

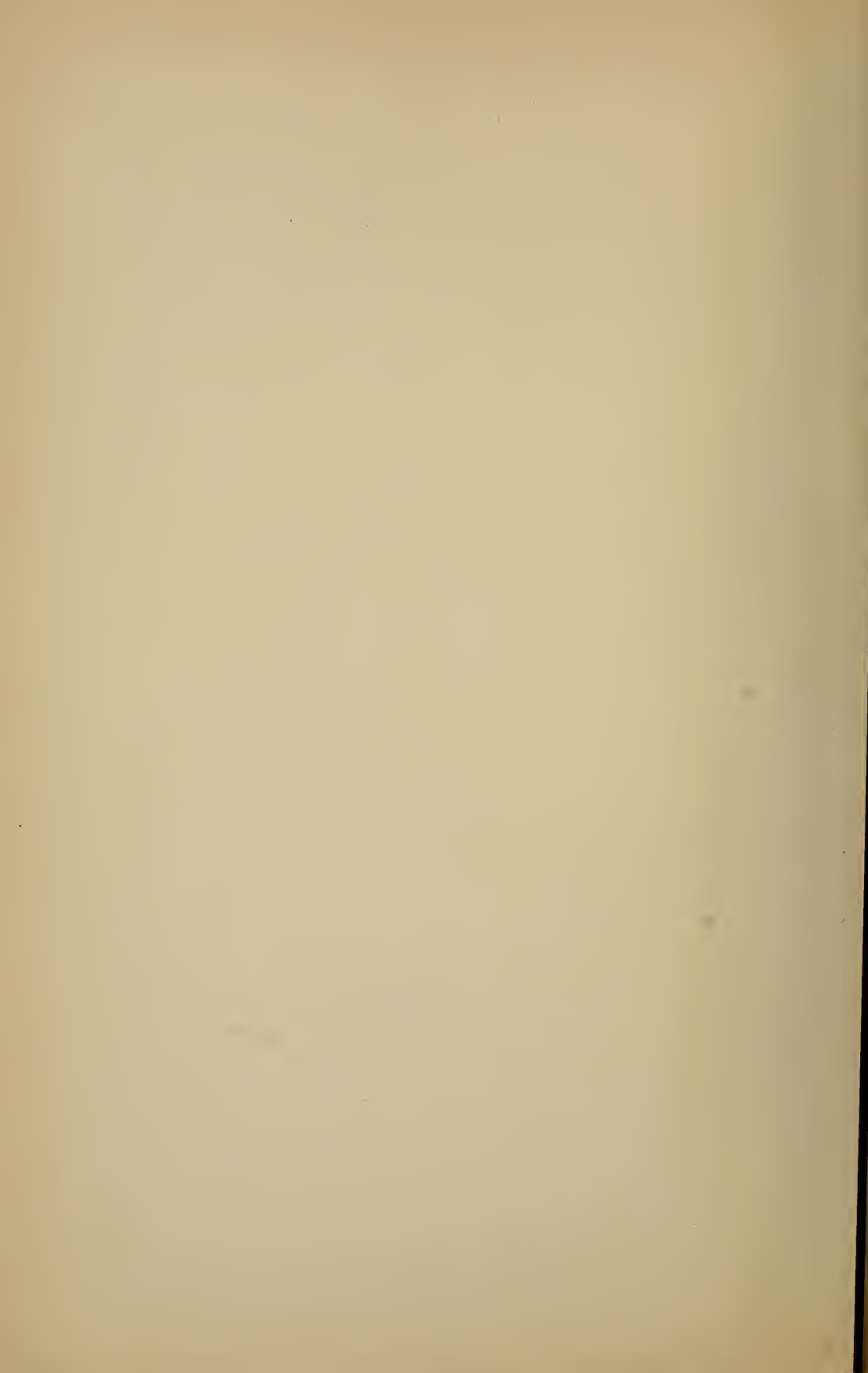


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POEMS

BY

HENRY HARMON CHAMBERLIN



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MORALITY AND LEGEND

DEDICATION

THESE TALES OF YEARNING AND OF OLD UNREST
ALIKE WHERE THAMES OR GANGES NEARS THE SEA,
WHAT E'ER MAY BE THE NOBLEST AND THE BEST,
DEAR, LOYAL FRIEND, I DEDICATE TO THEE.

