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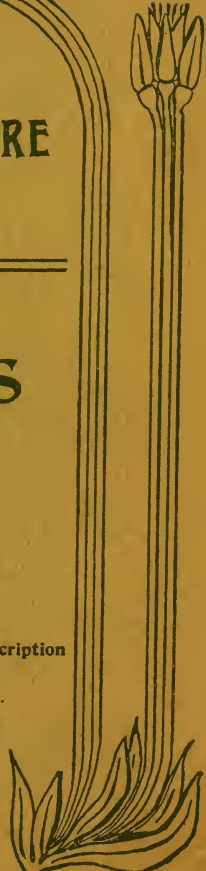
TENNYSON'S  
PRINCESS



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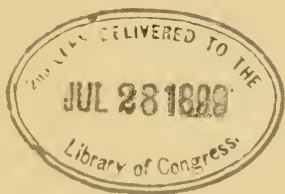
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ALFRED, LORD TENNYSON.

NUMBER 3

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# THE PRINCESS

A MEDLEY

BY

ALFRED, LORD TENNYSON

EDITED BY

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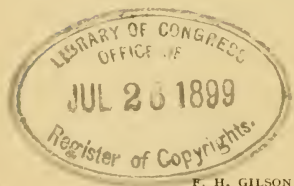
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## P R E F A C E.

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THE PRINCESS did not take its final shape until 1853, six years after its first publication, but this edition does not concern itself with the earlier readings. Tennyson's son, in his memoir of his father, says: "He 'gave the people of his best,' and he usually wished that his best should remain without variorum readings, 'the chips of the workshop,' as he called them." The ordinary student and reader, it is believed, can have no interest in the changes through which a literary product goes before reaching its final form. In the introduction and notes an attempt has been made to direct the reader's attention to the vital things in Tennyson's art and to a just conception of his point of view as a student of life. To these it is due that the poem has a place in literature, and the consideration of them is, therefore, the thing of first importance.

LINCOLN, NEB., March 27, 1899.





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## INTRODUCTION.

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### I.

ALFRED Tennyson was born at Somersby, Lincolnshire, England, August 6, 1809. His father, rector of Somersby and Wood Enderby, was a man of scholarly attainments, and his strong intellectuality was an important factor in the life of the young Tennysons. Alfred's two elder brothers, Frederick and Charles, gave evidence of poetic abilities at an early age. What they learned of art, science, the languages, and mathematics before going to Cambridge, they learned of their father, who also criticized Alfred's early verses, being himself a poet who "could write regular meter very skilfully." In the elder Tennyson's library were Shakespeare, Milton, Burke, Goldsmith, Rabelais, Sir William Jones, Addison, Swift, Defoe, Cervantes, Bunyan, and Buffon, and in these they took particular delight. Tennyson's mother was, as Edward Fitzgerald wrote, "one of the most innocent and tender-hearted ladies I ever saw;" a mother devoted to her husband and children.

Somersby, where the Tennysons lived during Alfred's boyhood, was a hamlet of but fifty or sixty inhabitants, in

an isolated part of Lincolnshire, a region dotted with little villages and crossed by a range of chalky hills, the Wold. Here Tennyson learned that love of nature which is so real and vitalizing a part of his poetry. Here, too, at his father's summer home at Mablethorpe on the Lincolnshire coast, he drew inspiration from the sea, an enduring inspiration, as may be understood from his *Crossing the Bar*, in some respects the noblest poem of the century. Wordsworth, Tennyson's predecessor in the laureate's office, had gone to nature with a like affection, but he had not reached the sureness of vision of Tennyson's saner and richer genius. Of Tennyson, Aubrey De Vere wrote, "It was easy to see that to discern the Beautiful in all around us, and to reveal that beauty to others, was his special poetic vocation," and this is the essential truth for us to realize about him. It is not that he adorns his ideas with beautiful images; so much, within the limits of good taste, he does, but that a truth of art or nature can not, as he sees it, become poetry until it has become beauty as well. He is at once the artist and the seer.

In 1827, Tennyson and his brother Charles published *Poems by Two Brothers*, the book being brought out by Jackson of Louth, the village where, when he was seven years old, Tennyson had been sent to school. The poems, for which they received £20 from the publisher, were of extraordinary performance and promise; those by Alfred, the younger, having been written between the ages of fifteen and seventeen. They attracted, however, practically no

attention. A year later, both Alfred and Charles matriculated at Cambridge, where Alfred was next year to win the Chancellor's medal for his poem *Timbuctoo*. Here among other friends to be famous later, — Spedding, Alford, Trench, Merivale, and others, — he grew into companionship with Arthur Hallam, son of Henry Hallam, the distinguished historian. His strong personal attachment to Hallam, whose high intellectual powers were full of remarkable promise, an attachment which has, perhaps, had no parallel, was strengthened by the latter's engagement to his sister Emily; and when at the early age of twenty-two, Hallam died in Vienna, his grief was unbounded. Out of this sorrow grew the noblest tribute to human friendship the world has ever known, *In Memoriam*. This was not published until 1850. Several other volumes had then appeared, among them, in 1847, *The Princess*.

General recognition of his genius came but slowly, so slowly that he was fain to give up the thought of success with his English public. Some few there were who saw at once the possibilities growing in him, and the warmth of their encouragement kept him to his purpose. It was charged against him that he was dull, and then as now the cheap commonplace of such things as the *May Queen*, *Lady Clara Vere de Vere*, *To Christopher North*, and *O Darling Room*, passed with some critics for the measure of his genius. He seemed to many to deal only with feelings that lie on the surface, and his repose, his grace, his careful attention to beauty of form appeared to indicate the

lack of emotional depth rather than the serene nobility of a great soul. That Tennyson wrote many things altogether unworthy of him is unfortunately true, but this should not lessen the estimate of his real achievements.

For ten years after the publication of the 1832 volume, Tennyson was silent, not because he ceased writing, but because his poetry had not so far been favorably received by the reviewers. He was through life extremely sensitive, little fitted for the task of fighting his way to public favor. The death of the elder Tennyson, recalling Alfred from college, had left the family in straitened circumstances, and later Alfred lost his all in a venture in which he was too easily induced to have faith. For long years his prospects were so uncertain that he was forced definitely to break off his attentions to Emily Sellwood, whom later, when he became assured that he could support her, he married. These years were full of discouragements, but with his marriage, as he is reported to have said, peace came into his life. Not long after his marriage he settled at Farringford in the Isle of Wight, and with this home it is that we especially associate him.

Tennyson gave himself to his art with a singleness and sincerity of purpose that is remarkable. The story of his life is simply the story of that devotion and the story of his friendships. Among his friends were many of the most distinguished men of his time, Browning, Carlyle, Spencer, Fitzgerald, Thackeray, and in their letters appears the warm personal regard which they entertained for him. After the publication of *In Memoriam* he was,

until he died, the acknowledged head of English poetry. Though he had previously refused a baronetcy, in 1884 he consented to be made a peer, receiving the title of Baron of Aldworth and Farringford. He died at Aldworth, his home in Sussex, October 6, 1892, and was buried in Westminster Abbey.

## II.

George Saintsbury in his "History of Nineteenth Century Literature," says :

"*The Princess* is undoubtedly Tennyson's greatest effort, if not exactly in comedy, in a vein verging towards the comic—a side on which he was not so well equipped for offense or for defense as on the other. But it is a masterpiece. Exquisite as its author's verse always is, it was never more exquisite than here, whether in the blank verse, or in the (superadded) lyrics, while none of his deliberately arranged plays contains characters half so good as those of the Princess herself, of Lady Blanche and Lady Psyche, of Cyril, of the two Kings, and even of one or two others. And that unequalled dream-faculty of his, which has been more than once glanced at, enabled him to carry off whatever was fantastical in the conception with almost unparalleled felicity. It may or may not be agreed that the question of the equality of the sexes is one of the distinguishing questions of this century; and some of those who would give it that position may or may not maintain, if they think it worth while, that it is treated here too lightly, while their opponents may wish that it had been treated more lightly still. But this very difference will point the unbiassed critic to the same conclusion, that Tennyson has hit the golden mean; while that,

whatever he has hit or missed in subject, the verse of his essay is golden, no one who is competent will doubt. Such lyrics as 'The splendor falls' and 'Tears, idle tears,' such blank verse as that of the closing passage, would raise to the topmost heights of poetry whatever subject it was spent upon."

But it is to be understood that *The Princess* is not the greatest effort in the whole range of Tennyson's poetry. That distinction must very probably be given to the *Idylls of the King*, in which the legends of King Arthur and his Round Table are rehabilitated in modern verse and filled with a new meaning. Though *The Princess* displays that reverence for womanhood which was so important a part of Tennyson's poetic endowment, yet this is voiced in a larger way in the *Idylls*. Tennyson was early familiar with the stories of Arthurian romance as told in Malory's pages; and the Arthurian country in the south of England he traversed on foot, learning its traditions from the lips of the common people, and making close acquaintance with its wealth of antiquities. This material and this inspiration slowly took shape in the *Idylls*, of which the first were published in 1859, and others at varying intervals later.

In his attempts in the dramatic form, Tennyson has not been so happy. *Queen Mary*, *Harold*, *The Foresters*, lack somewhere the fine fire that burns in the *Idylls* and in his shorter pieces. His wonderful power of condensed expression, his illuminating imagination, his vivid sense of color and form and of every phase of delicate or magnificent beauty, his mastery of suggestive phrasing, were not just the qualities to enable him to put a story in the



moving form of drama. His own spirit was too high, too meditative, his art too severely polished for the swift action, the lightning play of emotion of the drama.

But his range was yet a wide one. From the delicate grace of *Mariana* or *The Lady of Shalott*, from the passion of *Ænone* or *The Lover's Tale*, from the *Voyage to Tithonus*, *The Defense of Lucknow*, or *Ulysses*, is surely a long way. No other poet of the century has had so universal a sympathy, has touched upon so many themes with so sure a mastery of them as he.

Turning to our immediate purpose, consideration of *The Princess*, we should remember that at the time of its publication English ideas of the education of woman were very primitive. Tennyson was progressive always, flaming at time-sanctioned wrongs, looking "into the future far as human eye could see," and from that vision seeking to correct the abuses of the present; and this abuse the fine reverence of his regard for womanhood could but look upon with quickened indignation. Tennyson's son, in his memoir of his father, says:

"His friends report my father to have said that the two great social questions impending in England were, 'the housing and education of the poor man before making him our master, and the higher education of women,' and that the sooner woman finds out before the great educational movement begins, that 'woman is not undeveloped man, but diverse,' the better it will be for the progress of the world."

The poem has clearly been written from this point of

view. It is an almost complete summing up of what may be said on one phase of the subject of the relation of man and woman, interpenetrated with the chivalrous sense of the nobility of woman's diverse part in the life she shares with man.

But apart from the theme and the spirit that animates it, the art of the poem is notable. The meter is the iambic pentameter of Shakespeare and Milton. Occasionally a line varies from the typical line by the addition of an extra syllable or by a misplaced accent, but this relief to the monotony of the verse has almost always a further specific purpose. A few illustrations of this artistic employment of variation may serve to make the reader observant of other instances of the same thing in the course of the poem.

“Lived thro’ her to the tips of *her long* hands.”

The delay in movement caused by the transfer of the accent from *her* to *long* serves to emphasize, not only the adjective *long*, but also the impression of the whole line, and a like effect is to be noticed in the following.

“That on the stretched forefinger *of all* Time.”

The employment of two light syllables for one is very common throughout the poem, sometimes serving to make the verse quicker and brighter, and again merely useful in giving variety to the rhythm. Often the concluding vowel of the first of these two syllables is followed by an initial vowel in the other, in which case the two become more nearly one syllable, as in the following lines.

“The Princess ; liker to *the inhabitant*.”

“Makes noble through the *sensuous* organism.”

“‘And glean your scattered *sapience*.’ Then once more.”

When a consonant intervenes it may be one that the voice passes over lightly.

“Went *sorrowing* in a pause I dared not break.”

“Immersed in rich *foreshadowings* of the world.”

“Less *prosperously* the second suit obtained.”

Sometimes an accent coming irregularly in the line makes the word in which it occurs emphatic. So it is in this first line, in which the accent is transferred from the second syllable of the line to the first.

“*Tenderness* touch by touch, and last to these,  
Love like an Alpine harebell hung with tears  
By some cold morning glacier ; frail at first.”

And in the last line note that *some*, *cold*, and the first syllable of *morning* are all accented, increasing the deadening weight of the line, as cold is deadening.

The student of Tennyson will hardly fail to note the music of pure tone that is so abundant in his verse. The intercalary songs are particularly remarkable for their rich and mellow succession of vowels and for the tonal beauty of the consonants. Further, Tennyson employs the old Anglo-Saxon device of alliteration very freely. The alliterative letters are printed in italics in the illustrative quotations that follow.

“The splendor falls on castle walls  
 And snowy summits old in story :  
 The long light shakes across the lakes.”

“To leap the rotten pales of prejudice.”

“With prudes for proctors, dowagers for deans,  
 And sweet girl-graduates in their golden hair.”

“I smote him on the breast; he started up;  
 There rose a shriek as of a city sacked.”

“Or own one port of sense not flint to prayer.”

The student of Tennyson must always find his use of imaginative words and expressions one of the never-lessening marvels of his work. The lamp back of the Princess *droops* rather than hangs, as if animated and doing homage; the preëminence of man is *gray*; the day *fled* on; litanies are not soft or sweet or mellow, but *silver*; Lady Psyche's tears when she meets her brother are *gracious dew*; a flash of pain in Ida's face *tortures her mouth*. But instances need not be multiplied; the reader will pass under the spell of them as he finds them in the poem itself.

### III. SUGGESTIONS FOR STUDY.

A note-book for comment should be at hand in the reading, and in this notes upon these several aspects of the poem should have prominence: first, its wealth of figures; second, its music as sound merely, including rhythm,

vowel quality, alliterative and imitative tone-color (see note on line 41, Part II.); third, character study; and fourth, the art displayed in the management of the plot. Do not be content with observing that Tennyson has employed figurative language, but analyze the figure until you know in any given case just the defect in it or its peculiar beauty. Words that are used in a suggestive and imaginatively poetic way should be noted. In studying the character painting, observe all the hints of mood in the actors in the story, and write out what these imply in their feeling. Why (Prologue l. 125) does Walter pat Lilia's head? Why does she (l. 137) shake the hand aside? Why "the patron"? What mood is indicated by the tapping of her foot (l. 149)? What mood again in line 191? And what are the things that you now know of Lilia beyond what the poet has directly told you? Has Tennyson made you know her by his account of her, by letting you see what she does and says, or in this second way through the aid of suggesting and directing comment of his own? In such fashion study every character in the poem, making notes of your findings as you go along. Afterwards, you can sum them up separately for each one, and decide whether the portrait is true and consistent throughout; in thus reviewing your conclusions the characters will become more definite in your own mind. If the book is used in the class-room, the teacher should frame questions that will develop these things. Comments in the notes call attention to some matters worthy of consideration in the handling of the plot, but others are left to

be developed by the questioning of the teacher or by the observant study of the reader.

In addition to the consideration of the art of the poem, the subject matter should be taken into account. Remember that it was written over fifty years ago, and in the light of that remembrance note what opinions are original, as you judge, or the expression of an original point of view. Make a note also of such sentiments as appear to you to be a voicing of Tennyson's own spirit, rather than solely something put into the mouth of one of the characters. Endeavor as far as possible to find the poet's own feeling and attitude towards every question that he touches.

#### IV. BIBLIOGRAPHY.

The MacMillan Co., New York, publishes the standard edition of Tennyson's poems in various forms from a complete one-volume edition at a moderate price, to library editions in several volumes. The following books will be found helpful collateral reading:

Alfred, Lord Tennyson: A Memoir by his Son.

The Poetry of Tennyson. Henry Van Dyke.

Tennyson and his Relation to Modern Life. S. A. Brooke.

Tennyson: A Biographical Sketch. Alfred Waugh,  
Tennyson's Debt to Environment. W. G. Ward.

Tennyson: Poet, Philosopher, Idealist. J. C. Walters.  
Victorian Poets. E. C. Stedman,

## V. CHRONOLOGY.

1809. Birth, August 6, at Somersby.
1827. Poems by Two Brothers.
1828. Entered Trinity College, Cambridge.
1831. Left Cambridge in February. His father died  
in March.
1833. Poems. Appeared before the opening of the  
year and so have sometimes been called the edition of '32.
1842. Poems. Successive editions appeared in '43,  
'45, '46, '48, '50, '51 and '53.
1845. Received a pension of £200 through Sir Robert  
Peel.
1847. The Princess. Successive editions appeared in  
'48, '50, '51, and '53, in this last receiving its final form.
1850. In Memoriam. Married Emily Sellwood. Laure-  
ateship given by the Queen.
1855. Maud and Other Poems.
1859. First four Idylls of the King.
1864. Enoch Arden.
1869. The Holy Grail and Other Poems.
- 1875-'84. Queen Mary, Harold, The Cup, The Falcon,  
The Promise of May, Becket. \*
1885. Tiresias and Other Poems.
1889. Demeter and Other Poems.
1892. The Foresters, Robin Hood, and Maid Marian.  
Died October 6. Buried in Westminster Abbey.  
The Death of CEnone, Akbar's Dream and Other  
Poems.





# THE PRINCESS :

*A MEDLEY.*

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## PROLOGUE.

SIR WALTER VIVIAN all a summer's day  
Gave his broad lawns until the set of sun  
Up to the people : thither flock'd at noon  
His tenants, wife and child, and thither half  
The neighboring borough with their Institute  
Of which he was the patron. I was there  
From college, visiting the son,— the son  
A Walter too,— with others of our set,  
Five others : we were seven at Vivian-place.

And me that morning Walter show'd the house,  
Greek, set with busts : from vases in the hall  
Flowers of all heavens, and lovelier than their names,  
Grew side by side ; and on the pavement lay  
Carved stones of the Abbey-ruin in the park,  
Huge Ammonites, and the first bones of Time ;  
And on the tables every clime and age

Jumbled together ; celts and calumets,  
Claymore and snowshoe, toys in lava, fans  
Of sandal, amber, ancient rosaries,  
20 Laborious orient ivory sphere in sphere,  
The cursed Malayan crease, and battle-clubs  
From the isles of palm : and higher on the walls,  
Betwixt the monstrous horns of elk and deer,  
His own forefathers' arms and armor hung.

And " this," he said " was Hugh's at Agincourt ;  
And that was old Sir Ralph's at Ascalon :  
A good knight he ! we keep a chronicle  
With all about him " — which he brought, and I  
Dived in a hoard of tales that dealt with knights,—  
30 Half-legend, half-historic, counts and kings  
Who laid about them at their wills and died ;  
And mixt with these, a lady, one that arm'd  
Her own fair head, and sallying thro' the gate,  
Had beat her foes with slaughter from her walls.

" O miracle of women," said the book,  
" O noble heart who, being strait-besieged  
By this wild king to force her to his wish,  
Nor bent, nor broke, nor shunn'd a soldier's death,  
But now when all was lost or seem'd as lost —  
40 Her stature more than mortal in the burst

Of sunrise, her arm lifted, eyes on fire —  
 Brake with a blast of trumpets from the gate,  
 And, falling on them like a thunderbolt,  
 She trampled some beneath her horses' heels,  
 And some were whelm'd with missiles of the wall,  
 And some were push'd with lances from the rock,  
 And part were drown'd within the whirling brook :  
 O miracle of noble womanhood !”

So sang the gallant glorious chronicle ;  
 And, I all rapt in this, “Come out,” he said, 50  
 “To the Abbey : there is Aunt Elizabeth  
 And sister Lilia with the rest.” We went  
 (I kept the book and had my finger in it)  
 Down thro' the park : strange was the sight to me ;  
 For all the sloping pasture murmur'd, sown  
 With happy faces and with holiday.  
 There moved the multitude, a thousand heads :  
 The patient leaders of their Institute  
 Taught them with facts. One rear'd a font of stone  
 And drew, from butts of water on the slope, 60  
 The fountain of the moment, playing, now  
 A twisted snake, and now a rain of pearls,  
 Or steep-up spout whereon the gilded ball  
 Danced like a wisp : and somewhat lower down  
 A man with knobs and wires and vials fired

A cannon; Echo answer'd in her sleep  
From hollow fields: and here were telescopes  
For azure views; and there a group of girls  
In circle waited, whom the electric shock  
70 Dislink'd with shrieks and laughter: round the lake  
A little clock-work steamer paddling plied  
And shook the lilies: perch'd about the knolls  
A dozen angry models jettied steam:  
A petty railway ran: a fire-balloon  
Rose gem-like up before the dusky groves  
And dropt a fairy parachute and past:  
And there thro' twenty posts of telegraph  
They flash'd a saucy message to and fro  
Between the mimic stations; so that sport  
80 Went hand in hand with Science; otherwhere  
Pure sport: a herd of boys with clamor bowl'd  
And stump'd the wicket; babies roll'd about  
Like tumbled fruit in grass; and men and maids  
Arranged a country dance, and flew thro' light  
And shadow, while the twangling violin  
Struck up with Soldier-laddie, and overhead  
The broad ambrosial aisles of lofty lime  
Made noise with bees and breeze from end to end.

Strange was the sight and smacking of the time;  
90 And long we gazed, but satiated at length

Came to the ruins. High-arch'd and ivy-claspt,  
Of finest Gothic lighter than a fire,  
Thro' one wide chasm of time and frost they gave  
The park, the crowd, the house; but all within  
The sward was trim as any garden lawn :  
And here we lit on Aunt Elizabeth,  
And Lilia with the rest, and lady friends  
From neighbor seats : and there was Ralph himself,  
A broken statue propt against the wall,  
As gay as any. Lilia, wild with sport, 100  
Half child half woman as she was, had wound  
A scarf of orange round the stony helm,  
And robed the shoulders in a rosy silk,  
That made the old warrior from his ivied nook  
Glow like a sunbeam : near his tomb a feast  
Shone, silver-set ; about it lay the guests,  
And there we join'd them : then the maiden Aunt  
Took this fair day for text, and from it preach'd  
An universal culture for the crowd,  
And all things great ; but we, unworthier, told 110  
Of college : he had climb'd across the spikes,  
And he had squeezed himself betwixt the bars,  
And he had breath'd the Proctor's dogs ; and one  
Discuss'd his tutor, rough to common men,  
But honeying at the whisper of a lord ;  
And one the Master, as a rogue in grain  
Veneer'd with sanctimonious theory.

But while they talk'd, above their heads I saw  
The feudal warrior lady-clad ; which brought  
120 My book to mind : and opening this I read  
Of old Sir Ralph a page or two that rang  
With tilt and tourney ; then the tale of her  
That drove her foes with slaughter from her walls,  
And much I praised her nobleness, and " Where,"  
Ask'd Walter, patting Lilia's head ( she lay  
Beside him ) " lives there such a woman now ? "

Quick answer'd Lilia " There are thousands now  
Such women, but convention beats them down :  
It is but bringing up ; no more than that :  
130 You men have done it : how I hate you all !  
Ah, were I something great ! I wish I were  
Some mighty poetess, I would shame you then,  
That love to keep us children ! O I wish  
That I were some great princess, I would build  
Far off from men a college like a man's,  
And I would teach them all that men are taught ;  
We are twice as quick ! " And here she shook aside  
The hand that play'd the patron with her curls.

And one said smiling " Pretty were the sight  
140 If our old halls could change their sex, and flaunt  
With prudes for proctors, dowagers for deans,

And sweet girl-graduates in their golden hair.  
 I think they should not wear our rusty gowns,  
 But move as rich as Emperor-moths, or Ralph  
 Who shines so in the corner ; yet I fear,  
 If there were many Lilies in the brood,  
 However deep you might embower the nest,  
 Some boy would spy it."

At this upon the sward

She tapt her tiny silken-sandall'd foot :  
 "That's your light way ; but I would make it death 150  
 For any male thing but to peep at us."

Petulant she spoke, and at herself she laugh'd ;  
 A rosebud set with little wilful thorns,  
 And sweet as English air could make her, she :  
 But Walter hail'd a score of names upon her,  
 And "petty Ogress," and "ungrateful Puss,"  
 And swore he long'd at college, only long'd,  
 All else was well, for she-society.  
 They boated and they cricketed ; they talk'd  
 At wine, in clubs, of art, of politics ; 160  
 They lost their weeks ; they vex't the souls of deans ;  
 They rode ; they betted ; made a hundred friends,  
 And caught the blossom of the flying terms,  
 But miss'd the mignonette of Vivian-place,  
 The little hearth-flower, Lilia. Thus he spoke,

Part banter, part affection.

“True,” she said,  
 “We doubt not that. O yes, you miss’d us much.  
 I’ll stake my ruby ring upon it you did.”

She held it out; and as a parrot turns  
 170 Up thro’ gilt wires a crafty loving eye,  
 And takes a lady’s finger with all care,  
 And bites it for true heart and not for harm,  
 So he with Lilia’s. Daintily she shriek’d  
 And wrung it. “Doubt my word again!” he said.  
 “Come, listen! here is proof that you were miss’d:  
 We seven stay’d at Christmas up to read;  
 And there we took one tutor as to read:  
 The hard-grain’d Muses of the cube and square  
 Were out of season: never man, I think,  
 180 So moulder’d in a sinecure as he:  
 For while our cloisters echo’d frosty feet,  
 And our long walks were stript as bare as brooms,  
 We did but talk you over, pledge you all  
 In wassail; often, like as many girls—  
 Sick for the hollies and the yews of home—  
 As many little trifling Lilies—play’d  
 Charades and riddles as at Christmas here,  
 And *what’s my thought* and *when* and *where* and *how*,  
 And often told a tale from mouth to mouth



As here at Christmas.”

She remember'd that :

190

A pleasant game, she thought : she liked it more  
Than magic music, forfeits, all the rest.  
But these — what kind of tales did men tell men,  
She wonder'd, by themselves ?

A half-disdain

Perch'd on the pouted blossom of her lips ;  
And Walter nodded at me ; “ *He* began,  
The rest would follow, each in turn ; and so  
We forged a sevenfold story. Kind ? what kind ?  
Chimeras, crotchets, Christmas solecisms,  
Seven-headed monsters only made to kill  
Time by the fire in winter.”

200

“ Kill him now,

The tyrant ! kill him in the summer too,”  
Said Lilia ; “ Why not now ? ” the maiden Aunt.  
“ Why not a summer's as a winter's tale ?  
A tale for summer as befits the time,  
And something it should be to suit the place,  
Heroic, for a hero lies beneath,  
Grave, solemn ! ”

Walter warp'd his mouth at this

To something so mock-solemn, that I laugh'd  
And Lilia woke with sudden-shrilling mirth  
An echo like a ghostly woodpecker,

210

Hid in the ruins ; till the maiden Aunt  
 (A little sense of wrong had touch'd her face  
 With color) turn'd to me with "As you will ;  
 Heroic if you will, or what you will,  
 Or be yourself yóur hero if you will."

"Take Lilia, then, for heroine," clamored he,  
 "And make her some great Princess, six feet high,  
 Grand, epic, homicidal ; and be you  
 220 The Prince to win her !"

