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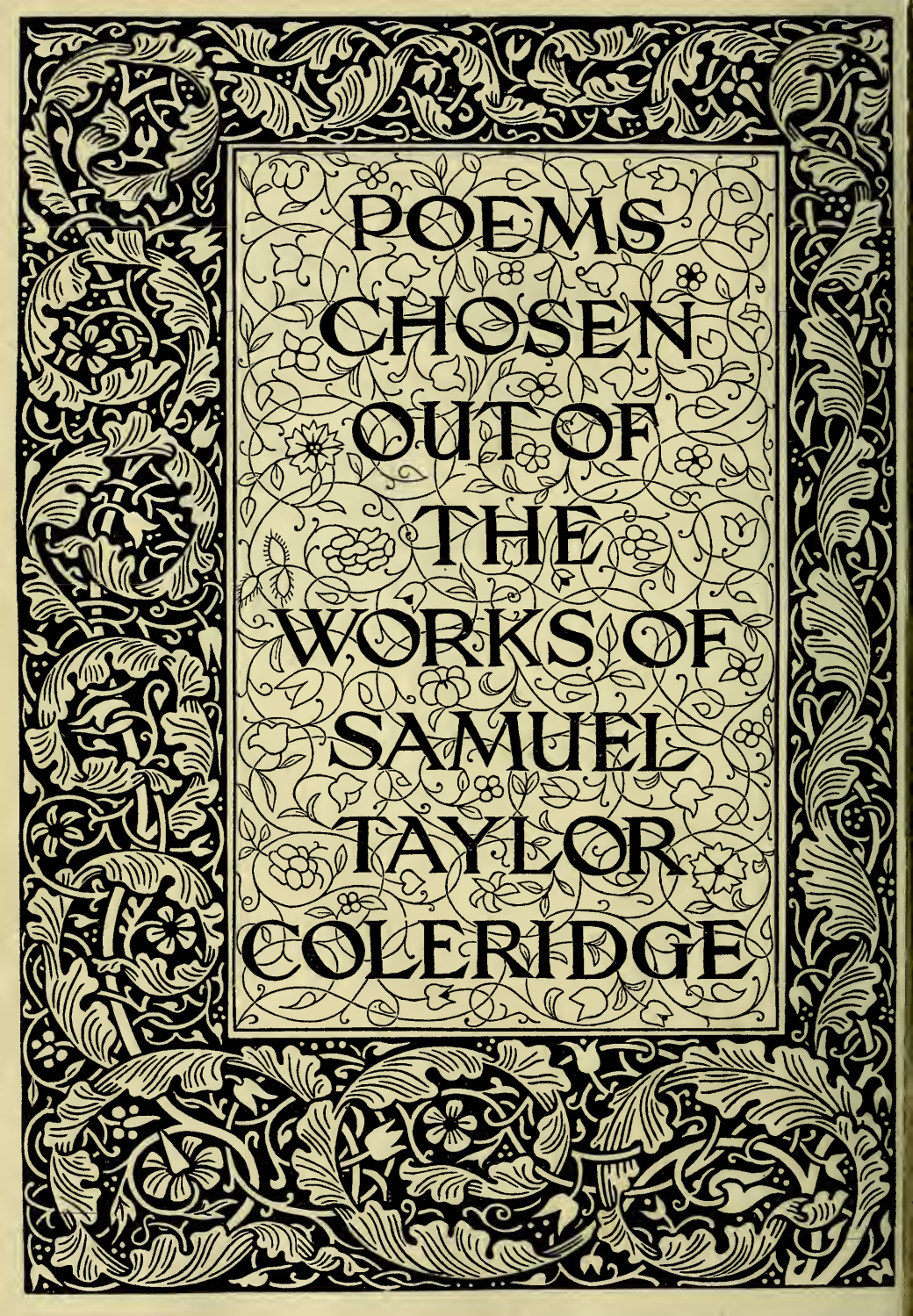
POEMS CHOSEN OUT OF THE WORKS  
OF SAMUEL TAYLOR COLERIDGE.

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POEMS  
CHOSEN  
OUT OF  
THE  
WORKS OF  
SAMUEL  
TAYLOR  
COLERIDGE



## CHRISTABEL. PART THE FIRST

**T** IS THE MIDDLE OF  
NIGHT BY THE CAS-  
TLE CLOCK, AND  
THE OWLS HAVE  
AWAKENED THE  
CROWING COCK,

TU...WHIT!....TU...WHOO!  
AND HARK, AGAIN! THE  
CROWING COCK, HOW  
DROWSILY IT CREW.

SIR LEOLINE, THE BARON  
RICH, HATH A TOOTHLESS  
MASTIFF, WHICH, FROM HER  
KENNEL BENEATH THE ROCK  
MAKETH ANSWER TO THE  
CLOCK, FOUR FOR THE  
QUARTERS, AND TWELVE FOR  
THE HOUR, EVER AND AYE,  
BY SHINE & SHOWER, SIX-  
TEEN SHORT HOWLS, NOT O-  
VER LOUD, SOME SAY, SHE  
SEES MY LADY'S SHROUD.

IS THE NIGHT CHILLY AND  
DARK? THE NIGHT IS CHIL-  
LY, BUT NOT DARK, THE  
THIN GRAY CLOUD IS SPREAD  
ON HIGH,

**Christabel.** It covers but not hides the sky.  
**Part I.** The moon is behind, and at the full;  
And yet she looks both small and dull.  
The night is chill, the cloud is grey:  
'Tis a month before the month of May,  
And the Spring comes slowly up this way.

The lovely lady, Christabel,  
Whom her father loves so well,  
What makes her in the wood so late,  
A furlong from the castle gate?  
She had dreams all yesternight  
Of her own betrothed knight;  
And she in the midnight wood will pray  
For the weal of her lover that's far away.

She stole along, she nothing spoke,  
The sighs she heaved were soft and low,  
And naught was green upon the oak  
But moss and rarest misletoe:  
She kneels beneath the huge oak tree,  
And in silence prayeth she.

The lady sprang up suddenly,  
The lovely lady, Christabel!  
It moaned as near, as near can be,  
But what it is she cannot tell...  
On the other side it seems to be,  
Of the huge, broad-breasted, old oak tree.

Christabel.  
Part I.

The night is chill; the forest bare;  
Is it the wind that moaneth bleak?  
There is not wind enough in the air  
To move away the ringlet curl  
From the lovely lady's cheek ...  
There is not wind enough to twirl  
The one red leaf, the last of its clan,  
That dances as often as dance it can,  
Hanging so light, and hanging so high,  
On the topmost twig that looks up at the sky.

Hush, beating heart of Christabel!  
Jesu, Maria, shield her well!  
She folded her arms beneath her cloak,  
And stole to the other side of the oak.  
What sees she there?  
There she sees a damsel bright,  
Drest in a silken robe of white,  
That shadowy in the moonlight shone:  
The neck that made that white robe wan,  
Her stately neck, and arms were bare;  
Her blue-veined feet unsandal'd were,  
And wildly glittered here and there  
The gems entangled in her hair.  
I guess, 'twas frightful there to see  
A lady so richly clad as she ...  
Beautiful exceedingly!

Mary mother, save me now!  
(Said Christabel,) And who art thou?

**Christabel.** The lady strange made answer meet,  
**Part I.** And her voice was faint and sweet:  
Have pity on my sore distress,  
I scarce can speak for weariness:  
Stretch forth thy hand, and have no fear!  
Said Christabel, How camest thou here?  
And the lady, whose voice was faint and sweet,  
Did thus pursue her answer meet:

My sire is of a noble line,  
And my name is Geraldine:  
Five warriors seized me yesternorn,  
Me, even me, a maid forlorn:  
They choked my cries with force and fright,  
And tied me on a palfrey white.  
The palfrey was as fleet as wind,  
And they rode furiously behind.  
They spurred amain, their steeds were white:  
And once we crossed the shade of night.  
As sure as Heaven shall rescue me,  
I have no thought what men they be;  
Nor do I know how long it is  
(For I have lain entranced I wis)  
Since one, the tallest of the five,  
Took me from the palfrey's back,  
A weary woman, scarce alive.  
Some muttered words his comrades spoke:  
He placed me underneath this oak;  
He swore they would return with haste;  
Whither they went I cannot tell...

I thought I heard, some minutes past,  
Sounds as of a castle bell.  
Stretch forth thy hand (thus ended she),  
And help a wretched maid to flee.

Then Christabel stretched forth her hand,  
And comforted fair Geraldine:  
O well, bright dame! may you command  
The service of Sir Leoline;  
And gladly our stout chivalry  
Will he send forth and friends withal  
To guide and guard you safe and free  
Home to your noble father's hall.

She rose: and forth with steps they passed  
That strove to be, and were not, fast.  
Her gracious stars the lady blest,  
And thus spake on sweet Christabel:  
All our household are at rest,  
The hall as silent as the cell;  
Sir Leoline is weak in health,  
And may not well awakened be,  
But we will move as if in stealth,  
And I beseech your courtesy,  
This night, to share your couch with me.

They crossed the moat, and Christabel  
Took the key that fitted well;  
A little door she opened straight,  
All in the middle of the gate;

**Christabel.** The gate that was ironed within and without,  
**Part I.** Where an army in battle array had marched out.  
The lady sank, belike through pain,  
And Christabel with might and main  
Lifted her up, a weary weight,  
Over the threshold of the gate:  
Then the lady rose again,  
And moved, as she were not in pain.

So free from danger, free from fear,  
They crossed the court: right glad they were.  
And Christabel devoutly cried  
To the lady by her side,  
Praise we the Virgin all divine  
Who hath rescued thee from thy distress!  
Alas, alas! said Geraldine,  
I cannot speak for weariness.  
So free from danger, free from fear,  
They crossed the court: right glad they were.

Outside her kennel, the mastiff old  
Lay fast asleep, in moonshine cold.  
The mastiff old did not awake,  
Yet she an angry moan did make!  
And what can ail the mastiff bitch?  
Never till now she uttered yell  
Beneath the eye of Christabel.  
Perhaps it is the owl's scritch:  
For what can ail the mastiff bitch?

They passed the hall, that echoes still,  
Pass as lightly as you will!  
The brands were flat, the brands were dying,  
Amid their own white ashes lying;  
But when the lady passed, there came  
A tongue of light, a fit of flame;  
And Christabel saw the lady's eye,  
And nothing else saw she thereby,  
Save the boss of the shield of Sir Leoline tall,  
Which hung in a murky old niche in the wall.  
O softly tread, said Christabel,  
My father seldom sleepeth well.

Sweet Christabel her feet doth bare,  
And jealous of the listening air  
They steal their way from stair to stair,  
Now in glimmer, and now in gloom,  
And now they pass the Baron's room,  
As still as death, with stifled breath!  
And now have reached her chamber door;  
And now doth Geraldine press down  
The rushes of the chamber floor.

The moon shines dim in the open air,  
And not a moonbeam enters here.  
But they without its light can see  
The chamber carved so curiously,  
Carved with figures strange and sweet,  
All made out of the carver's brain,  
For a lady's chamber meet:

**Christabel.** The lamp with twofold silver chain  
**Part I.** Is fastened to an angel's feet.

The silver lamp burns dead and dim;  
But Christabel the lamp will trim.  
She trimmed the lamp, and made it bright,  
And left it swinging to and fro,  
While Geraldine, in wretched plight,  
Sank down upon the floor below.

O weary lady, Geraldine,  
I pray you, drink this cordial wine!  
It is a wine of virtuous powers;  
My mother made it of wild flowers.

And will your mother pity me,  
Who am a maiden most forlorn?  
Christabel answered: Woe is me!  
She died the hour that I was born.  
I have heard the grey-haired friar tell  
How on her death-bed she did say,  
That she should hear the castle-bell  
Strike twelve upon my wedding-day.  
O mother dear! that thou wert here!  
I would, said Geraldine, she were!

But soon with altered voice, said she:  
"Off, wandering mother! Peak and pine!  
I have power to bid thee flee."  
Alas! what ails poor Geraldine?