BUT EVEN IF HAPLY TO THE HOUSE OF FAME
I WIN AT LENGTH WITH UNRELUCTANT FEET,
I WOULD NOT HAVE HER HALLS RESOUND THY NAME,
KNOWING THAT LETHE ALSO MAY BE SWEET.

THE QUEEN'S NECKLACE

(FROM THE JĀTAKA)

Read here the story of Ananda told
By the great Buddha in the days of old.
Ananda, by the Master cherished more
Than all the rest. His wisdom did restore
The stolen jewel of Kosala's king,
Sorely bewildered by that pilfering.
"Screen thou the basin of thy palace yard,"
Counselled Ananda, "Then without retard,
Summon thy slaves for washing of the hand."
When thirteen slave girls at the King's command
Had laved them in seclusions one by one,
Behold the jewel flashed against the sun,
Beneath the water jet, behind the screen;
Nor any man could choose from out thirteen
The girl who stole. That night within the Hall
Of Truth assembled, the disciples all
Lauded Ananda. "Venerable sage
Fulfilled of ruth, the glory of old age,
He found the royal gem by Reason's laws
And a frail girl escaped the tiger claws
Of royal justice." Entered unto them
As they were holding question of the gem
Gotama Buddha. Eyes could not endure
His beauty like the sun's effulgence pure.
Serene he questioned what might be their theme
And, certified, continued thus: "I deem
Ananda not the first man to restore
Stolen adornments. Ages long before
Jewels were robbed and women all were frail,

As I can prove you in this age old tale."
 Then he to them revealed in reverend wise
 What Death and Birth had hidden from their eyes,
 As one lets loose the full moon to adorn
 The lofty vaults of air, where snows are born.

I

The yellow bhunders jabbered in the palm
 And vexed the vernal breezes and the calm
 Of noon, while o'er steep rock and ferny bank
 Swift water foamed into a bathing tank.
 Over a white pavillion latticèd,
 A yellow bhunder clambered overhead
 Eager to peep the fretwork in between
 Down at the bathing of Benares' queen
 Who, unprofaned with any other gaze,
 Came as the maiden moon in beauty ablaze
 Beclouded with black hair from crown to sole
 Save her large eyes that needed not the khol.
 Nearby those cleansing waters ran a path
 By fruitful mangoes hidden from the bath,
 Where, stealthy as black panther on the stir,
 Stole on the noon the king's high treasurer
 Lord Kamayana, all of scornful mien
 Unless he looked upon Benares' queen;
 So said the king's high priest upon that morn
 And hard the words and heavy to be borne
 For Kamayana called the brahmin still,
 Fat paunch and hypocrite who taught God's will
 And guzzled beer and food; the pundit, he
 Spake at his face the word, *adultery*;
 And either gainst the other was at odds
 Like men who care but little for the gods.
 While Kamayana with ignoring eye
 Made haste, by reason of some basketry,

Falling he lay upon his belly prone
As he was wont to venerate the throne.
The yellow bhunder dropped into the air;
Uplancing with a scowl, the lord was ware,
Of an old figure gnarlèd like a root
Standing at gaze amid the mango fruit;
And wrath a priestly pundit would despise
Swelled at his heart and kindled in his eyes.
"What dost thou here, old man, in king's domain?
So may thy soul never to good attain!"
And Kamayana, raising up his hand,
Struck him upon the mouth. "'T is my command!
Go thee before me! Quit thee of thy gaze!"
"Father of gods favor they works and ways
And titles and emoluments! But I
A poor old sudra crave thy charity!
Respect the aged. Lo! 't is writ in full
'The lordly and the young be merciful
Unto old age!" "Old age! old fool! have done!
Thy babble doth offend me! Get thee gone!"
But ere the aged man once more could speak
Louder than many apes, rose a shrill shriek
And with a frightened face of dole and teen
Came unto them a slave girl of the queen!
"O me asleep! stripes and a girl's grief!
Lord Kamayana, hast thou seen the thief?"
"Only this vagrant who the meeting marred
Twixt me and—verily it shall go hard
With him! Where is the queen?" "The queen
attires.
She will not favor now my lord's desires;
And I have lost the pearls of price, and woe
Upon my head what time that she doth know!"
Lo! mid the leavèd tracery of the trees
Glittered tall soldiers in gold cuirasses.
"What, ho! 't is Kamayana who doth call!