"Then follow me, the Prince,"  
 I answer'd, "each be hero in his turn !  
 Seven and yet one, like shadows in a dream.—  
 Heroic seems our Princess as required —  
 But something made to suit with Time and place,  
 A Gothic ruin and a Grecian house,  
 A talk of college and of ladies' rights,  
 A feudal knight in silken masquerade,  
 And, yonder, shrieks and strange experiments  
 For which the good Sir Ralph had burnt them all —  
 230 This *were* a medley ! we should have him back  
 Who told the 'Winter's tale' to do it for us.  
 No matter : we will say whatever comes.  
 And let the ladies sing us, if they will,  
 From time to time, some ballad or a song  
 To give us breathing-space."

So I began,  
And the rest follow'd ; and the women sang  
Between the rougher voices of the men,  
Like linnets in the pauses of the wind :  
And here I give the story and the songs.

## I.

A PRINCE I was, blue-eyed, and fair in face,  
Of temper amorous, as the first of May,  
With lengths of yellow ringlet, like a girl,  
For on my cradle shone the Northern star.

There lived an ancient legend in our house.  
Some sorcerer, whom a far-off grandsire burnt  
Because he cast no shadow, had foretold,  
Dying, that none of all our blood should know  
The shadow from the substance, and that one  
Should come to fight with shadows and to fall : 10  
For so, my mother said, the story ran.  
And, truly, waking dreams were, more or less,  
An old and strange affection of the house.  
Myself too had weird seizures, Heaven knows what :  
On a sudden in the midst of men and day,

And while I walk'd and talk'd as heretofore,  
I seem'd to move among a world of ghosts,  
And feel myself the shadow of a dream.  
Our great court-Galen poised his gilt-head cane,  
20 And paw'd his beard, and mutter'd "catalepsy."  
My mother pitying made a thousand prayers ;  
My mother was as mild as any saint,  
Half-canonized by all that look'd on her,  
So gracious was her tact and tenderness :  
But my good father thought a king a king ;  
He cared not for the affection of the house ;  
He held his sceptre like a pedant's wand  
To lash offence, and with long arms and hands  
Reach'd out, and pick'd offenders from the mass  
30 For judgment.

Now it chanced that I had been,  
While life was yet in bud and blade, betroth'd  
To one, a neighboring Princess : she to me  
Was proxy-wedded with a bootless calf  
At eight years old ; and still from time to time  
Came murmurs of her beauty from the South,  
And of her brethren, youths of puissance ;  
And still I wore her picture by my heart,  
And one dark tress ; and all around them both  
Sweet thoughts would swarm as bees about their queen.

But when the days drew nigh that I should wed, 40  
My father sent ambassadors with furs  
And jewels, gifts, to fetch her : these brought back  
A present, a great labor of the loom ;  
And therewithal an answer vague as wind :  
Besides, they saw the king ; he took the gifts ;  
He said there was a compact ; that was true :  
But then she had a will ; was he to blame ?  
And maiden fancies ; loved to live alone  
Among her women ; certain, would not wed.

That morning in the presence room I stood 50  
With Cyril and with Florian, my two friends :  
The first, a gentleman of broken means  
(His father's fault) but given to starts and bursts  
Of revel ; and the last, my other heart,  
And almost my half-self, for still we moved  
Together, twinn'd as horse's ear and eye.

Now, while they spake, I saw my father's face  
Grow long and troubled like the rising moon,  
Inflamed with wrath : he started on his feet,  
Tore the king's letter, snow'd it down, and rent 60  
The wonder of the loom thro' warp and woof  
From skirt to skirt ; and at the last he sware  
That he would send a hundred thousand men,

And bring her in a whirlwind : then he chew'd  
The thrice-turn'd cud of wrath, and cook'd his spleen,  
Communing with his captains of the war.

At last I spoke. " My father, let me go.  
It cannot be but some gross error lies  
In this report, this answer of a king,  
70 Whom all men rate as kind and hospitable :  
Or, maybe, I myself, my bride once seen,  
Whate'er my grief to find her less than fame,  
May rue the bargain made." And Florian said :  
" I have a sister at the foreign court,  
Who moves about the Princess ; she, you know,  
Who wedded with a nobleman from thence :  
He, dying lately, left her, as I hear,  
The lady of three castles in that land :  
Thro' her this matter might be sifted clean."  
80 And Cyril whisper'd : " Take me with you too."  
Then laughing " What, if these weird seizures come  
Upon you in those lands, and no one near  
To point you out the shadow from the truth !  
Take me : I'll serve you better in a strait ;  
I grate on rusty hinges here : " but " No ! "  
Roar'd the rough king, " you shall not ; we ourself  
Will crush her pretty maiden fancies dead  
In iron gauntlets : break the council up."

But when the council broke, I rose and past  
Thro' the wild woods that hung about the town ; 90  
Found a still place, and pluck'd her likeness out ;  
Laid it on flowers, and watch'd it lying bathed  
In the green gleam of dewy-tassell'd trees :  
What were those fancies ? wherefore break her troth ?  
Proud look'd the lips : but while I meditated  
A wind arose and rush'd upon the South,  
And shook the songs, the whispers, and the shrieks  
Of the wild woods together ; and a Voice  
Went with it, " Follow, follow, thou shalt win."

Then, ere the silver sickle of that month 100  
Became her golden shield, I stole from court  
With Cyril and with Florian, unperceived,  
Cat-footed thro' the town and half in dread  
To hear my father's clamor at our backs  
With Ho ! from some bay-window shake the night ;  
But all was quiet : from the bastion'd walls  
Like threaded spiders, one by one, we dropt,  
And flying reach'd the frontier : then we crost  
To a livelier land ; and so by tith and grange,  
And vines, and blowing bosks of wilderness, 110  
We gain'd the mother-city thick with towers,  
And in the imperial palace found the king.

His name was Gama ; crack'd and small his voice,  
But bland the smile that like a wrinkling wind  
On glassy water drove his cheek in lines ;  
A little dry old man, without a star,  
Not like a king : three days he feasted us,  
And on the fourth I spake of why we came,  
And my betroth'd. " You do us, Prince," he said,  
120 Airing a snowy hand and signet gem,  
" All honor. We remember love ourselves  
In our sweet youth : there did a compact pass  
Long summers back, a kind of ceremony —  
I think the year in which our olives fail'd.  
I would you had her, Prince, with all my heart,  
With my full heart : but there were widows here,  
Two widows, Lady Psyche, Lady Blanche ;  
They fed her theories, in and out of place  
Maintaining that with equal husbandry  
130 The woman were an equal to the man.  
They harp'd on this ; with this our banquets rang ;  
Our dances broke and buzz'd in knots of talk ;  
Nothing but this ; my very ears were hot  
To hear them : knowledge, so my daughter held,  
Was all in all : they had but been, she thought,  
As children ; they must lose the child, assume  
The woman : then, Sir, awful odes she wrote,  
Too awful, sure, for what they treated of,



But all she is and does is awful ; odes  
 About this losing of the child ; and rhymes 140  
 And dismal lyrics, prophesying change  
 Beyond all reason : these the women sang ;  
 And they that know such things — I sought but peace ;  
 No critic I — would call them masterpieces :  
 They master'd *me*. At last she begg'd a boon,  
 A certain summer-palace which I have  
 Hard by your father's frontier : I said no,  
 Yet being an easy man, gave it : and there,  
 All wild to found an University  
 For maidens, on the spur she fled ; and more 150  
 We know not, — only this : they see no men,  
 Not even her brother Arac, nor the twins  
 Her brethren, tho' they love her, look upon her  
 As on a kind of paragon ; and I  
 (Pardon me saying it) were much loth to breed  
 Dispute betwixt myself and mine : but since  
 (And I confess with right) you think me bound  
 In some sort, I can give you letters to her ;  
 And yet, to speak the truth, I rate your chance  
 Almost at naked nothing."

Thus the king ;

160

And I, tho' nettled that he seem'd to slur  
 With garrulous ease and oily courtesies  
 Our formal compact, yet, not less (all frets

But chafing me on fire to find my bride)  
Went forth again with both my friends. We rode  
Many a long league back to the North. At last  
From hills, that look'd across a land of hope,  
We dropt with evening on a rustic town  
Set in a gleaming river's crescent-curve,  
170 Close at the boundary of the liberties ;  
There, enter'd an old hostel, call'd mine host  
To council, plied him with his richest wines,  
And show'd the late-writ letters of the king.

He with a long low sibilation, stared  
As blank as death in marble ; then exclaim'd  
Averring it was clear against all rules  
For any man to go : but as his brain  
Began to mellow, " If the king," he said,  
" Had given us letters, was he bound to speak ?  
180 The king would bear him out ;" and at the last —  
The summer of the vine in all his veins —  
" No doubt that we might make it worth his while.  
She once had passed that way ; he heard her speak ;  
She scared him ; life ! he never saw the like ;  
She look'd as grand as doomsday and as grave :  
And he, he reverenced his liege-lady there ;  
He always made a point to post with mares ;  
His daughter and his housemaid were the boys :

The land, he understood, for miles about  
 Was till'd by women ; all the swine were sows, 190  
 And all the dogs"—

But while he jested thus,  
 A thought flash'd thro' me which I clothed in act,  
 Remembering how we three presented Maid,  
 Or Nymph, or Goddess, at high tide of feast,  
 In masque or pageant at my father's court.  
 We sent mine host to purchase female gear ;  
 He brought it, and himself, a sight to shake  
 The midriff of despair with laughter, help  
 To lace us up, till, each, in maiden plumes  
 We rustled : him we gave a costly bribe 200  
 To guerdon silence, mounted our good steeds,  
 And boldly ventured on the liberties.

We follow'd up the river as we rode,  
 And rode till midnight when the college lights  
 Began to glitter firefly-like in copse  
 And linden alley : then we past an arch,  
 Whereon a woman-statue rose with wings  
 From four wing'd horses dark against the stars ;  
 And some inscription ran along the front,  
 But deep in shadow : further on we gain'd 210  
 A little street half garden and half house ;  
 But scarce could hear each other speak for noise

Of clocks and chimes, like silver hammers falling  
On silver anvils, and the splash and stir  
Of fountains spouted up and showering down  
In meshes of the jasmine and the rose :  
And all about us peal'd the nightingale,  
Rapt in her song, and careless of the snare.

There stood a bust of Pallas for a sign,  
220 By two sphere lamps blazon'd like Heaven and Earth  
With constellation and with continent,  
Above an entry : riding in, we call'd ;  
A plump-arm'd Ostleress and a stable wench  
Came running at the call, and help'd us down.  
Then stept a buxom hostess forth, and sail'd,  
Full-blown, before us into rooms which gave  
Upon a pillar'd porch, the bases lost  
In laurel : her we ask'd of that and this,  
And who were tutors. "Lady Blanche," she said,  
230 "And Lady Psyche." "Which was prettiest,  
Best-natured ?" "Lady Psyche." "Hers are we,"  
One voice, we cried ; and I sat down and wrote,  
In such a hand as when a field of corn  
Bows all its ears before the roaring East :

"Three ladies of the Northern empire pray  
Your Highness would enroll them with your own,

As Lady Psyche's pupils."

This I seal'd :

The seal was Cupid bent above a scroll,  
And o'er his head Uranian Venus hung,  
And raised the blinding bandage from his eyes :  
I gave the letter to be sent with dawn ;  
And then to bed, where half in doze I seem'd  
To float about a glimmering night, and watch  
A full sea glazed with muffled moonlight, swell  
On some dark shore just seen that it was rich.

## II.

As thro' the land at eve we went,  
And pluck'd the ripen'd ears,  
We fell out, my wife and I,  
O we fell out I know not why,  
And kiss'd again with tears.  
And blessings on the falling out  
That all the more endears,  
When we fall out with those we love  
And kiss again with tears!  
For when we came where lies the child  
We lost in other years,  
There above the little grave,  
O there above the little grave,  
We kiss'd again with tears.

AT break of day the College Portress came :  
She brought us Academic silks, in hue  
The lilac, with a silken hood to each,  
And zoned with gold ; and now when these were on,  
And we as rich as moths from dusk cocoons,  
She, curtseying her obeisance, let us know  
The Princess Ida waited : out we paced,  
I first, and following thro' the porch that sang  
All round with laurel, issued in a court  
Compact of lucid marbles, boss'd with lengths 10  
Of classic frieze, with ample awnings gay  
Betwixt the pillars, and with great urns of flowers.  
The Muses and the Graces, group'd in threes,  
Enring'd a billowing fountain in the midst ;  
And here and there on lattice edges lay  
Or book or lute ; but hastily we past,  
And up a flight of stairs into the hall.

There at a board by tome and paper sat,  
With two tame leopards couch'd beside her throne,  
All beauty compass'd in a female form, 20  
The Princess ; liker to the inhabitant  
Of some clear planet close upon the Sun,  
Than our man's earth ; such eyes were in her head,  
And so much grace and power, breathing down  
From over her arch'd brows, with every turn

Lived thro' her to the tips of her long hands,  
And to her feet. She rose her height, and said :

“ We give you welcome : not without redound  
Of use and glory to yourselves ye come,  
30 The first-fruits of the stranger : aftertime,  
And that full voice which circles round the grave,  
Will rank you nobly, mingled up with me.  
What ! are the ladies of your land so tall ? ”  
“ We of the court ” said Cyril. “ From the court ”  
She answer'd, “ then ye know the Prince ? ” and he :  
“ The climax of his age ! as tho' there were  
One rose in all the world, your Highness that,  
He worships your ideal : ” she replied :  
“ We scarcely thought in our own hall to hear  
40 This barren verbiage, current among men,  
Light coin, the tinsel clink of compliment.  
Your flight from out your bookless wilds would seem  
As arguing love of knowledge and of power ;  
Your language proves you still the child. Indeed,  
We dream not of him : when we set our hand  
To this great work, we purposed with ourself  
Never to wed. You likewise will do well,  
Ladies, in entering here, to cast and fling  
The tricks, which make us toys of men, that so,  
50 Some future time, if so indeed you will,



You may with those self-styled our lords ally  
Your fortunes, justlier balanced, scale with scale.”

At those high words, we conscious of ourselves,  
Perused the matting; then an officer  
Rose up, and read the statutes, such as these :  
Not for three years to correspond with home ;  
Not for three years to cross the liberties ;  
Not for three years to speak with any men ;  
And many more, which hastily subscribed,  
We enter'd on the boards : and “ Now,” she cried, 60  
“ Ye are green wood, see ye warp not. Look, our hall !  
Our statues ! — not of those that men desire,  
Sleek Odalisques, or oracles of mode,  
Nor stunted squaws of West or East ; but she  
That taught the Sabine how to rule, and she  
The foundress of the Babylonian wall,  
The Carian Artemisia strong in war,  
The Rhodope, that built the pyramid,  
Clelia, Cornelia, with the Palmyrene  
That fought Aurelian, and the Roman brows 70  
Of Agrippina. Dwell with these, and lose  
Convention, since to look on noble forms  
Makes noble thro' the sensuous organism  
That which is higher. O lift your natures up :  
Embrace our aims : work out your freedom. Girls,

Knowledge is now no more a fountain seal'd :  
 Drink deep, until the habits of the slave,  
 The sins of emptiness, gossip and spite  
 And slander, die. Better not be at all  
 80 Than not be noble. Leave us : you may go :  
 To-day the Lady Psyche will harangue  
 The fresh arrivals of the week before ;  
 For they press in from all the provinces,  
 And fill the hive."

She spoke, and bowing waved

Dismissal : back again we crost the court  
 To Lady Psyche's : as we enter'd in,  
 There sat along the forms, like morning doves  
 That sun their milky bosoms on the thatch,  
 A patient range of pupils ; she herself  
 90 Erect behind a desk of satin-wood,  
 A quick brunette, well-moulded, falcon-eyed,  
 And on the hither side, or so she look'd,  
 Of twenty summers. At her left, a child,  
 In shining draperies, headed like a star,  
 Her maiden babe, a double April old,  
 Aglaïa slept. We sat : the Lady glanced :  
 Then Florian, but no livelier than the dame  
 That whisper'd " Asses' ears," among the sedge,  
 " My sister." " Comely, too, by all that's fair,"  
 100 Said Cyril. " O hush, hush !" and she began.

“This world was once a fluid haze of light,  
 Till toward the centre set the starry tides,  
 And eddied into suns, that wheeling cast  
 The planets: then the monster, then the man;  
 Tattoo'd or woaded, winter-clad in skins,  
 Raw from the prime, and crushing down his mate;  
 As yet we find in barbarous isles, and here  
 Among the lowest.”

Thereupon she took  
 A bird's-eye-view of all the ungracious past;  
 Glanced at the legendary Amazon 110  
 As emblematic of a nobler age;  
 Appraised the Lycian custom, spoke of those  
 That lay at wine with Lar and Lucumo;  
 Ran down the Persian, Grecian, Roman lines  
 Of empire, and the woman's state in each,  
 How far from just; till warming with her theme  
 She fulminated out her scorn of laws Salique  
 And little-footed China, touch'd on Mahomet  
 With much contempt, and came to chivalry:  
 When some respect, however slight, was paid 120  
 To woman, superstition all awry:  
 However then commenced the dawn: a beam  
 Had slanted forward, falling in a land  
 Of promise; fruit would follow. Deep, indeed,  
 Their debt of thanks to her who first had dared

To leap the rotten pales of prejudice,  
Disyoke their necks from custom, and assert  
None lordlier than themselves but that which made  
Woman and man. She had founded ; they must build.  
130 Here might they learn whatever men were taught :  
Let them not fear : some said their heads were less :  
Some men's were small ; not they the least of men ;  
For often fineness compensated size :  
Besides the brain was like the hand, and grew  
With using ; thence the man's, if more was more ;  
He took advantage of his strength to be  
First in the field : some ages had been lost ;  
But woman ripen'd earlier, and her life  
Was longer ; and albeit their glorious names  
140 Were fewer, scatter'd stars, yet since in truth  
The highest is the measure of the man,  
And not the Kaffir, Hottentot, Malay,  
Nor those horn-handed breakers of the glebe,  
But Homer, Plato, Verulam ; even so  
With woman : and in arts of government  
Elizabeth and others ; arts of war  
The peasant Joan and others ; arts of grace  
Sappho and others vied with any man :  
And, last not least, she who had left her place,  
150 And bow'd her state to them, that they might grow  
To use and power on this Oasis, lapt

In the arms of leisure, sacred from the blight  
Of ancient influence and scorn.

At last

She rose upon a wind of prophecy  
Dilating on the future; "everywhere  
Two heads in council, two beside the hearth,  
Two in the tangled business of the world,  
Two in the liberal offices of life,  
Two plummetts dropt for one to sound the abyss  
Of science, and the secrets of the mind; 160  
Musician, painter, sculptor, critic, more:  
And everywhere the broad and bounteous Earth  
Should bear a double growth of those rare souls,  
Poets, whose thoughts enrich the blood of the world."

She ended here, and beckon'd us: the rest  
Parted; and, glowing full-faced welcome, she  
Began to address us, and was moving on  
In gratulation, till as when a boat  
Tacks, and the slacken'd sail flaps, all her voice  
Faltering and fluttering in her throat, she cried, 170  
"My brother!" "Well, my sister." "O," she said,  
"What do you here? and in this dress? and these?  
Why, who are these? a wolf within the fold!  
A pack of wolves! the Lord be gracious to me!  
A plot, a plot, a plot, to ruin all!"

“No plot, no plot,” he answer’d. “Wretched boy,  
How saw you not the inscription on the gate,  
LET NO MAN ENTER IN ON PAIN OF DEATH ?”

“And if I had,” he answer’d, “who could think  
180 The softer Adams of your Academe,  
O sister, Sirens tho’ they be, were such  
As chanted on the blanching bones of men ?”  
“But you will find it otherwise” she said.  
“You jest: ill jesting with edge-tools! my vow  
Binds me to speak, and O that iron will,  
That axelike edge unturnable, our Head,  
The Princess.” “Well then, Psyche, take my life,  
And nail me like a weasel on a grange  
For warning: bury me beside the gate,  
190 And cut this epitaph above my bones ;  
*Here lies a brother by a sister slain,  
All for the common good of womankind.*”  
“Let me die too,” said Cyril, “having seen  
And heard the Lady Psyche.”

I struck in :

“Albeit so mask’d, Madam, I love the truth ;  
Receive it; and in me behold the Prince  
Your countryman, affianced years ago  
To the Lady Ida: here, for here she was,  
And thus (what other way was left) I came.”  
200 “O Sir, O Prince, I have no country; none;

If any, this ; but none. Whate'er I was  
 Disrooted, what I am is grafted here.  
 Affianced, Sir ? love-whispers may not breathe  
 Within this vestal limit, and how should I,  
 Who am not mine, say, live : the thunderbolt  
 Hangs silent ; but prepare : I speak ; it falls."  
 "Yet pause," I said : "for that inscription there,  
 I think no more of deadly lurks therein,  
 Than in a clapper clapping in a garth,  
 To scare the fowl from fruit : if more there be, 210  
 If more and acted on, what follows ? war ;  
 Your own work marr'd : for this your Academe,  
 Whichever side be Victor, in the halloo  
 Will topple to the trumpet down, and pass  
 With all fair theories only made to gild  
 A stormless summer." "Let the Princess judge  
 Of that," she said : "farewell, Sir — and to you.  
 I shudder at the sequel, but I go."

"Are you that Lady Psyche," I rejoind'd,  
 "The fifth in line from that old Florian, 220  
 Yet hangs his portrait in my father's hall  
 (The gaunt old Baron with his beetle brow  
 Sun-shaded in the heat of dusty fights)  
 As he bestrode my Grandsire, when he fell,  
 And all else fled ? we point to it, and we say,

The loyal warmth of Florian is not cold,  
But branches current yet in kindred veins."

"Are you that Psyche," Florian added; "she  
With whom I sang about the morning hills,  
230 Flung ball, flew kite, and raced the purple fly,  
And snared the squirrel of the glen? are you  
That Psyche, wont to bind my throbbing brow,  
To smoothe my pillow, mix the foaming draught  
Of fever, tell me pleasant tales, and read  
My sickness down to happy dreams? are you  
That brother-sister Psyche, both in one?  
You were that Psyche, but what are you now?"  
"You are that Psyche," Cyril said, "for whom  
I would be that for ever which I seem,  
240 Woman, if I might sit beside your feet,  
And glean your scatter'd sapience."

Then once more,

"Are you that Lady Psyche," I began,  
"That on her bridal morn before she past  
From all her old companions, when the king  
Kiss'd her pale cheek, declared that ancient ties  
Would still be dear beyond the southern hills;  
That were there any of our people there  
In want or peril, there was one to hear  
And help them? look! for such are these and I."  
250 "Are you that Psyche," Florian ask'd, "to whom,



In gentler days, your arrow-wounded fawn  
 Came flying while you sat beside the well?  
 The creature laid his muzzle on your lap,  
 And sobb'd, and you sobb'd with it, and the blood  
 Was sprinkled on your kirtle, and you wept.  
 That was fawn's blood, not brother's, yet you wept.  
 O by the bright head of my little niece,  
 You were that Psyche, and what are you now?"  
 "You are that Psyche," Cyril said again,  
 "The mother of the sweetest little maid,  
 That ever crow'd for kisses."

260

"Out upon it!"

She answer'd, "peace! and why should I not play  
 The Spartan Mother with emotion, be  
 The Lucius Junius Brutus of my kind?  
 Him you call great: he for the common weal,  
 The fading politics of mortal Rome,  
 As I might slay this child, if good need were,  
 Slew both his sons: and I, shall I, on whom  
 The secular emancipation turns  
 Of half this world, be swerved from right to save  
 A prince, a brother? a little will I yield.  
 Best so, perchance, for us, and well for you.  
 O hard, when love and duty clash! I fear  
 My conscience will not count me fleckless; yet—  
 Hear my conditions: promise (otherwise

270

You perish) as you came, to slip away  
 To-day, to-morrow, soon : it shall be said,  
 These women were too barbarous, would not learn ;  
 They fled, who might have shamed us : promise, all."

280     What could we else, we promised each ; and she,  
 Like some wild creature newly-caged, commenced  
 A to-and-fro, so pacing till she paused  
 By Florian ; holding out her lily arms  
 Took both his hands, and smiling faintly said :  
 " I knew you at the first : tho' you have grown  
 You scarce have alter'd : I am sad and glad  
 To see you, Florian. *I* give thee to death  
 My brother ! it was duty spoke, not I.  
 My needful seeming harshness, pardon it.  
 290 Our mother, is she well ? "

With that she kiss'd  
 His forehead, then, a moment after, clung  
 About him, and betwixt them blossom'd up  
 From out a common vein of memory  
 Sweet household talk, and phrases of the hearth,  
 And far allusion, till the gracious dews  
 Began to glisten and to fall : and while  
 They stood, so rapt, we gazing, came a voice,  
 " I brought a message here from Lady Blanche."  
 Back started she, and turning round we saw

The Lady Blanche's daughter where she stood,  
 Melissa, with her hand upon the lock,  
 A rosy blonde, and in a college gown,  
 That clad her like an April daffodilly  
 (Her mother's color) with her lips apart,  
 And all her thoughts as fair within her eyes,  
 As bottom agates seen to wave and float  
 In crystal currents of clear morning seas.

So stood that same fair creature at the door.  
 Then Lady Psyche, "Ah — Melissa — you!  
 You heard us?" and Melissa, "O pardon me  
 I heard, I could not help it, did not wish:  
 But, dearest Lady, pray you fear me not,  
 Nor think I bear that heart within my breast,  
 To give three gallant gentlemen to death."  
 "I trust you," said the other, "for we two  
 Were always friends, none closer, elm and vine:  
 But yet your mother's jealous temperament —  
 Let not your prudence, dearest, drowse, or prove  
 The Danaïd of a leaky vase, for fear  
 This whole foundation ruin, and I lose  
 My honor, these their lives." "Ah, fear me not"  
 Replied Melissa; "no — I would not tell,  
 No, not for all Aspasia's cleverness,  
 No, not to answer, Madam, all those hard things

That Sheba came to ask of Solomon."

"Be it so" the other, "that we still may lead  
The new light up, and culminate in peace,  
For Solomon may come to Sheba yet."

Said Cyril, "Madam, he the wisest man  
330 Feasted the woman wisest then, in halls  
Of Lebanonian cedar; nor should you  
(Tho', Madam, *you* should answer, *we* would ask)  
Less welcome find among us, if you came  
Among us, debtors for our lives to you,  
Myself for something more." He said not what,  
But "Thanks," she answer'd "Go: we have been too  
long

Together: keep your hoods about the face;  
They do so that affect abstraction here.  
Speak little; mix not with the rest; and hold  
340 Your promise: all, I trust, may yet be well."

We turn'd to go, but Cyril took the child,  
And held her round the knees against his waist,  
And blew the swoll'n cheek of a trumpeter,  
While Psyche watch'd them, smiling, and the child  
Push'd her flat hand against his face and laugh'd;  
And thus our conference closed.

And then we stroll'd  
For half the day thro' stately theatres

Bench'd crescent-wise. In each we sat, we heard  
The grave Professor. On the lecture slate  
The circle rounded under female hands 350  
With flawless demonstration: follow'd then  
A classic lecture, rich in sentiment,  
With scraps of thunderous Epic lilted out  
By violet-hooded Doctors, elegies  
And quoted odes, and jewels five-words-long  
That on the stretch'd forefinger of all Time  
Sparkle for ever: then we dipt in all  
That treats of whatsoever is, the state,  
The total chronicles of man, the mind,  
The morals, something of the frame, the rock, 360  
The star, the bird, the fish, the shell, the flower,  
Electric, chemic laws, and all the rest,  
And whatsoever can be taught and known;  
'Till like three horses that have broken fence,  
And glutted all night long breast-deep in corn,  
We issued gorged with knowledge, and I spoke:  
"Why, Sirs, they do all this as well as we."  
"They hunt old trails" said Cyril "very well;  
But when did woman ever yet invent?"  
"Ungracious!" answer'd Florian; "have you learnt 370  
No more from Psyche's lecture, you that talk'd  
The trash that made me sick, and almost sad?"  
"O trash" he said, "but with a kernel in it.

