliäve.

An' I thowt as 'e'd goän eleän-wud,⁸ fur I noäwaeys knaw'd 'is intent;
An' I says "Git awaäy, ya beäst," an' I feteht 'im a kick an' 'e went.

Then 'e tumbled up stairs, fur I 'eärd 'im, as if 'e'd 'a brokken 'is neck,
An' I'd cleär forgot, little Dicky, thy chaumber door would n't sneck;⁹

An' I slep i' my chair ageän wi' my hairm hingin' down to the floor,
An' I thowt it was Roäver a-tuggin' an' teärin' me wuss nor afoor,

An' I thowt 'at I kick'd 'im ageän, but I kick'd thy Moother istancead.
"What arta snorin' theree fur? the house is afire," she said.

Thy Moother 'ed beän a-naggin' about the gell o' the farm,

⁶ Peel.

⁷ Arm.

⁸ Mad.

⁹ Latch.

She offens 'ud spy summut wrong when
there warn't not a mossel o' harm ;

An' she did n't not solidly meän I wur
gawin' that waäy to the bad,
Fur the gell¹ was as howry a trollope as
iver traäpes'd i' the squad.

But Moother was free of 'er tongue, as I
offens 'ev tell'd 'er mysen,
Sa I kep i' my chair, fur I thowt she was
nobbut a-rilin' ma then.

An' I says "I'd be good to tha, Bess, if
tha'd onywaäys let ma be good,"
But she skelpt ma haäfe ower i' the chair,
an' screeäd like a Howl gone
wud² —

"Ya mun run fur the lether.³ Git oop, if
ya're onywaäys good for owt."
And I says "If I bcänt noöwaäys — not
nowadaäys — good fur nowt —

Yit I beänt sich a Nowt⁴ of all Nowts
as 'ull hallus do as 'e's bid."
"But the stairs is afire," she said ; then I
seed 'er a-eryin', I did.

An' she beäld "Ya mun saäve little Dick,
an' be sharp about it an' all,"
Sa I runs to the yard fur a lether, an' sets
'im agein the wall,

An' I claums an' I mashes the winder hin,
when I gits to the top,
But the heät drav hout i' my heyes till I
feäld mysen ready to drop.

Thy Moother was howdin' the lether, an'
telli' me not to be skeärd,
An' I was n't afeärd, or I thinks leäst-
waäys as I was n't afeärd ;

But I could n't see fur the smoäke where
thou was a-liggin, my lad,
An' Roäver was there i' the chaumber
a-yowlin' an' yaupin' like mad ;

¹ The girl was as dirty a slut as ever truded
in the mud, but there is a sense of slatternli-
ness in "traäpes'd" which is not expressed in
"truded."

² She half overturned me and shrieked like an
owl gone mad.

³ Ladder.

⁴ A thoroughly insignificant or worthless per-
son.

An' thou was a-beälin' likewise, an'
a-squeälin', as if tha was bit,
An' it was n't a bite but a burn, fur the
merk's⁵ o' thy shou'der yit ;

Then I call'd out Roä, Roä, Roä, thaw I
did n't haäfe think as 'e'd 'ear,
*But 'e coom'd thruf the fire wi' my bairn i'
'is mouth to the winder there !*

He coom'd like a Hangel o' marcy as
soon as 'e 'cärd 'is naäme,
Or like tother Hangel i' Scriptur 'at
summun seed i' the flaäme,

When summun 'ed hax'd fur a son, an' 'e
promised a son to she,
An' Roä was as good as the Hangel i'
saävin' a son fur me.

Sa I browt tha down, an' I says "I mu,
gaw up agein fur Roä."
"Gaw up ageän fur the varmint?" I
tell'd 'er "Yeäs I mun goä."

An' I claumb'd up ageän to the winder, an'
clemm'd⁶ owd Roä by the 'eäd,
An' 'is 'air coom'd off i' my 'ands an' I
taäked 'im at fust fur deäd ;

Fur 'e smell'd like a herse a-singein', an'
secäm'd as blind as a poop,
An' haäfe on 'im bare as a bublin'.⁷ I
could n't wakken 'im oop,

But I browt 'im down, an' we got to the
barn, fur the barn would n't burn
Wi' the wind blawin' hard tother waäy,
an' the wind was n't like to turn.

An' I kep a-callin' o' Roä till 'e waggled
'is taäil fur a bit,
But the corks kep a-crawin' an' crawin'
all night, an' I 'ears 'em yit ;

An' the dogs was a-yowlin' all round, and
thou was a-squeälin' thysen,
An' Moother was naggin' an' groänin' an'
moänin' an' naggin' ageän ;

An' I 'eärd the bricks an' the baulks⁸
rummle down when the roof gev
waäy,

⁵ Mark.

⁶ Clutched.

⁷ "Bubbling," a young unfledged bird.

⁸ Beams.

Fur the fire was a-raägin' an' räavin' an'
roarin' like judgment daäy.

Warm enew theree sewer-ly, but the barn
was as cowl and owt,
An' we cuddled and huddled together, an'
happ¹ wersens oop as we mowt.

An' I browt Roä round, but Moother 'ed
beän sa soäk'd wi' the thaw
'At she cotch'd 'er death o' cowl that
night, poor soul, i' the straw.

Haäfe o' the parish runn'd oop when the
rigtree² was tummlin' in —
Too laäte — but it's all ower now — hall
hower — an' ten year sin ;

Too laäte, tha mun git tha to bed, but
I'll coom an' I'll squench the
light,

Fur we moänt 'ev naw moor fires — and
soa little Dick, good-night.

Dedicated to the Hon. J. Russell Lowell.

THE RING.

MIRIAM AND HER FATHER.

MIRIAM (*singing*).

MELLOW moon of heaven,
Bright in blue,
Moon of married hearts,
Hear me, you !

Twelve times in the year
Bring me bliss,
Globing Honey Moons
Bright as this.

Moon, you fade at times
From the night.
Young again you grow
Out of sight.

Silver crescent-curve,
Coming soon,
Globe again, and make
Honey Moon.

¹ Wrapt ourselves.

² The beam that runs along the roof of the house just beneath the ridge.

Shall not *my* love last,
Moon, with you,
For ten thousand years
Old and new ?

FATHER.

And who was he with such love-drunken
eyes
They made a thousand honey moons of
one ?

MIRIAM.

The prophet of his own, my Hubert — his
The words, and mine the setting. " Air
and Words,"
Said Hubert, when I sang the song, " are
bride
And bridegroom." Does it please you ?

FATHER.

Mainly, child,
Because I hear your Mother's voice in
yours.
She —, why, you shiver tho' the wind
is west
With all the warmth of summer.

MIRIAM.

Well, I fel-
On a sudden I know not what, a breath
that past
With all the cold of winter.

FATHER (*muttering to himself*).

Even so.
The Ghost in Man, the Ghost that once
was Man,
But cannot wholly free itself from Man,
Are calling to each other thro' a dawn
Stranger than earth has ever seen ; the
veil
Is rending, and the Voices of the day
Are heard across the Voices of the dark.
No sudden heaven, nor sudden hell, for
man,
But thro' the Will of One who knows and
rules —
And utter knowledge is but utter love —
Æonian Evolution, swift or slow,
Thro' all the Spheres — an ever opening
height,
An ever lessening earth — and she per-
haps,
My Miriam, breaks her latest earthly link
With me to-day.

MIRIAM.

You speak so low, what is it?
Your "Miriam breaks" — is making a
new link
Breaking an old one?

FATHER.

No, for we, my child,
Have been till now each other's all in-all.

MIRIAM.

And you the lifelong guardian of the
child.

FATHER.

I, and one other whom you have not
known.

MIRIAM.

And who? what other?

FATHER.

Whither are you bound?
For Naples which we only left in May?

MIRIAM.

No! father, Spain, but Hubert brings me
home
With April and the swallow. Wish me
joy!

FATHER.

What need to wish when Hubert weds in
you
The heart of Love, and you the soul of
Truth
In Hubert?

MIRIAM.

Tho' you used to call me once
The lonely maiden-Princess of the wood,
Who meant to sleep her hundred sum-
mers out
Before a kiss should wake her.