Grapple this robber! make him tell you all
 His story! Have you at him! Beat him down!
 Break you the ribs under the dirty brown!"
 They fell upon the sudra with foul words;
 They beat him with the pummels of their swords:
 "What! aged villany! art thou a thief?
 Where's the queen's necklace?" "Give my sides
 relief!"

Groaned the old man, "Yea! take me to the king
 I took the necklace! I took anything
 You will! Father of gods! I pray you cease!
 Mercy! have mercy! Leave me be at peace!"

Half hidden by tall grass in open space,
 With hounds in leash and cheetah for the chase,
 Over against a royal banyan, sate
 King Brahmadata canopied in state.
 The umbrella of white silk embroiderèd
 With ruddy gold was raised above his head
 And plump in the paunch, near to the king's right hand
 The priestly pundit solemnly did stand,
 His naked breast tattooed with Brahma's word,
 Proud of his wisdom and his triple cord.
 And while a piper underneath the trees
 Played to the dancers with light melodies,
 Came Kamayana at the king's command
 And murmured at the kissing of the hand:
 "Lord of the world, long loved of Indra, king,
 Before thee now thy guards a captive bring
 Who now await thy mandate." "Come they here."
 They dragged the man before him, limp with fear.
 Said the good king: "Whoever mayst thou be
 Who all against thy will dost visit me?
 If any tale, so tell it and be brief."
 "King of the time, thy servant is a thief!
 The peerless pearls, I held them as mine own,

A miserable thief, but not alone!
There is one man, a goblin's avatar,
Who is more worthy of thy wrath by far,
High born, of crafty soul, thy minister!
O king, it was thy lord high treasurer,
Who did command me, crossing of my path
Even as thy spotless queen was in the bath,
He told me as I valued age and ease
To steal the pearls all for his thieveries!
'Tis he alone can tell you where they bide;
I stole who have them not!" Loudly outcried
Lord Kamayana, but the first words stopped;
Into his brain, like unto water, dropped
Thought upon thought how the exact amount
Of rupees pilfered at his last account,
All the good gains, the little and the large
Would be examined if the lying charge
He did deny in full. Upon his fate
He gazed and gazing he did hesitate;
And at the last he knelt upon his knee.
"King of the time, I stole thy gems," quoth he,
"Bid by thy priest on peril of my soul,
I took the peerless pearls to pay him toll.
I prayed a lighter penance that he give;
For blameless in thy sight I fain would live.
I offered half my gold upon his shrine.
He answered back to any prayer of mine,
'I do desire the pearls.' Great king he knows
How the world changes, how the spirit flows,
The naga song beneath the deep sea wave,
The birth of Man, the life beyond the grave!
A brahmin he, and I an ignorant man
Him to deny his purport and his plan,
Who knows the incarnation's mystery.
Could such a man, of little honesty,
By whom the heavens and earth be understood,

Rob thee for gain and not for greater good?
A vulgar thief to violate thy laws,
And not to steal the pearls for nobler cause
Than I could dream of? Lo! mayhap for thee
He will unveil the sacred mystery,
Of kindness for to ease thy royal mind.
To truth and holiness he is inclined.
Bid him to speak, so may we live and learn!"
And the fat brahmin shook from stem to stern,
His bosom and his brain in troubled state,
Whereby he had no room for love or hate,
Resentment or revenge or swift surprise,
Only vile fear and aptitude for lies.
He guiltless, even as a guilty thing,
Grovelled upon the grass and grovelling,
Moaned like the wind in the tree tops: "It was I
To whom he gave the pearls! It was a lie
He tells! King of the age, 't was covetize
That made him take the jewels and he lies!
'T was covetize that prompted him, for he
Findeth thy bounty insufficiency;
And fain he would augment the stolen wealth;
And even the royal pearls he took by stealth;
Whereof the gods who see by day and night
Afflicted his impiety with fright.
So came he unto me in secrecy,
His visage wet with tears, and begged of me;
'O holy brahmin, lo! I do implore
That thou unto the queen the pearls restore,
So shall I pay thee back all with my tears,
Contritely to the gods in future years!
Now is he fain to blacken me with lies,
Who only erred to do him services!
O base ingratitude! O sovereign guilt,
Whereby my blood all innocent were spilt!
The burden of that lie is all too much!

The cauldrons of Avici yawn for such!
This island world create by Brahma, lord,
A million million fathoms deep and broad,
Even as a sun cracked gourd for such a liar,
Shall yawn before his footsteps and hell fire
Upleaping terrible and beautiful
Shall wrap him round as in red robe of wool!
That is the portion of his devilish guile
Who seeketh me, a brahmin, to defile!"