Should I not call her wise, who made me wise?  
And learnt? I learnt more from her in a flash,  
Than if my brainpan were an empty hull,  
And every Muse tumbled a science in.  
A thousand hearts lie fallow in these halls,  
And round these halls a thousand baby loves  
380 Fly twanging headless arrows at the hearts,  
Whence follows many a vacant pang; but O  
With me, Sir, enter'd in the bigger boy,  
The Head of all the golden-shafted firm,  
The long-limb'd lad that had a Psyche too;  
He cleft me thro' the stomacher; and now  
What think you of it, Florian? do I chase  
The substance or the shadow? will it hold?  
I have no sorcerer's malison on me,  
No ghostly hauntings like his Highness. I  
390 Flatter myself that always everywhere  
I know the substance when I see it. Well,  
Are castles shadows? Three of them? Is she  
The sweet proprietress a shadow? If not,  
Shall those three castles patch my tatter'd coat?  
For dear are those three castles to my wants,  
And dear is sister Psyche to my heart,  
And two dear things are one of double worth,  
And much I might have said, but that my zone  
Unmann'd me: then the Doctors! O to hear

The Doctors! O to watch the thirsty plants 400  
 Imbibing! once or twice I thought to roar,  
 To break my chain, to shake my mane: but thou,  
 Modulate me, Soul of mincing mimicry!  
 Make liquid treble of that bassoon, my throat;  
 Abase those eyes that ever loved to meet  
 Star-sisters answering under crescent brows;  
 Abate the stride which speaks of man, and loose  
 A flying charm of blushes o'er this cheek,  
 Where they like swallows coming out of time  
 Will wonder why they came: but hark the bell 410  
 For dinner, let us go!"

And in we stream'd

Among the columns, pacing staid and still  
 By twos and threes, till all from end to end  
 With beauties every shade of brown and fair  
 In colors gayer than the morning mist,  
 The long hall glitter'd like a bed of flowers.  
 How might a man not wander from his wits  
 Pierced thro' with eyes, but that I kept mine own  
 Intent on her, who rapt in glorious dreams,  
 The second-sight of some Astræan age, 420  
 Sat compass'd with professors: they, the while,  
 Discuss'd a doubt and tost it to and fro:  
 A clamor thicken'd, mixt with inmost terms  
 Of art and science: Lady Blanche alone

Of faded form and haughtiest lineaments,  
With all her autumn tresses falsely brown,  
Shot sidelong daggers at us, a tiger-cat  
In act to spring.

At last a solemn grace  
Concluded, and we sought the gardens : there  
430 One walk'd reciting by herself, and one  
In this hand held a volume as to read,  
And smooth'd a petted peacock down with that :  
Some to a low song oar'd a shallop by,  
Or under arches of the marble bridge  
Hung, shadow'd from the heat : some hid and sought  
In the orange thickets : others tost a ball  
Above the fountain-jets, and back again  
With laughter : others lay about the lawns,  
Of the older sort, and murmur'd that their May  
440 Was passing : what was learning unto them ?  
They wish'd to marry ; they could rule a house ;  
Men hated learned women : but we three  
Sat muffled like the Fates ; and often came  
Melissa hitting all we saw with shafts  
Of gentle satire, kin to charity,  
That harm'd not : then day droopt ; the chapel bells  
Call'd us : we left the walks ; we mixt with those  
Six hundred maidens clad in purest white,  
Before two streams of light from wall to wall,



While the great organ almost burst his pipes,  
Groaning for power, and rolling thro' the court  
A long melodious thunder to the sound  
Of solemn psalms, and silver litanies,  
The work of Ida, to call down from Heaven  
A blessing on her labors for the world.

450

## III.

Sweet and low, sweet and low,  
    Wind of the western sea,  
Low, low, breathe and blow,  
    Wind of the western sea!  
Over the rolling waters go,  
Come from the dying moon, and blow,  
    Blow him again to me;  
While my little one, while my pretty one, sleeps.

Sleep and rest, sleep and rest,  
    Father will come to thee soon;  
Rest, rest, on mother's breast,  
    Father will come to thee soon;  
Father will come to his babe in the nest,  
Silver sails all out of the west  
    Under the silver moon:  
Sleep, my little one, sleep, my pretty one, sleep.

Morn in the white wake of the morning star  
 Came furrowing all the orient into gold.  
 We rose, and each by other drest with care  
 Descended to the court that lay three parts  
 In shadow, but the Muses' heads were touch'd  
 Above the darkness from their native East.

There while we stood beside the fount, and watch'd  
 Or seem'd to watch the dancing bubble, approach'd  
 Melissa, tinged with wan from lack of sleep,  
 Or grief, and glowing round her dewy eyes 10  
 The circled Iris of a night of tears;  
 "And fly," she cried, "O fly, while yet you may!  
 My mother knows:" and when I asked her "how,"  
 "My fault" she wept "my fault! and yet not mine;  
 Yet mine in part. O hear me, pardon me.  
 My mother, 'tis her wont from night to night  
 To rail at Lady Psyche and her side.  
 She says the Princess should have been the Head,  
 Herself and Lady Psyche the two arms;  
 And so it was agreed when first they came; 20  
 But Lady Psyche was the right hand now,  
 And she the left, or not or seldom used;  
 Hers more than half the students, all the love.  
 And so last night she fell to canvass you:  
 Her countrywomen! she did not envy her.

‘Who ever saw such wild barbarians?  
Girls? — more like men!’ and at these words the  
snake,

My secret, seem’d to stir within my breast;  
And oh, Sirs, could I help it, but my cheek  
30 Began to burn and burn, and her lynx eye  
To fix and make me hotter, till she laugh’d:  
‘O marvellously modest maiden, you!  
Men! girls, like men! why, if they had been men  
You need not set your thoughts in rubric thus  
For wholesale comment.’ Pardon, I am shamed  
That I must needs repeat for my excuse  
What looks so little graceful: ‘men’ (for still  
My mother went revolving on the word)  
‘And so they are, — very like men indeed —  
40 And with that woman closeted for hours!’  
Then came these dreadful words out one by one,  
‘Why — these — *are* — men:’ I shudder’d: ‘and you  
know it.’  
‘O ask me nothing,’ I said: ‘And she knows too,  
And she conceals it.’ So my mother clutch’d  
The truth at once, but with no word from me;  
And now thus early risen she goes to inform  
The Princess: Lady Psyche will be crush’d;  
But you may yet be saved, and therefore fly:  
But heal me with your pardon ere you go.”

"What pardon, sweet Melissa, for a blush?" 50  
 Said Cyril: "Pale one, blush again: than wear  
 Those lilies, better blush our lives away.  
 Yet let us breathe for one hour more in Heaven"  
 He added, "lest some classic Angel speak  
 In scorn of us, 'They mounted, Ganymedes,  
 To tumble, Vulcans, on the second morn.'  
 But I will melt this marble into wax  
 To yield us farther furlough:" and he went.

Melissa shook her doubtful curls, and thought  
 He scarce would prosper. "Tell us," Florian ask'd, 60  
 "How grew this feud betwixt the right and left."  
 "O long ago," she said, "betwixt these two  
 Division smoulders hidden; 'tis my mother,  
 Too jealous, often fretful as the wind  
 Pent in a crevice: much I bear with her:  
 I never knew my father, but she says  
 (God help her!) she was wedded to a fool;  
 And still she rail'd against the state of things.  
 She had the care of Lady Ida's youth,  
 And from the Queen's decease she brought her up. 70  
 But when your sister came she won the heart  
 Of Ida: they were still together, grew  
 (For so they said themselves) inosculated;  
 Consonant chords that shiver to one note;

One mind in all things: yet my mother still  
 Affirms your Psyche thieved her theories,  
 And angled with them for her pupil's love:  
 She calls her plagiarist; I know not what:  
 But I must go: I dare not tarry," and light,  
 80 As flies the shadow of a bird, she fled.

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

"The crane," I said, "may chatter of the crane,  
 The dove may murmur of the dove, but I  
 90 An eagle clang an eagle to the sphere.  
 My princess, O my princess! true she errs,  
 But in her own grand way: being herself  
 Three times more noble than three score of men,  
 She sees herself in every woman else,  
 And so she wears her error like a crown  
 To blind the truth and me: for her, and her,  
 Hebes are they to hand ambrosia, mix  
 The nectar; but — ah she — whene'er she moves

The Samian Herè rises and she speaks  
 A Memnon smitten with the morning Sun." 100

So saying from the court we paced, and gain'd  
 The terrace ranged along the Northern front,  
 And leaning there on those balusters, high  
 Above the empurpled champaign, drank the gale  
 That blown about the foliage underneath,  
 And sated with the innumerable rose,  
 Beat balm upon our eyelids. Hither came  
 Cyril, and yawning "O hard task," he cried;  
 "No fighting shadows here! I forced a way  
 Thro' solid opposition crabb'd and gnarl'd. 110  
 Better to clear prime forests, heave and thump  
 A league of street in summer solstice down,  
 Than hammer at this reverend gentlewoman.  
 I knock'd and, bidden, enter'd; found her there  
 At point to move, and settled in her eyes  
 The green malignant light of coming storm.  
 Sir, I was courteous, every phrase well-oil'd,  
 As man's could be; yet maiden-meeek I pray'd  
 Concealment: she demanded who we were,  
 And why we came? I fabled nothing fair, 120  
 But, your example pilot, told her all.  
 Up went the hush'd amaze of hand and eye.  
 But when I dwelt upon your old affiance,

She answer'd sharply that I talk'd astray.  
I urged the fierce inscription on the gate,  
And our three lives. True — we had limed ourselves  
With open eyes, and we must take the chance.  
But such extremes, I told her, well might harm  
The woman's cause. 'Not more than now,' she said,  
130 'So puddled as it is with favoritism.'  
I tried the mother's heart. Shame might befall  
Melissa, knowing, saying not she knew :  
Her answer was 'Leave me to deal with that.'  
I spoke of war to come and many deaths,  
And she replied, her duty was to speak,  
And duty duty, clear of consequences.  
I grew discouraged, Sir ; but since I knew  
No rock so hard but that a little wave  
May beat admission in a thousand years,  
140 I recommenced ; 'Decide not ere you pause.  
I find you here but in the second place,  
Some say the third — the authentic foundress you.  
I offer boldly : we will seat you highest :  
Wink at our advent ; help my prince to gain  
His rightful bride, and here I promise you  
Some palace in our land, where you shall reign  
The head and heart of all our fair she-world,  
And your great name flow on with broadening time  
For ever.' Well, she balanced this a little,



And told me she would answer us to-day,  
 Meantime be mute : thus much, nor more I gain'd." 150

He ceasing, came a message from the Head.  
 "That afternoon the Princess rode to take  
 The dip of certain strata to the North.  
 Would we go with her? we should find the land  
 Worth seeing; and the river made a fall  
 Out yonder:" then she pointed on to where  
 A double hill ran up his furrowy forks  
 Beyond the thick-leaved platans of the vale.

Agreed to, this, the day fled on thro' all 160  
 Its range of duties to the appointed hour.  
 Then summon'd to the porch we went. She stood  
 Among her maidens, higher by the head,  
 Her back against a pillar, her foot on one  
 Of those tame leopards. Kittenlike he roll'd  
 And paw'd about her sandal. I drew near;  
 I gazed. On a sudden my strange seizure came  
 Upon me, the weird vision of our house:  
 The Princess Ida seem'd a hollow show,  
 Her gay-furr'd cats a painted fantasy, 170  
 Her college and her maidens empty masks,  
 And I myself the shadow of a dream,  
 For all things were and were not. Yet I felt

My heart beat thick with passion and with awe ;  
Then from my breast the involuntary sigh  
Broke, as she smote me with the light of eyes  
That lent my knee desire to kneel, and shook  
My pulses, till to horse we got, and so  
Went forth in long retinue following up  
180 The river as it narrow'd to the hills.

I rode beside her and to me she said :  
“ O friend, we trust that you esteem'd us not  
Too harsh to your companion yestermorn ;  
Unwillingly we spake.” “ No — not to her,”  
I answer'd, “ but to one of whom we spake  
Your Highness might have seem'd the thing you say.”  
“ Again ? ” she cried, “ are you ambassadors  
From him to me ? we give you, being strange,  
A license : speak, and let the topic die.”

190 I stammer'd that I knew him — could have wish'd —  
“ Our king expects — was there no precontract ?  
There is no truer-hearted — ah, you seem  
All he prefigured, and he could not see  
The bird of passage flying south but long'd  
To follow : surely, if your Highness keep  
Your purport, you will shock him even to death,  
Or baser courses, children of despair.”

"Poor boy," she said, "can he not read — no books?  
 Quoit, tennis, ball — no games? nor deals in that  
 Which men delight in, martial exercise? 200  
 To nurse a blind ideal like a girl,  
 Methinks he seems no better than a girl;  
 As girls were once, as we ourself have been:  
 We had our dreams; perhaps he mixt with them:  
 We touch on our dead self, nor shun to do it,  
 Being other — since we learnt our meaning here,  
 To lift the woman's fall'n divinity  
 Upon an even pedestal with man."

She paused, and added with a haughtier smile  
 "And as to precontracts, we move, my friend, 210  
 At no man's beck, but know ourself and thee,  
 O Vashti, noble Vashti! Summon'd out  
 She kept her state, and left the drunken king  
 To brawl at Shushan underneath the palms."

"Alas, your Highness breathes full East," I said,  
 "On that which leans to you. I know the Prince,  
 I prize his truth: and then how vast a work  
 To assail this gray preëminence of man!  
 You grant me license; might I use it? think;  
 Ere half be done perchance your life may fail; 220  
 Then comes the feebler heiress of your plan,

And takes and ruins all ; and thus your pains  
 May only make that footprint upon sand  
 Which old-recurring waves of prejudice  
 Resmooth to nothing : might I dread that you,  
 With only Fame for spouse and your great deeds  
 For issue, yet may live in vain, and miss,  
 Meanwhile, what every woman counts her due,  
 Love, children, happiness ? ”

And she exclaim'd,

230 “ Peace, you young savage of the Northern wild !  
 What ! tho' your Prince's love were like a God's,  
 Have we not made ourself the sacrifice ?  
 You are bold indeed : we are not talk'd to thus :  
 Yet will we say for children, would they grew  
 Like field-flowers everywhere ! we like them well :  
 But children die ; and let me tell you, girl,  
 Howe'er you babble, great deeds cannot die ;  
 They with the sun and moon renew their light  
 For ever, blessing those that look on them.

240 Children — that men may pluck them from our hearts,  
 Kill us with pity, break us with ourselves —  
 O — children — there is nothing upon earth  
 More miserable than she that has a son  
 And sees him err : nor would we work for fame ;  
 Tho' she perhaps might reap the applause of Great,  
 Who learns the one *POU STO* whence after-hands

May move the world, tho' she herself effect  
 But little: wherefore up and act, nor shrink  
 For fear our solid aim be dissipated  
 By frail successors. Would, indeed, we had been, 250  
 In lieu of many mortal flies, a race  
 Of giants living, each, a thousand years,  
 That we might see our own work out, and watch  
 The sandy footprint harden into stone."

I answer'd nothing, doubtful in myself  
 If that strange Poet-princess with her grand  
 Imaginations might at all be won.  
 And she broke out interpreting my thoughts:

"No doubt we seem a kind of monster to you;  
 We are used to that: for women, up till this 260  
 Cramp'd under worse than South-sea-isle taboo,  
 Dwarfs of the gynæceum, fail so far  
 In high desire, they know not, cannot guess  
 How much their welfare is a passion to us.  
 If we could give them surer, quicker proof—  
 Oh if our end were less achievable  
 By slow approaches, than by single act  
 Of immolation, any phase of death,  
 We were as prompt to spring against the pikes,  
 Or down the fiery gulf as talk of it, 270  
 To compass our dear sisters' liberties."

She bow'd as if to veil a noble tear ;  
And up we came to where the river sloped  
To plunge in cataract, shattering on black blocks  
A breath of thunder. O'er it shook the woods,  
And danced the color, and, below, stuck out  
The bones of some vast bulk that lived and roar'd  
Before man was. She gazed awhile and said,  
"As these rude bones to us, are we to her  
280 That will be." "Dare we dream of that," I ask'd,  
"Which wrought us, as the workman and his work,  
That practice betters?" "How," she cried, "you love  
The metaphysics! read and earn our prize,  
A golden brooch: beneath an emerald plane  
Sits Diotima, teaching him that died  
Of hemlock; our device; wrought to the life;  
She rapt upon her subject, he on her:  
For there are schools for all." "And yet" I said,  
"Methinks I have not found among them all  
290 One anatomic." "Nay, we thought of that,"  
She answer'd, "but it pleased us not: in truth  
We shudder but to dream our maids should ape  
Those monstrous males that carve the living hound,  
And cram him with the fragments of the grave,  
Or in the dark dissolving human heart,  
And holy secrets of this microcosm,  
Dabbling a shameless hand with shameful jest,

Encarnalize their spirits : yet we know  
 Knowledge is knowledge, and this matter hangs :  
 Howbeit ourself, foreseeing casualty, 300  
 Nor willing men should come among us, learnt,  
 For many weary moons before we came,  
 This craft of healing. Were you sick, ourself  
 Would tend upon you. To your question now,  
 Which touches on the workman and his work.  
 Let there be light and there was light : 'tis so :  
 For was, and is, and will be, are but is ;  
 And all creation is one act at once,  
 The birth of light : but we that are not all,  
 As parts, can see but parts, now this, now that, 310  
 And live, perforce, from thought to thought and make  
 One act a phantom of succession : thus  
 Our weakness somehow shapes the shadow, Time ;  
 But in the shadow will we work, and mould  
 The woman to the fuller day."

She spake

With kindled eyes : we rode a league beyond,  
 And, o'er a bridge of pinewood crossing, came  
 On flowery levels underneath the crag,  
 Full of all beauty. "O how sweet" I said  
 (For I was half-oblivious of my mask) 320  
 "To linger here with one that loved us." "Yea,"  
 She answer'd, "or with fair philosophies

That lift the fancy ; for indeed these fields  
Are lovely, lovelier not the Elysian lawns,  
Where paced the Demigods of old, and saw  
The soft white vapor streak the crowned towers  
Built to the Sun :” then, turning to her maids,  
“ Pitch our pavilion here upon the sward ;  
Lay out the viands.” At the word, they raised  
330 A tent of satin, elaborately wrought  
With fair Corinna’s triumph ; here she stood,  
Engirt with many a florid maiden-cheek,  
The woman-conqueror ; woman conquer’d there  
The bearded Victor of ten-thousand hymns,  
And all the men mourn’d at his side : but we  
Set forth to climb ; then, climbing, Cyril kept  
With Psyche, with Melissa Florian, I  
With mine affianced. Many a little hand  
Glanced like a touch of sunshine on the rocks,  
340 Many a light foot shone like a jewel set  
In the dark crag : and then we turn’d, we wound  
About the cliffs, the copses, out and in,  
Hammering and clinking, chattering stony names  
Of shale and hornblende, rag and trap and tuff,  
Amygdaloid and trachyte, till the Sun  
Grew broader toward his death and fell, and all  
The rosy heights came out above the lawns.



## IV.

The splendor falls on castle walls  
And snowy summits old in story :  
The long light shakes across the lakes,  
And the wild cataract leaps in glory.  
Blow, bugle, blow, set the wild echoes flying,  
Blow, bugle ; answer, echoes, dying, dying, dying.

O hark, O hear ! how thin and clear,  
And thinner, clearer, farther going !  
O sweet and far from cliff and scar  
The horns of Elfland faintly blowing !  
Blow, let us hear the purple glens replying :  
Blow, bugle ; answer, echoes, dying, dying, dying.

O love, they die in yon rich sky,  
They faint on hill or field or river :  
Our echoes roll from soul to soul,  
And grow for ever and for ever.  
Blow, bugle, blow, set the wild echoes flying,  
And answer, echoes, answer, dying, dying, dying.

“THERE sinks the nebulous star we call the Sun,  
If that hypothesis of theirs be sound”  
Said Ida “let us down and rest” ; and we  
Down from the lean and wrinkled precipices,  
By every coppice-feather’d chasm and cleft,  
Dropt thro’ the ambrosial gloom to where below  
No bigger than a glow-worm shone the tent  
Lamp-lit from the inner. Once she lean’d on me,  
Descending ; once or twice she lent her hand,  
10 And blissful palpitations in the blood  
Stirring a sudden transport rose and fell.

But when we planted level feet, and dipt  
Beneath the satin dome and enter’d in,  
There leaning deep in broider’d down we sank  
Our elbows ; on a tripod in the midst  
A fragrant flame rose, and before us glow’d  
Fruit, blossom, viand, amber wine, and gold.

Then she, “Let some one sing to us ; lightlier move  
The minutes fledged with music :” and a maid,  
20 Of those beside her, smote her harp, and sang.

“Tears, idle tears, I know not what they mean,  
Tears from the depth of some divine despair  
Rise in the heart, and gather to the eyes,

In looking on the happy Autumn-fields,  
And thinking of the days that are no more.

“ Fresh as the first beam glittering on a sail,  
That brings our friends up from the underworld,  
Sad as the last which reddens over one  
That sinks with all we love below the verge ;  
So sad, so fresh, the days that are no more.

30

“ Ah, sad and strange as in dark summer dawns  
The earliest pipe of half-awaken'd birds  
To dying ears, when unto dying eyes  
The casement slowly grows a glimmering square ;  
So sad, so strange, the days that are no more.

“ Dear as remember'd kisses after death,  
And sweet as those by hopeless fancy feign'd  
On lips that are for others ; deep as love,  
Deep as first love, and wild with all regret ;  
O Death in Life, the days that are no more.”

40

She ended with such passion that the tear,  
She sang of, shook and fell, an erring pearl  
Lost in her bosom : but with some disdain  
Answer'd the Princess, “ If indeed there haunt  
About the moulder'd lodges of the Past  
So sweet a voice and vague, fatal to men,  
Well needs it we should cram our ears with wool

And so pace by : but thine are fancies hatch'd  
In silken-folded idleness ; nor is it  
50 Wiser to weep a true occasion lost,  
But trim our sails, and let old by-gones be,  
While down the streams that float us each and all  
To the issue, goes, like glittering bergs of ice,  
Throne after throne, and molten on the waste  
Becomes a cloud : for all things serve their time  
Toward that great year of equal might and rights,  
Nor would I fight with iron laws, in the end  
Found golden : let the past be past : let be  
Their cancell'd Babels : tho' the rough kex break  
60 The starr'd mosaic, and the beard-blown goat  
Hang on the shaft, and the wild figtree split  
Their monstrous idols, care not while we hear  
A trumpet in the distance pealing news  
Of better, and Hope, a poising eagle, burns  
Above the unrisen morrow : " then to me  
" Know you no song of your own land," she said,  
" Not such as moans about the retrospect,  
But deals with the other distance and the hues  
Of promise ; not a death's-head at the wine ? "

70 Then I remember'd one myself had made,  
What time I watch'd the swallow winging south  
From mine own land, part made long since, and part

Now while I sang, and maidenlike as far  
As I could ape their treble, did I sing.

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

“O tell her, Swallow, thou that knowest each,  
That bright and fierce and fickle is the South,  
And dark and true and tender is the North.

80

“O Swallow, Swallow, if I could follow, and light  
Upon her lattice, I would pipe and trill,  
And cheep and twitter twenty million loves.

“O were I thou that she might take me in,  
And lay me on her bosom, and her heart  
Would rock the snowy cradle till I died.

“Why lingereth she to clothe her heart with love,  
Delaying as the tender ash delays  
To clothe herself, when all the woods are green?

“O tell her, Swallow, that thy brood is flown:  
Say to her, I do but wanton in the South,  
But in the North long since my nest is made.

90

“O tell her, brief is life but love is long,  
And brief the sun of summer in the North,  
And brief the moon of beauty in the South.

“ O Swallow, flying from the golden woods,  
Fly to her, and pipe and woo her, and make her mine,  
And tell her, tell her, that I follow thee.”

I ceased, and all the ladies, each at each,  
100 Like the Ithacensian suitors in old time,  
Stared with great eyes, and laugh'd with alien lips,  
And knew not what they meant ; for still my voice  
Rang false : but smiling “ Not for thee,” she said,  
“ O Bulbul, any rose of Gulistan  
Shall burst her veil : marsh-divers, rather, maid,  
Shall croak thee sister, or the meadow-crake  
Grate her harsh kindred in the grass : and this  
A mere love-poem ! O for such, my friend,  
We hold them slight : they mind us of the time  
110 When we made bricks in Egypt. Knaves are men,  
That lute and flute fantastic tenderness,  
And dress the victim to the offering up,  
And paint the gates of Hell with Paradise,  
And play the slave to gain the tyranny.  
Poor soul ! I had a maid of honor once ;  
She wept her true eyes blind for such a one,  
A rogue of canzonets and serenades.  
I loved her. Peace be with her. She is dead.  
So they blaspheme the muse ! But great is song  
120 Used to great ends : ourself have often tried

Valkyrian hymns, or into rhythm have dash'd  
 The passion of the prophetess ; for song  
 Is duer unto freedom, force and growth  
 Of spirit than to junketing and love.  
 Love is it? Would this same mock-love, and this  
 Mock-Hymen were laid up like winter bats,  
 Till all men grew to rate us at our worth,  
 Not vassals to be beat, nor pretty babes  
 To be dandled, no, but living wills, and sphered  
 Whole in ourselves and owed to none. Enough! 130  
 But now to leaven play with profit, you,  
 Know you no song, the true growth of your soil,  
 That gives the manners of your country-women? ”

She spoke and turn'd her sumptuous head with eyes  
 Of shining expectation fixt on mine.  
 Then while I dragg'd my brains for such a song,  
 Cyril, with whom the bell-mouth'd glass had wrought,  
 Or master'd by the sense of sport, began  
 To troll a careless, careless tavern-catch  
 Of Moll and Meg, and strange experiences 140  
 Unmeet for ladies. Florian nodded at him,  
 I frowning ; Psyche flush'd and wann'd and shook ;  
 The lilylike Melissa droop'd her brows ;  
 “ Forbear,” the Princess cried ; “ Forbear, Sir ” I ;  
 And heated thro' and thro' with wrath and love,

I smote him on the breast; he started up;  
There rose a shriek as of a city sack'd;  
Melissa clamor'd "Flee the death;" "To horse"  
Said Ida; "home! to horse!" and fled, as flies  
150 A troop of snowy doves athwart the dusk,  
When some one batters at the dovecote doors,  
Disorderly the women. Alone I stood  
With Florian, cursing Cyril, vext at heart,  
In the pavilion: there like parting hopes  
I heard them passing from me: hoof by hoof,  
And every hoof a knell to my desires,  
Clang'd on the bridge; and then another shriek,  
"The Head, the Head, the Princess, O the Head!"  
For blind with rage she miss'd the plank, and roll'd  
160 In the river. Out I sprang from glow to gloom:  
There whirl'd her white robe like a blossom'd branch  
Rapt to the horrible fall: a glance I gave,  
No more; but woman-vested as I was  
Plunged; and the flood drew; yet I caught her; then  
Oaring one arm, and bearing in my left  
The weight of all the hopes of half the world,  
Strove to buffet to land in vain. A tree  
Was half-disrooted from his place and stoop'd  
To drench his dark locks in the gurgling wave  
170 Mid-channel. Right on this we drove and caught,  
And grasping down the boughs I gain'd the shore.