FATHER.

Ay, but now
Your fairy Princee has found you, take
this ring.

MIRIAM.

"Iot' amo" — and these diamonds —
beautiful!

"From Walter," and for me from you
then?

FATHER.

Well,
One way for Miriam.

MIRIAM.

Miriam am I not?

FATHER.

This ring bequeath'd you by your mother,
child,
Was to be given you — such her dying
wish —
Given on the morning when you came of
age
Or on the day you married. Both the
days
Now close in one. The ring is doubly
yours.
Why do you look so gravely at the tower?

MIRIAM.

I never saw it yet so all ablaze
With creepers crimsoning to the pinna-
cles,
As if perpetual sunset linger'd there,
And all ablaze too in the lake below!
And how the birds that circle round the
tower
Are cheeping to each other of their
flight
To summer lands!

FATHER.

And that has made you grave?
Fly — care not. Birds and brides must
leave the nest.
Child, I am happier in your happiness
Than in mine own.

MIRIAM.

It is not that!

FATHER.

What else?

MIRIAM.

That chamber in the tower.

FATHER.

What chamber, child?
Your nurse is here?

MIRIAM.

My Mother's nurse and mine.
She comes to dress me in my bridal veil.

FATHER.

What did she say ?

MIRIAM.

She said, that you and I
Had been abroad for my poor health so
long
She fear'd I had forgotten her, and I
ask'd
About my Mother, and she said, "Thy hair
Is golden like thy Mother's, not so fine."

FATHER.

What then ? what more ?

MIRIAM.

She said — perhaps indeed
She wander'd, having wander'd now so
far
Beyond the common date of death — that
you,
When I was smaller than the statuette
Of my dear Mother on your bracket
here —
You took me to that chamber in the
tower,
The topmost — a chest there, by which
you knelt —
And there were books and dresses — left
to me,
A ring too which you kiss'd, and I, she
said,
I babbled, Mother, Mother — as I used
To prattle to her picture — stretch'd my
hands
As if I saw her ; then a woman came
And caught me from my nurse. I hear
her yet —
A sound of anger like a distant storm.

FATHER.

Garrulous old crone.

MIRIAM.

Poor nurse !

FATHER.

I bade her keep,
Like a seal'd book, all mention of the
ring,
For I myself would tell you all to-day.

MIRIAM.

"She too might speak to-day," she mumbled. Still,
I scarce have learnt the title of your book,
But you will turn the pages.

FATHER.

Ay, to-day !
I brought you to that chamber on your
third
September birthday with your nurse, and
felt
An icy breath play on me, while I stoop'd
To take and kiss the ring.

MIRIAM.

This very ring
Is t'amo ?

FATHER.

Yes, for some wild hope was mine
That, in the misery of my married life,
Miriam your Mother might appear to me.
She came to you, not me. The storm,
you hear
Far-off, is Muriel — your step-mother's
voice.

MIRIAM.

Next, that you thought my Mother came
to me ?
Or at my crying "Mother ?" or to find
My Mother's diamonds hidden from her
there,
Like worldly beauties in the Cell, not
shown
To dazzle all that see them ?

FATHER.

Wait a while.
Your Mother and step-mother — Miriam
Erne
And Muriel Erne — the two were cousins
— lived
With Muriel's mother on the down, that
sees
A thousand squares of corn and meadow,
far
As the gray deep, a landscape which you
eyes
Have many a time ranged over when a
babe.

MIRIAM.

I climb'd the hill with Hubert yesterday.
And from the thousand squares, one silent
voice

Came on the wind, and seem'd to say
 "Again."
 We saw far off an old forsaken house,
 Then home, and past the ruin'd mill.

FATHER.

And there
 I found these cousins often by the brook,
 For Miriam sketch'd and Muriel threw the
 fly;
 The girls of equal age, but one was fair,
 And one was dark, and both were beauti-
 ful.
 No voice for either spoke within my heart
 Then, for the surface eye, that only doats
 On outward beauty, glancing from the one
 To the other, knew not that which pleased
 it most,
 The raven ringlet or the gold; but both
 Were dowerless, and myself, I used to
 walk
 This Terrace — morbid, melancholy;
 mine
 And yet not mine the hall, the farm, the
 field;
 For all that ample woodland whisper'd
 "debt,"
 The brook that feeds this lakelet mur-
 mur'd "debt,"
 And in yon arching avenue of old elms,
 Tho' mine, not mine, I heard the sober
 rook
 And carrion crow cry "Mortgage."

MIRIAM.

Father's fault
 Visited on the children!

FATHER.

Ay, but then
 A kinsman, dying, summon'd me to
 Rome —
 He left me wealth — and while I journey'd
 hence,
 And saw the world fly by me like a dream,
 And while I communed with my truest
 self,
 I woke to all of truest in myself,
 Till, in the gleam of those mid-summer
 dawns,
 The form of Muriel faded, and the face
 Of Miriam grew upon me, till I knew;
 And past and future mix'd in Heaven and
 made
 The rosy twilight of a perfect day.

MIRIAM.

So glad? no tear for him, who left you
 wealth,
 Your kinsman?

FATHER.

I had seen the man but once;
 He loved my name not me; and then I
 pass'd
 Home, and thro' Venice, where a jeweller,
 So far gone down, or so far up in life,
 That he was nearing his own hundred,
 sold
 This ring to me, then laugh'd "the ring
 is weird."
 And weird and worn and wizard-like was
 he.
 "Why weird?" I ask'd him; and he
 said "The souls
 Of two repentant Lovers guard the
 ring;"
 Then with a ribald twinkle in his bleak
 eyes —
 "And if you give the ring to any maid,
 They still remember what it cost them
 here,
 And bind the maid to love you by the
 ring;
 And if the ring were stolen from the
 maid,
 The theft were death or madness to the
 thief,
 So sacred those Ghost Lovers hold the
 gift."
 And then he told their legend:

"Long ago

Two lovers parted by a scurrilous tale
 Had quarrell'd, till the man repenting
 sent
 This ring 'Io t'amo' to his best beloved,
 And sent it on her birthday. She in
 wrath
 Return'd it on her birthday, and that day
 His death-day, when, half-frenzied by the
 ring,
 He wildly fought a rival suitor, him
 The cause of that scandal, fought and
 fell;
 And she that came to part them all too
 late,
 And found a corpse and silence, drew the
 ring
 From his dead finger, wore it till her
 death,

Shrined him within the temple of her
heart,
Made every moment of her after life
A virgin victim to his memory,
And dying rose, and rear'd her arms, and
cried
'I see him, Io t' amo, Io t' amo.'

MIRIAM.

Legend or true? so tender should be
true!
Did *he* believe it? did you ask him?

FATHER.

Ay!

But that half skeleton, like a barren
ghost
From out the fleshless world of spirits,
laugh'd:
A hollow laughter!

MIRIAM.

Vile, so near the ghost
Himself, to laugh at love in death! But
you?

FATHER.

Well, as the bygone lover thro' this ring
Had sent his cry for her forgiveness, I
Would call thro' this "Io t' amo" to the
heart
Of Miriam; then I bade the man engrave
"From Walter" on the ring, and send it
— wrote
Name, surname, all as clear as noon, but
he—
Some younger hand must have engraven
the ring—
His fingers were so stiffen'd by the frost
Of seven and ninety winters, that he
scrawl'd
A "Miriam" that might seem a "Mu-
riel";
And Muriel claim'd and open'd what I
meant
For Miriam, took the ring, and flaunted it
Before that other whom I loved and love.
A mountain stay'd me here, a minster
there,
A galleried palace, or a battlefield,
Where stood the sheaf of Peace: but—
coming home—
And on your Mother's birthday—all but
yours—
A week betwixt—and when the tower
as now

Was all ablaze with crimson to the roof,
And all ablaze too plunging in the lake
Head-foremost—who were those that
stood between

The tower and that rich phantom of the
tower?

Muriel and Miriam, each in white, and
like

May-blossoms in mid autumn—was it
they?

A light shot upward on them from the
lake.

What sparkled there? whose hand was
that? they stood

So close together. I am not keen of
sight,

But coming nearer—Muriel had the
ring—

"O Miriam! have you given your ring
to her?