Why stares she with unsettled eye?  
Can she the bodiless dead espy?  
And why with hollow voice cries she:  
"Off, woman, off! this hour is mine...  
Though thou her guardian spirit be,  
Off, woman, off! 'tis given to me."

Then Christabel knelt by the lady's side,  
And raised to heaven her eyes so blue:  
Alas! said she, this ghastly ride...  
Dear lady! it hath wildered you!  
The lady wiped her moist cold brow,  
And faintly said, "'Tis over now!"

Again the wild-flower wine she drank:  
Her fair large eyes 'gan glitter bright,  
And from the floor whereon she sank,  
The lofty lady stood upright:  
She was most beautiful to see,  
Like a lady of a far countrée.  
And thus the lofty lady spake:  
"All they who live in the upper sky,  
Do love you, holy Christabel!  
And you love them, and for their sake  
And for the good which me befel,  
Even I in my degree will try,  
Fair maiden, to requite you well.  
But now unrobe yourself; for I  
Must pray, ere yet in bed I lie."

**Christabel.** Quoth Christabel, So let it be!  
**Part I.** And as the lady bade, did she.  
Her gentle limbs did she undress,  
And lay down in her loveliness.

But through her brain of weal and woe  
So many thoughts moved to and fro,  
That vain it were her lids to close;  
So half-way from the bed she rose,  
And on her elbow did recline  
To look at the lady Geraldine.

Beneath the lamp the lady bowed,  
And slowly rolled her eyes around;  
Then drawing in her breath aloud,  
Like one that shuddered, she unbound  
The cincture from beneath her breast:  
Her silken robe, and inner vest,  
Dropt to her feet, and full in view,  
Behold! her bosom and half her side...  
A sight to dream of, not to tell!  
O shield her! shield sweet Christabel!

Yet Geraldine nor speaks nor stirs;  
Ah! what a stricken look was hers!  
Deep from within she seems half-way  
To lift some weight with sick assay,  
And eyes the maid and seeks delay;  
Then suddenly, as one defied,  
Collects herself in scorn and pride,

And lay down by the Maiden's side!  
And in her arms the maid she took,  
Ah wel-a-day!  
And with low voice and doleful look  
These words did say:  
"In the touch of this bosom there worketh a spell,  
Which is lord of thy utterance, Christabel!  
Thou knowest to-night, and wilt know to-morrow,  
This mark of my shame, this seal of my sorrow;  
But vainly thou warrest,  
For this is alone in  
Thy power to declare,  
That in the dim forest  
Thou heard'st a low moaning,  
And found'st a bright lady, surpassingly fair;  
And didst bring her home with thee in love and  
in charity,  
To shield her and shelter her from the damp air."

## THE CONCLUSION TO PART THE FIRST.



T was a lovely sight to see  
The lady Christabel, when she  
Was praying at the old oak tree.  
Amid the jagged shadows  
Of mossy leafless boughs,  
Kneeling in the moonlight,  
To make her gentle vows;  
Her slender palms together prest,  
Heaving sometimes on her breast;

**Christabel.** Her face resigned to bliss or bale...  
**Part I.** Her face, oh call it fair not pale,  
And both blue eyes more bright than clear,  
Each about to have a tear.

With open eyes (ah woe is me!)  
Asleep, and dreaming fearfully,  
Fearfully dreaming, yet, I wis,  
Dreaming that alone, which is...  
O sorrow and shame! Can this be she,  
The lady, who knelt at the old oak tree?  
And lo! the worker of these harms,  
That holds the maiden in her arms,  
Seems to slumber still and mild,  
As a mother with her child.

A star hath set, a star hath risen,  
O Geraldine! since arms of thine  
Have been the lovely lady's prison.  
O Geraldine! one hour was thine...  
Thou'st had thy will! By tairn and rill,  
The night-birds all that hour were still.  
But now they are jubilant anew,  
From cliff and tower, tu-whoo! tu-whoo!  
Tu-whoo! tu-whoo! from wood and fell!

And see! the lady Christabel  
Gathers herself from out her trance;  
Her limbs relax, her countenance  
Grows sad and soft; the smooth thin lids

Close o'er her eyes; and tears she sheds ...  
Large tears that leave the lashes bright!  
And oft the while she seems to smile  
As infants at a sudden light!

Christabel.  
Part I.

Yea, she doth smile, and she doth weep,  
Like a youthful hermitess,  
Beauteous in a wilderness,  
Who, praying always, prays in sleep.  
And, if she move unquietly,  
Perchance, 'tis but the blood so free  
Comes back and tingles in her feet.  
No doubt, she hath a vision sweet.  
What if her guardian spirit 'twere,  
What if she knew her mother near?  
But this she knows, in joys and woes,  
That saints will aid if men will call:  
For the blue sky bends over all!

Christabel,  
Part II. PART THE SECOND.



ACH matin bell, the  
Baron saith,  
Knells us back to a  
world of death.  
These words Sir Leo-  
line first said,  
When he rose & found  
his lady dead:  
These words Sir Leo-  
line will say  
Many a morn to his dying day!

And hence the custom and law began  
That still at dawn the sacristan,  
Who duly pulls the heavy bell,  
Five and forty beads must tell  
Between each stroke... a warning knell,  
Which not a soul can choose but hear  
From Bratha Head to Wyndermere.

Saith Bracy the bard, So let it knell!  
And let the drowsy sacristan  
Still count as slowly as he can!  
There is no lack of such, I ween,  
As well fill up the space between.  
In Langdale Pike and Witch's Lair,  
And Dungeon-ghyll so foully rent,  
With ropes of rock and bells of air  
Three sinful sextons' ghosts are pent,

Christabel.  
Part II.

Who all give back, one after t' other,  
The death-note to their living brother;  
And oft too, by the knell offended,  
Just as their one! two! three! is ended,  
The devil mocks the doleful tale  
With a merry peal from Borrowdale.

The air is still! through mist and cloud  
That merry peal comes ringing loud;  
And Geraldine shakes off her dread,  
And rises lightly from the bed;  
Puts on her silken vestments white,  
And tricks her hair in lovely plight,  
And nothing doubting of her spell  
Awakens the lady Christabel.  
"Sleep you, sweet lady Christabel?  
I trust that you have rested well."

And Christabel awoke and spied  
The same who lay down by her side...  
O rather say, the same whom she  
Raised up beneath the old oak tree!  
Nay, fairer yet! and yet more fair!  
For she belike hath drunken deep  
Of all the blessedness of sleep!  
And while she spake, her looks, her air,  
Such gentle thankfulness declare,  
That (so it seemed) her girded vests  
Grew tight beneath her heaving breasts.  
"Sure I have sinn'd!" said Christabel,

**Christabel.** "Now heaven be praised if all be well!"  
**Part II.** And in low faltering tones, yet sweet,  
Did she the lofty lady greet  
With such perplexity of mind  
As dreams too lively leave behind.

So quickly she rose, and quickly arrayed  
Her maiden limbs, and having prayed  
That He, who on the cross did groan,  
Might wash away her sins unknown,  
She forthwith led fair Geraldine  
To meet her sire, Sir Leoline.  
The lovely maid and the lady tall  
Are pacing both into the hall,  
And pacing on through page and groom,  
Enter the Baron's presence-room.

The Baron rose, and while he prest  
His gentle daughter to his breast,  
With cheerful wonder in his eyes  
The lady Geraldine espies,  
And gave such welcome to the same,  
As might beseem so bright a dame!

But when he heard the lady's tale,  
And when she told her father's name,  
Why waxed Sir Leoline so pale,  
Murmuring o'er the name again,  
Lord Roland de Vaux of Tryermaine?



Alas! they had been friends in youth;  
But whispering tongues can poison truth;  
And constancy lives in realms above;  
And life is thorny; and youth is vain;  
And to be wroth with one we love  
Doth work like madness in the brain.  
And thus it chanced, as I divine,  
With Roland and Sir Leoline.  
Each spake words of high disdain  
And insult to his heart's best brother:  
They parted... ne'er to meet again!  
But never either found another  
To free the hollow heart from paining...  
They stood aloof, the scars remaining,  
Like cliffs which had been rent asunder;  
A dreary sea now flows between.  
But neither heat, nor frost, nor thunder,  
Shall wholly do away, I ween,  
The marks of that which once hath been.

Sir Leoline, a moment's space,  
Stood gazing on the damsel's face:  
And the youthful Lord of Tryermaine  
Came back upon his heart again.

O then the Baron forgot his age,  
His noble heart swelled high with rage;  
He swore by the wounds in Jesu's side  
He would proclaim it far and wide,  
With trump and solemn heraldry,

Christabel.  
Part II.

That they, who thus had wronged the dame  
Were base as spotted infamy!  
“And if they dare deny the same,  
My herald shall appoint a week,  
And let the recreant traitors seek  
My tourney court...that there and then  
I may dislodge their reptile souls  
From the bodies and forms of men!”  
He spake: his eye in lightning rolls!  
For the lady was ruthlessly seized; & he kenned  
In the beautiful lady the child of his friend!

And now the tears were on his face,  
And fondly in his arms he took  
Fair Geraldine, who met the embrace,  
Prolonging it with joyous look.  
Which when she viewed, a vision fell  
Upon the soul of Christabel,  
The vision of fear, the touch and pain!  
She shrunk and shuddered, and saw again...  
(Ah, woe is me! Was it for thee,  
Thou gentle maid! such sights to see?)

Again she saw that bosom old,  
Again she felt that bosom cold,  
And drew in her breath with a hissing sound:  
Whereat the Knight turned wildly round,  
And nothing saw, but his own sweet maid  
With eyes upraised, as one that prayed.

The touch, the sight, had passed away,  
And in its stead that vision blest,  
Which comforted her after rest,  
While in the lady's arms she lay,  
Had put a rapture in her breast,  
And on her lips and o'er her eyes  
Spread smiles like light!

With new surprise,

"What ails then my beloved child?"  
The Baron said ... His daughter mild  
Made answer, "All will yet be well!"  
I ween, she had no power to tell  
Aught else: so mighty was the spell.  
Yet he, who saw this Geraldine,  
Had deemed her sure a thing divine.  
Such sorrow with such grace she blended,  
As if she feared she had offended  
Sweet Christabel, that gentle maid!  
And with such lowly tones she prayed  
She might be sent without delay  
Home to her father's mansion.

"Nay!

Nay, by my soul!" said Leoline.  
"Ho! Bracy the bard, the charge be thine!  
Go thou with music sweet and loud,  
And take two steeds with trappings proud,  
And take the youth whom thou lov'st best  
To bear thy harp, and learn thy song,

**Christabel.**  
**Part II.**

And clothe you both in solemn vest,  
And over the mountains haste along,  
Lest wandering folk, that are abroad,  
Detain you on the valley road.

“And when he has crossed the Irthing flood,  
My merry bard! he hastes, he hastes  
Up Knorren Moor, through Halegarth Wood,  
And reaches soon that castle good  
Which stands and threatens Scotland’s wastes.

“Bard Bracy! bard Bracy! your horses are fleet,  
Ye must ride up the hall, your music so sweet,  
More loud than your horses’ echoing feet!  
And loud and loud to Lord Roland call,  
Thy daughter is safe in Langdale hall!  
Thy beautiful daughter is safe and free,  
Sir Leoline greets thee thus through me.  
He bids thee come without delay  
With all thy numerous array;  
And take thy lovely daughter home:  
And he will meet thee on the way  
With all his numerous array  
White with their panting palfreys’ foam:  
And, by mine honour! I will say,  
That I repent me of the day  
When I spake words of fierce disdain  
To Roland de Vaux of Tryermaine!...  
For since that evil hour hath flown,

Many a summer's sun hath shone;  
Yet ne'er found I a friend again  
Like Roland de Vaux of Tryermaine."

The lady fell, and clasped his knees,  
Her face upraised, her eyes o'erflowing;  
And Bracy replied, with faltering voice,  
His gracious hail on all bestowing;  
"Thy words, thou sire of Christabel,  
Are sweeter than my harp can tell;  
Yet might I gain a boon of thee,  
This day my journey should not be,  
So strange a dream hath come to me;  
That I had vowed with music loud  
To clear yon wood from thing unblest,  
Warn'd by a vision in my rest!  
For in my sleep I saw that dove,  
That gentle bird, whom thou dost love,  
And call'st by thy own daughter's name...  
Sir Leoline! I saw the same,  
Fluttering, and uttering fearful moan,  
Among the green herbs in the forest alone.  
Which when I saw and when I heard,  
I wonder'd what might ail the bird;  
For nothing near it could I see,  
Save the grass and green herbs underneath the  
old tree.