"So let him be," said Brahmadata then,
"He lies in terror, like to other men;
But if the necklace be within thy hand,
Then give it me. That is my sole command."
Like silly quail a-flutter in a snare,
The brahmin of his error was aware.

"King of the times," he stammered, "I—I gave,
I deemed mine aid for matter of more grave
Importance needful. Pearls we all confess
Are but a decoration for the dress.
I gave them to the piper, he to give
Unto thy queen, so let the truth to live.
He hath them now beside him as I ween,
If not yet given to thy spotless queen."

"Nay," said the king, "That veil is all too thin!
Thou shalt endure the ripening of thy sin!
Beware thou brahmin lest the stern decree
Thou madest now, the future hold for thee;
For down in darkest hell without a dawn
A double cauldron, as I ween, doth yawn!
And my musician, what hast thou to say?
Guard well thy words, if thou be fain to play
Thy pipes once more on earth!" He bowed him low.
Over his mobile mouth a smile did go.
Quoth he: "King Brahmadata, lord of all
From Coromandel unto high Chitral!
By winged Amanga, Lord of Love, I swear,

Whom Latchiani did to Vishnu bear,
My words will match in measure, span for span,
Those of the brahmin, wise and holy man;
Yea, verily thy pundit priest shall prove
A child of Wisdom and a child of Love,
Where Wisdom guideth Love in such a sort,
That he from all men fain would hide his sport,
Knowing that men do never gladly see
The sins of those in truth, that holy be.
On yestereve I therefore do confess
He cast the garment of his holiness
Aside and came to tell me he desired
Siri the nautch girl, by all men admired
Next to the queen in beauty; so I saw
All for Amanga he would break the law
Of Brahma; but the nautch girl at the sight
Of his fat paunch held him in deep despite;
She answered in the tossing of her curls
Who won her love must clasp the queen's own pearls
Around her throat, who never would be bent
Unto light love, unless by ornament.
She deemed that feat impossible; but lo!
A holy brahmin many things doth know.
King of the Age, Benares' moon and star
By night, by day our sun, in peace and war
Lord of our lives, by the still gods I swear,
As truly as the sudra first did bear
The pearls away; even as the truth outburst
From Kamayana, who in turn was curst
With their possession under Brahma's ban;
As truly as thy priest, that pious man,
For Siri's sake is by his passion whirled
Adown the vortex of a sinful world;
As truly as the bhunder in the tree
Is apt to ape my blameless melody;
So do I swear by the still gods above,

The brahmin all on fire with Siri's love
Stole for her sake the necklace of the queen
That now is hers; and I, the go-between!"
Said Brahmadata: "If that tale be true,
'Twill be the worse for both, if false for you!
To steal the royal necklace for a kiss?
Insolent jester, 'tis no time for this!
Where is the girl?" Out of his eyeballs clear
Shone forth a fulgency that made men fear;
And little was the time the guards allowed
To drag the girl from out the trembling crowd;
Who knelt before him with bowed head and arms
Aloft and hands outstretched. "Keep from all harms
Thy servants, king!" "O people of great greed
Ye harm yourselves with your own word and deed!
Where be the pearls? We will hear one more lie!
Where be the pearls?" "Great king, I know not, I!"
"Rise up and look at me! I'll have that word
Again!" "Benares' king and mighty lord,
The meanest of thy myriad dancing girls
Knows not at all of any of thy pearls;
For even as before thee now I stand
I never took them out of any hand
Nor did desire them! Lo! 'tis manifest
That story is a lie and witless jest.
King of the Time, before thee now I swear
I spoke not to thy brahmin nor was ware
The flame of holy chastity had ceased
To burn within the bosom of thy priest.
Behold I stand before thee a poor girl
Below the least desire of royal pearl.
Scorned by the subtle world, a slave am I.
'Tis Brahma's chosen who are wont to lie!
I am all too young nor yet so very wise
To find me favor in a pundit's eyes!
I am not wise enough and all too young