O Miriam!" Miriam redder'd, Muriel
clench'd

The hand that wore it, till I cried again:
"O Miriam, if you love me take the
ring!"

She glanced at me, at Muriel, and was
mute.

"Nay, if you cannot love me, let it be."
Then—Muriel standing ever statue-
like—

She turn'd, and in her soft imperial way
And saying gently: "Muriel, by your
leave,"

Unclosed the hand, and from it drew the
ring,

And gave it me, who pass'd it down her
own,

"Io t' amo, all is well then." Muriel fled.

MIRIAM.

Poor Muriel!

FATHER.

Ay, poor Muriel when you hear
What follows! Miriam loved me from
the first,

Not thro' the ring; but on her marriage-
morn

This birthday, death-day, and betrothal
ring,

Laid on her table overnight, was gone;
And after hours of search and doubt and
threats,

And hubbub, Muriel enter'd with it,
"See!—

Fond in a chink of that old moulder'd
floor!"

My Miriam nodded with a pitying smile,
As who should say "that those who lose
can find."

Then I and she were married for a
year,
One year without a storm, or even a
cloud ;

And you my Miriam born within the year ;
And she my Miriam dead within the year.

I sat beside her dying, and she gaspt :
" The books, the miniature, the lace are
hers,
My ring too when she comes of age, or
when

She marries ; you — you loved me, kept
your word.

You love me still " Io t'amo." -- Muriel
— no —

She cannot love ; she loves her own hard
self,

Her firm will, her fix'd purpose. Promise
me,

Miriam not Muriel — she shall have the
ring."

And there the light of other life, which
lives

Beyond our burial and our buried eyes,
Gleam'd for a moment in her own on
earth.

I swore the vow, then with my latest kiss
Upon them, closed her eyes, which would
not close,

But kept their watch upon the ring and
you.

Your birthday was her death-day.

MIRIAM.

O poor Mother !
And you, poor desolate Father, and poor
me,

The little senseless, worthless, wordless
babe,

Saved when your life was wreck'd !

FATHER.

Desolate? yes !
Desolate as that sailor, whom the storm
Had parted from his comrade in the boat,
And dash'd half dead on barren sands,
was I.

Nay, you were my one solace ; only — you
Were always ailing. Muriel's mother
sent,

And sure am I, by Muriel, one day came
And saw you, shook her head, and patted
yours,

And smiled, and making with a kindly
pinch

Each poor pale cheek a momentary
rose —

" That should be fix'd," she said ; " your
pretty bud,

So blighted here, would flower into full
health

Among our heath and bracken. Let her
come !

And we will feed her with our mountain
air,

And send her home to you rejoicing."
No —

We could not part. And once, when you
my girl

Rode on my shoulder home — the tiny
fist

Had graspt a daisy from your Mother's
grave —

By the lych-gate was Muriel. " Ay," she
said,

" Among the tombs in this damp vale of
yours !

You scorn my Mother's warning, but the
child

Is paler than before. We often walk
In open sun, and see beneath our feet

The mist of autumn gather from your
lake,

And shroud the tower ; and once we only
saw

Your gilded vane, a light above the
mist" —

(Our old bright bird that still is veering
there

Above his four gold letters) " and the
light,"

She said, " was like that light" — and
there she paused,

And long ; till I believing that the girl's
Lean fancy, groping for it, could not find

One likeness, laugh'd a little and found
her two —

" A warrior's crest above the cloud of
war" —

" A fiery phoenix rising from the smoke,
The pyre he burnt in." — " Nay," she

said, " the light
That glimmers on the marsh and on the
grave."

And spoke no more, but turn'd and pass'd
away.

Miriam, I am not surely one of those
Caught by the flower that closes on the

fly,

But after ten slow weeks her fix'd intent,
In aiming at an all but hopeless mark
To strike it, struck; I took, I left you
there;

I came, I went, was happier day by day;
For Muriel nursed you with a mother's
care;

Till on that clear and heather-scented
height

The rounder cheek had brighten'd into
bloom.

She always came to meet me carrying
you,

And all her talk was of the babe she
loved;

So, following her old pastime of the
brook,

She threw the fly for me; but oftener
left

That angling to the mother. "Muriel's
health

Had weaken'd, nursing little Miriam.
Strange!

She used to shun the wailing babe, and
doats

On this of yours." But when the ma-
tron saw

That hinted love was only wasted bait,
Not risen to, she was bolder. "Ever
since

You sent the fatal ring"—I told her
"sent

To Miriam," "Doubtless—ay, but ever
since

In all the world my dear one sees but
you—

In your sweet babe she finds but you—
she makes

Her heart a mirror that reflects but you."
And then the tear fell, the voice broke.

Her heart!

I gazed into the mirror, as a man
Who sees his face in water, and a stone,

That glances from the bottom of the pool,
Strike upward thro' the shadow; yet at
last,

Gratitude—loneliness—desire to keep
So skilled a nurse about you always—

—nay!

Some half remorseful kind of pity too—
Well! well, you know I married Muriel

Erne.

"I take thee Muriel for my wedded
wife"—

I had forgotten it was your birthday,
child—

When all at once with some electric
thrill

A cold air pass'd between us, and the
hands

Fell from each other, and were join'd
again.

No second cloudless honeymoon was
mine.

For by and by she sicken'd of the farce,
She dropt the gracious mask of mother-

hood,
She came no more to meet me, carrying
you,

Nor ever cared to set you on her knee,
Nor ever let you gambol in her sight,

Nor ever cheer'd you with a kindly smile,
Nor ever ceased to clamor for the ring;

Why had I sent the ring at first to her?
Why had I made her love me thro' the

ring,
And then had changed? so fickle are
men—the best!

Not she—but now my love was hers
again,

The ring by right, she said, was hers
again.

At times too shrilling in her angrier
moods,

"That weak and watery nature love you?
No!

'*Io t' amo, Io t' amo!*'" flung herself
Against my heart, but often while her lips

Were warm upon my cheek, an icy
breath,

As from the grating of a sepulchre,
Past over both. I told her of my vow,

No pliable idiot I to break my vow;
But still she made her outcry for the ring;

For one monotonous fancy madden'd her,
Till I myself was madden'd with her cry,

And even that "*Io t' amo,*" those three
sweet

Italian words, became a weariness.
My people too were scared with eerie

sounds,
A footstep, a low throbbing in the walls,
A noise of falling weights that never fell

Weird whispers, bells that rang without
a hand,

Door-handles turn'd when none was at
the door,

And bolted doors that open'd of them-
selves:

And one betwixt the dark and light had
seen

Her, bending by the cradle of her babe.

MIRIAM.

And I remember once that being waked
By noises in the house—and no one
near—

I cried for nurse, and felt a gentle hand
Fall on my forehead, and a sudden face
Look'd in upon me like a gleam and
pass'd,

And I was quieted, and slept again.
Or is it some half memory of a dream?

FATHER.

Your fifth September birthday.

MIRIAM.

And the face,
The hand, — my Mother.

FATHER.

Miriam, on that day
Two lovers parted by no scurrilous tale —
Mere want of gold — and still for twenty
years

Bound by the golden cord of their first
love —

Had ask'd us to their marriage, and to
share

Their marriage-banquet. Muriel, paler
then

Than ever you were in your cradle,
moan'd,

“I am fitter for my bed, or for my grave,
I cannot go, go you.” And then she rose,
She clung to me with such a hard em-
brace,

So lingeringly long, that half-amazed
I parted from her, and I went alone.

And when the bridegroom murmur'd,
“With this ring,”

I felt for what I could not find, the key,
The guardian of her relics, of *her* ring.

I kept it as a sacred amulet
About me, — gone! and gone in that em-
brace!

Then, hurrying home, I found her not in
house

Or garden — up the tower — an icy air
Fled by me. — There, the chest was open
— all

The sacred relics tost about the floor —
Among them Muriel lying on her face —
I raised her, call'd her “Muriel, Muriel
wake!”