There stood her maidens glimmeringly group'd  
In the hollow bank. One reaching forward drew  
My burthen from mine arms; they cried "she lives:"  
They bore her back into the tent: but I,  
So much a kind of shame within me wrought,  
Not yet endured to meet her opening eyes,  
Nor found my friends; but push'd alone on foot  
(For since her horse was lost I left her mine)  
Across the woods, and less from Indian craft 180  
Than beelike instinct hiveward, found at length  
The garden portals. Two great statues, Art  
And Science, Caryatids, lifted up  
A weight of emblem, and betwixt were valves  
Of open-work in which the hunter rued  
His rash intrusion, manlike, but his brows  
Had sprouted, and the branches thereupon  
Spread out at top, and grimly spiked the gates.

A little space was left between the horns,  
Thro' which I clamber'd o'er at top with pain, 190  
Dropt on the sward, and up the linden walks,  
And, tost on thoughts that changed from hue to hue,  
Now poring on the glowworm, now the star,  
I paced the terrace, till the Bear had wheel'd  
Thro' a great arc his seven slow suns.

A step

Of lightest echo, then a loftier form  
Than female, moving thro' the uncertain gloom,  
Disturb'd me with the doubt "if this were she,"  
But it was Florian. "Hist O hist," he said,  
200 "They seek us: out so late is out of rules.  
Moreover 'seize the strangers' is the cry.  
How came you here?" I told him: "I" said he,  
"Last of the train, a moral leper, I,  
To whom none spake, half-sick at heart, return'd.  
Arriving all confused among the rest  
With hooded brows I crept into the hall,  
And, couch'd behind a Judith, underneath  
The head of Holofernes peep'd and saw.  
Girl after girl was call'd to trial: each  
210 Disclaim'd all knowledge of us: last of all,  
Melissa: trust me, Sir, I pitied her.  
She, question'd if she knew us men, at first  
Was silent; closer prest, denied it not:  
And then, demanded if her mother knew,  
Or Psyche, she affirm'd not, or denied:  
From whence the Royal mind, familiar with her,  
Easily gather'd either guilt. She sent  
For Psyche, but she was not there; she call'd  
For Psyche's child to cast it from the doors;  
220 She sent for Blanche to accuse her face to face;  
And I slipt out: but whither will you now?

And where are Psyche, Cyril? both are fled :  
 What, if together? that were not so well.  
 Would rather we had never come! I dread  
 His wildness, and the chances of the dark."

"And yet," I said, "you wrong him more than I  
 That struck him: this is proper to the clown,  
 Tho' smock'd, or furr'd and purpled, still the clown,  
 To harm the thing that trusts him, and to shame  
 That which he says he loves: for Cyril, howe'er  
 He deal in frolic, as to-night—the song  
 Might have been worse and sinn'd in grosser lips  
 Beyond all pardon—as it is, I hold  
 These flashes on the surface are not he.  
 He has a solid base of temperament:  
 But as the water lily starts and slides  
 Upon the level in little puffs of wind,  
 Tho' anchor'd to the bottom, such is he."

230

Scarce had I ceased when from a tamarisk near  
 Two Proctors leapt upon us, crying, "Names:"  
 He, standing still, was clutch'd; but I began  
 To thrid the musky-circled mazes, wind  
 And double in and out the boles, and race  
 By all the fountains: fleet I was of foot:  
 Before me shower'd the rose in flakes; behind

240

I heard the puff'd pursuer ; at mine ear  
Bubbled the nightingale and heeded not,  
And secret laughter tickled all my soul.  
At last I hook'd my ankle in a vine,  
250 That claspt the feet of a Mnemosyne,  
And falling on my face was caught and known.

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

Then, as we came, the crowd dividing clove  
An advent to the throne : and therebeside,  
Half-naked as if caught at once from bed  
And tumbled on the purpled footcloth, lay  
The lily-shining child ; and on the left,  
Bow'd on her palms and folded up from wrong,

Her round white shoulder shaken with her sobs, 270  
 Melissa knelt; but Lady Blanche erect  
 Stood up and spake, an affluent orator.

“It was not thus, O Princess, in old days:  
 You prized my counsel, lived upon my lips:  
 I led you then to all the Castalies;  
 I fed you with the milk of every Muse;  
 I loved you like this kneeler, and you me  
 Your second mother: those were gracious times.  
 Then came your new friend: you began to change —  
 I saw it and grieved — to slacken and to cool; 280  
 Till taken with her seeming openness  
 You turn'd your warmer currents all to her,  
 To me you froze: this was my meed for all.  
 Yet I bore up in part from ancient love,  
 And partly that I hoped to win you back,  
 And partly conscious of my own deserts,  
 And partly that you were my civil head,  
 And chiefly you were born for something great,  
 In which I might your fellow-worker be,  
 When time should serve; and thus a noble scheme 290  
 Grew up from seed we two long since had sown;  
 In us true growth, in her a Jonah's gourd,  
 Up in one night and due to sudden sun:  
 We took this palace; but even from the first

You stood in your own light and darken'd mine.  
What student came but that you planed her path  
To Lady Psyche, younger, not so wise,  
A foreigner, and I your countrywoman,  
I your old friend and tried, she new in all?  
300 But still her lists were swell'd and mine were lean ;  
Yet I bore up in hope she would be known :  
Then came these wolves : *they* knew her : *they* endured,  
Long-closeted with her the yestermorn,  
To tell her what they were, and she to hear :  
And me none told : not less to an eye like mine  
A lidless watcher of the public weal,  
Last night, their mask was patent, and my foot  
Was to you : but I thought again : I fear'd  
To meet a cold 'We thank you, we shall hear of it  
310 From Lady Pysche : " you had gone to her,  
She told, perforce ; and winning easy grace,  
No doubt, for slight delay, remain'd among us  
In our young nursery still unknown, the stem  
Less grain than touchwood, while my honest heat  
Were all miscounted as malignant haste  
To push my rival out of place and power.  
But public use required she should be known ;  
And since my oath was ta'en for public use,  
I broke the letter of it to keep the sense.  
320 I spoke not then at first, but watch'd them well,

Saw that they kept apart, no mischief done ;  
And yet this day (tho' you should hate me for it)  
I came to tell you ; found that you had gone,  
Ridd'n to the hills, she likewise : now, I thought,  
That surely she will speak ; if not, then I :  
Did she ? These monsters blazon'd what they were,  
According to the coarseness of their kind,  
For thus I hear ; and known at last (my work)  
And full of cowardice and guilty shame,  
I grant in her some sense of shame, she flies ;                   330  
And I remain on whom to wreak your rage,  
I, that have lent my life to build up yours,  
I, that have wasted here health, wealth, and time,  
And talent, I — you know it — I will not boast :  
Dismiss me, and I prophesy your plan,  
Divorced from my experience, will be chaff  
For every gust of chance, and men will say  
We did not know the real light, but chased  
The wisp that flickers where no foot can tread."

She ceased : the Princess answer'd coldly, " Good : 340  
Your oath is broken : we dismiss you : go.  
For this lost lamb (she pointed to the child)  
Our mind is changed ; we take it to ourself."

Thereat the Lady stretch'd a vulture throat,  
And shot from crooked lips a haggard smile.

“The plan was mine. I built the nest” she said  
“To hatch the cuckoo. Rise!” and stoop’d to updrag  
Melissa : she, half on her mother propt,  
Half-drooping from her, turn’d her face, and cast  
350 A liquid look on Ida, full of prayer,  
Which melted Florian’s fancy as she hung,  
A Niobëan daughter, one arm out,  
Appealing to the bolts of Heaven ; and while  
We gazed upon her came a little stir  
About the doors, and on a sudden rush’d  
Among us, out of breath, as one pursued,  
A woman-post in flying raiment. Fear  
Stared in her eyes, and chalk’d her face, and wing’d  
Her transit to the throne, whereby she fell  
360 Delivering seal’d dispatches which the Head  
Took half-amazed, and in her lion’s mood  
Tore open, silent we with blind surmise  
Regarding, while she read, till over brow  
And cheek and bosom brake the wrathful bloom  
As of some fire against a stormy cloud,  
When the wild peasant rights himself, the rick  
Flames, and his anger reddens in the heavens ;  
For anger most it seem’d, while now her breast,  
Beaten with some great passion at her heart,  
370 Palpitated, her hand shook, and we heard  
In the dead hush the papers that she held



Rustle : at once the lost lamb at her feet  
 Sent out a bitter bleating for its dam ;  
 The plaintive cry jarr'd on her ire ; she crush'd  
 The scrolls together, made a sudden turn  
 As if to speak, but, utterance failing her,  
 She whirl'd them on to me, as who should say  
 " Read," and I read — two letters — one her sire's.

" Fair daughter, when we sent the Prince your way  
 We knew not your ungracious laws, which learnt, 380  
 We, conscious of what temper you are built,  
 Came all in haste to hinder wrong, but fell  
 Into his father's hand, who has this night,  
 You lying close upon his territory,  
 Slipt round and in the dark invested you,  
 And here he keeps me hostage for his son."

The second was my father's running thus :  
 " You have our son : touch not a hair of his head :  
 Render him up unscathed : give him your hand :  
 Cleave to your contract : tho' indeed we hear 390  
 You hold the woman is the better man ;  
 A rampant heresy, such as if it spread  
 Would make all women kick against their Lords  
 Thro' all the world, and which might well deserve  
 That we this night should pluck your palace down ;

And we will do it, unless you send us back  
Our son, on the instant, whole."

So far I read.

And then stood up and spoke impetuously.

"O not to pry and peer on your reserve,  
400 But led by golden wishes, and a hope  
The child of regal compact, did I break  
Your precinct; not a scorner of your sex  
But venerator, zealous it should be  
All that it might be : hear me, for I bear,  
Tho' man, yet human, whatso'er your wrongs,  
From the flaxen curl to the gray lock a life  
Less mine than yours : my nurse would tell me of you ;  
I babbled for you, as babies for the moon,  
Vague brightness ; when a boy, you stoop'd to me  
410 From all high places, lived in all fair lights,  
Came in long breezes rapt from inmost south  
And blown to inmost north ; at eve and dawn  
With *Ida, Ida, Ida*, rang the woods ;  
The leader wildswan in among the stars  
Would clang it, and lapt in wreaths of glowworm light  
The mellow breaker murmur'd *Ida*. Now,  
Because I would have reach'd you, had you been  
Sphered up with *Cassiopœia*, or the enthroned  
*Persephonè* in *Hades*, now at length,

Those winters of abeyance all worn out, 420  
A man I came to see you : but, indeed,  
Not in this frequency can I lend full tongue,  
O noble Ida, to those thoughts that wait  
On you, their centre : let me say but this,  
That many a famous man and woman, town  
And landskip, have I heard of, after seen  
The dwarfs of presage : tho' when known, there grew  
Another kind of beauty in detail  
Made them worth knowing ; but in you I found  
My boyish dream involved and dazzled down 430  
And master'd, while that after-beauty makes  
Such head from act to act, from hour to hour,  
Within me, that except you slay me here,  
According to your bitter statute-book,  
I cannot cease to follow you, as they say  
The seal does music ; who desire you more  
Than growing boys their manhood ; dying lips,  
With many thousand matters left to do,  
The breath of life ; O more than poor men wealth,  
Than sick men health—yours, yours, not mine—but half 440  
Without you ; with you, whole ; and of those halves  
You worthiest ; and howe'er you block and bar  
Your heart with system out from mine, I hold  
That it becomes no man to nurse despair,  
But in the teeth of clench'd antagonisms

To follow up the worthiest till he die :  
 Yet that I came not all unauthorized  
 Behold your father's letter."

On one knee

Kneeling, I gave it, which she caught, and dash'd  
 450 Unopen'd at her feet : a tide of fierce  
 Invective seem'd to wait behind her lips,  
 As waits a river level with the dam  
 Ready to burst and flood the world with foam :  
 And so she would have spoken, but there rose  
 A hubbub in the court of half the maids  
 Gather'd together : from the illumined hall  
 Long lanes of splendor slanted o'er a press  
 Of snowy shoulders, thick as herded ewes,  
 And rainbow robes, and gems and gemlike eyes,  
 460 And gold and golden heads ; they to and fro  
 Fluctuated, as flowers in storm, some red, some pale,  
 All open-mouth'd, all gazing to the light,  
 Some crying there was an army in the land,  
 And some that men were in the very walls,  
 And some they cared not ; till a clamor grew  
 As of a new-world Babel, woman-built,  
 And worse-confounded : high above them stood  
 The placid marble Muses, looking peace.

Not peace she look'd, the Head : but rising up  
 470 Robed in the long night of her deep hair, so

To the open window moved, remaining there  
 Fixt like a beacon-tower above the waves  
 Of tempest, when the crimson-rolling eye  
 Glares ruin, and the wild birds on the light  
 Dash themselves dead. She stretch'd her arms and  
     call'd  
 Across the tumult, and the tumult fell.

“ What fear ye, brawlers ? am not I your Head ?  
 On me, me, me, the storm first breaks : *I* dare  
 All these male thunderbolts : what is it ye fear ?  
 Peace ! there are those to avenge us and they come : 480  
 If not, — myself were like enough, O girls,  
 To unfurl the maiden banner of our rights,  
 And clad in iron burst the ranks of war,  
 Or, falling, protomartyr of our cause,  
 Die : yet I blame you not so much for fear ;  
 Six thousand years of fear have made you that  
 From which I would redeem you : but for those  
 That stir this hubbub — you and you — I know  
 Your faces there in the crowd — to-morrow morn  
 We hold a great convention : then shall they 490  
 That love their voices more than duty, learn  
 With whom they deal, dismiss'd in shame to live  
 No wiser than their mothers, household stuff,  
 Live chattels, mincers of each other's fame,

Full of weak poison, turnspits for the clown,  
 The drunkard's football, laughing-stocks of Time,  
 Whose brains are in their hands and in their heels,  
 But fit to flaunt, to dress, to dance, to thrum,  
 To tramp, to scream, to burnish, and to scour,  
 500 For ever slaves at home and fools abroad."

She, ending, waved her hands: thereat the crowd  
 Muttering, dissolved: then with a smile, that look'd  
 A stroke of cruel sunshine on the cliff,  
 When all the glens are drown'd in azure gloom  
 Of thunder-shower, she floated to us and said:

"You have done well and like a gentleman,  
 And like a prince: you have our thanks for all:  
 And you look well too in your woman's dress:  
 Well have you done and like a gentleman.  
 510 You saved our life: we owe you bitter thanks:  
 Better have died and spilt our bones in the flood—  
 Then men had said—but now—What hinders me  
 To take such bloody vengeance on you both?—  
 Yet since our father—Wasps in our good hive,  
 You would-be quenchers of the light to be,  
 Barbarians, grosser than your native bears—  
 O would I had his sceptre for one hour!  
 You that have dared to break our bound, and gull'd

Our servants, wrong'd and lied and thwarted us —  
*I wed with thee! I bound by precontract* 520  
 Your bride, your bondslave! not tho' all the gold  
 That veins the world were pack'd to make your crown,  
 And every spoken tongue should lord you. Sir,  
 Your falsehood and yourself are hateful to us:  
 I trample on your offers and on you:  
 Begone: we will not look upon you more.  
 Here, push them out at gates."

In wrath she spake.

Then those eight mighty daughters of the plough  
 Bent their broad faces toward us and address'd  
 Their motion: twice I sought to plead my cause, 530  
 But on my shoulder hung their heavy hands,  
 The weight of destiny: so from her face  
 They push'd us, down the steps, and thro' the court,  
 And with grim laughter thrust us out at gates.

We cross'd the street and gain'd a petty mound  
 Beyond it, whence we saw the lights and heard  
 The voices murmuring. While I listen'd, came  
 On a sudden the weird seizure and the doubt:  
 I seem'd to move among a world of ghosts;  
 The Princess with her monstrous woman-guard, 540  
 The jest and earnest working side by side,  
 The cataract and the tumult and the kings

Were shadows; and the long fantastic night  
With all its doings had and had not been,  
And all things were and were not.

This went by

As strangely as it came, and on my spirits  
Settled a gentle cloud of melancholy;  
Not long; I shook it off; for spite of doubts  
And sudden ghostly shadowings I was one  
550 To whom the touch of all mischance but came  
As night to him that sitting on a hill  
Sees the midsummer, midnight, Norway sun  
Set into sunrise; then we moved away.



Thy voice is heard thro' rolling drums,  
 That beat to battle where he stands ;  
 Thy face across his fancy comes,  
 And gives the battle to his hands :  
 A moment, while the trumpets blow,  
 He sees his brood about thy knee ;  
 The next, like fire he meets the foe,  
 And strikes him dead for thine and thee.

560

So Lilia sang : we thought her half-possess'd,  
 She struck such warbling fury thro' the words ;  
 And, after, feigning pique at what she call'd  
 The raillery, or grotesque, or false sublime —  
 Like one that wishes at a dance to change  
 The music — clapt her hands and cried for war,  
 Or some grand fight to kill and make an end :  
 And he that next inherited the tale,  
 Half turning to the broken statue, said,  
 " Sir Ralph has got your colors ; if I prove  
 Your knight, and fight your battle, what for me ? "  
 It chanced, her empty glove upon the tomb  
 Lay by her like a model of her hand.  
 She took it and she flung it. " Fight " she said,  
 " And make us all we would be, great and good."  
 He knightlike in his cap instead of casque,  
 A cap of Tyrol borrow'd from the hall,  
 Arranged the favor, and assumed the Prince.

570

## V.

Now, scarce three paces measured from the mound,  
We stumbled on a stationary voice,  
And "Stand, who goes?" "Two from the palace" I.  
"The second two: they wait," he said, "pass on;  
His Highness wakes:" and one, that clash'd in arms,  
By glimmering lanes and walls of canvas led  
Threading the soldier-city, till we heard  
The drowsy folds of our great ensign shake  
From blazon'd lions o'er the imperial tent  
10 Whispers of war.

Entering, the sudden light  
Dazed me half-blind: I stood and seem'd to hear,  
As in a poplar grove when a light wind wakes  
A lisp of the innumerable leaf and dies,  
Each hissing in his neighbor's ear; and then  
A strangled titter, out of which there brake  
On all sides, clamoring etiquette to death,  
Unmeasured mirth; while now the two old kings  
Began to wag their baldness up and down,  
The fresh young captains flash'd their glittering teeth,  
20 The huge bush-bearded Barons heaved and blew,  
And slain with laughter roll'd the gilded Squire.

At length my Sire, his rough cheek wet with tears,  
Panted from weary sides "King, you are free!"

We did but keep you surety for our son,  
 If this be he,— or a draggled mawkin, thou,  
 That tends her bristled gruntes in the sludge : ”  
 For I was drench’d with ooze, and torn with briers,  
 More crumpled than a poppy from the sheath,  
 And all one rag, disprinc’d from head to heel.  
 Then some one sent beneath his vaulted palm  
 A whisper’d jest to some one near him, “ Look,  
 He has been among his shadows.” “ Satan take  
 The old women and their shadows! ( thus the King  
 Roar’d ) make yourself a man to fight with men.  
 Go: Cyril told us all.”

30

As boys that slink  
 From ferule and the trespass-chiding eye,  
 Away we stole, and transient in a trice  
 From what was left of faded woman-slough  
 To sheathing splendors and the golden scale  
 Of harness, issued in the sun, that now  
 Leapt from the dewy shoulders of the Earth,  
 And hit the Northern hills. Here Cyril met us.  
 A little shy at first, but by and by  
 We twain, with mutual pardon ask’d and given  
 For stroke and song, resolder’d peace, whereon  
 Follow’d his tale. Amazed he fled away  
 Thro’ the dark land, and later in the night  
 Had come on Psyche weeping: “ then we fell

40

Into your father's hand, and there she lies,  
50 But will not speak, nor stir."

He show'd a tent

A stone-shot off: we enter'd in, and there  
Among piled arms and rough accoutrements,  
Pitiful sight, wrapp'd in a soldier's cloak,  
Like some sweet sculpture draped from head to foot,  
And push'd by rude hands from its pedestal,  
All her fair length upon the ground she lay:  
And at her head a follower of the camp,  
A charr'd and wrinkled piece of womanhood,  
Sat watching like a watcher by the dead.

60 Then Florian knelt, and "Come" he whisper'd to  
her,  
"Lift up your head, sweet sister: lie not thus.  
What have you done but right? you could not slay  
Me, nor your prince: look up: be comforted:  
Sweet is it to have done the thing one ought,  
When fall'n in darker ways." And likewise I:  
"Be comforted: have I not lost her too,  
In whose least act abides the nameless charm  
That none has else for me?" She heard, she moved,  
She moan'd, a folded voice; and up she sat,  
70 And raised the cloak from brows as pale and smooth  
As those that mourn half-shrouded over death

In deathless marble. "Her," she said, "my friend —  
Parted from her — betray'd her cause and mine —  
Where shall I breathe? why kept ye not your faith?  
O base and bad! what comfort? none for me!"  
To whom remorseful Cyril, "Yet I pray  
Take comfort: live, dear lady, for your child!"  
At which she lifted up her voice and cried.

"Ah me, my babe, my blossom, ah, my child,  
My one sweet child, whom I shall see no more!  
For now will cruel Ida keep her back;  
And either she will die from want of care,  
Or sicken with ill-usage, when they say  
The child is hers — for every little fault,  
The child is hers; and they will beat my girl  
Remembering her mother: O my flower!  
Or they will take her, they will make her hard,  
And she will pass me by in after-life  
With some cold reverence worse than were she dead.  
Ill mother that I was to leave her there,  
To lag behind, scared by the cry they made,  
The horror of the shame among them all:  
But I will go and sit beside the doors,  
And make a wild petition night and day,  
Until they hate to hear me like a wind  
Wailing for ever, till they open to me,

80

90

And lay my little blossom at my feet,  
 My babe, my sweet Aglaïa, my one child :  
 And I will take her up and go my way,  
 100 And satisfy my soul with kissing her :  
 Ah ! what might that man not deserve of me  
 Who gave me back my child ? ” “ Be comforted,”  
 Said Cyril, “ you shall have it ; ” but again  
 She veil'd her brows, and prone she sank, and so  
 Like tender things that being caught feign death,  
 Spoke not, nor stirr'd.

By this a murmur ran  
 Thro' all the camp and inward raced the scouts  
 With rumor of Prince Arac hard at hand.  
 We left her by the woman, and without  
 110 Found the gray kings at parle : and “ Look you ” cried  
 My-father “ that our compact be fulfill'd :  
 You have spoilt this child ; she laughs at you and man :  
 She wrongs herself, her sex, and me, and him :  
 But red-faced war has rods of steel and fire ;  
 She yields, or war.”

Then Gama turn'd to me :  
 “ We fear, indeed, you spent a stormy time  
 With our strange girl ; and yet they say that still  
 You love her. Give us, then, your mind at large :  
 How say you, war or not ? ”

“ Not war, if possible,

O king," I said, "lest from the abuse of war, 120  
 The desecrated shrine, the trampled year,  
 The smouldering homestead, and the household flower  
 Torn from the lintel — all the common wrong —  
 A smoke go up thro' which I loom to her  
 Three times a monster: now she lightens scorn  
 At him that mars her plan, but then would hate  
 (And every voice she talk'd with ratify it,  
 And every face she look'd on justify it)  
 The general foe. More soluble is this knot,  
 By gentleness than war. I want her love. 130  
 What were I nigher this altho' we dash'd  
 Your cities into shards with catapults,  
 She would not love; —or brought her chain'd, a slave,  
 The lifting of whose eyelash is my lord,  
 Not ever would she love; but brooding turn  
 The book of scorn, till all my fitting chance  
 Were caught within the record of her wrongs,  
 And crush'd to death: and rather, Sire, than this  
 I would the old God of war himself were dead,  
 Forgotten, rusting on his iron hills, 140  
 Rotting on some wild shore with ribs of wreck,  
 Or like an old-world mammoth bulk'd in ice,  
 Not to be molten out."

And roughly spake  
 My father, "Tut, you know them not, the girls.

Boy, when I hear you prate I almost think  
That idiot legend credible. Look you, Sir!  
Man is the hunter; woman is his game:  
The sleek and shining creatures of the chase,  
We hunt them for the beauty of their skins;  
150 They love us for it, and we ride them down.  
Wheedling and siding with them! Out! for shame!  
Boy, there's no rose that's half so dear to them  
As he that does the thing they dare not do,  
Breathing and sounding beauteous battle, comes  
With the air of the trumpet round him, and leaps in  
Among the women, snares them by the score  
Flatter'd and fluster'd, wins, tho' dash'd with death  
He reddens what he kisses: thus I won  
Your mother, a good mother, a good wife,  
160 Worth winning; but this firebrand — gentleness  
To such as her! if Cyril spake her true,  
To catch a dragon in a cherry net,  
To trip a tigress with a gossamer,  
Were wisdom to it."

“Yea but Sire,” I cried,  
“Wild natures need wise curbs. The soldier? No:  
What dares not Ida do that she should prize  
The soldier? I beheld her, when she rose  
The yesternight, and storming in extremes,  
Stood for her cause, and flung defiance down



Gagelike to man, and had not shunn'd the death, 170  
 No, not the soldier's; yet I hold her, king,  
 True woman: but you clash them all in one,  
 That have as many differences as we.  
 The violet varies from the lily as far  
 As oak from elm: one loves the soldier, one  
 The silken priest of peace, one this, one that,  
 And some unworthily; their sinless faith,  
 A maiden moon that sparkles on a sty,  
 Glorifying clown and satyr; whence they need  
 More breadth of culture: is not Ida right? 180  
 They worth it? truer to the law within?  
 Severer in the logic of a life?  
 Twice as magnetic to sweet influences  
 Of earth and heaven? and she of whom you speak,  
 My mother, looks as whole as some serene  
 Creation minted in the golden moods  
 Of sovereign artists; not a thought, a touch,  
 But pure as lines of green that streak the white  
 Of the first snowdrop's inner leaves; I say,  
 Not like the piebald miscellany, man, 190  
 Bursts of great heart and slips in sensual mire,  
 But whole and one: and take them all-in-all,  
 Were we ourselves but half as good, as kind,  
 As truthful, much that Ida claims as right  
 Had ne'er been mooted, but as frankly theirs

As dues of Nature. To our point: not war;  
Lest I lose all."