Between my teeth to hold a lying tongue.
I am not the equal of these mighty lords;
I neither do their deeds nor say their words;
And though they somewhat worthier did prove
Not all thy pearls could buy me for their love!"
She stood before him, beautiful and proud,
In all the pride to youth and beauty allowed.
Said Kamayana: "Lo! the king hath heard,
Trust water and wind, but not a woman's word!"
"King of the Times!" the outraged brahmin cried,
"Here on my knees! Deem not that thus I lied!
King of Benares, listen to me swear!
By all the gusty devils of the air,
By all the deep green devils in the seas,
By all the rough rind devils in the trees,
By Brahma's beard and Siva's majesty,
I a pure priest, how could I lie to thee?
For Holiness and Truth and Purity
Are Wisdom's children; and of Wisdom I—
To holy meditation I'd retire!"
"Yea," said the king, "That is my strong desire!
Thou and the rest whom Honor hath in hate
Immured within my lodge shall meditate.
Of all these words there is a weariness.
And be they false or true or more or less,
We will inquire another time, and how.
It is my will to find the necklace now.
Therefore, my people, search about the park
From dark till dawn and from the dawn till dark
And when the peerless pearls ye duly find,
I will make known what now is in my mind."
Chattered the hooded apes high in the trees;
And tossed the dhauri flowers upon the breeze;
And broke off twigs to pelt the men beneath;
Who searched the pearls mid many a fallen leaf
In terror and amazement of that deed,

Lest worse befall them did they not succeed.
They searched the mangoes all along the path;
They searched the shores that bordered on the bath;
They beat among the bushes on the bank;
They waded in the stream and dredged the tank;
Female or male, the slaves they searched all o'er;
They searched the white pavillion, walls and floor;
And still the bhunders chattered in the trees
And tossed the scarlet sepul on the breeze.

II

Upon that search there was not any cease;
Unto the royal bosom came no peace;
But Brahmadata paced his pleasance round
Until in a far corner of the ground
Where twining paths the jasmine did embower,
Where still the tree of wisdom was in flower,
With robe of yellow and face to wonder at,
On cool and shaded earth an hermit sat
Like statue of gold upon the temple stair;
And stole a blessed fragrance on the air,
So sweet ineffably it was to stir
Near to the spot where he did minister.
For if beside him at a task you wrought,
The fairly ordered fervor of calm thought
And loving kindness, nevermore did cease
To soothe the soul with plenitude of peace;
For out of Karma's unreality
In clouded heavens that sempiternal be,
To sheer vicissitude of death and birth,
It was the Bodhisatta come to earth.
And Brahmadata, troubled at his grace
Of bearing and the favor of his face
Spake in low tone: "O father, hast thou seen
One wandering in the woods with thievish mien?"

"Yea, many thus I've seen," he answered brief,
"But none of all I truly deem the thief.
By myriad rumors wafted to mine ear
Of the lost pearls there doth no man appear
Who from an incarnation of past birth
And former knavery upon this earth,
Reborn in these our days, to thee could bring
A repetition of his theft, O king!
Such is the truth. I feel it in my breast.
So shall the future make it manifest."
"Thou feelst it? What are feelings? These are blind
To lead men unto truth! My heart and mind
Are sorely vexed with robbery concealed
And deep dishonor many times revealed!
My servants, year by year whom I did hold
As precious in their worth as virgin gold,
Now in a moment, even at a breath,
Dims the bright polish and reveals beneath
The tarnished copper! What can they not be
Who, aping honor and great piety,
Lie like an outcast coolie! I will know
The depth of vileness where their souls may go.
So thou dost aid me!" "Son it is not wise
For whoso fain would look with equal eyes
To gaze on men and women at their worst.
With evil is the best of man accurst.
A million years be not enough in time
To know the whole, the vile and the sublime!
Wherefore 't is well to turn thine eyes away
From petty theft unto the nobler day
Of souls more worthy and of deeds more true
Where Knowledge gives not what the soul must rue."
"Yea! precepts!" said the king, "I ask advice.
The joys of knowledge are not ever nice!
The men I deemed all true—I will know all
Their evil deeds whatever may befall.

I who the evil of this realm would cure
Must know it all and knowing it, endure.
Father, 't is thou canst aid me." "King of the Time
If thus thou be resolved to fix a crime,
Come thou with me this evening in disguise
To hearken to the captives and their lies.
So mayst thou view the vile veracity
Of these thy servants in their lives with thee,
Envy and hate and foul ingratitude,
The evil that men do and not the good;
But turn again. The knowing of this thing
Doth not befit the bosom of a king.
A sorry lesson in a sorry school,
It cannot learn thee better how to rule;
And though my preaching may thy whims annoy,
Hearing thereof shall give thee little joy."
"No more!" the king replied, "I'll have my will.
I shall know all the little deeds of ill,
The little words of envy they have said.
Of knowing these no king shall be afraid!"