The fatal ring lay near her; the glazed
eye

Glared at me as in horror. Dead! I
took

And chafed the freezing hand. A red
mark ran

All round one finger pointed straight, the
rest

Were crumpled inwards. Dead! — and
maybe stung

With some remorse, had stolen, worn the
ring —

Then torn it from her finger, or as if —
For never had I seen her show remorse —
As if —

MIRIAM.

— those two Ghost lovers —

FATHER.

Lovers yet —

MIRIAM.

Yes, yes!

FATHER.

— but dead so long, gone up so far,
That now their ever-rising life has dwarf'd
Or lost the moment of their past on earth,
As we forget our wail at being born.
As if —

MIRIAM.

A dearer ghost had —

FATHER.

— wrench'd it away.

MIRIAM.

Had floated in with sad reproachful eyes,
Till from her own hand she had torn the
ring

In fright, and fallen dead. And I myself
Am half afraid to wear it.

FATHER.

Well, no more

No bridal music this! but fear not you!
You have the ring she guarded; that
poor link

With earth is broken, and has left her
free,

Except that, still drawn downward for an
hour,

Her spirit hovering by the church, where
she

Was married too, may linger, till she sees
Her maiden coming like a Queen, who
leaves

Some colder province in the North to gain
 Her capital city, where the loyal bells
 Clash welcome — linger, till her own, the
 babe
 She lean'd to from her Spiritual sphere,
 Her lonely maiden-Princess, crown'd with
 flowers,
 Has enter'd on the larger woman-world
 Of wives and mothers.

But the bridal veil —
 Your nurse is waiting. Kiss me child
 and go.

FORLORN.

I.

“HE is fled — I wish him dead —
 He that wrought my ruin —
 O the flattery and the craft
 Which were my undoing . . .
 In the night, in the night,
 When the storms are blowing.

II.

“Who was witness of the crime?
 Who shall now reveal it?
 He is fled, or he is dead,
 Marriage will conceal it . . .
 In the night, in the night,
 While the gloom is growing.”

III.

Catherine, Catherine, in the night
 What is this you're dreaming?
 There is laughter down in Hell
 At your simple scheming . . .
 In the night, in the night,
 When the ghosts are fleeting.

IV.

You to place a hand in his
 Like an honest woman's,
 You that lie with wasted lungs
 Waiting for your summons . . .
 In the night, O the night!
 O the deathwatch beating!

V.

There will come a witness soon
 Hard to be confuted,
 All the world will hear a voice
 Scream you are polluted . . .
 In the night! O the night,
 When the owls are wailing!

VI.

Shame and marriage, Shame and mar-
 riage,
 Fright and foul dissembling,
 Bantering bridesman, reddening priest
 Tower and altar trembling . . .
 In the night, O the night,
 When the mind is failing!

VII.

Mother, dare you kill your child?
 How your hand is shaking!
 Daughter of the seed of Cain,
 What is this you're taking? . . .
 In the night, O the night,
 While the house is sleeping.

VIII.

Dreadful! has it come to this,
 O unhappy creature?
 You that would not tread on a worm
 For your gentle nature . . .
 In the night, O the night,
 O the night of weeping!

IX.

Murder would not veil your sin,
 Marriage will not hide it,
 Earth and Hell will brand your name,
 Wretch you must abide it . . .
 In the night, O the night,
 Long before the dawning.

X.

Up, get up, and tell him all,
 Tell him you were lying!
 Do not die with a lie in your mouth,
 You that know you're dying . . .
 In the night, O the night,
 While the grave is yawning.

XI.

No — you will not die before,
 Tho' you'll ne'er be stronger:
 You will live till *that* is born,
 Then a little longer . . .
 In the night, O the night,
 While the Fiend is prowling.

XII.

Death and marriage, Death and marriage!
 Funeral hearses rolling!
 Black with bridal favors mixt!
 Bridal bells with tolling! . . .

In the night, O the night,
When the wolves are howling.

XIII.

Up, get up, the time is short,
Tell him now or never!
Tell him all before you die,
Lest you die for ever . . .
In the night, O the night,
Where there 's no forgetting

XIV.

Up she got, and wrote him all,
All her tale of sadness,
Blister'd every word with tears,
And eased her heart of madness . . .
In the night, and nigh the dawn,
And while the moon was setting.

HAPPY.

THE LEPER'S BRIDE.

I.

WHY wail you, pretty plover? and what
is it that you fear?
Is he sick your mate like mine? have
you lost him, is he fled?
And there — the heron rises from his
watch beside the mere,
And flies above the leper's hut, where
lives the living-dead.

II.

Come back, nor let me know it! would he
live and die alone?
And has he not forgiven me yet, his
over-jealous bride,
Who am, and was, and will be his, his
own and only own,
To share his living death with him, die
with him side by side?

III.

Is that the leper's hut on the solitary
moor,
Where noble Ulric dwells forlorn, and
wears the leper's weed?
The door is open. He! is he standing at
the door,
My soldier of the Cross? it is he and
he indeed!

IV.

My roses — will he take them *now* —
mine, his — from off the tree
We planted both together, happy in our
marriage morn?
O God, I could blaspheme, for he fought
Thy fight for Thee,
And Thou hast made him leper to com-
pass him with scorn —

V.

Hast spared the flesh of thousands, the
coward and the base,
And set a crueller mark than Cain's on
him, the good and brave!
He sees me, waves me from him. I will
front him face to face.
You need not wave me from you. I
would leap into your grave.

VI.

My warrior of the Holy Cross and of the
conquering sword,
The roses that you cast aside — once
more I bring you these.
No nearer? do you scorn me when you
tell me, O my lord,
You would not mar the beauty of your
bride with your disease.

VII.

You say your body is so foul — then here
I stand apart,
Who yearn to lay my loving head upon
your leprous breast.
The leper plague may seale my skin but
never taint my heart;
Your body is not foul to me, and body is
foul at best.

VIII.

I loved you first when young and fair, but
now I love you most;
The fairest flesh at last is filth on which
the worm will feast;
This poor rib-grated dungeon of the holy
human ghost,
This house with all its hateful needs no
cleaner than the beast,

IX.

This coarse diseaseful creature which in
Eden was divine,

This Satan-haunted ruin, this little city
of sewers,
This wall of solid flesh that comes between
your soul and mine,
Will vanish and give place to the beauty
that endures,

x.

The beauty that endures on the Spiritual
height,
When we shall stand transfigured, like
Christ on Hermon hill,
And moving each to music, soul in soul
and light in light,
Shall flash thro' one another in a mo-
ment as we will.

xi.

Foul! foul! the word was yours not mine,
I worship that right hand
Which fell'd the foes before you as the
woodman fells the wood,
And sway'd the sword that lighten'd back
the sun of Holy land,
And clove the Moslem crescent moon,
and changed it into blood.

xii.

And once I worshipt all too well this
creature of decay,
For Age will chink the face, and Death
will freeze the supplest limbs—
Yet you in your mid manhood—O the
grief when yesterday
They bore the Cross before you to the
chant of funeral hymns.

xiii.

"Libera me, Domine!" you sang the
Psalm, and when
The Priest pronounced you dead, and
flung the mould upon your feet,
A beauty came upon your face, not that
of living men,
But seen upon the silent brow when
life has ceased to beat.

xiv.

"Libera nos, Domine"—you knew not
one was there
Who saw you kneel beside your bier,
and weeping scarce could see;
May I come a little nearer, I that heard,
and changed the prayer

And sang the married "nos" for the
solitary "me."

xv.

*My beauty marred by you? by you! so
be it. All is well
If I lose it and myself in the higher
beauty, yours.
My beauty lured that falcon from his
eyry on the fell,
Who never caught one gleam of the
beauty which endures—*

xvi.

The Count who sought to snap the bond
that link'd us life to life,
Who whisper'd me "your Ulric loves"
— a little nearer still—
He hiss'd, "Let us revenge ourselves,
your Ulric woos my wife"—
A lie by which he thought he could
subdue me to his will.

xvii.

I knew that you were near me when I let
him kiss my brow;
Well, he kiss'd me on the lips, I was
jealous, anger'd, vain,
And I meant to make you jealous. Are
you jealous of me now?
Your pardon, O my love, if I ever gave
you pain.

xviii.