"And in my dream, methought, I went

**Christabel.** To search out what might there be found;  
**Part II.** And what the sweet bird's trouble meant,

That thus lay fluttering on the ground.  
I went and peered, and could descry  
No cause for her distressful cry;  
But yet for her dear lady's sake  
I stooped, methought, the dove to take,  
When lo! I saw a bright green snake  
Coiled around its wings and neck.  
Green as the herbs on which it couched,  
Close by the dove's its head it crouched;  
And with the dove it heaves and stirs,  
Swelling its neck as she swelled hers!  
I woke; it was the midnight hour,  
The clock was echoing in the tower;  
But though my slumber was gone by,  
This dream it would not pass away...  
It seems to live upon my eye!  
And thence I vowed this self-same day  
With music strong and saintly song  
To wander through the forest bare,  
Lest aught unholy loiter there."

Thus Bracy said: the Baron, the while,  
Half-listening heard him with a smile;  
Then turned to Lady Geraldine,  
His eyes made up of wonder and love;  
And said in courtly accents fine,  
"Sweet maid, Lord Roland's beauteous dove,

With arms more strong than harp or song,  
Thy sire and I will crush the snake!"  
He kissed her forehead as he spake,  
And Geraldine in maiden wise  
Casting down her large bright eyes,  
With blushing cheek and courtesy fine  
She turned her from Sir Leoline;  
Softly gathering up her train,  
That o'er her right arm fell again;  
And folded her arms across her chest,  
And couched her head upon her breast,  
And looked askance at Christabel....  
Jesu, Maria, shield her well!

A snake's small eye blinks dull and shy,  
And the lady's eyes they shrunk in her head,  
Each shrunk up to a serpent's eye,  
And with somewhat of malice, & more of dread,  
At Christabel she look'd askance!  
One moment... and the sight was fled!  
But Christabel in dizzy trance  
Stumbling on the unsteady ground  
Shuddered aloud, with a hissing sound;  
And Geraldine again turned round,  
And like a thing, that sought relief,  
Full of wonder and full of grief,  
She rolled her large bright eyes divine  
Wildly on Sir Leoline.

**Christabel.** The maid, alas! her thoughts are gone,  
**Part II.** She nothing sees ... no sight but one!  
The maid, devoid of guile and sin,  
I know not how, in fearful wise,  
So deeply had she drunken in  
That look, those shrunken serpent eyes,  
That all her features were resigned  
To this sole image in her mind:  
And passively did imitate  
That look of dull and treacherous hate!  
And thus she stood, in dizzy trance,  
Still picturing that look askance  
With forced unconscious sympathy  
Full before her father's view ....  
As far as such a look could be  
In eyes so innocent and blue!

And when the trance was o'er, the maid  
Paused awhile, and inly prayed:  
Then falling at the Baron's feet,  
"By my mother's soul do I entreat  
That thou this woman send away!"  
She said: and more she could not say:  
For what she knew she could not tell,  
O'er-mastered by the mighty spell.

Why is thy cheek so wan and wild,  
Sir Leoline! Thy only child  
Lies at thy feet, thy joy, thy pride,



So fair, so innocent, so mild;  
The same, for whom thy lady died!  
O, by the pangs of her dear mother  
Think thou no evil of thy child!  
For her, and thee, and for no other,  
She prayed the moment ere she died:  
Prayed that the babe for whom she died,  
Might prove her dear lord's joy and pride!  
That prayer her deadly pangs beguiled,  
Sir Leoline!  
And wouldst thou wrong thy only child,  
Her child and thine?

Within the Baron's heart and brain  
If thoughts, like these, had any share,  
They only swelled his rage and pain,  
And did but work confusion there.  
His heart was cleft with pain and rage,  
His cheeks they quivered, his eyes were wild,  
Dishonour'd thus in his old age;  
Dishonour'd by his only child,  
And all his hospitality  
To the insulted daughter of his friend  
By more than woman's jealousy  
Brought thus to a disgraceful end...  
He rolled his eye with stern regard  
Upon the gentle minstrel bard,  
And said in tones abrupt, austere:  
"Why, Bracy! dost thou loiter here?"

Christabel.  
Part II.

I bade thee hence!" The bard obeyed;  
And turning from his own sweet maid,  
The aged knight, Sir Leoline,  
Led forth the lady Geraldine!

THE CONCLUSION TO PART THE  
SECOND.



LITTLE child, a limber elf,  
Singing, dancing to itself,  
A fairy thing with red round  
cheeks,  
That always finds, & never seeks,  
Makes such a vision to the sight  
As fills a father's eyes with light;  
And pleasures flow in so thick and fast  
Upon his heart, that he at last  
Must need express his love's excess  
With words of unmeant bitterness.  
Perhaps 'tis pretty to force together  
Thoughts so all unlike each other;  
To mutter and mock a broken charm,  
To dally with wrong that does no harm.  
Perhaps 'tis tender too and pretty  
At each wild word to feel within  
A sweet recoil of love and pity.  
And what, if in a world of sin  
(O sorrow and shame should this be true!)  
Such giddiness of heart and brain  
Comes seldom save from rage and pain,  
So talks as it's most used to do.

## KUBLA KHAN.

Kubla  
Khan



IN Xanadu did Kubla  
Khan  
A stately pleasure-dome  
decree:  
Where Alph, the sacred  
river, ran  
Through caverns mea-  
sureless to man  
Down to a sunless sea.  
So twice five miles of

fertile ground

With walls and towers were girdled round:  
And here were gardens bright with sinuous rills,  
Where blossomed many an incense-bearing tree;  
And here were forests ancient as the hills,  
Emfolding sunny spots of greenery.

But oh! that deep romantic chasm which slanted  
Down the green hill athwart a cedarn cover!  
A savage place! as holy and enchanted  
As e'er beneath a waning moon was haunted  
By woman wailing for her demon-lover!  
And from this chasm, with ceaseless turmoil  
seething,  
As if this earth in fast thick pants were breathing,  
Amid whose swift half-intermitted burst  
Huge fragments vaulted like rebounding hail,  
Or chaffy grain beneath the thresher's flail:

**Kubla** And 'mid these dancing rocks at once and ever  
**Khan** It flung up momentarily the sacred river.  
Five miles meandering with a mazy motion  
Through wood and dale the sacred river ran,  
Then reached the caverns measureless to man,  
And sank in tumult to a lifeless ocean:  
And 'mid this tumult Kubla heard from far  
Ancestral voices prophesying war!

The shadow of the dome of pleasure  
Floated midway on the waves;  
Where was heard the mingled measure  
From the fountain and the caves.  
It was a miracle of rare device,  
A sunny pleasure-dome with caves of ice!

A damsel with a dulcimer  
In a vision once I saw:  
It was an Abyssinian maid,  
And on her dulcimer she played,  
Singing of Mount Abora.  
Could I revive within me  
Her symphony and song,  
To such a deep delight 'twould win me,  
That with music loud and long,  
I would build that dome in air,  
That sunny dome! those caves of ice!  
And all who heard should see them there,  
And all should cry, Beware! Beware!


His flashing eyes, his floating hair!  
Weave a circle round him thrice,  
And close your eyes with holy dread,  
For he on honey-dew hath fed,  
And drunk the milk of Paradise.

**Kubla  
Khan**

## THE RIME OF THE ANCIENT MARINER. IN SEVEN PARTS.

Facile credo, plures esse Naturas invisibiles quam visibiles in rerum universitate. Sed horum omnium familiam quis nobis enarrabit? et gradus et cognationes et discrimina et singulorum munera? Quid agunt? quæ loca habitant? Harum rerum notitiam semper ambivit ingenium humanum, nunquam attigit. Juvat, interea, non diffiteor, quandoque in animo, tanquam in tabulâ, majoris et melioris mundi imaginem contemplari: ne mens assuefacta hodiernæ vitæ minutiis se contrahat nimis, et tota subsidat in pusillas cogitationes. Sed veritati interea invigilandum est, modusque servandus, ut certa ab incertis, diem a nocte, distinguamus. ... T. Burnet, Archæol. Phil. p. 68.

Argument: How a Ship having passed the Line was driven by storms to the cold Country towards the South Pole; and how from thence she made her course to the tropical Latitude of the Great Pacific Ocean; & of the strange things that befell; & in what manner the Ancyent Marinere came back to his own Country.



PART I.

An ancient Mariner meeteth three Gallants bidden to a wedding-feast, and detaineth one.



T is an ancient Mariner,  
And he stoppeth one of  
three.

“By thy long grey beard  
and glittering eye,  
Now wherefore stopp’st  
thou me?”

The Bridegroom’s doors  
are opened wide,  
And I am next of kin ;

The guests are met, the feast is set:  
May’st hear the merry din.”

He holds him with his skinny hand,

“There was a ship,” quoth he.

“Hold off! unhand me, grey-beard loon!”

Eftsoons his hand dropt he.

The Wedding-Guest is spell-bound by the eye  
of the old seafaring man, and constrained to hear  
his tale.

He holds him with his glittering eye...

The Wedding-Guest stood still,



And listens like a three years' child:  
The Mariner hath his will.

The Wedding-Guest sat on a stone:  
He cannot choose but hear;  
And thus spake on that ancient man,  
The bright-eyed Mariner.

“The ship was cheered, the harbour cleared,  
Merrily did we drop  
Below the kirk, below the hill,  
Below the lighthouse top.

The Mariner  
tells how the  
ship sailed  
southward  
with a good  
wind and fair  
weather, till  
it reached the  
line.

The sun came up upon the left,  
Out of the sea came he!  
And he shone bright, and on the right  
Went down into the sea.

Higher and higher every day,  
Till over the mast at noon...  
The Wedding-Guest here beat his breast,  
For he heard the loud bassoon.

The Wed-  
ding-Guest  
heareth the  
bridal music;  
but the Ma-  
riner contin-  
ueth his tale.

The bride hath paced into the hall,  
Red as a rose is she;  
Nodding their heads before her goes  
The merry minstrelsy.

The Wedding-Guest he beat his breast,  
Yet he cannot choose but hear;  
And thus spake on that ancient man,  
The bright-eyed Mariner.



“ And now the Storm-blast came, and he  
Was tyrannous and strong:  
He struck with his o’ertaking wings,  
And chased us south along.

The ship  
driven by a  
storm toward  
the south pole.

With sloping masts and dipping prow,  
As who pursued with yell and blow  
Still treads the shadow of his foe,  
And forward bends his head,  
The ship drove fast, loud roared the blast,  
And southward aye we fled.

And now there came both mist and snow,  
And it grew wondrous cold:  
And ice, mast-high, came floating by,  
As green as emerald.

And through the drifts the snowy clifts  
Did send a dismal sheen:  
Nor shapes of men nor beasts we ken ...  
The ice was all between.

The land of  
ice, & of fear-  
ful sounds  
where no liv-  
ing thing was  
to be seen.

The ice was here, the ice was there,  
The ice was all around:  
It cracked and growled, and roared and howled,  
Like noises in a swound!

At length did cross an Albatross,  
Thorough the fog it came;

Till a great  
sea-bird, call-  
ed the Alba-

tross, came through the snow-fog, and was received with great  
joy and hospitality.

As if it had been a Christian soul,  
We hailed it in God's name.

It ate the food it ne'er had eat,  
And round and round it flew.  
The ice did split with a thunder-fit;  
The helmsman steered us through!

And lo! the  
Albatross  
proveth a bird  
of good omen,  
& followeth  
the ship as it  
returned  
northward  
through fog  
& floating ice.  
The ancient  
Mariner  
inhospitably  
killeth the  
pious bird of  
good omen.

And a good south wind sprung up behind;  
The Albatross did follow,  
And every day, for food or play,  
Came to the mariners' hollo!