In the king's lodge the daylight hours did go
For the five captives haltingly and slow.
Under the carven pillars of the court
In glare of noon they made a forced resort
Near to the middle pool. The guard nearby
Kept watch upon them with a quiet eye.
For hours on hours these captives of the king's
Spake as men stammer, of indifferent things,
Full fain with empty words to wear away
Their premonition of a judgment day
On earth. Upon the stilly afternoon
Came slumber to their eyelids like a boon
Till the cramped muscle and the aching bone
No longer loved the hardness of that stone.
And all in weariness at eventide

They woke and viewed the court from side to side,
Where the hot splendor of the sunset light
Fled from the still, hot darkness of the night.
And all with nerves a stretch and wide awake
They saw within that space the pillars make
Shade upon shade upon the polished floor,
Pillars with monster figures carven o'er
Save in dread dreams unseen by human eye,
That leered and flaunted all outlandishly.
Strange shapes within the dying light they made
Upon the gleaming floor, in shade on shade.
The guard was gone and twilight drew apace
And each to each upon the other's face,
At the faint gray of twilight, thus alone,
In fourfold pallor, there might read his own.
So at the bourne of night, their thoughts were racked
With nameless horror and their hearts attacked
With dread of the long dark and what would bring
Disaster on the morn before the king.
Quoth the musician, braving out a yawn,
"Must we our vigils keep until the dawn?
The guard's not here; and silence may permit
The joy of music and the gracious wit.
How the time wears! Look you, 'tis all too long.
What say you comrades? I will sing a song
Fit for a king or Bodhisatta's ear;
So Siri dance a turn. Let us have here
Play for the senses, and the tedious hours
Will pass like pleasant fragrance of strange flowers!"
"Nay!" said the brahmin, "Look upon the floor!
The dreadful shapes! The lions seem to roar
Destruction on our heads! The elephants
Tread down our destinies like puny ants!
Varuna draws to darkness! Brethren here
It is the hour to watch in prayer and fear!"
Said Kamayana: "Wilt thou fear alway

And dodder at thy prayers till dawn of day?
Let's have a song! a song upon the fret
Of the world! a song that teaches to forget!
Come forth thou daughter of love unto the dance!"

"Nay, not one step will I my feet advance
For thee lord liar nor the craven priest!
It is the hour for the royal feast!
Would I were there, dancing before the wine!
'T was thy coarse jest and not the fault of mine
Prisons me here, O man of brutish word!
I would my tongue were like a keen-edged sword!"

"Why!" said the piper, "I did think to choose
Thee for these goodly fellows, to amuse
Their long captivity and all our dearth,
In tribute to thy beauty and thy mirth.
'T is thus thou wilt repay me?" "I repay
Dross for the dross and gold for gold alway;
Thee only in the silence of disdain!"

"Hist! hist! there was a noise! it sounds again!
Under the eastern columns in deep shade!"
Shuddered the sudra, "'T was a wail it made,
And it comes nearer, nearer! O ye gods,
Scourge not the innocent thus with your rods!
The naga! the garuda! the black terror!"

"Brethren, if any fears, he fears in error."
A voice came from the eastern colonnade,
"'T is only I, an humble man, yet made
Of brahmin stock, who seek on prison floor
Asylum, being lost in the night and poor!"
So in the paling of the sunset light
Upon the gray and utmost verge of night,
Stepped forth the holy hermit like the sun
In farthest east, when daylight hath begun;
And while he crossed his legs upon the ground
And glanced all mildly at the people round,
To him a tall, majestic figure stole