You never once accused me, but I wept
alone, and sigh'd
In the winter of the Present for the
summer of the Past;
That icy winter silence—how it froze
you from your bride,
Tho' I made one barren effort to break
it at the last.

xix.

I brought you, you remember, these roses,
when I knew
You were parting for the war, and you
took them tho' you frown'd;
You frown'd and yet you kiss'd them.
All at once the trumpet blew,
And you spurr'd your fiery horse, and
you hurl'd them to the ground.

xx.

You parted for the Holy War without a
word to me,

And clear myself unask'd — not I. My
nature was too proud.
And him I saw but once again, and far
away was he,
When I was praying in a storm — the
crash was long and loud —

XXI.

That God would ever slant His bolt from
falling on your head —
Then I lifted up my eyes, he was
coming down the fell —
I clapt my hands. The sudden fire from
Heaven had dash'd him dead,
And sent him charr'd and blasted to
the deathless fire of Hell.

XXII.

See, I sinn'd but for a moment. I re-
pent and repent,
And trust myself forgiven by the God
to whom I kneel.
A little nearer? Yes. I shall hardly be
content
Till I be leper like yourself, my love,
from head to heel.

XXIII.

O foolish dreams, that you, that I, would
slight our marriage oath:
I held you at that moment even dearer
than before;
Now God has made you leper in His lov-
ing care for both,
That we might cling together, never
doubt each other more.

XXIV.

The Priest, who join'd you to the dead,
has join'd our hands of old;
If man and wife be but one flesh, let
mine be leprous too,
As dead from all the human race as if be-
neath the mould;
If you be dead, then I am dead, who
only live for you.

XXV.

Would Earth tho' hid in cloud not be fol-
low'd by the Moon?
The leech forsake the dying bed for
terror of his life?
The shadow leave the Substance in the
brooding light of noon?

Or if I had been the leper would you
have left the wife?

XXVI.

Not take them? Still you wave me off
— poor roses — must I go —
I have worn them year by year — from
the bush we both had set —
What? fling them to you? — well — that
were hardly gracious. No!
Your plague but passes by the touch.
A little nearer yet!

XXVII.

There, there! he buried you, the Priest;
the Priest is not to blame,
He joins us once again, to his either
office true:
I thank him. I am happy, happy. Kiss
me. In the name
Of the everlasting God, I will live and
die with you.

[DEAN MILMAN has remarked that the protec-
tion and care afforded by the Church to this
blighted race of lepers was among the most beau-
tiful of its offices during the Middle Ages. The
leprosy of the thirteenth and fourteenth cen-
turies was supposed to be a legacy of the crusades,
but was in all probability the offspring of me-
agre and unwholesome diet, miserable lodging and
clothing, physical and moral degradation. The
services of the Church in the seclusion of these
unhappy sufferers were most affecting. The
stern duty of looking to the public welfare is
tempered with exquisite compassion for the vic-
tims of this loathsome disease. The ritual for
the sequestration of the leprous differed little
from the burial service. After the leper had
been sprinkled with holy water, the priest con-
ducted him into the church, the leper singing
the psalm "Libera me domine," and the crucifix
and bearer going before. In the church a black
cloth was stretched over two trestles in front
of the altar, and the leper leaning at its side
devoutly heard mass. The priest, taking up
a little earth in his cloak, threw it on one of
the leper's feet, and put him out of the church, if it
did not rain too heavily; took him to his hut in
the midst of the fields, and then uttered the pro-
hibitions: "I forbid you entering the church
. . . or entering the company of others. I forbid
you quitting your home without your leper's
dress." He concluded: "Take this dress, and
wear it in token of humility; take these gloves,
take this clapper, as a sign that you are forbidden
to speak to any one. You are not to be indig-
nant at being thus separated from others, and as
to your little wants, good people will provide for
you, and God will not desert you." Then in
this old ritual follow these sad words: "When
it shall come to pass that the leper shall pass
out of this world, he shall be buried in his hut,
and not in the churchyard." At first there was

a doubt whether wives should follow their husbands who had been leprous, or remain in the world and marry again. The Church decided that the marriage tie was indissoluble, and so bestowed on these unhappy beings this immense source of consolation. With a love stronger than this living death, lepers were followed into banishment from the haunts of men by their faithful wives. Readers of Sir J. Stephen's *Essays on Ecclesiastical Biography* will recollect the description of the founder of the Franciscan order, how, controlling his involuntary disgust, St. Francis of Assisi washed the feet and dressed the sores of the lepers, once at least reverently applying his lips to their wounds. — BOUCHER-JAMES.]

This ceremony of *quasi*-burial varied considerably at different times and in different places. In some cases a grave was dug, and the leper's face was often covered during the service

TO ULYSSES.

I.

ULYSSES, much-experienced man,
Whose eyes have known this globe of ours,
Her tribes of men, and trees, and flowers,
From Corrientes to Japan,

II.

To you that bask below the Line,
I soaking here in winter wet —
The century's three strong eights have met
To drag me down to seventy-nine

III.

In summer if I reach my day —
To you, yet young, who breathe the balm
Of summer-winters by the palm
And orange grove of Paraguay,

IV.

[tolerant of the colder time,
Who love the winter woods, to trace
On paler heavens the branching grace
Of leafless elm, or naked lime,

V.

And see my cedar green, and there
My giant ilex keeping leaf
When frost is keen and days are brief —
Or marvel how in English air

VI.

My yucca, which no winter quells,
Altho' the months have scarce begun,
Has push'd toward our faintest sun
A spike of half-accomplish'd bells —

VII.

Or watch the waving pine which here
The warrior of Caprera set,¹
A name that earth will not forget
Till earth has roll'd her latest year —

VIII.

I, once half-crazed for larger light
On broader zones beyond the foam,
But chaining fancy now at home
Among the quarried downs of Wight,

IX.

Not less would yield full thanks to you
For your rich gift, your tale of lands
I know not,² your Arabian sands ;
Your cane, your palm, tree-fern, bamboo,

X.

The wealth of tropic bower and brake ;
Your Oriental Eden-isles,³
Where man, nor only Nature smiles ;
Your wonder of the boiling lake ;⁴

XI.

Phra-Chai, the Shadow of the Best,⁵
Phra-bat⁶ the step ; your Pontic coast ;
Crag-cloister ;⁷ Anatolian Ghost ;⁸
Hong-Kong,⁹ Karnac,¹⁰ and all the rest.

XII.

Thro' which I follow'd line by line
Your leading hand, and came, my friend,

¹ Garibaldi said to me, alluding to his barrer island, "I wish I had your trees."

² The Tale of Nejd.

³ The Philippines.

⁴ In Dominica.

⁵ The Shadow of the Lord. Certain obscure markings on a rock in Siam, which express the image of Buddha to the Buddhist more or less distinctly according to his faith and his moral worth.

⁶ The footstep of the Lord on another rock.

⁷ The monastery of Sumelas.

⁸ Anatolian Spectre stories.

⁹ The three cities.

¹⁰ Travels in Egypt.

To prize your various book,¹ and send
A gift of slenderer value, mine.

TO MARY BOYLE.

WITH THE FOLLOWING POEM.

I.
'SPRING-FLOWERS"! While you still
delay to take
Your leave of Town,
Our elm-tree's ruddy-hearted blossom-
flake
Is fluttering down.

II.
Be truer to your promise. There! I
heard
One cuckoo call.
Be needle to the magnet of your word,
Nor wait, till all

III.
Our vernal bloom from every vale and
plain
And garden pass,
And all the gold from each laburnum
chain
Drop to the grass.

IV.
Is memory with your Marian gone to rest,
Dead with the dead?
For ere she left us, when we met, you
prest
My hand, and said

V.
"I come with your spring-flowers." You
came not, friend;
My birds would sing,
You heard not. Take then this spring-
flower I send,
This song of spring,

VI.
Found yesterday — forgotten mine own
rhyme
By mine old self,
As I shall be forgotten by old Time
Laid on the shelf —

¹ "Ulysses," the title of a number of essays by
W. G. Palgrave. He died at Monte Video before
seeing either this volume or my poem.