"Nay, nay, you spake but sense"

Said Gama. "We remember love ourself  
In our sweet youth; we did not rate him then  
200 This red-hot iron to be shaped with blows.  
You talk almost like Ida: *she* can talk;  
And there is something in it as you say:  
But you talk kindlier: we esteem you for it. —  
He seems a gracious and a gallant Prince,  
I would he had our daughter: for the rest,  
Our own detention, why, the causes weigh'd,  
Fatherly fears — you used us courteously —  
We would do much to gratify your Prince —  
We pardon it; and for your ingress here  
210 Upon the skirt and fringe of our fair land,  
You did but come as goblins in the night,  
Nor in the furrow broke the ploughman's head,  
Nor burnt the grange, nor buss'd the milking-maid,  
Nor robb'd the farmer of his bowl of cream:  
But let your Prince (our royal word upon it,  
He comes back safe) ride with us to our lines,  
And speak with Arac: Arac's word is thrice  
As ours with Ida: something may be done —  
I know not what — and ours shall see us friends.  
220 You, likewise, our late guests, if so you will,

Follow us : who knows ? we four may build some plan  
Foursquare to opposition."

Here he reach'd  
White hands of farewell to my sire, who growl'd  
An answer which, half-muffled in his beard,  
Let so much out as gave us leave to go.

Then rode we with the old king across the lawns  
Beneath huge trees, a thousand rings of Spring  
In every bole, a song on every spray  
Of birds that piped their Valentines, and woke  
Desire in me to infuse my tale of love 230  
In the old king's ears, who promised help, and oozed  
All o'er with honey'd answer as we rode  
And blossom-fragrant slipt the heavy dews  
Gather'd by night and peace, with each light air  
On our mail'd heads : but other thoughts than Peace  
Burnt in us, when we saw the embattled squares,  
And squadrons of the Prince, trampling the flowers  
With clamor : for among them rose a cry  
As if to greet the king ; they made a halt ;  
The horses yell'd ; they clash'd their arms ; the drum 240  
Beat ; merrily-blowing shrill'd the martial fife ;  
And in the blast and bray of the long horn  
And serpent-throated bugle, undulated  
The banner : anon to meet us lightly pranced

Three captains out ; nor ever had I seen  
Such thews of men : the midmost and the highest  
Was Arac : all about his motion clung  
The shadow of his sister, as the beam  
Of the East, that play'd upon them, made them glance  
250 Like those three stars of the airy Giant's zone,  
That glitter burnish'd by the frosty dark ;  
And as the fiery Sirius alters hue,  
And bickers into red and emerald, shone  
Their morions, wash'd with morning, as they came.

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

“ Our land invaded, 'sdeath ! and he himself  
Your captive, yet my father wills not war :  
And, 'sdeath ! myself, what care I, war or no ?

But then this question of your troth remains :  
 And there's a downright honest meaning in her ; 270  
 She flies too high, she flies too high ! and yet  
 She ask'd but space and fair-play for her scheme ;  
 She prest and prest it on me — I myself,  
 What know I of these things ? but, life and soul !  
 I thought her half-right talking of her wrongs ;  
 I say she flies too high, 'sdeath ! what of that ?  
 I take her for the flower of womankind,  
 And so I often told her, right or wrong,  
 And, Prince, she can be sweet to those she loves,  
 And, right or wrong, I care not : this is all, 280  
 I stand upon her side : she made me swear it —  
 'Sdeath ! — and with solemn rites by candle-light —  
 Swear by St. something — I forget her name —  
 Her that talk'd down the fifty wisest men ;  
*She* was a princess too ; and so I swore.  
 Come, this is all ; she will not : waive your claim :  
 If not, the foughten field, what else, at once  
 Decides it, 'sdeath ! against my father's will."

I lagg'd in answer loth to render up  
 My precontract, and loth by brainless war 290  
 To cleave the rift of difference deeper yet ;  
 Till 'one of those two brothers, half aside  
 And fingering at the hair about his lip,

To prick us on to combat "Like to like!  
The woman's garment hid the woman's heart."  
A taunt that clench'd his purpose like a blow!  
For fiery-short was Cyril's counter-scoff,  
And sharp I answer'd, touch'd upon the point  
Where idle boys are cowards to their shame,  
300 "Decide it here: why not? we are three to three."

Then spake the third "But three to three? no more?  
No more, and in our noble sister's cause?  
More, more, for honor: every captain waits  
Hungry for honor, angry for his king.  
More, more, some fifty on a side, that each  
May breathe himself, and quick! by overthrow  
Of these or those, the question settled die."

"Yea," answer'd I, "for this wild wreath of air,  
This flake of rainbow flying on the highest  
310 Foam of men's deeds — this honor, if ye will.  
It needs must be for honor if at all:  
Since, what decision? if we fail, we fail,  
And if we win, we fail: she would not keep  
Her compact." "'Sdeath! but we will send to her,"  
Said Arac, "worthy reasons why she should  
Bide by this issue: let our missive thro',  
And you shall have her answer by the word."

"Boys!" shriek'd the old king, but vainlier than a hen  
 To her false daughters in the pool; for none  
 Regarded; neither seem'd there more to say: 320  
 Back rode we to my father's camp, and found  
 He thrice had sent a herald to the gates,  
 To learn if Ida yet would cede our claim,  
 Or by denial flush her babbling wells  
 With her own people's life: three times he went:  
 The first, he blew and blew, but none appear'd:  
 He batter'd at the doors; none came: the next,  
 An awful voice within had warn'd him thence:  
 The third, and those eight daughters of the plough  
 Came sallying thro' the gates, and caught his hair, 330  
 And so belabor'd him on rib and cheek  
 They made him wild: not less one glance he caught  
 Thro' open doors of Ida station'd there  
 Unshaken, clinging to her purpose, firm  
 Tho' compass'd by two armies and the noise  
 Of arms; and standing like a stately Pine  
 Set in a cataract on an island-crag,  
 When storm is on the heights, and right and left  
 Suck'd from the dark heart of the long hills roll  
 The torrents, dash'd to the vale: and yet her will 340  
 Bred will in me to overcome it or fall.

But when I told the king that I was pledged  
 To fight in tourney for my bride, he clash'd

His iron palms together with a cry ;  
Himself would tilt it out among the lads :  
But overborne by all his bearded lords  
With reasons drawn from age and state, perforce  
He yielded, wroth and red, with fierce demur :  
And many a bold knight started up in heat,  
350 And sware to combat for my claim till death.

All on this side the palace ran the field  
Flat to the garden-wall ; and likewise here,  
Above the garden's glowing blossom-belts,  
A column'd entry shone and marble stairs,  
And great bronze valves, emboss'd with Tomyris  
And what she did to Cyrus after fight,  
But now fast barr'd : so here upon the flat  
All that long morn the lists were hammer'd up,  
And all that morn the heralds to and fro,  
360 With message and defiance, went and came ;  
Last, Ida's answer, in a royal hand,  
But shaken here and there, and rolling words  
Oration-like. I kiss'd it and I read.

“ O brother, you have known the pangs we felt,  
What heats of indignation when we heard  
Of those that iron-cramp'd their women's feet ;  
Of lands in which at the altar the poor bride



Gives her harsh groom for bridal-gift a scourge ;  
 Of living hearts that crack within the fire  
 Where smoulder their dead despots; and of those, — 370  
 Mothers, — that, all prophetic pity, fling  
 Their pretty maids in the running flood, and swoops  
 The vulture, beak and talon, at the heart  
 Made for all noble motion : and I saw  
 That equal baseness lived in sleeker times  
 With smoother men : the old leaven leaven'd all ;  
 Millions of throats would bawl for civil rights,  
 No woman named : therefore I set my face  
 Against all men, and lived but for mine own.  
 Far off from men I built a fold for them : 380  
 I stored it full of rich memorial :  
 I fenced it round with gallant institutes,  
 And biting laws to scare the beasts of prey  
 And prosper'd ; till a rout of saucy boys  
 Brake on us at our books, and marr'd our peace,  
 Mask'd like our maids, blustering I know not what  
 Of insolence and love, some pretext held  
 Of baby troth, invalid, since my will  
 Seal'd not the bond — the striplings ! — for their  
 sport ! —  
 I tamed my leopards : shall I not tame these ? 390  
 Or you ? or I ? for since you think me touch'd  
 In honor — what, I would not aught of false —

Is not our cause pure? and whereas I know  
 Your prowess, Arac, and what mother's blood  
 You draw from, fight; you failing, I abide  
 What end soever: fail you will not. Still  
 Take not his life: he risk'd it for my own;  
 His mother lives: yet whatsoe'er you do,  
 Fight and fight well; strike and strike home. O dear  
 400 Brothers, the woman's Angel guards you, you  
 The sole men to be mingled with our cause,  
 The sole men we shall prize in the after-time,  
 Your very armor hallow'd, and your statues  
 Rear'd, sung to, when, this gad-fly brush'd aside,  
 We plant a solid foot into the Time,  
 And mould a generation strong to move  
 With claim on claim from right to right, till she  
 Whose name is yoked with children's, know herself;  
 And Knowledge in our own land make her free,  
 410 And, ever following those two crowned twins,  
 Commerce and conquest, shower the fiery grain  
 Of freedom broadcast over all that orbs  
 Between the Northern and the Southern morn."

Then came a postscript dash'd across the rest.  
 "See that there be no traitors in your camp:  
 We seem a nest of traitors — none to trust  
 Since our arms fail'd — this Egypt-plague of men!"

Almost our maids were better at their homes,  
 Than thus man-girdled here : indeed I think  
 Our chiefest comfort is the little child 420  
 Of one unworthy mother ; which she left :  
 She shall not have it back : the child shall grow  
 To prize the authentic mother of her mind.  
 I took it for an hour in mine own bed  
 This morning : there the tender orphan hands  
 Felt at my heart, and seem'd to charm from thence  
 The wrath I nursed against the world : farewell."

I ceased ; he said, " Stubborn, but she may sit  
 Upon a king's right hand in thunder-storms,  
 And breed up warriors ! See now, tho' yourself 430  
 Be dazzled by the wildfire Love to sloughs  
 That swallow common sense, the spindling king,  
 This Gama swamp'd in lazy tolerance.  
 When the man wants weight, the woman takes it up,  
 And topples down the scales ; but this is fixt  
 As are the roots of earth and base of all ;  
 Man for the field and woman for the hearth :  
 Man for the sword and for the needle she :  
 Man with the head and woman with the heart :  
 Man to command and woman to obey ; 440  
 All else confusion. Look you ! the gray mare  
 Is ill to live with, when her whinny shrills

From tile to scullery, and her small goodman  
Shrinks in his arm-chair while the fires of Hell  
Mix with his hearth : but you — she's yet a colt —  
Take, break her : strongly groom'd and straitly curb'd  
She might not rank with those detestable  
That let the bantling scald at home, and brawl  
Their rights or wrongs like potherbs in the street.  
450 They say she's comely ; there's the fairer chance :  
I like her none the less for rating at her !  
Besides, the woman wed is not as we,  
But suffers change of frame. A lusty brace  
Of twins may weed her of her folly. Boy,  
The bearing and the training of a child  
Is woman's wisdom."

Thus the hard old king :

I took my leave, for it was nearly noon :  
I pored upon her letter which I held,  
And on the little clause "take not his life :"  
460 I mused on that wild morning in the woods,  
And on the "Follow, follow, thou shalt win :"  
I thought on all the wrathful king had said,  
And how the strange betrothment was to end :  
Then I remember'd that burnt sorcerer's curse  
That one should fight with shadows and should fall ;  
And like a flash the weird affection came :  
King, camp and college turn'd to hollow shows ;

I seem'd to move in old memorial tilts,  
 And doing battle with forgotten ghosts,  
 To dream myself the shadow of a dream : 470  
 And ere I woke it was the point of noon,  
 The lists were ready. Empanoplied and plumed  
 We enter'd in, and waited, fifty there  
 Opposed to fifty, till the trumpet blared  
 At the barrier like a wild horn in a land  
 Of echoes, and a moment, and once more  
 The trumpet, and again : at which the storm  
 Of galloping hoofs bare on the ridge of spears  
 And riders front to front, until they closed  
 In conflict with the crash of shivering points, 480  
 And thunder. Yet it seem'd a dream, I dream'd  
 Of fighting. On his haunches rose the steed,  
 And into fiery splinters leapt the lance,  
 And out of stricken helmets sprang the fire.  
 Part sac like rocks : part reel'd but kept their seats :  
 Part roll'd on the earth and rose again and drew :  
 Part stumbled mixt with floundering horses. Down  
 From those two bulks at Arac's side, and down  
 From Arac's arm, as from a giant's flail,  
 The large blows rain'd, as here and everywhere 490  
 He rode the mellay, lord of the ringing lists,  
 And all the plain,—brand, mace, and shaft, and  
 shield —

Shock'd, like an iron-clanging anvil bang'd  
With hammers; till I thought, can this be he  
From Gama's dwarfish loins? if this be so,  
The mother makes us most — and in my dream  
I glanced aside, and saw the palace-front  
Alive with fluttering scarfs and ladies' eyes,  
And highest, among the statues, statuelike,  
500 Between a cymbal'd Miriam and a Jael,  
With Psyche's babe, was Ida watching us,  
A single band of gold about her hair,  
Like a Saint's glory up in heaven: but she  
No saint — inexorable — no tenderness —  
Too hard, too cruel: yet she sees me fight,  
Yea, let her see me fall! with that I drave  
Among the thickest and bore down a Prince,  
And Cyril, one. Yea, let me make my dream  
All that I would. But that large-moulded man,  
510 His visage all agrin as at a wake,  
Made at me thro' the press, and, staggering back  
With stroke on stroke the horse and horseman, came  
As comes a pillar of electric cloud,  
Flaying the roofs and sucking up the drains,  
And shadowing down the champaign till it strikes  
On a wood, and takes, and breaks, and cracks, and  
splits,  
And twists the grain with such a roar that Earth

Reels, and the herdsmen cry ; for everything  
Gave way before him : only Florian, he  
That loved me closer than his own right eye, 520  
Thrust in between ; but Arac rode him down :  
And Cyril seeing it, push'd against the Prince,  
With Psyche's color round his helmet, tough,  
Strong, supple, sinew-corded, apt at arms ;  
But tougher, heavier, stronger, he that smote  
And threw him : last I spurr'd ; I felt my veins  
Stretch with fierce heat ; a moment hand to hand,  
And sword to sword, and horse to horse we hung,  
Till I struck out and shouted ; the blade glanced,  
I did but shear a feather, and dream and truth 530  
Flow'd from me ; darkness closed me ; and I fell.

## VI.

Home they brought her warrior dead :  
She nor swoon'd nor utter'd cry :  
All her maidens, watching, said,  
“ She must weep or she will die.”

Then they praised him, soft and low,  
Call'd him worthy to be loved,  
Truest friend and noblest foe ;  
Yet she neither spoke nor moved.

Stole a maiden from her place,  
Lightly to the warrior stept,  
Took the face-cloth from the face ;  
Yet she neither moved nor wept.

Rose a nurse of ninety years,  
Set his child upon her knee —  
Like summer tempest came her tears —  
“ Sweet my child, I live for thee.”



My dream had never died or lived again.  
As in some mystic middle state I lay ;  
Seeing I saw not, hearing not I heard :  
Tho', if I saw not, yet they told me all  
So often that I speak as having seen.

For so it seem'd, or so they said to me,  
That all things grew more tragic and more strange ;  
That when our side was vanquish'd and my cause  
For ever lost, there went up a great cry,  
The Prince is slain. My father heard and ran 10  
In on the lists, and there unlaced my casque  
And grovell'd on my body, and after him  
Came Psyche, sorrowing for Aglaïa.

But high upon the palace Ida stood  
With Psyche's babe in arm : there on the roofs  
Like that great dame of Lapidoth she sang.

“ Our enemies have fall'n, have fall'n : the seed,  
The little seed they laugh'd at in the dark,  
Has risen and cleft the soil, and grown a bulk  
Of spanless girth, that lays on every side 20  
A thousand arms and rushes to the Sun.

“ Our enemies have fall'n, have fall'n : they came ;  
The leaves were wet with women's tears : they heard

A noise of songs they would not understand :  
They mark'd it with the red cross to the fall,  
And would have strown it, and are fall'n themselves.

“ Our enemies have fall'n, have fall'n : they came,  
The woodmen with their axes : lo the tree !  
But we will make it faggots for the hearth,  
30 And shape it plank and beam for roof and floor,  
And boats and bridges for the use of men.

“ Our enemies have fall'n, have fall'n : they struck ;  
With their own blows they hurt themselves, nor knew  
There dwelt an iron nature in the grain :  
The glittering axe was broken in their arms,  
Their arms were shatter'd to the shoulder blade.

“ Our enemies have fall'n, but this shall grow  
A night of Summer from the heat, a breadth  
Of Autumn, dropping fruits of power : and roll'd  
40 With music in the growing breeze of Time,  
The tops shall strike from star to star, the fangs  
Shall move the stony bases of the world.

“ And now, O maids, behold our sanctuary  
Is violate, our laws broken : fear we not  
To break them more in their behoof, whose arms  
Champion'd our cause and won it with a day  
Blanch'd in our annals, and perpetual feast,

When dames and heroines of the golden year  
 Shall strip a hundred hollows bare of Spring,  
 To rain an April of ovation round 50  
 Their statues, borne aloft, the three : but come,  
 We will be liberal, since our rights are won.  
 Let them not lie in the tents with coarse mankind,  
 Ill nurses ; but descend, and proffer these  
 The brethren of our blood and cause, that there  
 Lie bruised and maim'd, the tender ministries  
 Of female hands and hospitality."

She spoke, and with the babe yet in her arms,  
 Descending, burst the great bronze valves, and led  
 A hundred maids in train across the Park. 60  
 Some cowl'd, and some bare-headed, on they came,  
 Their feet in flowers, her loveliest : by them went  
 The enamor'd air sighing, and on their curls  
 From the high tree the blossom wavering fell,  
 And over them the tremulous isles of light  
 Slided, they moving under shade : but Blanche  
 At distance follow'd : so they came : anon  
 Thro' open field into the lists they wound  
 Timorously ; and as the leader of the herd  
 That holds a stately fretwork to the Sun, 70  
 And follow'd up by a hundred airy does,  
 Steps with a tender foot, light as on air,

The lovely, lordly creature floated on  
To where her wounded brethren lay ; there stay'd ;  
Knelt on one knee,— the child on one,— and prest  
Their hands, and call'd them dear deliverers,  
And happy warriors, and immortal names,  
And said “ You shall not lie in the tents but here,  
And nursed by those for whom you fought, and  
served  
80 With female hands and hospitality.”

Then, whether moved by this, or was it chance,  
She past my way. Up started from my side  
The old lion, glaring with his whelpless eye,  
Silent ; but when she saw me lying stark,  
Dishelm'd and mute, and motionlessly pale,  
Cold ev'n to her, she sigh'd ; and when she saw  
The haggard father's face and reverend beard  
Of grisly twine, all dabbled with the blood  
Of his own son, shudder'd, a twitch of pain  
90 Tortured her mouth, and o'er her forehead past  
A shadow, and her hue changed, and she said :  
“ He saved my life : my brother slew him for it.”  
No more : at which the king in bitter scorn  
Drew from my neck the painting and the tress,  
And held them up : she saw them, and a day  
Rose from the distance on her memory,

When the good Queen, her mother, shore the tress  
 With kisses, ere the days of Lady Blanche :  
 And then once more she look'd at my pale face :  
 Till understanding all the foolish work 100  
 Of Fancy, and the bitter close of all,  
 Her iron will was broken in her mind ;  
 Her noble heart was molten in her breast ;  
 She bow'd, she set the child on the earth ; she laid  
 A feeling finger on my brows, and presently  
 " O Sire," she said, " he lives : he is not dead :  
 O let me have him with my brethren here  
 In our own palace : we will tend on him  
 Like one of these ; if so, by any means,  
 To lighten this great clog of thanks, that make 110  
 Our progress falter to the woman's goal."

She said : but at the happy word " he lives"  
 My father stoop'd, re-father'd o'er my wounds.  
 So those two foes above my fall'n life,  
 With brow to brow like night and evening mixt  
 Their dark and gray, while Psyche ever stole  
 A little nearer, till the babe that by us,  
 Half-lapt in glowing gauze and golden brede,  
 Lay like a new-fall'n meteor on the grass,  
 Uncared for, spied its mother and began 120  
 A blind and babbling laughter, and to dance

Its body, and reach its fatling innocent arms  
And lazy lingering fingers. She the appeal  
Brook'd not, but clamoring out "Mine — mine — not  
yours,

It is not yours, but mine : give me the child "  
Ceased all on tremble : piteous was the cry :  
So stood the unhappy mother open-mouth'd,  
And turn'd each face her way : wan was her cheek  
With hollow watch, her blooming mantle torn,  
130 Red grief and mother's hunger in her eye,  
And down dead-heavy sank her curls, and half  
The sacred mother's bosom, panting, burst  
The laces toward her babe ; but she nor cared  
Nor knew it, clamoring on, till Ida heard,  
Look'd up, and rising slowly from me, stood  
Erect and silent, striking with her glance  
The mother, me, the child ; but he that lay  
Beside us, Cyril, batter'd as he was,  
Trail'd himself up on one knee : then he drew  
140 Her robe to meet his lips, and down she look'd  
At the arm'd man sideways, pitying as it seem'd,  
Or self-involved ; but when she learnt his face,  
Remembering his ill-omen'd song, arose  
Once more thro' all her height, and o'er him grew  
Tall as a figure lengthen'd on the sand  
When the tide ebbs in sunshine, and he said :

"O fair and strong and terrible! Lioness  
 That with your long locks play the Lion's mane!  
 But Love and Nature, these are two more terrible  
 And stronger. See, your foot is on our necks, 150  
 We vanquish'd, you the Victor of your will.  
 What would you more? give her the child! remain  
 Orb'd in your isolation: he is dead,  
 Or all as dead: henceforth we let you be:  
 Win you the hearts of women; and beware  
 Lest, where you seek the common love of these,  
 The common hate with the revolving wheel  
 Should drag you down, and some great Nemesis  
 Break from a darken'd future, crown'd with fire,  
 And tread you out for ever: but howsoe'er 160  
 Fixt in yourself, never in your own arms  
 To hold your own, deny not hers to her,  
 Give her the child! O if, I say, you keep  
 One pulse that beats true woman, if you loved  
 The breast that fed or arm that dandled you,  
 Or own one port of sense not flint to prayer,  
 Give her the child! or if you scorn to lay it,  
 Yourself, in hands so lately claspt with yours,  
 Or speak to her, your dearest, her one fault  
 The tenderness, not yours, that could not kill, 170  
 Give *me* it; *I* will give it her."

He said:

At first her eye with slow dilation roll'd  
Dry flame, she listening ; after sank and sank  
And, into mournful twilight mellowing, dwelt  
Full on the child ; she took it : “ Pretty bud !  
Lily of the vale ! half-open'd bell of the woods !  
Sole comfort of my dark hour, when a world  
Of traitorous friend and broken system made  
No purple in the distance, mystery,  
180 Pledge of a love not to be mine, farewell ;  
These men are hard upon us as of old,  
We two must part : and yet how fain was I  
To dream thy cause embraced in mine, to think  
I might be something to thee, when I felt  
Thy helpless warmth about my barren breast  
In the dead prime : but may thy mother prove  
As true to thee as false, false, false to me !  
And, if thou needs must bear the yoke, I wish it  
Gentle as freedom ” — here she kiss'd it : then —  
190 “ All good go with thee ! take it Sir,” and so  
Laid the soft babe in his hard-mailed hands,  
Who turn'd half-round to Psyche as she sprang  
To meet it, with an eye that swum in thanks ;  
Then felt it sound and whole from head to foot,  
And hugg'd and never hugg'd it close enough,  
And in her hunger mouth'd and mumbled it,  
And hid her bosom with it ; after that  
Put on more calm and added suppliantly :



“We two were friends: I go to mine own land  
 For ever: find some other: as for me 200  
 I scarce am fit for your great plans: yet speak to me,  
 Say one soft word and let me part forgiven.”

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

But Ida spoke not, gazing on the ground, 210  
 And reddening in the furrows of his chin,  
 And moved beyond his custom, Gama said:

“I’ve heard that there is iron in the blood,  
 And I believe it. Not one word? not one?  
 Whence drew you this steel temper? not from me,  
 Not from your mother, now a saint with saints.  
 She said you had a heart — I heard her say it —  
 ‘Our Ida has a heart’ — just ere she died —  
 ‘But see that some one with authority  
 Be near her still’ and I — I sought for one — 220  
 All people said she had authority —

The Lady Blanche : much profit! Not one word ;  
 No! tho' your father sues : see how you stand  
 Stiff as Lot's wife, and all the good knights maim'd,  
 I trust that there is no one hurt to death,  
 For your wild whim : and was it then for this,  
 Was it for this we gave our palace up,  
 Where we withdrew from summer heats and state,  
 And had our wine and chess beneath the planes,  
 230 And many a pleasant hour with her that's gone,  
 Ere you were born to vex us? Is it kind?  
 Speak to her I say : is this not she of whom,  
 When first she came, all flush'd you said to me,  
 Now had you got a friend of your own age,  
 Now could you share your thought ; now should men  
 see

Two women faster welded in one love  
 Than pairs of wedlock ; she you walk'd with, she  
 You talk'd with, whole nights long, up in the tower,  
 Of sine and arc, spheroid and azimuth,  
 240 And right ascension, Heaven knows what ; and now  
 A word, but one, one little kindly word,  
 Not one to spare her : out upon you, flint!  
 You love nor her, nor me, nor any ; nay,  
 You shame your mother's judgment too. Not one?  
 You will not? well — no heart have you, or such  
 As fancies like the vermin in a nut

· Have fretted all to dust and bitterness.”  
So said the small king moved beyond his wont.

But Ida stood nor spoke, drain'd of her force  
By many a varying influence and so long. 250  
Down thro' her limbs a drooping languor wept :  
Her head a little bent ; and on her mouth  
A doubtful smile dwelt like a clouded moon  
In a still water : then brake out my sire,  
Lifting his grim head from my wounds. “ O you,  
Woman, whom we thought woman even now,  
And were half fool'd to let you tend our son,  
Because he might have wish'd it — but we see  
The accomplice of your madness unforgiven,  
And think that you might mix his draught with death, 260  
When your skies change again : the rougher hand  
Is safer : on to the tents : take up the Prince.”

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

“ Come hither,  
O Psyche,” she cried out, “ embrace me, come,  
Quick while I melt ; make reconcilment sure  
With one that cannot keep her mind an hour :

270 Come to the hollow heart they slander so!  
 Kiss and be friends, like children being chid!  
*I* seem no more: *I* want forgiveness too:  
 I should have had to do with none but maids,  
 That have no links with men. Ah false but dear,  
 Dear traitor, too much loved, why? — why? — Yet  
     see,  
 Before these kings we embrace you yet once more  
 With all forgiveness, all oblivion,  
 And trust, not love, you less.

And now, O sire,  
 Grant me your son, to nurse, to wait upon him,  
 280 Like mine own brother. For my debt to him,  
 This nightmare weight of gratitude, I know it;  
 Taunt me no more: yourself and yours shall have  
 Free adit; we will scatter all our maids  
 Till happier-times each to her proper hearth:  
 What use to keep them here—now? grant my prayer.  
 Help, father, brother, help; speak to the king:  
 Thaw this male nature to some touch of that  
 Which kills me with myself, and drags me down  
 From my fixt height to mob me up with all  
 290 The soft and milky rabble of womankind,  
 Poor weakling ev'n as they are."

Passionate tears  
 Follow'd: the king replied not: Cyril said:

“Your brother, Lady, — Florian, — ask for him  
Of your great head — for he is wounded too —  
That you may tend upon him with the prince.”

“Ay so,” said Ida with a bitter smile,

“Our laws are broken : let him enter too.”