In mist or cloud, on mast or shroud,  
It perched for vespers nine;  
Whiles all the night, through fog-smoke white,  
Glimmered the white moon-shine."

"God save thee, ancient Mariner!  
From the fiends, that plague thee thus! ...  
Why look'st thou so?" ... With my cross-bow  
I shot the Albatross.

## PART II.



HE Sun now rose upon the right:  
Out of the sea came he,  
Still hid in mist, and on the left  
Went down into the sea.  
And the good south wind still  
blew behind,

But no sweet bird did follow,  
Nor any day for food or play  
Came to the mariners' hollo!

And I had done a hellish thing,  
And it would work 'em woe:  
For all averred, I had killed the bird  
That made the breeze to blow.  
Ah wretch! said they, the bird to slay,  
That made the breeze to blow!

Nor dim nor red, like God's own head,  
The glorious Sun uprist:  
Then all averred, I had killed the bird  
That brought the fog and mist.  
'Twas right, said they, such birds to slay,  
That bring the fog and mist.

The fair breeze blew, the white foam flew,  
The furrow followed free;  
The ship enters the Pacific Ocean, and sails northward, even  
till it reaches the Line.

His shipmates  
cry out against  
the ancient Ma-  
riner, for killing  
the bird of good  
luck.

But when the fog  
cleared off, they  
justify the same, &  
thus make them-  
selves accom-  
plices in the crime.

We were the first that ever burst  
Into that silent sea.

The ship  
hath been  
suddenly  
becalmed.

Down dropt the breeze, the sails dropt down,  
'Twas sad as sad could be;  
And we did speak only to break  
The silence of the sea!

All in a hot and copper sky,  
The bloody Sun, at noon,  
Right up above the mast did stand,  
No bigger than the Moon.

Day after day, day after day,  
We stuck, nor breath nor motion;  
As idle as a painted ship  
Upon a painted ocean.

And the  
Albatross  
begins to  
beavenged.

Water, water, every where,  
And all the boards did shrink;  
Water, water, every where,  
Nor any drop to drink.

The very deep did rot: O Christ!  
That ever this should be!  
Yea, slimy things did crawl with legs  
Upon the slimy sea.

About, about, in reel and rout  
The death-fires danced at night;  
The water, like a witch's oils,  
Burnt green, and blue and white.

A Spirit had followed them; one of the invisible inhabitants of this planet, neither departed souls nor angels; concerning whom the learned Jew, Josephus, and the Platonic Constantinopolitan, Michael Psellus, may be consulted. They are

And some in dreams assured were  
Of the Spirit that plagued us so  
Nine fathom deep he had followed us  
From the land of mist and snow.

very numerous, & there is no climate or element without one or more.


And every tongue, through utter drought,  
Was withered at the root;  
We could not speak, no more than if  
We had been choked with soot.

Ah! well-a-day! what evil looks  
Had I from old and young!  
Instead of the cross, the Albatross  
About my neck was hung.

The shipmates, in their sore distress,

would fain throw the whole guilt on the ancient Mariner:  
in sign whereof they hang the dead sea-bird round his neck.

### PART III.

 HERE passed a weary time. Each throat  
Was parched, and glazed each eye.  
A weary time! a weary time!  
How glazed each weary eye,  
When looking westward, I beheld  
A something in the sky.

The ancient Mariner beholdeth a sign in the element afar off.

At first it seemed a little speck,  
And then it seemed a mist;  
It moved and moved, and took at last  
A certain shape, I wist.

A speck, a mist, a shape, I wist!  
And still it neared and neared:  
As if it dodged a water-sprite,  
It plunged and tacked and veered.

At its nearer approach, it seemeth him to be a ship; and at a dear ransom he freeth his speech from the bonds of thirst.

With throats unslaked, with black lips baked,  
We could nor laugh nor wail;  
Through utter drought all dumb we stood!  
I bit my arm, I sucked the blood,  
And cried, A sail! a sail!

A flash of joy;

With throats unslaked, with black lips baked,  
Agape they heard me call:  
Gramercy! they for joy did grin,  
And all at once their breath drew in,  
As they were drinking all.

And horror follows. For can it be a ship that comes onward without wind or tide?

See! see! (I cried) she tacks no more!  
Hither to work us weal;  
Without a breeze, without a tide,  
She steadies with upright keel!

The western wave was all a-flame.  
The day was well nigh done!  
Almost upon the western wave

Rested the broad bright Sun;  
When that strange shape drove suddenly  
Betwixt us and the Sun.

And straight the Sun was flecked with bars,  
(Heaven's Mother send us grace!)  
As if through a dungeon-grate he peered  
With broad and burning face.

Alas! (thought I, and my heart beat loud)  
How fast she nears and nears!  
Are those her sails that glance in the Sun,  
Like restless gossameres?

Are those her ribs through which the Sun  
Did peer, as through a grate?  
And is that Woman all her crew?  
Is that a Death? and are there two?  
Is Death that woman's mate?

Her lips were red, her looks were free,  
Her locks were yellow as gold:  
Her skin was as white as leprosy,  
The Night-mare Life-in-Death was she,  
Who thicks man's blood with cold.

The naked hulk alongside came,  
And the twain were casting dice;

ship's crew, & she (the latter) winneth the ancient Mariner.

It seemeth  
him but the  
skeleton of a  
ship.

And its ribs are seen as  
bars on the face of the  
setting Sun.  
The Spectre-Woman  
and her Death-mate,  
and no other on board  
the skeleton-ship.

Like vessel,  
like crew!

Death & Life-  
in-Death have  
diced for the

“The game is done! I’ve won! I’ve won!”  
Quoth she, and whistles thrice.

No twilight  
within the  
courts of the  
Sun.

The Sun’s rim dips; the stars rush out:  
At one stride comes the dark;  
With far-heard whisper, o’er the sea,  
Off shot the spectre-bark.

At the rising  
of the Moon,

We listened and looked sideways up!  
Fear at my heart, as at a cup,  
My life-blood seemed to sip!  
The stars were dim, and thick the night,  
The steersman’s face by his lamp gleamed white;  
From the sails the dew did drip...  
Till clomb above the eastern bar  
The horned Moon, with one bright star  
Within the nether tip.

One after  
another,

One after one, by the star-dogged Moon,  
Too quick for groan or sigh,  
Each turned his face with a ghastly pang,  
And cursed me with his eye.

His ship-  
mates drop  
down dead.

Four times fifty living men,  
(And I heard nor sigh nor groan)  
With heavy thump, a lifeless lump,  
They dropped down one by one.

But Life-in-  
Death begins  
her work on  
the ancient  
Mariner.

The souls did from their bodies fly, ...  
They fled to bliss or woe!  
And every soul, it passed me by,  
Like the whizz of my cross-bow!



## PART IV.



FEAR thee, ancient Mariner!  
I fear thy skinny hand!  
And thou art long, and lank, and  
brown,  
As is the ribbed sea-sand. ∴  
I fear thee and thy glittering eye,

And thy skinny hand, so brown."  
Fear not, fear not, thou Wedding-Guest!  
This body dropt not down.

Alone, alone, all, all alone,  
Alone on a wide wide sea!  
And never a saint took pity on  
My soul in agony.

The many men, so beautiful!  
And they all dead did lie:  
And a thousand thousand slimy things  
Lived on; and so did I.

I looked upon the rotting sea,  
And drew my eyes away;  
I looked upon the rotting deck,  
And there the dead men lay.

∴ For the last two lines of this stanza, I am indebted to Mr. Wordsworth. It was on a delightful walk from Nether Stowey to Dulverton, with him & his sister, in the autumn of 1797, that this poem was planned, and in part composed. (Note of S. T. C., first printed in Sibylline Leaves.)

The Wedding-Guest  
feareth that a  
Spirit is talk-  
ing to him;

But the ancient  
Mariner assur-  
eth him of his  
bodily life, and  
proceedeth to  
relate his hor-  
rible penance.

He despiseth  
the creatures  
of the calm.

And envieth  
that they  
should live,  
and so many  
lie dead.

I looked to heaven, and tried to pray;  
But or ever a prayer had gusht,  
A wicked whisper came, and made  
My heart as dry as dust.

I closed my lids, and kept them close,  
And the balls like pulses beat;  
For the sky and the sea, and the sea and the sky  
Lay like a load on my weary eye,  
And the dead were at my feet.

**But the curse liveth for him  
in the eye of  
the dead men.** The cold sweat melted from their limbs,  
Nor rot nor reek did they:  
The look with which they looked on me  
Had never passed away.

An orphan's curse would drag to hell  
A spirit from on high;  
But oh! more horrible than that  
Is a curse in a dead man's eye!  
Seven days, seven nights, I saw that curse,  
And yet I could not die.

**In his loneli-  
ness & fixed-  
ness he yearn-  
eth towards the journeying Moon, & the stars that still sojourn,  
yet still move onward; and every where the blue sky belongs to  
them, & is their appointed rest, & their native country and their  
own natural homes, which they enter unannounced, as lords that  
are certainly expected & yet there is a silent joy at their arrival.**

Softly she was going up,  
And a star or two beside.

Her beams bemocked the sultry main,  
Like April hoar-frost spread;  
But where the ship's huge shadow lay,  
The charmed water burnt alway  
A still and awful red.

Beyond the shadow of the ship,  
I watched the water-snakes:  
They moved in tracks of shining white,  
And when they reared, the elfish light  
Fell off in hoary flakes.

Within the shadow of the ship  
I watched their rich attire:  
Blue, glossy green, and velvet black,  
They coiled and swam; and every track  
Was a flash of golden fire.

O happy living things! no tongue  
Their beauty might declare:  
A spring of love gushed from my heart,  
And I blessed them unaware:  
Sure my kind saint took pity on me,  
And I blessed them unaware.

The selfsame moment I could pray;  
And from my neck so free  
The Albatross fell off, and sank  
Like lead into the sea.

By the light  
of the Moon  
he beholdeth  
God's crea-  
tures of the  
great calm.

Their beauty  
and their  
happiness.  
He blesseth  
them in his  
heart.

The spell be-  
gins to break.

PART V.



H sleep! it is a gentle thing,  
Beloved from pole to pole!  
To Mary Queen the praise be  
given!  
She sent the gentle sleep from  
Heaven,

That slid into my soul.

By grace of  
the holy  
Mother, the  
ancient  
Mariner is  
refreshed  
with rain.

The silly buckets on the deck,  
That had so long remained,  
I dreamt that they were filled with dew;  
And when I awoke, it rained.

My lips were wet, my throat was cold,  
My garments all were dank;  
Sure I had drunken in my dreams,  
And still my body drank.

I moved, and could not feel my limbs:  
I was so light... almost  
I thought that I had died in sleep,  
And was a blessed ghost.

He heareth  
sounds and  
seeth strange  
sights and  
commotions  
in the sky &  
the element.

And soon I heard a roaring wind:  
It did not come anear;  
But with its sound it shook the sails,  
That were so thin and sere.

The upper air burst into life!

And a hundred fire-flags sheen,  
To and fro they were hurried about!  
And to and fro, and in and out,  
The wan stars danced between.

And the coming wind did roar more loud,  
And the sails did sigh like sedge;  
And the rain poured down from one black cloud;  
The Moon was at its edge.

The thick black cloud was cleft, and still  
The Moon was at its side:  
Like waters shot from some high crag,  
The lightning fell with never a jag,  
A river steep and wide.

The loud wind never reached the ship,  
Yet now the ship moved on!  
Beneath the lightning and the Moon  
The dead men gave a groan.

They groaned, they stirred, they all uprose,  
Nor spake, nor moved their eyes;  
It had been strange, even in a dream,  
To have seen those dead men rise.

The helmsman steered, the ship moved on;  
Yet never a breeze up blew;  
The mariners all 'gan work the ropes,  
Where they were wont to do;

The bodies  
of the ship's  
crew are in-  
spired, & the  
ship moves  
on;

They raised their limbs like lifeless tools...  
We were a ghastly crew.

The body of my brother's son  
Stood by me, knee to knee:  
The body and I pulled at one rope  
But he said nought to me.

But not by  
the souls of  
the men, nor  
by dæmons  
of earth or  
middle air,  
but by a  
blessed troop  
of angelic  
spirits, sent  
down by the  
invocation of  
the guardian  
saint.