VII.
A rhyme that flower'd betwixt the white-
ning sloe
And kingcup blaze,
And more than half a hundred years ago,
In rick-fire days,

VIII.
When Dives loathed the times, and paced
his land
In fear of worse,
And sanguine Lazarus felt a vacant hand
Fill with *his* purse.

IX.
For lowly minds were madden'd to the
height
By tonguener tricks,
And once — I well remember that red
night
When thirty ricks,

X.
All flaming, made an English homestead
Hell —
These hands of mine
Have helpt to pass a bucket from the well
Along the line,

XI.
When this bare dome had not begun to
gleam
Thro' youthful curls,
And you were then a lover's fairy dream,
His girl of girls;

XII.
And you, that now are lonely, and with
Grief
Sit face to face,
Might find a flickering glimmer of relief
In change of place.

XIII.
What use to brood? this life of mingled
pains
And joys to me,
Despite of every Faith and Creed, re-
mains
The Mystery.

XIV.
Let golden youth bewail the friend, the
wife,
For ever gone.

He dreams of that long walk thro' desert
life
Without the one.

XV.

The silver year should cease to mourn
and sigh —
Not long to wait —
So close are we, dear Mary, you and I
To that dim gate.

XVI.

Take, read! and be the faults your Poet
makes
Or many or few,
He rests content, if his young music
wakes
A wish in you

XVII.

To change our dark Queen-city, all her
realm
Of sound and smoke,
For his clear heaven, and these few lanes
of elm
And whispering oak.

THE PROGRESS OF SPRING.

I.

THE groundflame of the crocus breaks
the mould,
Fair Spring slides hither o'er the
Southern sea,
Wavers on her thin stem the snowdrop
cold
That trembles not to kisses of the bee :
Come Spring, for now from all the drip-
ping eaves
The spear of ice has wept itself away,
And hour by hour unfolding woodbine
leaves
O'er his uncertain shadow droops the
day.
She comes! The loosen'd rivulets run ;
The frost-bead melts upon her golden
hair ;
Her mantle, slowly greening in the Sun,
Now wraps her close, now arching
leaves her bare
To breaths of balmier air ;

II.

Up leaps the lark, gone wild to welcome
her,

About her glance the tits, and shriek
the jays,
Before her skins the jubilant woodpecker,
The linnet's bosom blushes at her gaze,
While round her brows a woodland culver
flits,
Watching her large light eyes and
gracious looks,
And in her open palm a haleyon sits
Patient — the secret splendor of the
brooks.
Come Spring! She comes on waste and
wood,
On farm and field: but enter also here,
Diffuse thyself at will thro' all my blood,
And, tho' thy violet sicken into sere,
Lodge with me all the year!

III.

Once more a downy drift against the
brakes,
Self-darken'd in the sky, descending
slow!
But gladly see I thro' the wavering flakes
Yon blanching apricot like snow in
snow.
These will thine eyes not brook in forest-
paths,
On their perpetual pine, nor round the
beech ;
They fuse themselves to little spicy baths,
Solved in the tender blushes of the
peach ;
They lose themselves and die
On that new life that gems the haw-
thorn line ;
Thy gay lent-lilies wave and put them
by,
And out once more in varnish'd glory
shine
Thy stars of celandine.

IV.

She floats across the hamlet. Heaven
lours,
But in the tearful splendor of her
smiles
I see the slowly-thickening chestnut
towers
Fill out the spaces by the barrier tiles.
Now past her feet the swallow circling,
flies,
A clamorous cuckoo stoops to meet her
hand ;
Her light makes rainbows in my closing
eyes,

I hear a charm of song thro' all the
land.
Come, Spring! She comes, and Earth is
glad
To roll her North below thy deepening
dome,
But ere thy maiden birk be wholly clad,
And these low bushes dip their twigs in
foam,
Make all true hearths thy home.

v.

Across my garden! and the thicket stirs.
The fountain pulses high in sunnier
jets,
The blackcap warbles, and the turtle
purrs,
The starling claps his tiny castanets.
Still round her forehead wheels the
woodland dove,
And scatters on her throat the sparks
of dew,
The kingcup fills her footprint, and above
Broaden the glowing isles of vernal
blue.
Hail ample presence of a Queen,
Bountiful, beautiful, apparell'd gay,
Whose mantle, every shade of glancing
green,
Flies back in fragrant breezes to dis-
play
A tunic white as May!

vi.

She whispers, "From the South I bring
you balm,
For on a tropic mountain was I born,
While some dark dweller by the cocoa-
palm
Watch'd my far meadow zoned with
airy morn;
From under rose a muffled moan of
floods;
I sat beneath a solitude of snow;
There no one came, the turf was fresh,
the woods
Plunged gulf on gulf thro' all their
vales below.
I saw beyond their silent tops
The steaming marshes of the scarlet
cranes,
The slant seas leaning on the mangrove
copse,
And summer basking in the sultry
plains
About a land of canes;

vii.

"Then from my vapor-girdle soaring forth
I scaled the buoyant highway of the
birds,
And drank the dew and drizzle of the
North,
That I might mix with men, and hear
their words
On pathway'd plains; for— while my
hand exults
Within the bloodless heart of lowly
flowers
To work old laws of Love to fresh results,
Thro' manifold effect of simple pow-
ers—
I too would teach the man
Beyond the darker hour to see the
bright,
That his fresh life may close as it began,
The still fulfilling promise of a light
Narrowing the bounds of night."

viii.

So wed thee with my soul, that I may
mark
The coming year's great good and
varied ills,
And new developments, whatever spark
Be struck from out the clash of warring
wills;
Or whether, since our nature cannot
rest,
The smoke of war's volcano burst
again
From hoary deeps that belt the changeful
West,
Old Empires, dwellings of the kings of
men;
Or should those fail, that hold the helm,
While the long day of knowledge
grows and warms,
And in the heart of this most ancient
realm
A hateful voice be utter'd, and alarms
Sounding "To arms! to arms!"

ix.

A simpler, saner lesson might he learn
Who reads thy gradual process, Holy
Spring.
Thy leaves possess the season in their
turn,
And in their time thy warblers rise on
wing.
How surely glidest thou from March to
May,

And changest, breathing it, the sullen
wind,
Thy scope of operation, day by day,
Larger and fuller, like the human
mind!
Thy warmths from bud to bud
Accomplish that blind model in the
seed,
And men have hopes, which race the rest-
less blood,
That after many changes may succeed
Life, which is Life indeed.

MERLIN AND THE GLEAM.

I.

O YOUNG Mariner,
You from the haven
Under the sea-cliff,
You that are watching
The gray Magician
With eyes of wonder,
I am Merlin,
And I am dying,
I am Merlin
Who follow The Gleam.

II.

Mighty the Wizard
Who found me at sunrise
Sleeping, and woke me
And learn'd me Magic!
Great the Master,
And sweet the Magic,
When over the valley,
In early summers,
Over the mountain,
On human faces,
And all around me,
Moving to melody,
Floated The Gleam.

III.

Once at the croak of a Raven who
crost it
A barbarous people,
Blind to the magic,
And deaf to the melody,
Snarl'd at and cursed me.
A demon vext me,
The light retreated,
The landskip darker'd,
The melody deaden'd,
The Master whisper'd
"Follow The Gleam."

IV.

Then to the melody,
Over a wilderness
Gliding, and glancing at
Elf of the woodland,
Gnome of the cavern,
Griffin and Giant,
And dancing of Fairies
In desolate hollows,
And wraiths of the mountain,
And rolling of dragons
By warble of water,
Of cataract music
Of falling torrents,
Flitted The Gleam.

V.

Down from the mountain
And over the level,
And streaming and shining on
Silent river,
Silvery willow,
Pasture and plowland,
Horses and oxen,
Innocent maidens,
Garrulous children,
Homestead and harvest,
Reaper and gleaner,
And rough-ruddy faces
Of lowly labor,
Slided The Gleam. —

VI.

Then, with a melody
Stronger and statelier,
Led me at length
To the city and palace
Of Arthur the king;
Touch'd at the golden
Cross of the churches,
Flash'd on the Tournament,
Flicker'd and bicker'd
From helmet to helmet,
And last on the forehead
Of Arthur the blameless
Rested The Gleam.