Then Violet, she that sang the mournful song,

And had a cousin tumbled on the plain,

Petition'd too for him. “Ay so,” she said,

300

“I stagger in the stream : I cannot keep

My heart an eddy from the brawling hour :

We break our laws with ease, but let it be.”

“Ay, so ? ” said Blanche : “Amazed am I to hear

Your Highness : but your Highness breaks with ease

The law your Highness did not make : 'twas I.

I had been wedded wife, I knew mankind,

And block'd them out ; but these men came to woo

Your Highness — verily I think to win.”

So she, and turn'd askance a wintry eye :

310

But Ida, with a voice, that like a bell

Toll'd by an earthquake in a trembling tower,

Rang ruin, answer'd full of grief and scorn.

“Fling our doors wide ! all, all, not one, but all,

Not only he, but by my mother's soul,

Whatever man lies wounded, friend or foe,

Shall enter, if he will ! Let our girls flit,  
Till the storm die ! but had you stood by us,  
The roar that breaks the Pharos from his base  
320 Had left us rock. She fain would sting us too,  
But shall not. Pass, and mingle with your likes.  
We brook no further insult but are gone."

She turn'd ; the very nape of her white neck  
Was rosed with indignation : but the Prince  
Her brother came ; the king her father charm'd  
Her wounded soul with words : nor did mine own  
Refuse her proffer, lastly gave his hand.

Then us they lifted up, dead weights, and bare  
Straight to the doors : to them the doors gave way  
330 Groaning, and in the Vestal entry shriek'd  
The virgin marble under iron heels :  
And on they moved and gain'd the hall, and there  
Rested : but great the crush was, and each base.  
To left and right, of those tall columns drown'd  
In silken fluctuation and the swarm  
Of female whisperers : at the further end  
Was Ida by the throne, the two great cats  
Close by her, like supporters on a shield,  
Bow-back'd with fear : but in the centre stood  
340 The common men with rolling eyes ; amazed

They glared upon the women, and aghast  
The women stared at these, all silent, save  
When armor clash'd or jingled, while the day,  
Descending, struck athwart the hall, and shot  
A flying splendor out of brass and steel  
That o'er the statues leapt from head to head,  
Now fired an angry Pallas on the helm,  
Now set a wrathful Dian's moon on flame,  
And now and then an echo started up,  
And shuddering fled from room to room, and died . . . 350  
Of fright in far apartments.

Then the voice

Of Ida sounded, issuing ordinance :  
And me they bore up the broad stairs, and thro'  
The long-laid galleries past a hundred doors  
To one deep chamber shut from sound, and due  
To languid limbs and sickness ; left me in it ;  
And others otherwhere they laid ; and all  
That afternoon a sound arose of hoof  
And chariot, many a maiden passing home  
Till happier times ; but some were left of those . . . 360  
Held sagest, and the great lords out and in,  
From those two hosts that lay beside the walls,  
Walk'd at their will, and everything was changed.

## VII.

Ask me no more: the moon may draw the sea;  
The cloud may stoop from heaven and take the shape  
With fold to fold, of mountain or of cape;  
But O too fond, when have I answer'd thee?  
Ask me no more.

Ask me no more: what answer should I give?  
I love not hollow cheek nor faded eye:  
Yet, O my friend, I will not have thee die!  
Ask me no more, lest I should bid thee live;  
Ask me no more.

Ask me no more: thy fate and mine are seal'd:  
I strove against the stream and all in vain:  
Let the great river take me to the main:  
No more, dear love, for at a touch I yield;  
Ask me no more.



So was their sanctuary violated,  
So their fair college turn'd to hospital ;  
At first with all confusion : by and by  
Sweet order lived again with other laws :  
A kindlier influence reign'd ; and everywhere  
Low voices with the ministering hand  
Hung round the sick : the maidens came, they talk'd,  
They sang, they read : till she not fair began  
To gather light, and she that was, became  
Her former beauty treble ; and to and fro  
With books, with flowers, with Angel offices,  
Like creatures native unto gracious act,  
And in their own clear element, they moved.

10

But sadness on the soul of Ida fell,  
And hatred of her weakness, blent with shame.  
Old studies fail'd ; seldom she spoke : but oft  
Clomb to the roofs, and gazed alone for hours  
On that disastrous leaguer, swarms of men  
Darkening her female field : void was her use,  
And she as one that climbs a peak to gaze  
O'er land and main, and sees a great black cloud  
Drag inward from the deeps, a wall of night,  
Blot out the slope of sea from verge to shore,  
And suck the blinding splendor from the sand,  
And quenching lake by lake and tarn by tarn

20

Expunge the world : so fared she gazing there ;  
So blacken'd all her world in secret, blank  
And waste it seem'd and vain ; till down she came,  
And found fair peace once more among the sick.

30     And twilight dawn'd ; and morn by morn the lark  
Shot up and shrill'd in flickering gyres, but I  
Lay silent in the muffled cage of life :  
And twilight gloom'd ; and broader-grown the bowers  
Drew the great night into themselves, and Heaven,  
Star after star, arose and fell ; but I,  
Deeper than those weird doubts could reach me, lay  
Quite sunder'd from the moving Universe,  
Nor knew what eye was on me, nor the hand  
That nursed me, more than infants in their sleep.

40     But Psyche tended Florian : with her oft  
Melissa came ; for Blanche had gone, but left  
Her child among us, willing she should keep  
Court-favor : here and there the small bright head,  
A light of healing, glanced about the couch,  
Or thro' the parted silks the tender face  
Peep'd, shining in upon the wounded man  
With blush and smile, a medicine in themselves  
To wile the length from languorous hours, and draw  
The sting from pain ; nor seem'd it strange that soon

He rose up whole, and those fair charities 50  
Join'd at her side; nor stranger seem'd that hearts  
So gentle, so employ'd, should close in love,  
Than when two dewdrops on the petal shake  
To the same sweet air, and tremble deeper down,  
And slip at once all-fragrant into one.

Less prosperously the second suit obtain'd  
At first with Psyche. Not tho' Blanche had sworn  
That after that dark night among the fields  
She needs must wed him for her own good name;  
Not tho' he built upon the babe restored; 60  
Nor tho' she liked him, yielded she, but fear'd  
To incense the Head once more; till on a day  
When Cyril pleaded, Ida came behind  
Seen but of Psyche: on her foot she hung  
A moment, and she heard, at which her face  
A little flush'd, and she past on; but each  
Assumed from thence a half-consent involved  
In stillness, plighted troth, and were at peace.

Nor only these: Love in the sacred halls  
Held carnival at will, and flying struck 70  
With showers of random sweet on maid and man.  
Nor did her father cease to press my claim,  
Nor did mine own now reconciled; nor yet

Did those twin brothers, risen again and whole ;  
Nor Arac, satiate with his victory.

But I lay still, and with me oft she sat :  
Then came a change ; for sometimes I would catch  
Her hand in wild delirium, gripe it hard,  
And fling it like a viper off, and shriek  
80 " You are not Ida ; " clasp it once again,  
And call her Ida, tho' I knew her not,  
And call her sweet, as if in irony,  
And call her hard and cold, which seem'd a truth :  
And still she fear'd that I should lose my mind,  
And often she believed that I should die :  
Till out of long frustration of her care,  
And pensive tendance in the all-weary noons,  
And watches in the dead, the dark, when clocks  
Throbb'd thunder thro' the palace floors, or call'd  
90 On flying Time from all their silver tongues —  
And out of memories of her kindlier days,  
And sidelong glances at my father's grief,  
And at the happy lovers heart in heart —  
And out of hauntings of my spoken love,  
And lonely listenings to my mutter'd dream,  
And often feeling of the helpless hands,  
And wordless broodings on the wasted cheek —  
From all a closer interest flourish'd up,

Tenderness touch by touch, and last, to these,  
 Love, like an Alpine harebell hung with tears 100  
 By some cold morning glacier ; frail at first  
 And feeble, all unconscious of itself,  
 But such as gather'd color day by day.

Last I woke sane, but well-nigh close to death  
 For weakness : it was evening : silent light  
 Slept on the painted walls, wherein were wrought  
 Two grand designs ; for on one side arose  
 The women up in wild revolt, and storm'd  
 At the Oppian law. Titanic shapes, they cramm'd  
 The forum, and half-crush'd among the rest 110  
 A dwarf-like Cato cower'd. On the other side  
 Hortensia spoke against the tax ; behind,  
 A train of dames : by axe and eagle sat,  
 With all their foreheads drawn in Roman scowls,  
 And half the wolf's-milk curdled in their veins,  
 The fierce triumvirs ; and before them paused  
 Hortensia pleading : angry was her face.

I saw the forms : I knew not where I was :  
 They did but look like hollow shows ; nor more  
 Sweet Ida : palm to palm she sat : the dew 120  
 Dwelt in her eyes, and softer all her shape  
 And rounder seem'd : I moved ; I sigh'd : a touch

Came round my wrist, and tears upon my hand :  
 Then all for languor and self-pity ran  
 Mine down my face, and with what life I had,  
 And like a flower that cannot all unfold,  
 So drench'd it is with tempest, to the sun,  
 Yet, as it may, turns toward him, I on her  
 Fixt my faint eyes, and utter'd whisperingly :

130     “ If you be, what I think you, some sweet dream,  
 I would but ask you to fulfil yourself :  
 But if you be that Ida whom I knew,  
 I ask you nothing : only, if a dream,  
 Sweet dream, be perfect. I shall die to-night.  
 Stoop down and seem to kiss me ere I die.”

I could no more, but lay like one in trance,  
 That hears his burial talk'd of by his friends,  
 And cannot speak, nor move, nor make one sign,  
 But lies and dreads his doom. She turn'd ; she paused ;  
 140 She stoop'd ; and out of languor leapt a cry ;  
 Leapt fiery Passion from the brinks of death ;  
 And I believed that in the living world  
 My spirit closed with Ida's at the lips ;  
 Till back I fell, and from mine arms she rose  
 Glowing all over noble shame ; and all  
 Her falser self slipt from her like a robe,

And left her woman, lovelier in her mood  
 Than in her mould that other, when she came  
 From barren deeps to conquer all with love ;  
 And down the streaming crystal dropt ; and she 150  
 Far-fleeted by the purple island-sides,  
 Naked, a double light in air and wave,  
 To meet her Graces, where they deck'd her out  
 For worship without end ; nor end of mine,  
 Stateliest, for thee ! but mute she glided forth,  
 Nor glanced behind her, and I sank and slept,  
 Fill'd thro' and thro' with Love, a happy sleep.

Deep in the night I woke : she, near me, held  
 A volume of the Poets of her land :  
 There to herself, all in low tones, she read : 160

“ Now sleeps the crimson petal, now the white ;  
 Nor waves the cypress in the palace walk ;  
 Nor winks the gold fin in the porphyry font :  
 The fire-fly wakens : waken thou with me.

“ Now droops the milkwhite peacock like a ghost,  
 And like a ghost she glimmers on to me.

“ Now lies the Earth all Danaë to the stars,  
 And all thy heart lies open unto me.

“ Now slides the silent meteor on, and leaves  
 A shining furrow, as thy thoughts in me. 170

“ Now folds the lily all her sweetness up,  
 And slips into the bosom of the lake :  
 So fold thyself, my dearest, thou, and slip  
 Into my bosom and be lost in me.”

I heard her turn the page ; she found a small  
 Sweet Idyl, and once more, as low, she read :

“ Come down, O maid, from yonder mountain height :  
 What pleasure lives in height (the shepherd sang),  
 In height and cold, the splendor of the hills ?  
 180 But cease to move so near the Heavens, and cease  
 To glide a sunbeam by the blasted Pine,  
 To sit a star upon the sparkling spire ;  
 And come, for Love is of the valley, come,  
 For Love is of the valley, come thou down  
 And find him ; by the happy threshold, he,  
 Or hand in hand with Plenty in the maize,  
 Or red with spirted purple of the vats,  
 Or foxlike in the vine ; nor cares to walk  
 With Death and Morning on the silver horns,  
 190 Nor wilt thou snare him in the white ravine,  
 Nor find him dropt upon the firths of ice,  
 That huddling slant in furrow-cloven falls  
 To roll the torrent out of dusky doors :  
 But follow ; let the torrent dance thee down  
 To find him in the valley ; let the wild  
 Lean-headed Eagles yelp alone, and leave



The monstrous ledges there to slope, and spill  
 Their thousand wreaths of dangling water-smoke,  
 That like a broken purpose waste in air :  
 So waste not thou ; but come ; for all the vales 200  
 Await thee ; azure pillars of the hearth  
 Arise to thee ; the children call, and I  
 Thy shepherd pipe, and sweet is every sound,  
 Sweeter thy voice, but every sound is sweet ;  
 Myriads of rivulets hurrying thro' the lawn,  
 The moan of doves in immemorial elms,  
 And murmuring of innumerable bees."

So she low-toned ; while with shut eyes I lay  
 Listening ; then look'd. Pale was the perfect face ;  
 The bosom with long sighs labor'd ; and meek 210  
 Seem'd the full lips, and mild the luminous eyes,  
 And the voice trembled and the hand. She said  
 Brokenly, that she knew it, she had fail'd  
 In sweet humility ; had fail'd in all ;  
 That all her labor was but as a block  
 Left in the quarry ; but she still were loth,  
 She still were loth to yield herself to one  
 That wholly scorn'd to help their equal rights  
 Against the sons of men, and barbarous laws.  
 She pray'd me not to judge their cause from her 220  
 That wrong'd it, sought far less for truth than power  
 In knowledge : something wild within her breast,

A greater than all knowledge, beat her down.  
 And she had nursed me there from week to week :  
 Much had she learnt in little time. In part  
 It was ill counsel had misled the girl—  
 To vex true hearts : yet was she but a girl —  
 “ Ah fool, and made myself a Queen of farce !  
 When comes another such ? never, I think,  
 230 Till the Sun drop, dead, from the signs.”

Her voice

Choked, and her forehead sank upon her hands,  
 And her great heart thro' all the faultful Past  
 Went sorrowing in a pause I dared not break ;  
 Till notice of a change in the dark world  
 Was lispt about the acacias, and a bird,  
 That early woke to feed her little ones,  
 Sent from a dewy breast a cry for light :  
 She moved, and at her feet the volume fell.

“ Blame not thyself too much,” I said, “ nor blame  
 240 Too much the sons of men and barbarous laws ;  
 These were the rough ways of the world till now.  
 Henceforth thou hast a helper, me, that know  
 The woman's cause is man's : they rise or sink  
 Together, dwarf'd or godlike, bond or free :  
 For she that out of Lethe scales with man  
 The shining steps of Nature, shares with man

His nights, his days, moves with him to one goal,  
 Stays all the fair young planet in her hands —  
 If she be small, slight-natured, miserable,  
 How shall men grow ? but work no more alone ! 250  
 Our place is much : as far as in us lies  
 We two will serve them both in aiding her —  
 Will clear away the parasitic forms  
 That seem to keep her up but drag her down —  
 Will leave her space to burgeon out of all  
 Within her — let her make herself her own  
 To give or keep, to live and learn and be  
 All that not harms distinctive womanhood.  
 For woman is not undeveloped man,  
 But diverse : could we make her as the man, 260  
 Sweet Love were slain : his dearest bond is this,  
 Not like to like, but like in difference.  
 Yet in the long years liker must they grow ;  
 The man be more of woman, she of man ;  
 He gain in sweetness and in moral height,  
 Nor lose the wrestling thews that throw the world :  
 She mental breadth, nor fail in childward care,  
 Nor lose the childlike in the larger mind ;  
 Till at the last she set herself to man,  
 Like perfect music unto noble words : 270  
 And so these twain, upon the skirts of Time,  
 Sit side by side, full-summ'd in all their powers,

Dispensing harvest, sowing the To-be,  
 Self-reverent each and reverencing each,  
 Distinct in individualities,  
 But like each other ev'n as those who love.  
 Then comes the statelier Eden back to men :  
 Then reign the world's great bridals, chaste and calm :  
 Then springs the crowning race of humankind.

280 May these things be ! ”

Sighing she spoke “ I fear  
 They will not.”

“ Dear, but let us type them now  
 In our own lives, and this proud watchword rest  
 Of equal ; seeing either sex alone  
 Is half itself, and in true marriage lies  
 Nor equal, nor unequal : each fulfils  
 Defect in each, and always thought in thought,  
 Purpose in purpose, will in will, they grow,  
 The single pure and perfect animal,  
 The two-cell'd heart beating, with one full stroke,  
 290 Life.”

And again sighing she spoke : “ A dream  
 That once was mine ! what woman taught you this ? ”

“ Alone,” I said, “ from earlier than I know,  
 Immersed in rich foreshadowings of the world,  
 I loved the woman : he, that doth not, lives

A drowning life, besotted in sweet self,  
 Or pines in sad experience worse than death,  
 Or keeps his wing'd affections clipt with crime :  
 Yet there was one thro' whom I loved her, one  
 Not learned, save in gracious household ways,  
 Not perfect, nay, but full of tender wants, 300  
 No Angel, but a dearer being, all dipt  
 In Angel instincts, breathing Paradise,  
 Interpreter between the Gods and men,  
 Who look'd all native to her place, and yet  
 On tiptoe seem'd to touch upon a sphere  
 Too gross to tread, and all male minds perforce  
 Sway'd to her from their orbits as they moved,  
 And girdled her with music. Happy he  
 With such a mother ! faith in womankind  
 Beats with his blood, and trust in all things high 310  
 Comes easy to him, and tho' he trip and fall  
 His shall not blind his soul with clay."

" But I,"

Said Ida, tremulously, " so all unlike —  
 It seems you love to cheat yourself with words :  
 This mother is your model. I have heard  
 Of your strange doubts : they well might be : I seem  
 A mockery to my own self. Never, Prince ;  
 You cannot love me."

" Nay but thee " I said

“From yearlong poring on thy pictured eyes,  
320 Ere seen I loved, and loved thee seen, and saw  
Thee woman thro’ the crust of iron moods  
That mask’d thee from men’s reverence up, and forced  
Sweet love on pranks of saucy boyhood: now,  
Giv’n back to life, to life indeed, thro’ thee,  
Indeed I love: the new day comes, the light  
Dearer for night, as dearer thou for faults  
Lived over: lift thine eyes; my doubts are dead,  
My haunting sense of hollow shows: the change,  
This truthful change in thee has kill’d it. Dear,  
330 Look up, and let thy nature strike on mine,  
Like yonder morning on the blind half-world;  
Approach and fear not; breathe upon my brows;  
In that fine air I tremble, all the past  
Melts mist-like into this bright hour, and this  
Is morn to more, and all the rich to-come  
Reels, as the golden Autumn woodland reels  
Athwart the smoke of burning weeds. Forgive me,  
I waste my heart in signs: let be. My bride,  
My wife, my life. O we will walk this world,  
340 Yoked in all exercise of noble end,  
And so thro’ those dark gates across the wild  
That no man knows. Indeed I love thee: come,  
Yield thyself up: my hopes and thine are one:  
Accomplish thou my manhood and thyself;  
Lay thy sweet hands in mine and trust to me.”

## CONCLUSION.

So closed our tale, of which I give you all  
 The random scheme as wildly as it rose :  
 The words are mostly mine ; for when we ceased  
 There came a minute's pause, and Walter said,  
 " I wish she had not yielded ! " then to me,  
 " What, if you drest it up poetically ! "  
 So pray'd the men, the women : I gave assent :  
 Yet how to bind the scatter'd scheme of seven  
 Together in one sheaf ? What style could suit ?  
 The men required that I should give throughout 10  
 The sort of mock-heroic gigantesque,  
 With which we banter'd little Lilia first :  
 The women — and perhaps they felt their power,  
 For something in the ballads which they sang,  
 Or in their silent influence as they sat,  
 Had ever seem'd to wrestle with burlesque,  
 And drove us, last, to quite a solemn close —  
 They hated banter, wish'd for something real,  
 A gallant fight, a noble princess — why  
 Not make her true-heroic — true-sublime ? 20  
 Or all, they said, as earnest as the close ?  
 Which yet with such a framework scarce could be.  
 Then rose a little feud betwixt the two,

Betwixt the mockers and the realists :  
And I, betwixt them both, to please them both,  
And yet to give the story as it rose,  
I moved as in a strange diagonal,  
And maybe neither pleased myself nor them.

But Lilia pleased me, for she took no part  
30 In our dispute : the sequel of the tale  
Had touch'd her ; and she sat, she pluck'd the grass,  
She flung it from her, thinking : last, she fixt  
A showery glance upon her aunt, and said,  
“ You — tell us what we are ” who might have told,  
For she was cramm'd with theories out of books,  
But that there rose a shout : the gates were closed  
At sunset, and the crowd were swarming now,  
To take their leave, about the garden rails.

So I and some went out to these : we climb'd  
40 The slope to Vivian-place, and turning saw  
The happy valleys, half in light, and half  
Far-shadowing from the west, a land of peace ;  
Gray halls alone among their massive groves ;  
Trim hamlets ; here and there a rustic tower  
Half-lost in belts of hop and breadths of wheat ;  
The shimmering glimpses of a stream ; the seas ;  
A red sail, or a white ; and far beyond,  
Imagined more than seen, the skirts of France.



"Look there, a garden!" said my college friend,  
 The Tory member's elder son, "and there! 50  
 God bless the narrow sea which keeps her off,  
 And keeps our Britain, whole within herself,  
 A nation yet, the rulers and the ruled —  
 Some sense of duty, something of a faith,  
 Some reverence for the laws ourselves have made,  
 Some patient force to change them when we will,  
 Some civic manhood firm against the crowd —  
 But yonder, whiff! there comes a sudden heat,  
 The gravest citizen seems to lose his head,  
 The king is scared, the soldier will not fight, 60  
 The little boys begin to shoot and stab,  
 A kingdom topples over with a shriek  
 Like an old woman, and down rolls the world  
 In mock heroics stranger than our own;  
 Revolts, republics, revolutions, most  
 No graver than a schoolboys' barring out;  
 Too comic for the solemn things they are,  
 Too solemn for the comic touches in them,  
 Like our wild Princess with as wise a dream  
 As some of theirs — God bless the narrow seas! 70  
 I wish they were a whole Atlantic broad."

"Have patience," I replied, "ourselves are full  
 Of social wrong; and maybe wildest dreams

Are but the needful preludes of the truth :  
 For me, the genial day, the happy crowd,  
 The sport half-science, fill me with a faith,  
 This fine old world of ours is but a child  
 Yet in the go-cart. Patience ! Give it time  
 To learn its limbs : there is a hand that guides."

80 In such discourse we gain'd the garden rails,  
 And there we saw Sir Walter where he stood,  
 Before a tower of crimson holly-oaks,  
 Among six boys, head under head, and look'd  
 No little lily-handed Baronet he,  
 A great broad-shoulder'd genial Englishman,  
 A lord of fat prize-oxen and of sheep,  
 A raiser of huge melons and of pine,  
 A patron of some thirty charities,  
 A pamphleteer on guano and on grain,  
 90 A quarter-sessions chairman, abler none ;  
 Fair-hair'd and redder than a windy morn ;  
 Now shaking hands with him, now him, of those  
 That stood the nearest — now address'd to speech —  
 Who spoke few words and pithy, such as closed  
 Welcome, farewell, and welcome for the year  
 To follow : a shout rose again, and made  
 The long line of the approaching rookery swerve  
 From the elms, and shook the branches of the deer

From slope to slope thro' distant ferns, and rang  
Beyond the bourn of sunset ; O, a shout 100  
More joyful than the city-roar that hails  
Premier or king ! Why should not these great Sirs  
Give up their parks some dozen times a year  
To let the people breathe ? So thrice they cried,  
I likewise, and in groups they stream'd away.

But we went back to the Abbey, and sat on,  
So much the gathering darkness charm'd : we sat  
But spoke not, rapt in nameless reverie,  
Perchance upon the future man : the walls  
Blacken'd about us, bats wheel'd, and owls whoop'd, 110  
And gradually the powers of the night,  
That range above the region of the wind,  
Deepening the courts of twilight broke them up  
Thro' all the silent spaces of the worlds,  
Beyond all thought into the Heaven of Heavens.

Last little Lilia, rising quietly,  
Disrobed the glimmering statue of Sir Ralph  
From those rich silks, and home well-pleased we went.



## NOTES.

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### PROLOGUE.

LINE 5. **Their Institute.** A Mechanics' Institute for the laboring classes.

L. 12. **Their names.** Their botanical names.

L. 15. **Ammonites.** Creatures of geologic times.

L. 17. **Celts and calumets.** The former an instrument of stone or metal found in the tumuli of early Celtic peoples, and the latter the Indian peace-pipe.

L. 18. **Claymore.** A large two-handed sword used by Scottish highlanders.

L. 20. **Laborious orient ivory.** Refers to those balls within balls carved out of ivory by the Chinese. The artistic purpose of this passage is to emphasize the strange and varied luxury of Walter's house, and in keeping with this purpose we are told that the far-brought ivory has been wrought into shape laboriously.

L. 21. **Malayan crease.** A dagger, cursed because, on account of its form, it makes a terrible wound.

L. 31. **Laid about them.** Hacked and heaved right and left from mere pleasure of fighting.

L. 40. **Her stature.** A figure looms up larger against a fringe of light than in the broad brightness of day.

L. 42. **Brake.** The archaic form of *broke*.

L. 53. **I kept the book.** Tennyson suggests to us here the atmosphere of "half-legend, half-historic" tales "that dealt with knights," preparing the mood of the reader for what is to follow.

L. 64. **Wisp.** Will-o'-the-wisp, the light seen in marshy places.

Ll. 66-67. **Echo answer'd in her sleep.** It is rocks and buildings that reflect sound rather than fields and hollows. In Greek legend Echo was a mountain nymph.

L. 92. **Lighter than a fire.** Fire rises to heaven in its flame, aspiring in its lightness like the pointed arches of Gothic architecture.

L. 93. **Thro' one wide chasm.** Time and frost had so rent the abbey walls that the park could be seen through the opening.

L. 113. **Breath'd the Proctor's dogs.** The verb is here from *breathe*, meaning to exercise. A Proctor is a subordinate college officer who enforces discipline. His attendants who assist him in pursuing and arresting students are called, in college slang, "bull-dogs."

Ll. 118-119. **Above their heads.** The old warrior of line 104.

L. 128. **Convention.** Conventionality.

L. 141. **Dowagers.** Wealthy widows of rank. **Deans.** The Dean of a college has charge of the discipline.

L. 161. **Lost their weeks.** An English undergraduate who is not in actual residence at his college for a certain number of weeks during the term cannot have that term counted, a cer-

tain number of terms of actual residence being required for graduation. Residence is lost by absence from dinner in the college.

L. 176. **Read.** Study.

L. 180. **So moulder'd.** Because not compelled to do his teaching.

L. 199. **Chimeras.** Fabulous monsters.

L. 202. **The tyrant.** Time.

Ll. 225-229. **A Gothic ruin.** The prologue serves the artistic purpose of preparing the mind for the fusion of fantasy and reality in the story.

L. 231. **Who told the "Winter's tale."** Shakespeare.

#### PART I.

L. 6. **Some sorcerer.** Having in the prologue prepared the reader for strange things, Tennyson at once gives the story its proper atmosphere. In a world where men believe in sorcery or in a world of shadows, we may expect anything.