"I fear thee, ancient Mariner!"  
Be calm, thou Wedding-Guest!  
'Twas not those souls that fled in pain,  
Which to their corses came again,  
But a troop of spirits blest:

For when it dawned... they dropped their arms,  
And clustered round the mast;  
Sweet sounds rose slowly through their mouths,  
And from their bodies passed.

Around, around, flew each sweet sound,  
Then darted to the Sun;  
Slowly the sounds came back again,  
Now mixed, now one by one.

Sometimes a-dropping from the sky  
I heard the sky-lark sing;  
Sometimes all little birds that are,  
How they seemed to fill the sea and air  
With their sweet jargoning!

And now 'twas like all instruments,  
Now like a lonely flute;  
And now it is an angel's song,  
That makes the heavens be mute.

It ceased; yet still the sails made on  
A pleasant noise till noon,  
A noise like of a hidden brook  
In the leafy month of June,  
That to the sleeping woods all night  
Singeth a quiet tune.

Till noon we quietly sailed on,  
Yet never a breeze did breathe:  
Slowly and smoothly went the ship,  
Moved onward from beneath.

Under the keel nine fathom deep,  
From the land of mist and snow,  
The spirit slid: and it was he  
That made the ship to go.  
The sails at noon left off their tune,  
And the ship stood still also.

The Sun, right up above the mast,  
Had fixed her to the ocean:  
But in a minute she 'gan stir,  
With a short uneasy motion...  
Backwards and forwards half her length  
With a short uneasy motion.

The lone-  
some Spirit  
from the  
south-pole  
carries on the  
ship as far as  
the Line, in  
obedience to  
the angelic  
troop, but  
still requireth  
vengeance.

Then like a pawing horse let go,  
She made a sudden bound:  
It flung the blood into my head,  
And I fell down in a swoond.

The Polar Spirit's  
fellow-dæmons,  
the invisible in-  
habitants of the  
element, take part  
in his wrong; and  
two of them re-  
late, one to the  
other, that pen-  
ance long & heavy  
for the ancient  
Mariner hath  
been accorded to  
the Polar Spirit,  
who returneth  
southward.

How long in that same fit I lay,  
I have not to declare;  
But ere my living life returned,  
I heard and in my soul discerned  
Two voices in the air.

“Is it he?” quoth one, “Is this the man?  
By him who died on cross,  
With his cruel bow he laid full low  
The harmless Albatross.

The spirit who bideth by himself  
In the land of mist and snow,  
He loved the bird that loved the man  
Who shot him with his bow.”

The other was a softer voice,  
As soft as honey-dew:  
Quoth he, “The man hath penance done,  
And penance more will do.”



## PART VI.

### First Voice.



UT tell me, tell me! speak again,  
Thy soft response renewing ...  
What makes that ship drive on so  
fast?  
What is the ocean doing?"

### Second Voice.

"Still as a slave before his lord,  
The ocean hath no blast;  
His great bright eye most silently  
Up to the Moon is cast ...

If he may know which way to go;  
For she guides him smooth or grim.  
See, brother, see! how graciously  
She looketh down on him."

### First Voice.

"But why drives on that ship so fast,  
Without or wave or wind?"

### Second Voice.

"The air is cut away before,  
And closes from behind.

Fly, brother, fly! more high, more high!  
Or we shall be belated:

The Mariner  
hath been cast  
into a trance;  
for the angelic  
power causeth  
the vessel to  
drive north-  
ward faster than  
human life  
could endure.

For slow and slow that ship will go,  
When the Mariner's trance is abated."

The  
supernatural  
motion is re-  
tarded; the  
Mariner a-  
wakes, & his  
penance be-  
gins anew.

I woke, and we were sailing on  
As in a gentle weather:  
'Twas night, calm night, the moon was high,  
The dead men stood together.

All stood together on the deck,  
For a charnel-dungeon fitter:  
All fixed on me their stony eyes,  
That in the Moon did glitter.

The pang, the curse, with which they died,  
Had never passed away:  
I could not draw my eyes from theirs,  
Nor turn them up to pray.

The curse is  
finally ex-  
piated.

And now this spell was snapt: once more  
I viewed the ocean green,  
And looked far forth, yet little saw  
Of what had else been seen ...

Like one, that on a lonesome road  
Doth walk in fear and dread,  
And having once turned round walks on,  
And turns no more his head;  
Because he knows, a frightful fiend  
Doth close behind him tread.

But soon there breathed a wind on me,  
Nor sound nor motion made:  
Its path was not upon the sea,  
In ripple or in shade.

It raised my hair, it fanned my cheek  
Like a meadow-gale of spring ...  
It mingled strangely with my fears,  
Yet it felt like a welcoming.

Swiftly, swiftly flew the ship,  
Yet she sailed softly too:  
Sweetly, sweetly blew the breeze ...  
On me alone it blew.

Oh! dream of joy! is this indeed  
The light-house top I see?  
Is this the hill? is this the kirk?  
Is this mine own countree?

And the an-  
cient Mariner  
beholdeth his  
native country.

We drifted o'er the harbour-bar,  
And I with sobs did pray ...  
O let me be awake, my God!  
Or let me sleep alway.

The harbour-bay was clear as glass,  
So smoothly it was strewn!  
And on the bay the moonlight lay,  
And the shadow of the Moon.

The rock shone bright, the kirk no less,  
That stands above the rock:  
The moonlight steeped in silentness  
The steady weathercock.

The angelic  
spirits leave  
the dead  
bodies,

And the bay was white with silent light  
Till rising from the same,  
Full many shapes, that shadows were,  
In crimson colours came.

And appear  
in their own  
forms of light.

A little distance from the prow  
Those crimson shadows were:  
I turned my eyes upon the deck...  
Oh, Christ! what saw I there!

Each corse lay flat, lifeless and flat,  
And, by the holy rood!  
A man all light, a seraph-man,  
On every corse there stood.

This seraph-band, each waved his hand:  
It was a heavenly sight!  
They stood as signals to the land,  
Each one a lovely light;

This seraph-band, each waved his hand,  
No voice did they impart...  
No voice; but oh! the silence sank  
Like music on my heart.

But soon I heard the dash of oars,  
I heard the Pilot's cheer;  
My head was turned perforce away,  
And I saw a boat appear.

The Pilot and the Pilot's boy,  
I heard them coming fast:  
Dear Lord in Heaven! it was a joy  
The dead men could not blast.

I saw a third... I heard his voice:  
It is the Hermit good!  
He singeth loud his godly hymns  
That he makes in the wood.  
He'll shrive my soul, he'll wash away  
The Albatross's blood.

## PART VII.



**H**IS Hermit good lives in that  
wood  
Which slopes down to the sea.  
How loudly his sweet voice he  
rears!  
He loves to talk with marineres  
That come from a far countree.

The Hermit  
of the Wood,

He kneels at morn, and noon, and eve...  
He hath a cushion plump:  
It is the moss that wholly hides  
The rotted old oak-stump.

The skiff-boat neared: I heard them talk,  
“Why, this is strange, I trow!  
Where are those lights so many and fair,  
That signal made but now?”

Approach-  
eth the ship  
with wonder.

“Strange, by my faith!” the Hermit said...  
“And they answered not our cheer!  
The planks looked warped! and see those sails,  
How thin they are and sere!  
I never saw aught like to them,  
Unless perchance it were

Brown skeletons of leaves that lag  
My forest-brook along;  
When the ivy-tod is heavy with snow,  
And the owlet whoops to the wolf below,  
That eats the she-wolf’s young.”

“Dear Lord! it hath a fiendish look...  
(The Pilot made reply)  
I am a-feared” ...“Push on, push on!”  
Said the Hermit cheerily.

The boat came closer to the ship,  
But I nor spake nor stirred;  
The boat came close beneath the ship,  
And straight a sound was heard.

Under the water it rumbled on,  
Still louder and more dread:

It reached the ship, it split the bay;  
The ship went down like lead.

The ship sud-  
denly sinketh.

Stunned by that loud and dreadful sound,  
Which sky and ocean smote,  
Like one that hath been seven days drowned  
My body lay afloat;  
But swift as dreams, myself I found  
Within the Pilot's boat.

The ancient  
Mariner is  
saved in the  
Pilot's boat.

Upon the whirl, where sank the ship,  
The boat spun round and round;  
And all was still, save that the hill  
Was telling of the sound.

I moved my lips...the Pilot shrieked  
And fell down in a fit;  
The holy Hermit raised his eyes,  
And prayed where he did sit.

I took the oars: the Pilot's boy,  
Who now doth crazy go,  
Laughed loud and long, and all the while  
His eyes went to and fro.  
"Ha! ha!" quoth he "full plain I see,  
The Devil knows how to row."

And now, all in my own countree,  
I stood on the firm land!  
The Hermit stepped forth from the boat,  
And scarcely he could stand.

The ancient  
Mariner  
earnestly en-  
treateth the  
Hermit to  
shrieve him;  
and the pen-  
ance of life  
falls on him.

“O shrieve me, shrieve me, holy man!”  
The Hermit crossed his brow.  
“Say quick,” quoth he, “I bid thee say...  
What manner of man art thou?”

Forthwith this frame of mine was wrenched  
With a woful agony,  
Which forced me to begin my tale;  
And then it left me free.

And ever & a-  
non through-  
out his future  
life an agony  
constraineth  
him to travel  
from land to  
land,

Since then, at an uncertain hour,  
That agony returns:  
And till my ghastly tale is told,  
This heart within me burns.

I pass, like night, from land to land;  
I have strange power of speech;  
That moment that his face I see,  
I know the man that must hear me:  
To him my tale I teach.

What loud uproar bursts from that door!  
The wedding-guests are there:  
But in the garden-bower the bride  
And bride-maids singing are:  
And hark the little vesper bell,  
Which biddeth me to prayer!

O Wedding-Guest! this soul hath been  
Alone on a wide wide sea:



So lonely 'twas, that God himself  
Scarce seemèd there to be.

O sweeter than the marriage-feast,  
'Tis sweeter far to me,  
To walk together to the kirk  
With a goodly company!

To walk together to the kirk,  
And all together pray,  
While each to his great Father bends,  
Old men, and babes, and loving friends,  
And youths and maidens gay!


Farewell, farewell! but this I tell  
To thee, thou Wedding-Guest!  
He prayeth well, who loveth well  
Both man and bird and beast.

He prayeth best, who loveth best  
All things both great and small;  
For the dear God who loveth us,  
He made and loveth all.

The Mariner, whose eye is bright,  
Whose beard with age is hoar,  
Is gone: and now the Wedding-Guest  
Turned from the bridegroom's door.

He went like one that hath been stunned,  
And is of sense forlorn:  
A sadder and a wiser man,  
He rose the morrow morn.

And to teach,  
by his own  
example,  
love and rev-  
erence to all  
things that  
God made &  
loveth.



A FRAGMENT OF A SEXTON'S  
TALE.




HE grapes upon the  
Vicar's wall  
Were ripe as ripe could  
be;  
And yellow leaves in  
sun and wind  
Were falling from the  
tree.  
On the hedge-elms in  
the narrow lane

Still swung the spikes of corn:  
Dear Lord! it seems but yesterday ...  
Young Edward's marriage-morn.

Up through that wood behind the church,  
There leads from Edward's door  
A mossy track, all over boughed,  
For half a mile or more.

And from their house-door by that track  
The bride and bridegroom went;  
Sweet Mary, though she was not gay,  
Seemed cheerful and content.

But when they to the church-yard came,



I've heard poor Mary say,  
As soon as she stepped into the sun,  
Her heart it died away.

And when the Vicar join'd their hands,  
Her limbs did creep and freeze;  
But when they prayed, she thought she saw  
Her mother on her knees.

And o'er the church-path they returned...  
I saw poor Mary's back,  
Just as she stepped beneath the boughs  
Into the mossy track.

Her feet upon the mossy track  
The married maiden set:  
That moment... I have heard her say...  
She wished she could forget.

The shade o'er-flushed her limbs with heat...  
Then came a chill like death:  
And when the merry bells rang out,  
They seemed to stop her breath.