VII.

Clouds and darkness
Closed upon Camelot;
Arthur had vanish'd
I knew not whither,
The king who loved me,
And cannot die;
For out of the darkness
Silently and slowly

The Gleam, that had waned to a
wintry glimmer
On icy fallow
And faded forest,
Drew to the valley
Named of the shadow,
And slowly brightening
Out of the glimmer,
And slowly moving again to a
melody
Yearningly tender,
Fell on the shadow,
No longer a shadow,
But clothed with The Gleam.

VIII.

And broader and brighter
The Gleam flying onward,
Wed to the melody,
Sang thro' the world;
And slower and fainter,
Old and weary,
But eager to follow,
I saw, whenever
In passing it glanced upon
Hamlet or city,
That under the Crosses
The dead man's garden,
The mortal hillock,
Would break into blossom;
And so to the land's
Last limit I came —
And can no longer,
But die rejoicing,
For thro' the Magic
Of Him the Mighty,
Who taught me in childhood,
There on the border
Of boundless Ocean,
And all but in Heaven
Hovers The Gleam.

IX.

Not of the sunlight,
Not of the moonlight,
Not of the starlight!
O young Mariner,
Down to the haven,
Call your companions,
Launch your vessel,
And crowd your canvas,
And, ere it vanishes
Over the margin,
After it, follow it,
Follow The Gleam.

ROMNEY'S REMORSE.

"I read Hayley's Life of Romney the other day — Romney wanted but education and reading to make him a very fine painter; but his ideal was not high nor fixed. How touching is the close of his life! He married at nineteen, and because Sir Joshua and others had said that 'marriage spoils an artist' almost immediately left his wife in the North and scarce saw her till the end of his life; when old, nearly mad and quite desolate, he went back to her and she received him and nursed him till he died. This quiet act of hers is worth all Romney's pictures! even as a matter of Art, I am sure." (*Letters and Literary Remains of Edward Fitzgerald*, vol. i.)

"BEAT, little heart — I give you this and this."

Who are you? What! the Lady Hamilton?

Good, I am never weary painting you.
To sit once more? Cassandra, Hebe,
Joan,
Or spinning at your wheel beside the
vine —

Bacchante, what you will; and if I fail
To conjure and concentrate into form
And color all you are, the fault is less
In me than Art. What Artist ever yet
Could make pure light live on the canvas?
Art!

Why should I so disrelish that short word?
Where am I? snow on all the hills!
so hot,
So fever'd! never colt would more de-
light

To roll himself in meadow grass than I
To wallow in that winter of the hills.

Nurse, were you hired? or came of
your own will

To wait on one so broken, so forlorn?
Have I not met you somewhere long
ago?

I am all but sure I have — in Kendal
church —

O yes! I hired you for a season there,
And then we parted; but you look so kind
That you will not deny my sultry throat
One draught of icy water. There — you
spill

The drops upon my forehead. Your
hand shakes.

I am ashamed. I am a trouble to you,
Could kneel for your forgiveness. Are
they tears?

For me — they do me too much grace —
for me?

O Mary, Mary!

Vexing you with words!
 Words only, born of fever, or the fumes
 Of that dark opiate dose you gave me, —
 words,
 Wild babble. I have stumbled back again
 Into the common day, the sounder self.
 God stay me there, if only for your sake,
 The truest, kindest, noblest-hearted wife
 That ever wore a Christian marriage-
 ring.

My curse upon the Master's apothegm,
 That wife and children drag an Artist
 down!

This seem'd my lodestar in the Heaven of
 Art,
 And lured me from the household fire on
 earth.

To you my days have been a life-long
 lie,
 Grafted on half a truth, and tho' you
 say

' Take comfort, you have won the
 Painter's fame;

The best in me that sees the worst in
 me,

And groans to see it, finds no comfort
 there.

What fame? I am not Raphaël, Titian
 — no

Nor even a Sir Joshua, some will cry.
 Wrong there! The painter's fame? but
 mine, that grew

Blown into glittering by the popular
 breath,

May float awhile beneath the sun, may
 roll

The rainbow hues of heaven about it —
 There!

The color'd bubble bursts above the
 abyss

Of Darkness, utter Lethe.

Is it so?

Her sad eyes plead for my own fame with
 me

To make it dearer.

Look, the sun has risen

To flame along another dreary day.

Your hand. How bright you keep your
 marriage ring!

Raise me. I thank you.

Has your opiate then

Bred this black mood? or am I conscious,
 more

Than other Masters, of the chasm be-
 tween

Work and Ideal? Or does the gloom of
 Age

And suffering cloud the height I stand
 upon

Even from myself? stand? stood . . . no
 more.

And yet

The world would lose, if such a wife as
 you

Should vanish unrecorded. Might I
 crave

One favor? I am bankrupt of all claim
 On your obedience, and my strongest wish

Falls flat before your least unwillingness.
 Still would you — if it please you — sit

to me?

I dream'd last night of that clear
 summer noon,

When seated on a rock, and foot to foot
 With your own shadow in the placid

lake,
 You claspt our infant daughter, heart to
 heart.

I had been among the hills, and brought
 you down

A length of staghorn-moss, and this you
 twined

About her cap. I see the picture yet,
 Mother and child. A sound from far

away,

No louder than a bee among the flowers,
 A fall of water lull'd the noon asleep.

You still'd it for the moment with a
 song

Which often echo'd in me, while I stood
 Before the great Madonna-masterpieces

Of ancient Art in Paris, or in Rome.
 Mary, my crayons! if I can, I will.

You should have been — I might have
 made you once,

Had I but known you as I know you
 now —

The true Alcestis of the time. Your
 song —

Sit, listen! I remember it, a proof
 That I — even I — at times remember'd

you.

"Beat upon mine, little heart! beat,
 beat!

Beat upon mine! you are mine, my
 sweet!

All mine from your pretty blue eyes to
 your feet,

My sweet."

Less profile! turn to me — three-quarter
 face.

"Sleep, little blossom, my honey, my
 bliss!
 For I give you this, and I give you
 this!
 And I blind your pretty blue eyes with
 a kiss!
 Sleep!"
 Too early blinded by the kiss of death—
 "Father and Mother will watch you
 grow"—
 You watch'd not I, she did not grow, she
 died.
 "Father and Mother will watch you
 grow,
 And gather the roses whenever they
 blow,
 And find the white heather wherever
 you go,"
 My sweet."
 Ah, my white heather only grows in
 heaven
 With Milton's amaranth. There, there,
 there! a child
 Had shamed me at it—Down, you idle
 tools,
 Stamp't into dust—tremulous, all awry,
 Blurr'd like a landskip in a ruffled pool,—
 Not one stroke firm. This Art, that
 harlot-like
 Seduced me from you, leaves me harlot-
 like,
 Who love her still, and whimper, im-
 potent
 To win her back before I die—and
 then—
 Then, in the loud world's bastard judg-
 ment-day,
 One truth will damn me with the mind-
 less mob,
 Who feel no touch of my temptation
 more
 More than all the myriad lies, that
 blacken round
 The corpse of every man that gains a
 name;
 "This model husband, this fine Artist"!
 Fool,
 What matters? Six foot deep of burial
 mould
 Will dull their comments! Ay, but
 when the shout
 Of His descending peals from Heaven,
 and throbs

Thro' earth, and all her graves, if *He*
 should ask
 "Why left you wife and children? for my
 sake,
 According to my word?" and I replied
 "Nay, Lord, for *Art*," why, that would
 sound so mean
 That all the dead, who wait the doom of
 Hell
 For bolder sins than mine, adulteries,
 Wife-murders,—nay, the ruthless Mus-
 sulman
 Who flings his bowstrung Harem in the
 sea,
 Would turn, and glare at me, and point
 and jeer,
 And gibber at the worm, who, living,
 made
 The wife of wives a widow-bride, and lost
 Salvation for a sketch.
 I am wild again!
 The coals of fire you heap upon my head
 Have crazed me. Some one knocking
 there without?
 No! Will my Indian brother come? to
 find
 Me or my coffin? Should I know the
 man?
 This worn-out Reason dying in her house
 May leave the windows blinded, and if so,
 Bid him farewell for me, and tell him—
 Hope!
 I hear a death-bed Angel whisper
 "Hope."
 "The miserable have no medicine
 But only Hope!" He said it . . . in the
 play.
 His crime was of the senses; of the mind
 Mine; worse, cold, calculated.
 Tell my son—
 O let me lean my head upon your breast.
 "Beat little heart" on this fool brain of
 mine.
 I once had friends—and many—none
 like you.
 I love you more than when we married.
 Hope!
 O yes, I hope, or fancy that, perhaps,
 Human forgiveness touches heaven, and
 thence—
 For you forgive me, you are sure of
 that—
 Reflected, sends a light on the forgiven-

PARNASSUS.