L. 14. **Weird seizures.** An artistic justification of these weird seizures is suggested in the course of the notes, but it may be remarked here that Tennyson's son, in his memoir of his father, says of the Prince that, "His too emotional temperament was intended from an artistic point of view to emphasize his comparative want of power." Dawson in his study of the poem has said that the seizures are inartistic and unnecessary, and Rolfe joins him in the opinion. Certainly the Prince seems less princely on account of them, but possibly the poet meant to emphasize man's incompleteness before love has

healed him of sickly moods and purposeless inanition. They are quite in keeping with the atmosphere of the poem, and as Tennyson did not introduce them into the poem until the fifth edition, he must then have written them with a deliberate artistic purpose.

L. 19. **Court Galén.** Galen was a famous Greek physician (circa 130), and was long the leading medical authority in Europe.

L. 23. **Half-canonized.** One who has been placed in canon, or catalogue of saints of the Roman Catholic Church is said to be canonized.

L. 33. **Was proxy-wedded.** In this case we are to suppose that when, after the marriage ceremony, the Princess had gone to bed as a bride, the man who acted as substitute for the Prince, came into the bridal chamber, perhaps accompanied by a guard, and thrust his leg naked to the knee between the sheets, so in behalf of the Prince assuming to complete the marriage relation. Proxy-weddings, though the ceremonies differed, were not uncommon in the Middle Ages.

L. 43. **A great labor of the loom.** The reader should note how much more artistic this expression is than a more definite one could be. It fully suggests something rich and costly, and the costly richness is all we should know.

L. 44. **Therewithal.** Therewith.

L. 58. **Grow long.** The refraction of the atmosphere makes the moon appear elongated, and gives it a red color.

L. 60. **Snow'd it down.** Because torn in such fine pieces. An effect of mood.

L. 85. **I grate on rusty hinges.** Cyril means that his life is



so inactive that he rusts in idleness like the hinges of an unused gate.

L. 87. **Will crush.** The student will be repaid for a careful study of the character of the old king. There are some feelings, some sentiments that he cannot understand. In his thought a pledge is a pledge, and a king's will is not to be opposed. The wish of the Prince to win the favor of the Princess as well as her hand, springs from a feeling of which he has no adequate conception.

L. 96. **A wind arose.** The Prince is unlike his father; he finds pleasure in day-dreams and longing. Into his mood of reverie, outside influences steal imperceptibly, making his waking-dreams at once real and unreal.

Ll. 100-101. **The silver sickle.** The moon, which is sickle-shaped when new, later growing into the round shield of the full moon.

L. 106. **Bastion'd walls.** Strengthened with that kind of fortification called a bastion.

L. 109. **Tilth and grange.** Cultivated fields and farm-houses.

Ll. 114-115. **Like a wrinkling wind.** Gama's cheeks were not round and full, but withered, and so his smile could only wrinkle, as the wind wrinkles glassy water into ridges.

L. 116. **Without a star.** Having no military decoration or badge of honor, since he had earned none.

L. 124. **I think.** This line is a strikingly effective character hint. Gama is interested in comparatively trivial matters. A year stands out in his memory because it brought a failure of olives.

L. 139. **But all she is.** This is more distinctly a characterization of the king himself, than of his daughter. He cannot understand a woman who takes upon herself some of the activities which he has supposed to belong more particularly to men, and the problem of how to cope with the difficulties that such activities in his daughter present is altogether beyond him.

L. 163. **Frets.** Hindrances against which his will beats.

L. 170. **Liberties.** An English law term for adjacent territory, here the outskirts of the territory of the Princess, and so in this privileged sense belonging to it.

L. 181. **The summer.** It is in the summer that the vine produces the grape from which the wine is made.

L. 195. **Masque.** A spectacular theatrical representation such as Milton's *Comus*.

L. 198. **Holp.** The old past tense of help.

L. 201. **Guerdon silence.** To reward silence.

L. 218. **Rapt in her song.** Here woman's gentleness tames the birds into fearlessness.

L. 219. **Pallas.** Pallas Athene. She is represented as one of the three goddesses not subject to the influence of love.

L. 226. **Gave.** Opened.

Ll. 233-234. **Such a hand.** Sloping a great deal to appear feminine.

L. 239. **Uranian Venus.** Aphrodite, born according to Hesiod from Uranus and the sea, as distinguished from her other manifestation as the daughter, according to Homer, of Zeus and Dione. The former is the heavenly Aphrodite, as

the latter is the goddess of a lower order, inciting to a purely earthly love.

Ll. 243-245. **To float.** These three lines have a touch of that vague beauty that is so large an element in poetry. It is a glimmering night, the moonlight is muffled, and the richness is but suggested to the imagination in the darkness.

## PART II.

**Song.** This song has a less intimate connection with the story than have those that follow, but it suggests beforehand the mellowing influence of sorrow and misfortune. It does not hint to the reader the character of the denouement, for that would be inartistic, but it does bring up in our thoughts the reflection that bitterness can be drowned in a common misfortune.

Ll. 8-9. **Sang.** Singing is suggestive of joy and beauty, and so the laurel gave the porch a charm like that of song. The poet may have meant merely that the laurel was haunted by birds and bees, or that the wind murmured through the leaves.

L. 10. **Compact.** Composed. **Boss'd.** Embossed, having raised work.

L. 13. **The Muses and the Graces.** The muses, presiding over poetry, art, and science, were nine in number; and the graces, personifications of female beauty, three.

L. 22. **Some clear planet.** A planet where beauty and truth and majesty are less veiled and darkened with weakness and the disfigurement of earth.

L. 27. **She rose her height.** Here Tennyson makes us know the tall majesty of the Princess, without affirming it of

her. It is in such little touches as this that the artist shows himself.

L. 28. **Redound.** Ordinarily a verb rather than a noun as here.

L. 35. **And he.** This is Cyril speaking, and not the Prince.

L. 38. **Ideal.** The image he has formed of you; or, perhaps, he worships you as his ideal.

L. 41. **Light coin.** This is a fine example of Tennyson's mastery of the music of verse. The c's, t's, n's, and l's alternate in just the right proportion to give the line the ring of thin metal.

L. 52. **Justlier balanced.** Meaning that woman may through education, obtain her rights in the bargain of marriage.

L. 60. **Enter'd on the boards.** Registered as students.

L. 63. **Odalisques.** Female slaves of a Turkish harem.

L. 65. **That taught the Sabine.** The nymph Egeria, who was said to have taught Numa Pompilius how to rule.

L. 66. **The foundress of the Babylonian wall.** Semiramis.

L. 67. **The Carian Artemisia.** The queen who fought so well at Salamis, that Xerxes, whose ally she was, expressed the wish that his men might become women.

L. 68. **The Rhodope.** A famous courtesan of Greece. With a part of her gains she was said to have built a pyramid near Memphis.

L. 69. **Clelia.** A Roman girl who had been given as a hostage to Porsena. She swam across the Tiber on horseback and escaped. **Cornelia.** The mother of the Gracchi. **The Palmyrene.** Zenobia.

L. 71. **Agrippina.** The wife of Germanicus. She accompanied him in his campaigns against the Germans, and on one occasion saved a defeated Roman army from destruction by preventing the frightened soldiers on the left bank of the Rhine from destroying a bridge over which the retreating army must pass to find safety.

Ll. 72-74. **Since to look.** The Princess means that the sight of noble forms affects the spirit through the senses, and makes him who sees, nobler.

L. 84. **She spoke.** Before going further with the narrative, the reader should make sure that he properly understands the character of the Princess as she has so far made herself known by her words.

L. 87. **Forms.** Benches.

L. 94. **Headed like a star.** With shining golden hair; or possibly, having a face bright with beauty.

L. 97. **The dame.** Midas, according to one account, confided the secret of his asses' ears to his wife alone, but she, unable to keep it, whispered it to the water among the sedge.

L. 105. **Woaded.** Dyed with blue from the woad-plant.

L. 112. **Appraised.** Approved. **The Lycian custom.** Herodotus tells us that the Lycians took their names from their mothers, and traced descent in the female line.

L. 113. **That lay at wine.** The Etruscan women, who were depicted as reclining at banquets with their husbands. **Lars** was an honorary designation in Etruria; and **Lucumo** was a title given there to princes and priests.

L. 117. **Fulmined.** Thundered. **Laws Salique.** The laws of the Salian Franks did not permit women to inherit royal power.

L. 126. **Pales.** Fence.

L. 135. **Thence the man's.** If greater size were really indicative of greater power, man's advantage was still that of longer use only.

L. 144. **Verulam.** Bacon.

L. 148. **Sappho.** A Greek poetess.

L. 151. **Lapt.** Enfolded.

L. 154. **She rose.** The figure must be spiritually and not literally conceived. Her feeling grew to exaltation in the thought of the future, and her words rose to the fervor of oratory that bears things before it as a wind.

L. 164. **Whose thoughts.** The vital thing in human life is the intercommunication of ideas, which is ours by the gift of language. This is the blood that feeds the growth of all good that man can know.

L. 168. **As when a boat.** As the boat tacks, the sail is for a moment in a position to be tossed one way and then another by the wind. Psyche at the instant of discovering that the course of her words must veer is in the same fluttering uncertainty.

L. 180. **Softer Adams.** Women assuming the rôle of men.

Ll. 181-182. **Sirens tho' they be.** In the classic story the sirens with their singing and their beauty lured to destruction sailors going by.

L. 208. **No more of deady.** The occasional occurrence of the partitive genitive with an adjective object of the preposition is to be noted in Tennyson. It secures vagueness, a thing necessary here where some uncertain punishment is only apprehended.

L. 209. **Garth.** A fruit garden.

L. 214. **To the trumpet.** At the sound of the trumpet.

Ll. 215-216. **Made to gild.** This is hardly a happy figure. To grasp it the reader must think of the word *gild* as if it meant merely to make pleasant.

L. 222. **The gaunt old Baron.** Note the succession of hard consonants. The tone-color materially helps in forming the picture.

L. 224. **Bestrode my Grandsire.** To defend him.

L. 227. **Branches current.** In different branches of the house of Florian the old baron's warm loyalty to the royal house has not yet grown cold.

L. 241. **Glean.** Cyril is talking the language of compliment, humbling himself before her wisdom.

L. 264. **Lucius Junius Brutus.** He condemned his sons to death for treason.

L. 270. **Of half this world.** Psyche means of course the woman-half. She is arguing with her better nature, still hoping to influence them to save her from the need of deciding between love and duty. Knowing that she will yield, she yet wishes to make for her yielding as good terms as possible.

L. 281. **Like some wild creature.** Psyche is under the stress of more than one passion; she has failed in duty to her patroness, she is undecided as to the outcome of it all, and she is filled with emotion at meeting her brother after so many years.

L. 290. **Our mother.** Here the real Psyche forgets the rôle it is hers to play, and is in a moment's change tender, loving, womanly.

L. 304. **Her mother's color.** That worn by Lady Blanche's pupils.

Ll. 305-307. **All her thoughts.** The reader's attention need hardly be called to the beautiful picture of Melissa here, but he should pause and dwell on the illumination of the simile. Everything in Melissa's heart is sweet and pure, and open for all the world to see, but just now the clearness of her soul is disturbed by a doubt and a wonder, as the light from the bottom agates is bent and broken by the running water.

L. 319. **The Danaïd.** According to the myth, the daughters of Danaüs were compelled to labor forever at the task of filling a leaky vase.

L. 320. **Ruin.** The college and its purpose fall to ruin.

L. 323. **Aspasia.** A Greek woman famous for her intellectual powers and her friendship with Pericles.

L. 328. **For Solomon.** Meaning that man may come to learn of woman, instead of woman of man.

L. 332. **Tho' Madam.** Cyril is again speaking the language of compliment, telling Psyche that they should be the taught and she, the teacher.

L. 335. **Something more.** What something more ?

Ll. 355-356. **And jewels.** Sayings that have become immortal. The stretched forefinger seems to point to them, since it is the forefinger, though merely holding them up for inspection.

L. 376. **An empty hull.** A man who knows nothing, has, of course, more to learn. Cyril has also learned something that science does not teach.

L. 381. **Vacant pang.** Resulting from vacancy of the heart.

L. 382. **The bigger boy.** Cupid,



L. 385. **Stomacher.** A part of a woman's dress, worn in front.

L. 388. **Sorcerer's malison.** Sorcerer's curse, or evil prediction.

Ll. 398-399. **Zone unmanu'd.** His female attire made him feel unmanly.

L. 400. **Thirsty plants.** The students, thirsty because so long deprived of opportunities for learning.

L. 404. **Bassoon.** A deep toned wind-instrument of wood. His voice, like a bassoon in its heaviness, he wishes by "mingling mimicry" to make lighter and more feminine in tone.

L. 415. **Colors gayer.** The sunlight on the morning mist gives the colors of the rainbow.

L. 419. **Who rapt.** The word *rapt* is of frequent occurrence in Tennyson. He uses it to indicate intentness of almost any sort.

L. 420. **Astræan age.** According to the myth, Astræa the goddess of justice, was to return to earth in a future golden age.

L. 426. **Falsely brown.** Lady Blanche is the foil for the Princess and Psyche. She is as false in herself as in the color of her hair, the false brown of her autumn tresses suggesting other falseness.

L. 432. **Smoothed a petted peacock.** Here Tennyson delicately suggests woman's inherent need of loving. Even when busied with the studies of the schools that need makes itself known unconsciously in the Princess.

L. 439. **Of the older.** This belongs grammatically to the word *others*.

L. 443. **The Fates.** Three in number. They were muffled as concealing the future.

L. 444. **Hitting all.** Meaning that she talked in a tone of kindly satire.

### PART III.

**Song.** This song is one of the best known that Tennyson has written. No other poet has wrought into his longer poems so many beautiful lyrics. The student of Tennyson's verse will do well to study carefully the tonal qualities of this one, noting the succession of round vowels, and the lulling reiteration of *s*'s as they alternate with more liquid tones.

L. 2. **Came furrowing.** Before the prow of a ship the blue water piles up in white masses, and in the same way in front of the dawn the billowy clouds are piled up in furrowed gold.

L. 6. **Above the darkness.** As the morning sunlight touches high objects first, the Muses' heads were earliest touched by the sunlight "from their native East."

L. 24. **Fell to canvass.** Any accession to the ranks of Lady Psyche's pupils stirs the venomous spirit in Lady Blanche. She is glad to find opportunity for belittling the new pupils, and the bitterness in her heart lends keenness to her spiritual vision.

L. 34. **In rubric.** Red lettering in manuscripts or books is rubric. Melissa sets her thoughts in rubric by blushing.

L. 52. **Those lilies.** The paleness of her cheeks.

L. 55. **Ganymedes.** The Trojan boy, Ganymede, was so beautiful that Zeus stole him away to become his cup-bearer in Olympus.

L. 56. **Vulcans.** In the myth, Vulcan was cast down from Olympus to earth, and was lame ever after.

L. 65. **Much I bear.** Does Melissa here paint herself as an unfilial child, or does the fact that she criticizes her mother more particularly characterize Lady Blanche herself?

L. 68. **The state of things.** The conventional relation between man and woman. For the cause of Blanche's bitterness we may look to her own married life, and we may consider here whether Ida's feeling on the subject of woman's place in the world is natural to her or something that has been cultivated in her.

Ll. 72-73. **Grew inosculated.** Became closely united.

L. 74. **Shiver.** Literally, vibrate, but note the wonderful effect, the rounding-out of the figure till even a shivering string has life and life's joy and pain, that comes with this poetically imaginative substitution.

L. 90. **An eagle clang.** The crane chatters and the dove murmurs, but the eagle clangs of its love to the heavens.

L. 96. **Her and her.** Melissa and Psyche.

L. 97. **Hebes.** Hebe, the daughter of Zeus and Herè, was cup-bearer in Olympus, before Ganymede.

L. 99. **The Samian Herè.** Wife of Zeus.

L. 100. **A Memnon.** The allusion is to a statue of Memnon, an Egyptian deity, called the "Vocal Memnon" because popularly supposed to give forth a musical note when struck by the rays of the rising sun.

L. 103. **Balusters.** The balustrade. The accent is changed to the second syllable.

L. 104. **Champaign.** A level landscape.

L. 111. **Prime.** Primeval.

L. 120. **Fabled nothing fair.** Made nothing appear fairer than reality.

L. 121. **Your example pilot.** A pilot simply indicates the course; he does not steer.

L. 122. **The hush'd amaze.** Note the condensation in this line. Feeling, gesture, and look all become the one thing, amazement.

L. 126. **Limed ourselves.** A metaphor from the use of bird-lime to ensnare birds.

L. 143. **We will seat.** Cyril readily understands that ambition is the fundamental thing in Lady Blanche. In him, thought goes naturally from the beginning to the end at one leap, and in the success of the Prince he sees his own success, by which Psyche as well as Ida will be freed from any desire to rule over a woman's college, leaving that to Lady Blanche.

L. 179. **Retinue.** Accent on second syllable.

L. 186. **Might have seem'd.** To the Prince she might appear harsh.

L. 198. **Poor boy.** Ida's "erring pride" makes her speak of the Prince in this way, since he has not reached her intellectual condition.

L. 212. **Vashti.** She was summoned to appear before the king that he might show her beauty to the people, and refused to come.

L. 215. **Breathes full East.** He means that she goes to the East to find confirmation of her opinion, that which leans to her. Vashti was a Persian queen, and her example of independent opposition to the will of man strengthens the inde-

pendence of the Princess. In the East, woman's condition has not been so fortunate as in the West, so that the East gives the Princess more cause for indignation.

L. 227. **Issue.** Deeds as the outcome of her life in the place of children.

L. 230. **Peace.** That the Princess is touched by this last appeal, as shown in her reply, indicates a latent tenderness in her, more of womanly than she would have appear.

L. 246. **Pou sto.** Greek, meaning, where I may stand. The Greek philosopher Archimedes said that he could move the earth, if given a lever long enough and a place where he might stand.

L. 254. **The sandy footprint.** The Princess, following up her thought in lines 238 and 239, tells the Prince that the footprints of human endeavor are not washed away, but harden into stone.

L. 261. **South-sea-isle taboo.** A regular system of interdiction among the aborigines of the South Sea islands.

L. 262. **Gynæceum.** The woman's quarters in a Greek house.

L. 264. **A passion.** The Princess uses the most intense expression available, making her purpose fully a thing of feeling.

L. 269. **Against the pikes.** This allusion is to Arnold von Winkelreid, who at Sempach gathered a score of Austrian pikes to his own breast, making way for the charge of his comrades.

L. 270. **The fiery gulf.** An earthquake at Rome having opened a great crack in the crust, Curtius, to avert the anger of the gods, leaped with his steed into the fiery chasm.

L. 276. **The color.** The rainbow formed in the mist over the cataract.

L. 282. **That practice better.** Is the creator to be thought of as a workman who by practice has been able to create man superior to the earlier life forms?

L. 285. **Diotima.** A woman of Mantinea, said to have been an instructor of Socrates. Because he denied the Greek religion, Socrates was condemned to die by drinking hemlock.

L. 298. **Encarnalize their spirits.** The Princess thinks that by the practice of vivisection, and by the study of "this microcosm," the human body, men debauch their spiritual natures and become sensual. The wonders of the material world, so long as they are merely known to us, are a sort of spiritual food, but when through familiarity they have become common-place, they change to a sort of spiritual poison.

L. 299. **Hangs.** Awaits decision.

L. 308. **All creation.** The operation of natural laws must result in a set of definite effects from any given set of causes. Setting these first causes in operation would, therefore, result in producing the whole series of effects, so making all creation one act at once.

L. 313. **Our weakness.** Because we cannot know all the causes in operation at any given time, and, if we did know them, could not reason out the long series of effects to follow from them through the centuries, we must think of creation as a succession of events, "the shadow, Time."

Ll. 325-327. **Where paced.** Note how the word *paced* suggests the mood of thought and meditation in which the demigods from the fields of Elysium looked upon the beauty of the lofty towers streaked by the filmy vapor.

L. 331. **Corinna's triumph.** Over the poet Pindar, the "Theban eagle," with whom she contested at the public games for the prize of poetry.

## PART IV.

**Song.** This lyric takes up the mood of the concluding lines of Part III., the mood of enchanted reverie that comes with the decline of day. It has the charm of vagueness, the misty atmosphere of twilight, and is a marvel of tonal beauty like the one following Part II. The student will hardly fail to note how the effect of vagueness is aided by the fact that some of the lines end with unaccented syllables. Through the vagueness is hinted the unity of influence that grows out of the union of two hearts in marriage, a thing that is but a platitude if too directly and definitely stated.

L. 4. **Lean and wrinkled.** The precipices show age like an old man's face on which the storms of years have beaten.

L. 12. **Planted level feet.** Walked on the level ground.

Ll. 33-34. **When unto dying eyes.** The charm of the poem is in its suggestion, as here, of mingled joy and sadness. The casement "grows a glimmering square," as the dawn brightens through it into the darkened room, but while this foreshows the possibility of joy, death draws near and puts the joy away from the dying eyes. So memory lights up the joys that have been, but are to be no more. There is the shadow, like the haze of an autumn landscape, to darken over beauty and promise, making the beauty softer and sweeter, but full of a wild, unfathomable regret, a regret that has no seeming excuse for being, since it comes we know not whence or why. But of all sadly sweet things, at once the sweetest and the saddest,

is an imagined love, so real that the lips feign kisses "on lips that are for others."

L. 45. **Moulder'd lodges.** Mouldered lodges are types of the ideas in which man's thought has dwelt, ideas now left with the dead past to fall in ruin and decay.

L. 59. **Rough kex.** A provincial term for dry stalks of hemlock. Here it means any wild growth coming up through the cracks in the mosaic.

L. 60. **Beard-blown goat.** The goat on the top of a ruined pillar with his beard blown by the wind.

L. 61. **Wild figtree.** Particularly remarkable for the strength with which its roots rend asunder ruined buildings, as noted by the Roman poets.

L. 64. **Hope, a poisoning eagle.** The word *burns* must here be understood in its imaginative sense. It gives us in its intensity the eagerness of Hope, a poisoning eagle waiting for the morrow.

L. 68. **The other distance.** The future.

L. 75. **O Swallow.** The repetitions in this first stanza and its general rapidity of movement indicate the mood of the singer. Longing breathes in it, such longing as leaves no mood for thought or any other emotion. The reader will do well to follow carefully the alternation of thought or feeling as the one or the other is in excess, up to the insistent exhortation of the last stanza.

L. 100. **Ithacensian suitors.** In the absence of Ulysses, his wife, Penelope, at Ithaca was besieged with suitors, who, not recognizing Ulysses on his return, smiled without knowing why.

L. 104. **O Bulbul.** This is the oriental name for the nightin-



gale, here pictured as singing to the rose. **Gulistan** is the Persian for rose-garden. The Princess means that the Prince is not a nightingale whose love-plaint will make the rose burst the veil it wears to see the singer.

Ll. 105-107. **Marsh-divers.** The marsh-diver and the meadow-crake, unmusical birds, will show their kindred to the singer by a likeness of voice in song.

L. 110. **When we made bricks in Egypt.** Refers to the bondage of the children of Israel in Egypt before the exodus, which has become a type of all bondage, as here of that of woman to man.

L. 121. **Valkyrian hymns.** The Valkyrs were the "choosers of the slain" in the northern mythology. They were represented as beautiful but terrible maidens who became visible or invisible at will, and whose duty it was to conduct to Valhalla those slain in battle.

L. 126. **Mock-Hymen.** Hymen was the god of marriage.

L. 129. **Sphered.** The sphere is a type or symbol of completeness.

L. 136. **Dragg'd my brains.** This expression serves to suggest the difficulty the Prince has in recalling such a song.

L. 137. **Bell-mouth'd glass.** The wine-glass.

L. 139. **Careless, careless.** Note the effect of this repetition in hinting the Prince's mood of irritation.

L. 149. **And fled.** The subject of this verb is the concluding word of the sentence, *women*.

L. 162. **Rapt.** Here there is intentness in the sense that the horrible fall is inevitable. The word *rapt* shuts out every other consideration but the certainty of her falling.

L. 183. **Caryatids.** Representations of living figures used as columns to support an entablature.

Ll. 185-186. **The hunter rued.** Actæon, who, in the old myth, having ventured to look upon Diana and her nymphs bathing, was turned into a stag. The **valves** are gates.

L. 194. **The Bear.** The constellation commonly known as the Big Dipper, composed of seven stars, the *seven slow suns*.

L. 207. **A Judith.** A Hebrew heroine of the apocryphal book of Judith. By a stratagem she succeeded in putting to death Holofernes, the captain of an Assyrian army sent against Judea by Nebuchadnezzar.

L. 211. **I pitied her.** This is the one interruption to the directness of Florian's story. There are other things upon which he might well comment, but it is only Melissa's trouble that touches the vein of thoughtful sentiment in him. In this connection see Part III., lines 82-87.

L. 227. **Proper to.** Characteristic of.

L. 242. **Musky-circled.** Enveloped in perfume.

L. 243. **Boles.** Tree trunks.

L. 247. **Bubbled.** Note the effect of light and overflowing spontaneity of song suggested by this word.

L. 250. **Mnemosyne.** The goddess of memory.

L. 252. **Haled.** Hauled or dragged.

L. 255. **Mystic fire.** St. Elmo's fire, an electrical ball of light that plays about the masts of ships.

L. 260. **Blowzed.** Ruddy.

L. 261. **Druid rock.** The earliest religious rites of which we know in the isle of Britain were those of the Druids. They

were usually conducted near some huge rock. A number of these rocks are still to be found in England.

L. 263. **Mews.** Sea-fowls, gulls.

L. 271. **The Lady Blanche.** She is artistically necessary to this scene. Some severe things must be said, the circumstances require them; but such words as are demanded of her, Ida herself can hardly say. They come naturally from Lady Blanche, and, while arousing the reader against her, stimulate a sympathetic appreciation of the difficulties that beset the Princess.

L. 275. **The Castalies.** From *Castaly*, the mythical spring on Olympus, sacred to the Muses. Here the pluralized form stands for sources of culture of any sort.

L. 282. **Warmer currents.** Currents of feeling.

L. 296. **Planed.** Made the path to Lady Psyche smooth and easy.

L. 301. **Yet I.** This line is a most effective character stroke. The Lady Blanche's bold assumption presupposes in Lady Psyche, simply on the strength of her own dislike, all the faults she wishes to find in her.

L. 307. **Their mask was patent.** It was clear that they were playing a part. Their mask, the disguise and pretence of woman, was open and understood.

L. 310. **Had gone.** Would have gone.

L. 314. **Less grain.** She means that Lady Psyche lacks the fiber of character, being like touchwood in which decay has destroyed the grain. This carries out the figure of a nursery or place where young trees are grown.

L. 317. **Public use.** The public good.

L. 326. **Blazon'd.** Emblazonry publishes to every observant eye the facts it would make known. It needs no patient reading of word after word, and Cyril's conduct had this essential quality of unmistakable meaning.

L. 339. **The wisp.** The will-o'-the-wisp.

L. 343. **Our mind.** The Princess has a regal way of dismissing difficulties and doing her own will. This is a part of her character, and here, perhaps, she changes her purpose to accord with her feelings, because the tirade of Lady Blanche makes it possible for her to do so. She has not before permitted herself to think of the child as a lost lamb. From this point on the child is more distinctly instrumental in influencing her mood.