Beneath the foulest mother's curse  
No child could ever thrive:  
A mother is a mother still,  
The holiest thing alive.

So five months passed: the mother still

A Frag-  
ment of a  
Sexton's  
Tale

Would never heal the strife;  
But Edward was a loving man,  
And Mary a fond wife.

“My sister may not visit us,  
My mother says her nay:  
O Edward! you are all to me,  
I wish for your sake I could be  
More lifesome and more gay.

“I'm dull and sad! indeed, indeed  
I know I have no reason!  
Perhaps I am not well in health,  
And 'tis a gloomy season.”

'Twas a drizzly time ... no ice, no snow!  
And on the few fine days  
She stirred not out, lest she might meet  
Her mother in the ways.

But Ellen, spite of miry ways  
And weather dark and dreary,  
Trudged every day to Edward's house,  
And made them all more cheery.

Oh! Ellen was a faithful friend,  
More dear than any sister!  
As cheerful too as singing lark;  
And she ne'er left them till 'twas dark,  
And then they always missed her.

And now Ash-Wednesday came ... that day  
But few to church repair :  
For on that day you know we read  
The Commination prayer.

A Frag-  
ment of a  
Sexton's  
Tale

Our late old Vicar, a kind man,  
Once, Sir, he said to me,  
He wished that service was clean out  
Of our good Liturgy.

The mother walked into the church,  
To Ellen's seat she went :  
Though Ellen always kept her church  
All church-days during Lent.

And gentle Ellen welcomed her  
With courteous looks and mild :  
Thought she, "What if her heart should melt,  
And all be reconciled!"

The day was scarcely like a day,  
The clouds were black outright :  
And many a night, with half a moon,  
I've seen the church more light.

The wind was wild ; against the glass  
The rain did beat and bicker ;  
The church-tower swinging over head,  
You scarce could hear the Vicar !

A Frag-  
ment of a  
Sexton's  
Tale

And then and there the mother knelt,  
And audibly she cried:  
"Oh! may a clinging curse consume  
This woman by my side!

"O hear me, hear me, Lord in Heaven,  
Although you take my life,  
O curse this woman, at whose house  
Young Edward woo'd his wife.

"By night and day, in bed and bower,  
O let her cursed be!!!"  
So having prayed, steady and slow,  
She rose up from her knee!  
And left the church, nor e'er again  
The church-door entered she.

I saw poor Ellen kneeling still,  
So pale! I guessed not why:  
When she stood up, there plainly was  
A trouble in her eye.

And when the prayers were done, we all  
Came round and asked her why:  
Giddy she seemed, and sure, there was  
A trouble in her eye.

But ere she from the church-door stepped  
She smiled and told us why:  
"It was a wicked woman's curse,"  
Quoth she, "and what care I?"

She smiled, and smiled, and passed it off  
Ere from the door she stept;  
But all agree it would have been  
Much better had she wept.

A Frag-  
ment of a  
Sexton's  
Tale

And if her heart was not at ease,  
This was her constant cry:  
"It was a wicked woman's curse;  
God's good, and what care I?"

There was a hurry in her looks,  
Her struggles she redoubled:  
"It was a wicked woman's curse,  
And why should I be troubled?"

These tears will come... I dandled her  
When 'twas the merest fairy...  
Good creature! and she hid it all:  
She told it not to Mary.

But Mary heard the tale: her arms  
Round Ellen's neck she threw;  
"O Ellen, Ellen, she cursed me,  
And now she hath cursed you!"

I saw young Edward by himself  
Stalk fast adown the lee,  
He snatched a stick from every fence,  
A twig from every tree.

A Frag-  
ment of a  
Sexton's  
Tale

He snapped them still with hand or knee,  
And then away they flew!  
As if with his uneasy limbs  
He knew not what to do!

You see, good sir! that single hill?  
His farm lies underneath:  
He heard it there, he heard it all,  
And only gnashed his teeth.

Now Ellen was a darling love  
In all his joys and cares:  
And Ellen's name and Mary's name  
Fast-linked they both together came,  
Whene'er he said his prayers.

And in the moment of his prayers  
He loved them both alike:  
Yea, both sweet names with one sweet joy  
Upon his heart did strike!

He reach'd his home, and by his looks  
They saw his inward strife:  
And they clung round him with their arms,  
Both Ellen and his wife.

And Mary could not check her tears,  
So on his breast she bowed;  
Then frenzy melted into grief,  
And Edward wept aloud.



Dear Ellen did not weep at all,  
But closelier did she cling,  
And turned her face and looked as if  
She saw some frightful thing.

A Frag-  
ment of a  
Sexton's  
Tale

#### PART IV.



O see a man tread over graves  
I hold it no good mark;  
'Tis wicked in the sun and moon,  
And bad luck in the dark!  
You see that grave? The Lord he  
gives,

The Lord, he takes away:  
O Sir! the child of my old age  
Lies there as cold as clay.

Except that grave, you scarce see one  
That was not dug by me;  
I'd rather dance upon 'em all  
Than tread upon these three!

"Aye, Sexton! 'tis a touching tale."  
You, Sir! are but a lad;  
This month I'm in my seventieth year,  
And still it makes me sad.

And Mary's sister told it me,  
For three good hours and more;  
Though I had heard it, in the main,  
From Edward's self, before.

A Frag-  
ment of a  
Sexton's  
Tale

Well! it passed off! the gentle Ellen  
Did well nigh dote on Mary;  
And she went oftener than before,  
And Mary loved her more and more:  
She managed all the dairy.

To market she on market-days,  
To church on Sundays came;  
All seemed the same: all seemed so, Sir!  
But all was not the same!

Had Ellen lost her mirth? Oh! no!  
But she was seldom cheerful;  
And Edward look'd as if he thought  
That Ellen's mirth was fearful.

When by herself, she to herself  
Must sing some merry rhyme;  
She could not now be glad for hours,  
Yet silent all the time.

And when she soothed her friend, through all  
Her soothing words 'twas plain  
She had a sore grief of her own,  
A haunting in her brain.

And oft she said, I'm not grown thin!  
And then her wrist she spanned;  
And once when Mary was down-cast,  
She took her by the hand,

And gazed upon her, and at first  
She gently pressed her hand;

Then harder, till her grasp at length  
Did gripe like a convulsion!  
"Alas!" said she, "we ne'er can be  
Made happy by compulsion!"

And once her both arms suddenly  
Round Mary's neck she flung,  
And her heart panted, and she felt  
The words upon her tongue.

She felt them coming, but no power  
Had she the words to smother;  
And with a kind of shriek she cried,  
"Oh Christ! you're like your mother!"

So gentle Ellen now no more  
Could make this sad house cheery;  
And Mary's melancholy ways  
Drove Edward wild and weary.

Lingering he raised his latch at eve,  
Though tired in heart and limb:  
He loved no other place, and yet  
Home was no home to him.

One evening he took up a book,  
And nothing in it read;

A Fragment of a  
Sexton's  
Tale

Then flung it down, and groaning cried,  
"O! Heaven! that I were dead."

Mary looked up into his face,  
And nothing to him said;  
She tried to smile, and on his arm  
Mournfully leaned her head.

And he burst into tears, and fell  
Upon his knees in prayer:  
"Her heart is broke! O God! my grief,  
It is too great to bear!"

'Twas such a foggy time as makes  
Old sextons, Sir! like me,  
Rest on their spades to cough; the spring  
Was late uncommonly.

And then the hot days, all at once,  
They came, we knew not how:  
You looked about for shade, when scarce  
A leaf was on a bough.

It happened then ('twas in the bower,  
A furlong up the wood:  
Perhaps you know the place, and yet  
I scarce know how you should,)

No path leads thither, 'tis not nigh  
To any pasture-plot;

But clustered near the chattering brook,  
Lone hollies marked the spot.

Those hollies of themselves a shape  
As of an arbour took,  
A close, round arbour; and it stands  
Not three strides from a brook.

Within this arbour, which was still  
With scarlet berries hung,  
Were these three friends, one Sunday morn,  
Just as the first bell rung.

'Tis sweet to hear a brook, 'tis sweet  
To hear the Sabbath-bell,  
'Tis sweet to hear them both at once,  
Deep in a woody dell.

His limbs along the moss, his head  
Upon a mossy heap,  
With shut-up senses, Edward lay:  
That brook e'en on a working day  
Might chatter one to sleep.

And he had passed a restless night,  
And was not well in health;  
The women sat down by his side,  
And talked as 'twere by stealth.

“The Sun peeps through the close thick leaves,

A Fragment of a  
Sexton's Tale

See, dearest Ellen! see!  
'Tis in the leaves, a little sun,  
No bigger than your ee;

“A tiny sun, and it has got  
A perfect glory too;  
Ten thousand threads and hairs of light,  
Make up a glory gay and bright  
Round that small orb, so blue.”

And then they argued of those rays,  
What colour they might be;  
Says this, “They’re mostly green”; says that,  
“They’re amber-like to me.”

So they sat chatting, while bad thoughts  
Were troubling Edward’s rest;  
But soon they heard his hard quick pants,  
And the thumping in his breast.

“A mother too!” these self-same words  
Did Edward mutter plain;  
His face was drawn back on itself,  
With horror and huge pain.

Both groan’d at once, for both knew well  
What thoughts were in his mind;  
When he waked up, and stared like one  
That hath been just struck blind.

He sat upright; and ere the dream  
Had had time to depart,  
"O God, forgive me!" (he exclaimed)  
"I have torn out her heart."

A Frag-  
ment of a  
Sexton's  
Tale

Then Ellen shrieked, and forthwith burst  
Into ungentle laughter;  
And Mary shivered, where she sat,  
And never she smiled after.

*Carmen reliquum in futurum tempus relegatum.*  
To-morrow! and To-morrow! and To-morrow!  
(Note of S. T. C., 1815.)



LOVE.



ALL thoughts, all pas-  
sions, all delights,  
Whatever stirs this  
mortal frame,  
All are but ministers of  
Love,  
And feed his sacred  
flame.


Oft in my waking  
dreams do I

Live o'er again that happy hour,  
When midway on the mount I lay,  
Beside the ruined tower.

The moonshine, stealing o'er the scene,  
Had blended with the lights of eve;  
And she was there, my hope, my joy,  
My own dear Genevieve!

She leant against the armed man,  
The statue of the armed knight;  
She stood and listened to my lay,  
Amid the lingering light.

Few sorrows hath she of her own.  
My hope! my joy! my Genevieve!





She loves me best, whene'er I sing  
The songs that make her grieve.

I played a soft and doleful air,  
I sang an old and moving story,  
An old rude song, that suited well  
That ruin wild and hoary.

She listened with a flitting blush,  
With downcast eyes and modest grace;  
For well she knew, I could not choose  
But gaze upon her face.

I told her of the Knight that wore  
Upon his shield a burning brand;  
And that for ten long years he wooed  
The Lady of the Land.

I told her how he pined : and ah!  
The deep, the low, the pleading tone  
With which I sang another's love,  
Interpreted my own.

She listened with a flitting blush,  
With downcast eyes, and modest grace;  
And she forgave me, that I gazed  
Too fondly on her face!

But when I told the cruel scorn  
That crazed that bold and lovely Knight,

Love And that he crossed the mountain-woods,  
Nor rested day nor night;

That sometimes from the savage den,  
And sometimes from the darksome shade,  
And sometimes starting up at once  
In green and sunny glade,

There came and looked him in the face  
An angel beautiful and bright;  
And that he knew it was a Fiend,  
This miserable Knight!

And that unknowing what he did,  
He leaped amid a murderous band,  
And saved from outrage worse than death  
The Lady of the Land!

And how she wept, and clasped his knees;  
And how she tended him in vain,  
And ever strove to expiate  
The scorn that crazed his brain;

And that she nursed him in a cave;  
And how his madness went away,  
When on the yellow forest-leaves  
A dying man he lay;

His dying words... but when I reached  
That tenderest strain of all the ditty,

My faltering voice and pausing harp  
Disturbed her soul with pity!

All impulses of soul and sense  
Had thrilled my guileless Genevieve;  
The music and the doleful tale,  
The rich and balmy eve;

And hopes, and fears that kindle hope,  
An undistinguishable throng,  
And gentle wishes long subdued,  
Subdued and cherished long!