Exegi monumentum . . .
 Quod non . . .
 Possit diruere . . .
 . . . innumerabilis
 Annorum series et fuga temporum.
 HORACE.

I.

WHAT be the crown'd forms high over
 the sacred fountain?
 Bards, that the mighty Muses have raised
 to the heights of the mountain,
 And over the flight of the Ages! O
 Goddesses, help me up thither!
 Lightning may shrivel the laurel of
 Cæsar, but mine would not wither.
 Steep is the mountain, but you, you will
 help me to overcome it,
 And stand with my head in the zenith,
 and roll my voice from the sum-
 mit,
 Sounding for ever and ever thro' Earth
 and her listening nations,
 And mixt with the great Sphere-music of
 stars and of constellations.

II.

What be those two shapes high over the
 sacred fountain,
 Taller than all the Muses, and huger
 than all the mountain?
 On those two known peaks they stand
 ever spreading and heightening;
 Poet, that evergreen laurel is blasted by
 more than lightning!
 Look, in their deep double shadow the
 crown'd ones all disappearing!
 Sing like a bird and be happy, nor hope
 for a deathless hearing!
 "Sounding for ever and ever?" pass on!
 the sight confuses—
 These are Astronomy and Geology, ter-
 rible Muses!

III.

If the lips were touch'd with fire from off
 a pure Pierian altar,
 Tho' their music here be mortal need the
 singer greatly care?
 Other songs for other worlds! the fire
 within him would not falter;
 Let the golden Iliad vanish, Homer here
 is Homer there.

BY AN EVOLUTIONIST.

THE Lord let the house of a brute to the
 soul of a man,
 And the man said "Am I your
 debtor?"
 And the Lord—"Not yet: but make it
 as clean as you can,
 And then I will let you a better."

I.

If my body come from brutes, my soul
 uncertain, or a fable,
 Why not bask amid the senses while
 the sun of morning shines,
 I, the finer brute rejoicing in my hounds,
 and in my stable,
 Youth and Health, and birth and
 wealth, and choice of women and
 of wines?

II.

What hast thou done for me, grim Old
 Age, save breaking my bones on
 the rack?
 Would I had past in the morning that
 looks so bright from afar!

OLD AGE.

Done for thee? starved the wild beast
 that was linkt with thee eighty
 years back.
 Less weight now for the ladder-of-
 heaven that hangs on a star.

I.

If my body come from brutes, tho' some-
 what finer than their own,
 I am heir, and this my kingdom. Shall
 the royal voice be mute?
 No, but if the rebel subject seek to drag
 me from the throne,
 Hold the sceptre, Human Soul, and
 rule thy Province of the brute.

II.

I have climb'd to the snows of Age, and
 I gaze at a field in the Past,
 Where I sank with the body at times
 in the sloughs of a low desire,
 But I hear no yelp of the beast, and the
 Man is quiet at last
 As he stands on the heights of his life
 with a glimpse of a height that is
 higher.

FAR — FAR — AWAY.

(FOR MUSIC.)

WHAT sight so lured him thro' the fields
 he knew
 As where earth's green stole into heaven's
 own hue,

Far — far — away ?

What sound was dearest in his native
 dells ?

The mellow lin-lan-lone of evening bells
 Far — far — away.

What vague world-whisper, mystic pain
 or joy,
 Thro' those three words would haunt him
 when a boy

Far — far — away ?

A whisper from his dawn of life ? a breath
 From some fair dawn beyond the doors of
 death

Far — far — away ?

Far, far, how far ? from o'er the gates of
 Birth,
 The faint horizons, all the bounds of
 earth,

Far — far — away ?

What charm in words, a charm no words
 could give ?

O dying words, can Music make you
 live

Far — far — away ?

POLITICS.

WE move, the wheel must always move,
 Nor always on the plain,
 And if we move to such a goal
 As Wisdom hopes to gain,
 Then you that drive, and know your Craft,
 Will firmly hold the rein,
 Nor lend an ear to random cries,
 Or you may drive in vain,
 For some cry "Quick" and some cry
 "Slow,"

But, while the hills remain,
 Up hill "Too-slow" will need the whip,
 Down hill "Too-quick" the chain.

BEAUTIFUL CITY.

BEAUTIFUL city, the centre and crater of
 European confusion,
 O you with your passionate shriek for the
 rights of an equal humanity,
 How often your Re-volution has proved
 but E-volution
 Roll'd again back on itself in the tides of
 a civic insanity !

THE ROSES ON THE TERRACE.

ROSE, on this terrace fifty years ago,
 When I was in my June, you in your
 May,
 Two words, "My Rose" set all your face
 aglow,
 And now that I am white, and you are
 gray,
 That blush of fifty years ago, my dear,
 Blooms in the Past, but close to me to-
 day
 As this red rose, which on our terrace here
 Glows in the blue of fifty miles away.

THE PLAY.

ACT first, this Earth, a stage so gloom'd
 with woe
 You all but sicken at the shifting scenes.
 And yet be patient. Our Playwright may
 show
 In some fifth Act what this wild Drama
 means.

ON ONE WHO AFFECTED AN
EFFEMINATE MANNER.

WHILE man and woman still are incom-
 plete,
 I prize that soul where man and woman
 meet,
 Which types all Nature's male and female
 plan,
 But, friend, man-woman is not woman-
 man.

TO ONE WHO RAN DOWN THE
ENGLISH.

You make our faults too gross, and thence
 maintain

Our darker future. May your fears be
vain!
At times the small black fly upon the pane
May seem the black ox of the distant
plain.

THE SNOWDROP.

MANY, many welcomes
February fair-maid,
Ever as of old time,
Solitary firstling,
Coming in the cold time,
Prophet of the gay time,
Prophet of the May time,
Prophet of the roses,
Many, many welcomes
February fair-maid!

THE THROSTLE.

"SUMMER is coming, summer is coming.
I know it, I know it, I know it.
Light again, leaf again, life again, love
again,"
Yes, my wild little Poet.

Sing the new year in under the blue.
Last year you sang it as gladly.
"New, new, new, new"! Is it then so
new
That you should carol so madly?

"Love again, song again, nest again,
young again"
Never a prophet so crazy!
And hardly a daisy as yet, little friend,
See, there is hardly a daisy.

"Here again, here, here, here, happy year!
O warble unchidden, unbidden!
Summer is coming, is coming, my dear,
And all the winters are hidden.

THE OAK.

LIVE thy Life,
Young and old,
Like yon oak,
Bright in spring,
Living gold;

Summer-rich
Then; and then
Autumn changed,
Soberer-hued
Gold again.

All his leaves
Fall'n at length,
Look, he stands,
Trunk and bough,
Naked strength.

IN MEMORIAM.

W. G. WARD.

FAREWELL, whose like on earth I shall
not find,
Whose Faith and Work were bells of
full accord,
My friend, the most unworldly of man-
kind,
Most generous of all Ultramontanes,
Ward,
How subtle at tierce and quart of mind
with mind,
How loyal in the following of thy Lord!

CROSSING THE BAR.

SUNSET and evening star,
And one clear call for me!
And may there be no moaning of the bar,
When I put out to sea,

But such a tide as moving seems asleep,
Too full for sound and foam,
When that which drew from out the
boundless deep
Turns again home.

Twilight and evening bell,
And after that the dark!
And may there be no sadness of farewell,
When I embark;

For tho' from out our bourne of Time and
Place
The flood may bear me far,
I hope to see my Pilot face to face
When I have crost the bar.

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