L. 344. **Stretch'd.** Nothing could be more powerful in picturing the whole physical and spiritual self of Lady Blanche than this line and the following. The bare, protuberant ugliness of a vulture throat, stretched in baffled rage, is full of suggestion and character.

L. 347. **The cuckoo.** The cuckoo lays its eggs in the nests of other birds.

L. 352. **A Niobëan.** Apollo and Artemis punished the presumption of Niobe by killing all her seven sons and seven daughters. Melissa here appeals to Ida's judgment as if it were, like that of Apollo and Artemis, a bolt of heaven.

L. 358. **Stared in.** The personification of fear here serves a double purpose. It makes possible the condensation characteristic of Tennyson, and, by the activity of the fear as personified, in effect increases its intensity.

L. 359. **Whereby.** This is here equivalent to the phrase *by*

*which*, instead of having its modern meaning, on account of which, or by means of which. Observe that the introduction of the woman-post serves to turn the current of the story, relieving *Ida* of the difficulty of passing judgment on some perplexing problems.

L. 366. **When the wild.** The peasant "rights himself," or avenges his wrongs, by burning the ricks of his landlord. Notice the conjunction of fire and stormy cloud, as of anger reddening against the gloom of wrath. There had been trouble with the agricultural laborers of England shortly before this was written.

L. 371. **The dead hush.** The passion in the Princess had so dwarfed every other interest in those about her that all are silent watching.

L. 398. **Spoke impetuously.** He is angered by his father's interference, and wishes to disavow that method of winning her.

L. 401. **Regal compact.** Born of the compact between their royal fathers.

Ll. 404-407. **I bear.** He means that from childhood to age his life is not his own, but one devoted to her.

L. 409. **Vague brightness.** The Princess. Vague because known to the imagination only, as the brightness of the moon is but vague to a baby, before it has any conception of size or space.

L. 411. **Long breezes.** Long, because coming from so far.

L. 411. **Rapt.** Intent always upon the South, and so having always the inmost spirit of the South.

L. 415. **Clang.** As the eagle in Part III., line 90. **Lapt in wreaths.** Enfolded in the softened radiance that lights up the thin crests of the waves.

L. 418. **Sphered up with Cassiopëia.** Placed among the stars like the Ethiopian queen from whom the constellation is named.

L. 419. **Persephonè.** The myth records that Pluto carried her off from earth to Hades, and there made her his queen.

L. 422. **In this frequency.** In the presence of so many.

L. 426. **Landskip.** Landscape.

L. 430. **Involved.** Included as only a part of her beauty.

L. 439. **O more than.** Notice in this and the two succeeding lines the climax of feeling in the Prince. He began by addressing himself to Ida's reason, but for the moment emotion overpowers him.

L. 445. **In the teeth.** The word *clenched* in this line furnishes an example of transferred epithet. Literally it belongs to *teeth*, but by being transferred to *antagonisms* it intensifies the effect of bitter opposition.

L. 446. **To follow up.** For a less definite and strenuous expression of this thought, that it is a part of manliness to seek what is worthiest, regardless of success or failure, compare Browning's lines from Rabbi Ben Ezra.

"What I aspired to be,  
And what not, comforts me;  
A brute I might have been, but would not sink i' the scale."

See also *Guinevere* in the *Idylls of the King*. The queen says, "We must needs love the highest when we see it."

L. 453. **With foam.** Not water, because water in commotion turns to foam.

L. 454. **But there rose.** Tennyson again changes the course

of the story in order to save *Ida* from the necessity of saying the bitter things that are in her heart. We must know that she can be stirred by great passion, but she must not wholly lose her womanliness for us by saying the bitter and unjust things to which she is prompted by her feelings.

L. 458. **Hereded ewes.** This has the double effect of suggesting the great number of the women and their gentle natures.

L. 468. **The placid marble Muses.** The contrast here is the more effective because of the devotion to the arts for which the university was founded. The Muses look peace as with a sort of admonitory chiding for devotees who have forgotten to what service they have given themselves.

L. 474. **Glares ruin.** The red revolving light both suggests ruin and glares upon it, lighting it up in the tempest without.

L. 482. **Maiden banner.** A maiden banner because never before unfurled.

L. 484. **Protomartyr.** First martyr.

L. 495. **Turnspits for the clown.** Those that tend spits on which they cook meat for clownish husbands.

L. 503. **A stroke.** Such sunshine seems cruel, because it brings out the hard outlines of the rock above the softened darkness.

L. 505. **She floated.** The Princess remains so much mistress of herself and of circumstances that she does not lose her natural grace of movement. More than that, so much purpose is in her that she seems but the embodiment of that purpose, a spiritual being floating towards them. Note the fine irony that is still at her command when she speaks.

L. 523. **Lord you.** Call you a lord.

L. 527. **Push them out.** If the Princess here shows herself unlovely, she does so after the fashion of a king's daughter. There is justification for her severity, and in view of the inscription on the gates, she even inclines towards mercy. This it is now possible for her to do because of the letters from the two kings. Before this she could not have made decision about them without seeming to err on the side of cruelty or of weakness.

L. 538. **The doubt.** A feeling of uncertainty that was a part of his seizure. This seizure like the cadence at the close of a strain of music, serves as a gentle descent from the climax here, up to which the story has so far been leading. This is, as it were, the climax of entanglement. Beginning with Part V., the story develops to the climax of the denouement.

L. 553. **Set into sunrise.** In northern latitudes, in summer the sun simply dips down to the horizon and rises again; so to him mischance instead of being darkness, was but a little lessening of brightness before a greater glow.

L. 579. **Favor.** This is a term borrowed from the language of chivalry, and was used to designate the token of his lady's favor, which the knight wore in the tourney. This little interlude serves to remind the reader anew that the story is only a tale told in jest.

## PART V.

L. 2. **A stationary voice.** A sentinel.

L. 13. **Innumeros.** Tennyson uses this word instead of innumerable to get the sound of *s* with its suggestion of lispings leaves.

L. 18. **Their baldness.** You can afford to stop and smile



over these lines. Notice that the two kings, in wagging their heads up and down, would expose to view the tops of their heads rather than their faces, so making of them a baldness to the vision of the Prince.

L. 25. **A dragged mawkin, thou.** This last is addressed to the Prince, and not to Gama. **Mawkin**, for *malkin*, a kitchen wench.

L. 28. **From the sheath.** From the covering of the bud.

L. 32. **Among his shadows.** The shadow of his seizures.

L. 37. **Transient.** This word is derived from the Latin verb *transeo*, meaning to cross over, to which meaning Tennyson makes it revert here. A thing that crosses over is changeable, whence the ordinary meaning of the word.

L. 38. **Woman-slough.** Woman garments.

L. 58. **Charr'd and wrinkled.** Extinguished fires of passion or of pain and misery leave their black marks on faces as on wood. A powerful expression.

L. 62. **What have you done.** The sweet naturalness of this must appeal to every reader. The sympathy for Psyche that all this develops is meant to react upon our thought of the Princess and her injustice. Psyche's story is for this reason an essential part of the whole narrative.

L. 76. **Remorseful Cyril.** His song, it is to be remembered, was responsible for the disclosure of their identity.

L. 101. **What might.** Psyche speaks impulsively, and not with the purpose of implying a promise to Cyril. This is clear from the fact that afterwards, like one caught, she feigns death, and neither speaks nor stirs.

L. 110. **Parle.** Parley.

L. 114. **Rods of steel.** Rods of punishment.

L. 121. **The trampled year.** The year is trampled when its fruits, the grain in the field, and the purple vine are trodden under foot.

L. 124. **A smoke.** In connection with the thought of war, the mind readily receives the picture of the smoke of burning dwellings, a smoke for which, in Ida's eyes, the Prince would be responsible, and so "three times a monster."

L. 125. **Lightens scorn.** The Prince is not troubled when she merely flashes scorn at him as lightning. That springs from anger, not dislike, but hatred will come to her, he knows, when she sees that he has been, however indirectly, the author of general ruin.

L. 132. **Shards with catapults.** Catapults were Roman engines of war answering in use to our cannon; engines capable of dashing the city to pieces, making them like shards of broken pottery.

L. 134. **The lifting.** The wonderful directness of this is like a revelation. In the *Idylls* Tennyson makes use of a similar expression, and repeats it slightly changed.

"And in the heart of Arthur, pain was lord."

Is it, however, in keeping with the rest of the speech, or does it seem strained and affected?

L. 141. **Ribs of wreck.** The solid framework of a wrecked ship, its ribs, remain when the rest is gone.

L. 146. **That idiot legend.** The king means the story that the Prince was of unsound mind. See Part I., line 5, *et seq.*

L. 154. **Comes.** This verb is in the same construction as the word *does* in the line preceding.

L. 157. **Tho' dash'd.** Though the blood upon him reddens what he kisses.

“But my sword was wet with the blood of the foe, and my raiment with mine own blood ; and I was aweary with the day's work, and sick with many strokes, and methought I was fainting into death. And there thou wert before me, full of life, and ruddy, and smiling, both lips and eyes ; thy raiment clean and clear, thine hands unstained with blood. Then didst thou take me by my bloody and weary hand, and didst kiss my lips grown ashen pale, and thou saidst, ‘Come with me.’” William Morris : “The House of the Wolfings.”

L. 159. **Your mother.** In a few lines here the king betrays his spiritual blindness and blankness. He can understand deeds, but not thoughts and feelings.

L. 170. **Gagelike.** Like a glove or gage of battle, flung in challenge to combat.

L. 172. **You clash.** Things that clash, of course, come together and with violence. Here the word suggests the king's rough temper as well as the mere fact of his failing to recognize differences in women.

L. 178. **A maiden moon.** A new moon that sparkles on a sty because inexperienced to detect the difference between a sty and a palace.

L. 179. **Satyr.** A mythological being, half human, half goat, here used as a type of the animal in man.

L. 181. **Truer.** The Prince means that woman yields to the suggestions of conscience a readier obedience than man.

L. 182. **Severer in the logic.** A life which maintains throughout its course a consistent conformity to certain un-

changing principles of action may be said to be severe in the logic of a life. Woman, it seems to the Prince, is more severely logical in her life than man, because she is more loyal to principle, less changeable, more consistent.

L. 185. **Whole.** Complete and perfect.

L. 186. **Minted in the golden.** Observe here how the word *golden*, though used in another connection, suggests that the mintage is golden.

L. 188. **Lines of green.** Tennyson has seen that green is a color of fresher purity than white even.

L. 190. **Piebald.** Mottled.

L. 195. **Mooted.** Made a matter of question.

L. 205. **I would he had.** Gama's mood here, it will be observed, is brighter and livelier than usual. The anxiety under which he has been bowed down, and now the sudden release from that, together with the support of the Prince, have combined to quicken all his faculties, so that he even ventures upon taking the initiative in a measure.

L. 213. **Buss'd.** Kissed.

L. 222. **Foursquare.** Prepared to meet opposition on all sides.

L. 223. **White hands.** A character hint.

L. 227. **A thousand rings.** The rings in every bole are rings of spring, because during the life of the tree each spring adds a new one.

L. 230. **Desire in me.** Tennyson, like his predecessor in the laureate's office, Wordsworth, finds something personal and sympathetic in nature. He does not interpret his mood into nature, as had been done by earlier poets, but the mood of nature reacts upon his own and heightens it.

L. 248. **The shadow.** Showed a likeness to Ida in the morning sunlight as it played upon the three brothers.

L. 250. **Those three stars.** The stars in the belt of Orion, the mighty hunter, who was transferred to the heavens as the constellation of that name.

Ll. 252-254. **Fiery Sirius.** A very bright star in the constellation of Orion. As it alters hue near the horizon, so their helmets in the clear light of the morning flashed with a new brightness.

L. 259. **A wandering hand.** Moving about in gesticulations.

L. 266. **'Sdeath.** An abbreviation of an old oath: By God's death.

L. 280. **And, right or wrong.** This animal indifference to anything but his own will is perfectly in keeping with what we know of Arac so far.

L. 282. **With solemn rites.** This hints at something not wholly intellectual in the Princess. The student should watch for all suggestions of normal human weakness and womanly tenderness in the undercurrent of Ida's real self.

L. 284. **Her that talk'd down.** St. Catherine of Alexandria.

L. 287. **Foughten.** Tennyson employs this form of the past participle in the *Idylls* also.

L. 319. **False daughters.** False because hatched by her from the eggs of ducks or geese.

L. 324. **Flush her babbling wells.** Babbling wells must be shallow wells, from which the water gushes out joyously as from a spring, and the blood of a great battle might flood them.

L. 340. **Her will.** Consider whether Tennyson could, after showing us the firm strength of purpose of the Princess, have

that purpose roughly broken without jarring upon the artistic beauty of the story.

L. 355. **Tomyris.** Queen of the Massagetæ, who after defeating and killing Cyrus the Great, avenged herself upon his dead body.

L. 369. **Of living hearts.** A custom in India required the widowed wife to throw herself on the funeral pyre of her husband, and perish with him.

L. 371. **Prophetic pity.** To save them from the hardships of woman's lot there, mothers were accustomed to throw their female children into the Ganges, there to drown or be seized by hovering vultures.

L. 389. **The striplings!** Indignation swells in the breast of the Princess as she thinks how those three "striplings" have come in disguise "for their sport," and have made a mockery of her fair purposes.

L. 394. **What mother's blood.** This resolves the wonder of Arac's rough manhood, and Gama's effeminacy. It is the mother's blood in both Arac and the Princess.

L. 398. **His mother lives.** This is a repetition of Ida's feeling for woman in particular, but it is womanly tenderness none the less.

L. 404. **This gad-fly.** The Prince.

L. 405. **Plant a solid foot.** She means that she will exert an influence that shall go into the future, "the Time."

L. 420. **Our chiefest comfort.** The student should not fail to make a careful study of the mood of the Princess whenever word or deed of hers gives the opportunity. Has she before been very thoroughly self-sufficient, and is she so here ?

L. 431. **Sloughs.** The king means that the Prince is beyond his depth in a slough, led by the will-o'-the-wisp, love.

L. 441. **The gray mare.** An old and shrewish woman.

L. 459. **The little clause.** In the clause there is, of course, a hint of tenderness, but he cannot know whether of natural mercy or of awakening warmth towards him. This uncertainty of mood in him serves naturally as an introduction to the seizure of line 465, accounting for it as well as making the transition to it less abrupt. This mood of musing in the Prince is further justified by the circumstances in which he finds himself, every wish and purpose overruled by the fiercer wills of his father and Prince Arac.

L. 460. **That wild morning.** Cf. I. 96.

L. 468. **Memorial tilts.** Tilts that have been made memorable.

L. 483. **Into fiery splinters.** Note how the personification in this line and the following adds to the animation of the conflict, making even the lance and the helmet alive with the passion of the battle.

L. 488. **Two bulks.** Arac's brothers.

L. 500. **Miriam and a Jael.** Hebrew women warriors.

L. 504. **No saint.** Note that now his thoughts stir in the Prince a sort of blind madness. He goes into the fight, but his guiding genius is an unthinking Fury.

L. 511. **Staggering back.** Used here in the transitive sense, with horse and horseman as its object.

L. 514. **Flying the roofs.** Here we have a double personification, serving to increase the intensity of personal malignity animating the pillar of electric cloud. Living creatures are

flayed, and towards living creatures only, can one exhibit the violence of real passion.

L. 526. **Last I spurr'd.** The Prince is the hero of the story, and Arac's prowess must be shown in contest with others before the Prince can be permitted to fall before it. For this, his overthrow, his recent seizure has also made preparation, since because of it we understand that he is not his best self in the battle, and therefore not in so great degree less princely for being overthrown.

#### PART VI.

**Song.** This song serves the artistic purpose of suggesting that occasion for tenderness may soften a heart unyielding to sterner influences. In all the songs the Child and the influence of childhood in the life of men and women are suggested. Psyche's child Aglaia is throughout the poem introduced at critical points to affect the mood of the Princess; but it is woman's inherent need of having something to which she may minister, that is the fundamental force influencing Ida in the end. In woman that feeling most readily directs itself towards children, because of their weakness, but man may be made its object through sickness or misfortune. Recognition of love as a factor in the perfect life comes inevitably when one has yielded to this feeling.

L. 12. **And grovell'd on my body.** The old king is not hard and brutal like Arac. He is as uncompromising as that huge giant, but he is human, and for his severity he finds justification in his reason.

L. 13. **Came Psyche.** She seems unnecessary here, and in this is the pitifulness of her coming.



L. 16. **Dame of Lapidoth.** Deborah, who sang a song of triumph after the defeat of the army of Sisera, whom Jael (cf. V. 500) slew with a nail. See *Judges* iv-v.

L. 21. **A thousand arms.** The branches of the tree as they spread and grow upward towards the sun.

L. 25. **They mark'd it.** This stanza continues the metaphor of the first. Though the leaves are wet with woman's tears, and a strange song rustles through them, the wood-choppers have marked the tree for the axe.

L. 34. **There dwelt.** In the grain of the wood as in the strength of her purpose and her power to carry it through.

L. 38. **A night of Summer.** Refreshing by the coolness of its shade as the coolness of a night in summer. The tree is a "breadth of autumn" because of its yielding so much good. The song, in comparison with others in the *Princess*, is cold and mechanical. The metaphor, instead of being a poetic illumination of the thought, is forced in its continual elaboration of detail. But this ineffectiveness of the poem in itself is another thing in its relation to the story. It springs readily enough from the unnatural mood of the *Princess*, glorying, though a woman, in bloodshed, for which she is herself responsible. The womanly consciousness of this checks the flow of her exulting joy.

L. 44. **Violate.** Violated. A Latinism.

L. 47. **Blanch'd in our annals.** Made memorable, being fortunate.

L. 50. **An April.** Flowers gathered from the hollows, which are so left bare of spring, to be thrown about the statues of her three brothers.

L. 65. **Tremulous isles.** Sunbeams flickering through the wind-tossed leaves.

L. 67. **At distance.** Lady Blanche is still drawn by the powerful personality of the Princess, even when she dares not approach her.

L. 70. **Stately fretwork.** Antlers.

L. 83. **The old lion.** The king, glaring with a whelpless eye, because in it there was now the pain of loss of the lion's whelp, the Prince.

L. 90. **Tortured.** Note how this word, essentially poetic and imaginative here, intensifies her pain.

L. 92. **He saved.** Consider what mood in her prompts this.

L. 97. **Shore.** Sheared. The old past tense.

L. 110. **Great clog.** The Princess is still so noble-natured that she cannot be satisfied with ingratitude in herself. Until she has in some way repaid the Prince for saving her life, she cannot, without feeling herself in the wrong, cast him off and go on alone in the fulfilment of her purpose.

L. 117. **The babe.** The important part that the child plays in the story should not be overlooked. It first wakes in Ida a hint of womanliness. See V., 420-427.

L. 118. **Brede.** Embroidery.

L. 126. **On tremble.** *On* and *a* were interchangeable in early English, and we say *aboard* or *on board* indifferently.

L. 142. **Self-involved.** Lost in her own thoughts.

L. 144. **Thro' all her height.** Another poet might have written, *to all her height*, but Tennyson feels that the passion of her indignation has possessed her whole being.

L. 166. **Port.** Portal at which prayer might enter and affect her.

L. 179. **Purple.** The hue of supreme richness, no longer delighting her eyes in the distance that has grown gray with assurance of failure.

L. 186. **The dead prime.** The silent hours after midnight.

L. 209. **I would sooner.** Is Arac's pleading prompted by sympathy for Psyche, or by the dislike of tears, common to all men?

L. 218. **Just ere she died.** The queen expresses rather a hope about Ida than an opinion. As death comes to end her care of her child, she quiets her anxious fears by declaring that the thing she wishes is true.

L. 221. **All people.** Note the little things, as in this most suggestive line, by which the king paints his own character. King though he is, he moulds his judgment by popular opinion.

Ll. 239-240. **Sine and arc.** Terms in mathematics and astronomy.

L. 251. **Wept.** This word is peculiarly expressive in indicating Ida's mood. The languor springs from the mood of tears and so can itself be said to weep.

L. 270. **The hollow heart.** It may be doubted here whether she means that her heart is hollow because of its loneliness, or that the hollowness is in their accusing. Perhaps in her yearning for Psyche, and in her pain from the chiding of the two kings, both meanings may have had place in her mind at once.

L. 283. **Adit.** Access.

L. 289. **Mob me up.** Mix her up in the mob of woman-kind.

L. 298. **The mournful song.** IV., 21.

L. 309. **Verily I think to win.** This point marks the turn of our sympathies toward the Princess. Lady Blanche has been necessary in the story for this scene, and after this she passes off the stage. So far we have been permitted to see in Ida only her unwomanliness, her masculine ambition, her wish to unsex herself and all womankind with her; but Lady Blanche is infinitely more unlovely. When, after the Princess has already had beratings enough and has suffered them in patience, when now Blanche adds the venom of her bitterness, we can but take sides with the Princess. This change has been fully prepared for, but by introducing Blanche at the moment when it is to be expected, she is made to receive the current of our disfavor, and the reversion of sentiment towards Ida is concealed.

L. 319. **Pharos.** A famous ancient lighthouse on the isle of Pharos, near Alexandria.

L. 330. **In the Vestal entry shriek'd.** This gives us at once the protest at the entrance of men, and the sound itself of iron upon marble.

L. 338. **Supporters.** The heraldic figures on the sides of a coat of arms.

L. 348. **Dian's moon.** Diana is painted in the background of a sky with a crescent moon showing. Both Pallas and Diana are probably statues here, the crescent moon taking, perhaps, the form of a bow.

L. 355. **Due.** Devoted. The word, of course, suggests further the fitness of the room for the use for which it is now properly required.

## PART VII.

**Song.** This lyric is full of the sweet sadness of love that yields unwillingly to love. The reiteration of its theme like a plaint is delicately powerful, and it mixes softly with our conception of a new mood in the Princess.

L. 8. **She not fair began.** Woman's natural office of sweet and kindly ministration brings beauty, through the beauty of the life, into faces to which it had before been lacking.

L. 17. **Clomb.** Climbed.

L. 18. **Leaguer.** The men leagued together in arms in the camp without.

L. 19. **Void was her use.** There was now nothing to occupy her.

L. 23. **Verge.** Horizon.

L. 25. **Tarn.** A small dark pond.

L. 31. **Gyres.** Circles.

L. 32. **Lay silent.** His soul-self and its consciousness were so shut within the body, "the muffled cage of life," that he "lay quite sundered from the moving universe."

L. 50. **Those fair charities join'd.** Took part with her in ministration to others.

L. 53. **Two dewdrops.** These three lines furnish an excellent example of the beauty of Tennyson's figures.

L. 56. **Obtain'd.** Succeeded or prevailed, effective here because it suggests Cyril himself as the subject of the verb in the character of suitor.

L. 60. **The babe restored.** See V., 101-102.

L. 67. **Involved in stillness.** Implied by her silence.

L. 75. **Satiate.** Satisfied or satiated. A Latinism like *violate* in VI., 44.

L. 78. **In wild delirium.** It is to be noted that the passages containing the weird seizures were not introduced into the poem until the fourth edition in 1851. They are a proper, perhaps a necessary, preparation for the delirium which is here required to have its subtle influence upon the Princess.

L. 98. **Flourish'd up.** "Blossomed up," as in II., 292, in the etymological sense of the word *flourish*.

L. 109. **The Oppian law.** This was a law passed at the time when Rome was in the greatest danger from Hannibal. By its provisions no woman could wear a gay-colored dress, have more than an ounce of gold ornaments, or ride in the city in a carriage. On the return of peace the women demanded the repeal of the law, finally securing their end, though opposed by one of the consuls, Cato, a lifelong foe to the growing luxury and corruption of Rome.

L. 112. **The tax.** A tax imposed on Roman matrons by the second triumvirate. Hortensia opposed it with such eloquent ability that it was repealed.

L. 135. **Stoop down.** The moving pathos of this petition is a fitting climax for the story.

L. 148. **That other.** Aphrodite (Venus) as she rose in birth from the barren deeps of the sea, her mother. The fancy of the Prince has so dwelt upon the thought of Aphrodite that in his weakness his passion partly identifies her with Ida. That she has really kissed him he does not surely know, and the loveliness of this description of Aphrodite is the loveliness of his thought of Ida in his longing for her.

L. 154. **End of mine.** My worship for thee, the Princess.

L. 166. **Glimmers on to me.** The ghostly glimmer becomes a part of her mood.

L. 167. **All Danaë.** Receptive of the light of the stars, as Danaë, the daughter of Akrisios, was receptive to the love of Zeus when he descended to her in her cell in the form of a shower of gold.

L. 181. **A sunbeam.** Warmth and light are wasted and ineffectual where barrenness has taken the place of life.

L. 189. **Death and Morning.** Morning walks first on the Silver Horns, twin peaks of the Jungfrau, because they first catch the rays of the sun. Death walks with morning, because at that elevation life cannot have a home, and even the mountain-climber must risk the chance of destruction in going so high.

L. 199. **Like a broken purpose waste in air.** The peculiar thing in this figure is that the immaterial is made to illustrate the material.

L. 201. **Azure pillars of the hearth.** Columns of smoke.

Ll. 206-207. **The moan of doves.** The perfect beauty of these two lines has been the theme of many commentators. The soft alliteration and the halting meter of the last line are probably unsurpassed, if not unequaled, elsewhere.

L. 233. **Went sorrowing.** The image that this figure is to produce is perhaps hardly conceivable. We shall have to think of her heart as emotionalized memory, and then the conception in a spiritual, rather than a material, way becomes possible.

L. 234. **Till notice of a change.** Some influence from the world outside themselves must come to break the mood that is

upon them. She is lost in her sorrowing and he must be dumb with compassion until something gives him occasion for speaking.

L. 245. **Out of Lethe.** The river of oblivion in the underworld. From it, Tennyson means, man comes into life and all the fulness of its activities.

L. 248. **The fair young planet.** The hope and promise of childhood.

L. 255. **Burgeon.** Bud.

L. 308. **With music.** The stars are poetically thought to make music, "the music of the spheres," in their motion.

L. 335. **Is morn to more.** The first of many like hours to follow.

L. 337. **Athwart the smoke.** The rising smoke and heated air refract the light from the woodlands so that they seem to reel and waver.

L. 231. **Those dark gates.** Death.

#### CONCLUSION.

L. 49. **Garden.** England,

L. 51. **Which keeps her off.** The allusion to France that follows is certainly a digression, but it has this excuse, that it reflects admirably the mood in which the story leaves those who have heard it. The things that have been directly touched upon in the course of the poem have been exhausted, but the mood remains, and reflections upon allied topics that the time and place suggest grow from it naturally. It was shortly after the publication of the first edition, which does not contain this



allusion to France, that that country found herself in the throes of the Revolution of 1848, and this probably accounts for its introduction.

L. 70. **The narrow seas.** The Straits of Dover.

L. 76. **Fill me with a faith.** The sane self-poise of Tennyson's temper is one of the most distinct marks of his greatness, as it is one of the chief sources of his popularity. With the exception of *Maud*, a healthy optimism flames nobly in all that he has written. It grows upon us through the wonder and the doubt of *In Memoriam*, and in spite of some bitter lines it is the fundamental note of both the *Locksley Halls*. Long ago, Poe, writing of Tennyson, declared him the noblest of poets, and the criticism of later years gives no reason for altering that judgment.

L. 87. **Pine.** Pineapples.

L. 94. **Closed.** Inclosed or included.

L. 97. **Rookery.** The rooks that belong to a rookery.



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