She wept with pity and delight,  
She blushed with love, and virgin-shame;  
And like the murmur of a dream,  
I heard her breathe my name.


Her bosom heaved... she stepped aside,  
As conscious of my look she stepped...  
Then suddenly, with timorous eye  
She fled to me and wept.

She half enclosed me with her arms,  
She pressed me with a meek embrace;  
And bending back her head, looked up,  
And gazed upon my face.

'T was partly love, and partly fear,  
And partly 'twas a bashful art,

**Love** That I might rather feel, than see,  
The swelling of her heart.

I calmed her fears, and she was calm,  
And told her love with virgin pride;  
And so I won my Genevieve,  
My bright and beauteous Bride.



THE BALLAD OF THE DARK LADIÉ.  
A FRAGMENT.

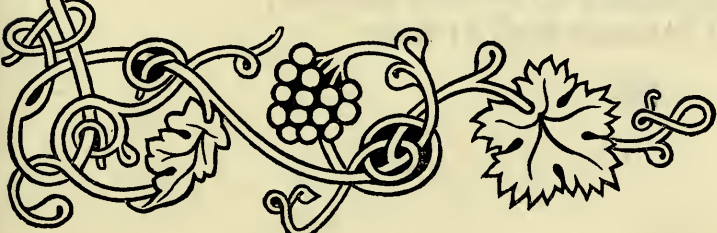


ENEATH yon birch  
with silver bark,  
And boughs so pendulous  
and fair,  
The brook falls scatter'd  
down the rock:  
And all is mossy there!  
And there upon the moss  
she sits,  
The Dark Ladié in silent

pain;  
The heavy tear is in her eye,  
And drops and swells again.

Three times she sends her little page  
Up the castled mountain's breast,  
If he might find the Knight that wears  
The Griffin for his crest.

The sun was sloping down the sky,  
And she had linger'd there all day,  
Counting moments, dreaming fears...  
Oh wherefore can he stay?



**The Dark** She hears a rustling o'er the brook,  
**Ladie** She sees far off a swinging bough!  
" 'Tis He! 'Tis my betrothed Knight!  
Lord Falkland, it is Thou!"

She springs, she clasps him round the neck,  
She sobs a thousand hopes and fears,  
Her kisses glowing on his cheeks  
She quenches with her tears.

\* \* \* \* \*  
"My friends with rude ungentle words  
They scoff and bid me fly to thee!  
O give me shelter in thy breast!  
O shield and shelter me!"

"My Henry, I have given thee much,  
I gave what I can ne'er recall,  
I gave my heart, I gave my peace,  
O Heaven! I gave thee all."

The Knight made answer to the Maid,  
While to his heart he held her hand,  
"Nine castles hath my noble sire,  
None statelier in the land.

"The fairest one shall be my love's,  
The fairest castle of the nine!  
Wait only till the stars peep out,  
The fairest shall be thine:

The Dark  
Ladie

“Wait only till the hand of eve  
Hath wholly closed yon western bars,  
And through the dark we two will steal  
Beneath the twinkling stars!” ...

“The dark? the dark? No! not the dark?  
The twinkling stars? How, Henry? How?  
O God! ’twas in the eye of noon  
He pledged his sacred vow!

“And in the eye of noon my love  
Shall lead me from my mother’s door,  
Sweet boys and girls all clothed in white  
Strewing flowers before:

“But first the nodding minstrels go  
With music meet for lordly bowers,  
The children next in snow-white vests,  
Strewing buds and flowers!

“And then my love and I shall pace,  
My jet black hair in pearly braids,  
Between our comely bachelors  
And blushing bridal maids.”

. . . . .

**Names** NAMES.

From Lessing.




ASK'D my fair one happy day,  
What I should call her in my lay;  
By what sweet name from Rome  
or Greece;

Lalage, Neæra, Chloris,  
Sappho, Lesbia, or Doris,

Arethusa or Lucrece.

“Ah!” replied my gentle fair,  
“Beloved, what are names but air?  
Choose thou whatever suits the line;  
Call me Sappho, call me Chloris,  
Call me Lalage or Doris,  
Only, only call me Thine.”





YOUTH AND AGE.



ERSE, a breeze mid  
blossoms straying,  
Where Hope clung  
feeding, like a bee ...  
Both were mine! Life  
went a-maying  
With Nature, Hope,  
and Poesy,  
When I was young!  
When I was young?...

Ah, woful When!

Ah! for the change 'twixt Now and Then!

This breathing house not built with hands,

This body that does me grievous wrong,

O'er aery cliffs and glittering sands,

How lightly Then it flashed along:

Like those trim skiffs, unknown of yore,

On winding lakes and rivers wide,

That ask no aid of sail or oar,

That fear no spite of wind or tide!

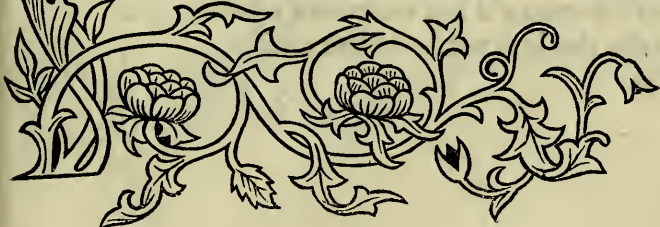
Nought cared this body for wind or weather

When Youth and I lived in't together.

Flowers are lovely; Love is flower-like;

Friendship is a sheltering tree;

O! the joys, that came down shower-like,



Youth and Age Of Friendship, Love, and Liberty,  
Ere I was old!

Ere I was old? Ah woful Ere,  
Which tells me, Youth's no longer here!  
O Youth! for years so many and sweet,  
'Tis known, that Thou and I were one,  
I'll think it but a fond conceit...  
It cannot be that Thou art gone!  
Thy vesper-bell hath not yet toll'd: ...  
And thou wert aye a masker bold!  
What strange disguise hast now put on,  
To Make Believe, that thou art gone?  
I see these locks in silvery slips,  
This drooping gait, this altered size:  
But Spring-tide blossoms on thy lips,  
And tears take sunshine from thine eyes!  
Life is but thought: so think I will  
That Youth and I are house-mates still.

Dew-drops are the gems of morning,  
But the tears of mournful eve!  
Where no hope is, life's a warning  
That only serves to make us grieve,  
When we are old:  
That only serves to make us grieve  
With oft and tedious taking-leave,  
Like some poor nigh-related guest,  
That may not rudely be dismiss;  
Yet hath outstay'd his welcome while,  
And tells the jest without the smile.




THE IMPROVISATORE.



ES, yes! that boon, life's  
richest treat  
He had, or fancied that  
he had;  
Say, 'twas but in his own  
conceit,  
The fancy made him glad!  
Crown of his cup, and  
garnish of his dish!  
The boon, prefigured in

his earliest wish,  
The fair fulfilment of his poesy,  
When his young heart first yearn'd for sympathy!

But e'en the meteor offspring of the brain  
Unnourished wane;  
Faith asks her daily bread,  
And Fancy must be fed!  
Now so it chanced... from wet or dry,  
It boots not how... I know not why...  
She missed her wonted food; and quickly  
Poor Fancy stagger'd and grew sickly.  
Then came a restless state, 'twixt yea and nay,  
His faith was fix'd, his heart all ebb and flow;  
Or like a bark, in some half-shelter'd bay,  
Above its anchor driving to and fro.



The Im-  
provisatore

That boon, which but to have possess'd  
In a Belief, gave life a zest ...  
Uncertain both what it Had been,  
And if by error lost, or luck;  
And what it Was; ... an evergreen  
Which some insidious blight had struck,  
Or annual flower, which, past its blow,  
No vernal spell shall e'er revive;  
Uncertain, and afraid to know,  
Doubts toss'd him to and fro:  
Hope keeping Love, Love Hope alive,  
Like babes bewildered in a snow,  
That cling and huddle from the cold  
In hollow tree or ruin'd fold.

Those sparkling colours, once his boast,  
Fading, one by one away,  
Thin and hueless as a ghost,  
Poor Fancy on her sick bed lay;  
Ill at distance, worse when near,  
Telling her dreams to jealous Fear!  
Where was it then, the sociable sprite  
That crown'd the Poet's cup & deck'd his dish!  
Poor shadow cast from an unsteady wish,  
Itself a substance by no other right  
But that it intercepted Reason's light;  
It dimm'd his eye, it darken'd on his brow,  
A peevish mood, a tedious time, I trow!  
Thank Heaven! 'tis not so now.

O bliss of blissful hours!  
The boon of Heaven's decreeing,  
While yet in Eden's bowers  
Dwelt the first husband and his sinless mate!  
The one sweet plant, which, piteous Heaven  
agreeing,  
They bore with them thro' Eden's closing gate!  
Of life's gay summer tide the sovran rose!  
Late autumn's amaranth, that more fragrant  
blows  
When passion's flowers all fall or fade;  
If this were ever his, in outward being,  
Or but his own true love's projected shade,  
Now that at length by certain proof he knows,  
That whether real or a magic show,  
Whate'er it Was, it Is no longer so;  
Though heart be lonesome, hope laid low,  
Yet, Lady! deem him not unblest:  
The certainty that struck Hope dead,  
Hath left Contentment in her stead:  
And that is next to Best!

Work  
without  
Hope

WORK WITHOUT HOPE. LINES  
COMPOSED 21st FEBRUARY, 1827.



ALL Nature seems at work. Slugs  
leave their lair...  
The bees are stirring... birds are  
on the wing...  
And Winter slumbering in the  
open air,  
Wears on his smiling face a dream of Spring!  
And I the while, the sole unbusy thing,  
Nor honey make, nor pair, nor build, nor sing.

Yet well I ken the banks where amaranths blow,  
Have traced the fount whence streams of nectar  
flow.

Bloom, O ye amaranths! bloom for whom ye may,  
For me ye bloom not! Glide, rich streams, away!  
With lips unbrightened, wreathless brow, I stroll:  
And would you learn the spells that drowse my  
soul?

Work without Hope draws nectar in a sieve,  
And Hope without an object cannot live.

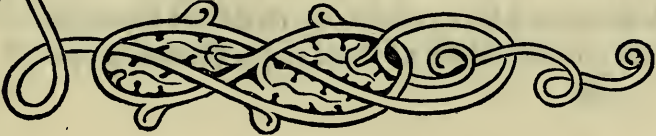


THE GARDEN OF BOCCACCIO.



IF late, in one of those  
most weary hours,  
When life seems emp-  
tied of all genial powers,  
A dreary mood, which  
he who ne'er has known  
May bless his happy  
lot, I sate alone;  
And, from the numbing  
spell to win relief,

Call'd on the Past for thought of glee or grief.  
In vain! bereft alike of grief and glee,  
I sate and cow'r'd o'er my own vacancy!  
And as I watch'd the dull continuous ache,  
Which, all else slumb'ring, seem'd alone to wake;  
O Friend! long wont to notice yet conceal,  
And soothe by silence what words cannot heal,  
I but half saw that quiet hand of thine  
Place on my desk this exquisite design.  
Boccaccio's Garden and its faery,  
The love, the joyaunce, and the gallantry!  
An Idyll, with Boccaccio's spirit warm,  
Framed in the silent poesy of form.  
Like flocks adown a newly-bathed steep  
Emerging from a mist: or like a stream



The Garden of  
Boccaccio

Of music soft that not dispels the sleep,  
But casts in happier moulds the slumberer's dream,  
Gazed by an idle eye with silent might  
The picture stole upon my inward sight.  
A tremulous warmth crept gradual o'er my chest,  
As though an infant's finger touch'd my breast.  
And one by one (I know not whence) were brought  
All spirits of power that most had stirr'd my  
thought  
In selfless boyhood, on a new world tost  
Of wonder, and in its own fancies lost;  
Or charm'd my youth, that, kindled from above,  
Loved ere it loved, and sought a form for love;  
Or lent a lustre to the earnest scan  
Of manhood, musing what and whence is man!  
Wild strain of Scalds, that in the sea-worn caves  
Rehearsed their war-spell to the winds and waves;  
Or fateful hymn of those prophetic maids,  
That call'd on Hertha in deep forest glades;  
Or minstrel lay, that cheer'd the baron's feast;  
Or rhyme of city pomp, of monk and priest,  
Judge, mayor, and many a guild in long array,  
To high-church pacing on the great saint's day.  
And many a verse which to myself I sang,  
That woke the tear yet stole away the pang,  
Of hopes which in lamenting I renew'd.  
And last, a matron now, of sober mien,  
Yet radiant still and with no earthly sheen,  
Whom as a faery child my childhood woo'd  
Even in my dawn of thought... Philosophy;



Though then unconscious of herself, pardie,  
She bore no other name than Poesy;  
And, like a gift from heaven, in life's glee,  
That had but newly left a mother's knee,  
Prattled and play'd with bird and flower, and  
stone,  
As if with elfin playfellows well known,  
And life reveal'd to innocence alone.

Thanks, gentle artist! now I can descry  
Thy fair creation with a mastering eye,  
And All awake! And now in fix'd gaze stand,  
Now wander through the Eden of thy hand;  
Praise the green arches, on the fountain clear  
See fragment shadows of the crossing deer;  
And with that serviceable nymph I stoop  
The crystal from its restless pool to scoop.  
I see no longer! I myself am there,  
Sit on the ground-sward, and the banquet share.  
'Tis I, that sweep that lute's love-echoing strings,  
And gaze upon the maid who gazing sings;  
Or pause and listen to the tinkling bells  
From the high tower, and think that there she  
dwells.

With old Boccaccio's soul I stand possess'd,  
And breathe an air like life, that swells my chest.  
The brightness of the world, O thou once free,  
And always fair, rare land of courtesy!  
O Florence! with the Tuscan fields and hills  
And famous Arno, fed with all their rills;

The Garden of  
Boccaccio

Thou brightest star of star-bright Italy!  
Rich, ornate, populous, all treasures thine,  
The golden corn, the olive, and the vine.  
Fair cities, gallant mansions, castles old,  
And forests, where beside his leafy hold  
The sullen boar hath heard the distant horn,  
And whets his tusks against the gnarled thorn;  
Palladian palace with its storied halls;  
Fountains, where Love lies listening to their falls;  
Gardens, where flings the bridge its airy span,  
And Nature makes her happy home with man;  
Where many a gorgeous flower is duly fed  
With its own rill, on its own spangled bed,  
And wreathes the marble urn, or leans its head,  
A mimic mourner, that with veil withdrawn  
Weeps liquid gems, the presents of the dawn;...  
Thine all delights, and every muse is thine;  
And more than all, the embrace and intertwine  
Of all with all in gay and twinkling dance!  
Mid gods of Greece and warriors of romance,  
See! Boccaccio sits, unfolding on his knees  
The new-found roll of old Mæonides;  
But from his mantle's fold, and near the heart,  
Peers Ovid's Holy Book of Love's sweet smart!

O all-enjoying and all-blending sage,  
Long be it mine to con thy mazy page,  
Where, half conceal'd, the eye of fancy views  
Fauns, nymphs, and winged saints, all gracious  
to thy muse!

Still in thy garden let me watch their pranks,  
And see in Dian's vest between the ranks  
Of the trim vines, some maid that half believes  
The Vestal fires, of which her lover grieves,  
With that sly satyr peeping through the leaves!

The  
Knight's  
Tomb

THE KNIGHT'S TOMB.

**W**HERE is the grave of Sir Arthur  
O'Kellyn?  
Where may the grave of that  
good man be?  
By the side of a spring, on the  
breast of Helvellyn,  
Under the twigs of a young birch tree!  
The oak that in summer was sweet to hear,  
And rustled its leaves in the fall of the year,  
And whistled and roar'd in the winter alone,  
Is gone, ... and the birch in its stead is grown, ...  
The Knight's bones are dust,  
And his good sword rust; ...  
His soul is with the saints, I trust.



ALICE DU CLOS, OR THE FORKED  
TONGUE. A BALLAD.

“One word with two meanings is the traitor’s  
shield & shaft: and a slit tongue be his blazon!”  
Caucasian Proverb.



HE Sun is not yet risen,  
But the dawn lies red on  
the dew:  
Lord Julian has stolen  
from the hunters away,  
Is seeking, Lady, for  
you.  
Put on your dress of  
green,  
Your buskins and your

quiver;  
Lord Julian is a hasty man,  
Long waiting brook'd he never.  
I dare not doubt him, that he means  
To wed you on a day,  
Your lord and master for to be,  
And you his lady gay.  
O Lady! throw your book aside!  
I would not that my Lord should chide.”

Thus spake Sir Hugh the vassal knight

To Alice, child of old Du Clos,  
As spotless fair, as airy light  
As that moon-shiny doe,  
The gold star on its brow, her sire's ancestral crest!  
For ere the lark had left his nest,  
She in the garden bower below  
Sate loosely wrapt in maiden white,  
Her face half drooping from the sight,  
A snow-drop on a tuft of snow!

O close your eyes, and strive to see  
The studious maid, with book on knee, ...  
Ah! earliest-open'd flower;  
While yet with keen unblunted light  
The morning star shone opposite  
The lattice of her bower ...  
Alone of all the starry host,  
As if in prideful scorn  
Of flight and fear he stay'd behind,  
To brave th' advancing morn.

O! Alice could read passing well,  
And she was conning then  
Dan Ovid's mazy tale of loves,  
And gods, and beasts, and men.

The vassal's speech, his taunting vein,  
It thrill'd like venom thro' her brain;  
Yet never from the book  
She rais'd her head, nor did she deign  
The knight a single look.

Alice Du "Off, traitor friend! how dar'st thou fix  
Clos Thy wanton gaze on me?  
And why, against my earnest suit,  
Does Julian send by thee?

"Go, tell thy Lord, that slow is sure:  
Fair speed his shafts to-day!  
I follow here a stronger lure,  
And chase a gentler prey."

She said: and with a baleful smile  
The vassal knight reel'd off,  
Like a huge billow from a bark  
Toil'd in the deep sea-trough,  
That shouldering sideways in mid plunge,  
Is travers'd by a flash,  
And staggering onward, leaves the ear  
With dull and distant crash.

And Alice sate with troubled mién  
A moment; for the scoff was keen,  
And thro' her veins did shiver!  
Then rose and donn'd her dress of green,  
Her buskins and her quiver.

There stands the flow'ring may-thorn tree!  
From thro' the veiling mist you see  
The black and shadowy stem; ...  
Smit by the sun the mist in glee  
Dissolves to lightsome jewelry ...  
Each blossom hath its gem!

With tear-drop glittering to a smile,  
The gay maid on the garden-stile  
Mimics the hunter's shout.  
"Hip! Florian, hip! To horse, to horse!  
Go, bring the palfrey out.

"My Julian's out with all his clan,  
And, bonny boy, you wis,  
Lord Julian is a hasty man,  
Who comes late, comes amiss."

Now Florian was a stripling squire,  
A gallant boy of Spain,  
That toss'd his head in joy and pride,  
Behind his Lady fair to ride,  
But blush'd to hold her train.

The huntress is in her dress of green, ...  
And forth they go; she with her bow,  
Her buskins and her quiver! ...  
The squire ... no younger e'er was seen ...  
With restless arm and laughing een,  
He makes his javelin quiver.

And had not Ellen stay'd the race,  
And stopp'd to see, a moment's space,  
The whole great globe of light  
Give the last parting kiss-like touch  
To the eastern ridge, it lack'd not much,  
They had o'erta'en the knight.

Alice Du  
Clos It chanced that up the covert lane,  
Where Julian waiting stood,  
A neighbour knight prick'd on to join  
The huntsmen in the wood.

And with him must Lord Julian go,  
Tho' with an anger'd mind:  
Betroth'd not wedded to his bride,  
In vain he sought, 'twixt shame and pride,  
Excuse to stay behind.

He bit his lip, he wrung his glove,  
He look'd around, he look'd above,  
But pretext none could find or frame.  
Alas! alas! and well-a-day!  
It grieves me sore to think, to say,  
That names so seldom meet with Love,  
Yet Love wants courage without a name!

Straight from the forest's skirt the trees  
O'er-branching, made an aisle,  
Where hermit old might pace and chaunt  
As in a minster's pile.

From underneath its leafy screen,  
And from the twilight shade,  
You pass at once into a green,  
A green and lightsome glade.

And there Lord Julian sate on steed;  
Behind him, in a round,



Stood knight and squire, and menial train;  
Against the leash the greyhounds strain;  
The horses paw'd the ground.

Alice Du  
Clos

When up the alley green, Sir Hugh  
Spurr'd in upon the sward,  
And mute, without a word, did he  
Fall in behind his lord.

Lord Julian turn'd his steed half round, ...  
"What! doth not Alice deign  
To accept your loving convoy, knight?  
Or doth she fear our woodland sleight,  
And joins us on the plain?"

With stifled tones the knight replied,  
And look'd askance on either side, ...  
"Nay, let the hunt proceed! ...  
The Lady's message that I bear,  
I guess would scantily please your ear,  
And less deserves your heed.

"You sent betimes. Not yet unbarr'd  
I found the middle door; ...  
Two stirrers only met my eyes,  
Fair Alice, and one more.

"I came unlook'd for: and, it seem'd,  
In an unwelcome hour;  
And found the daughter of Du Clos  
Within the lattic'd bower.

Alice Du  
Clos “But hush! the rest may wait. If lost,  
No great loss, I divine;  
And idle words will better suit  
A fair maid’s lips than mine.”

“God’s wrath! speak out, man,” Julian cried,  
O’ermaster’d by the sudden smart;...  
And feigning wrath, sharp, blunt, and rude,  
The knight his subtle shift pursued....  
“Scowl not at me; command my skill,  
To lure your hawk back, if you will,  
But not a woman’s heart.

“Go! (said she) tell him, ... slow is sure;  
Fair speed his shafts to-day!  
I follow here a stronger lure,  
And chase a gentler prey.’

“The game, pardie, was full in sight,  
That then did, if I saw aright,  
The fair dame’s eyes engage;  
For turning, as I took my ways,  
I saw them fix’d with steadfast gaze  
Full on her wanton page.”

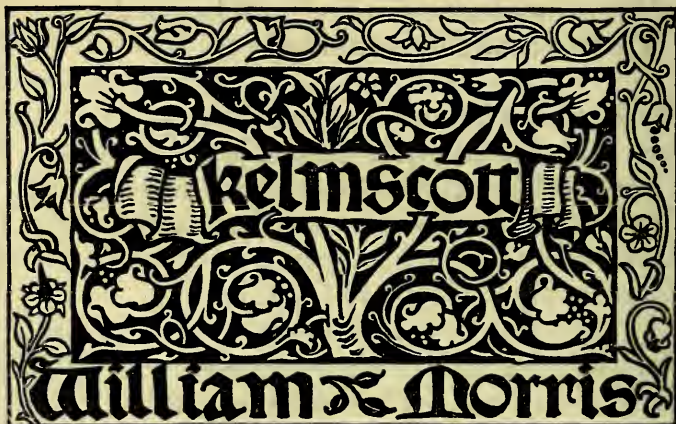
The last word of the traitor knight  
It had but entered Julian’s ear, ...  
From two o’erarching oaks between,  
With glist’ning helm-like cap is seen,  
Borne on in giddy cheer,

A youth, that ill his steed can guide;  
Yet with reverted face doth ride,  
As answering to a voice,  
That seems at once to laugh and chide ...  
"Not mine, dear mistress," still he cried,  
"Tis this mad filly's choice."

With sudden bound, beyond the boy,  
See! see! that face of hope and joy,  
That regal front! those cheeks aglow!  
Thou needed'st but the crescent sheen,  
A quiver'd Dian to have been,  
Thou lovely child of old Du Clos!

Dark as a dream Lord Julian stood,  
Swift as a dream, from forth the wood,  
Sprang on the plighted Maid!  
With fatal aim, and frantic force,  
The shaft was hurl'd! ... a lifeless corse,  
Fair Alice from her vaulting horse,  
Lies bleeding on the glade.

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