In rags, and lit four sticks and put a bowl
 Of earthenware above and in a trice
 Out of a wallet poured the huskèd rice;
 And when the boiling of the rice was done,
 Out spake the holy hermit: "Lo! my son
 Take thou this food in place of better meat
 A gift unto our brethren that they eat."
 The dusky figure drew anigh the priest:
 "Brother, wilt thou partake of this our feast?"
 "I touch that food? A holy Brahmin I,
 King Brahmadatta's chaplain! and I cry
 Dolor to heaven and insult unto thee!
 How are the righteous brought to misery!
 Before I take the food impure that goes
 Out of thy hands, I'll be the meat of crows
 And vultures! Oh! how changed my former lot
 When from an honored king the rice I got,
 But yesterday from his own hands for me
 Polluted by the proffered aid of thee!"
 Before the Brahmin's face the figure stirred
 Not once nor answered him upon that word
 But wending to the rest, in a short while
 The strong lips parted in a scornful smile.
 By all the rest, each in his turn, refused,
 Struck by the treasurer, struck and abused
 Even by the sudra, he at Siri's hand
 With changeless visage lastly took his stand,
 Who stirred at his approach and felt his eyes
 Fixed on her face and in a half surprise
 And fear upglancing, gave a stifled scream
 Like one who feels the passion of a dream.
 Quickly again recovered, in a trice
 Put forth her hand and took a dole of rice
 While softly murmuring: "What mischance can bring
 Thee here in this vile raiment, O my king?"
 "Soft!" whispered Brahmadatta, "Royalty

And I be parted here; and thou must see
The helper of an hermit with thine eye;
Take thou the dole of rice nor question why!"
"Faugh!" said the piper, "Siri now doth go
Coquetting with an half caste!" "Yea and woe
On me!" groaned out the priest, "Woe upon me
Here amid slaves and dancing girls to be!
Yet it is written: 'Be Misfortune's friend
So shall thy spirit prosper in the end!
Who art thou, hermit? There is on thy head
The sacred topnot. From thy hand instead
Soiled though it be with huskèd food unclean
I will take food. A Brahmin thou, I ween —
One of the strange new sect who by lost ways
Dost wander weary with the dust of days!
Where was thy dwelling place?" "Over the world
Through long conflicting æons, always hurled,
'Mid the red pangs of ages hurled away
I have wandered still; and I have had my day.
Now 'tis of life the blissful end and close.
After this vestment, I do seek repose,
Exempt forevermore from toil and strife,
The pageantry and sordor of this life,
From earth and soiled achievement I would cease
On Buddha's breast to gain perpetual peace —
Nirvana's realm where lotus doth not bloom,
Realm where the cradle rocks not, nor the tomb
Shuts in, nor birth nor death nor second birth
Nor any fevered phantasy of earth.
Into that boundless realm there doth not creep
E'en the sweet stupor of the poppied sleep
Nor night nor the clear day nor fair nor foul;
Only deep peace of an extinguished soul!"
So fell his words full soft as lotus bloom,
Fragrant with rest and peace in gathering gloom
Of latter twilight, and the brahmin stirred

By the fair favor of that wondrous word,
"Brother," quoth he, "Thou errest in the light
Of truth; and yet, the still and ceaseless night
Thy soul aspires to, naught else can be
Than depth of universal mystery.
Thou errest from the pathway of thy creed
Foregathering with the needy in their need.
Thy food is of the unhulled rice prepared
By tainted hands; as ever pariah fared
Thou farest; yet I know in Brahma's plan
Thy soul was made to be an holy man,
Though marred by matter of mere heresy.
I therefore do beseech thee, even I
Chaplain to Brahmadata, king of the age,
Cast not away that goodly heritage;
Forswear the vicious teaching, so at last
Thou shalt regain the blessing of thy caste,
Whom Brahma first created by his word
Above domain of king and mighty lord
Establishing the equal and the right,
Whereby the isles of earth as garden bright
Shall bloom!" Said Kamayana: "Outcast priest,
From thy dull homily hast never ceased
Until thou showest thine addled brain to be
Thrice lacquered over with hypocrisy!
Liar and lifelong hypocrite, disowned
By the elect of Brahma, unatoned
Thy guilt, and yet thou pratest as by right
Even as God's chosen, underneath the night!
Have done!" "And why thou lord high treasurer
Should I have done? And wherefore dost thou stir
Against me? Are not all men's lies alike
And thou a liar? Or doth perchance it strike
Thee in thy wisdom, that thy lordly caste
Second to mine alone from first to last
Can enter into crime both late and soon

And in great Brahma's eyes be yet immune?"
Said the musician: "Even as at night
One fares by many pitfalls with a light,
So doth your holiness make reason clear.
Like temple bells your discourse to mine ear;
That doth befit an inner palace room
Edged with soft divans! Even as a broom
Your words have swept the dust out of my brain;
So unto me your holiness makes plain
How vile this liar and how insolent
Whom from high station wicked works have sent
To custody!" "Yea truly he is one
A giddy pate like thee, should ever shun
As I full oft have preached at thee of yore.
So now thou dost confess my wisdom store?"
"Yea, for he's worse than a vile carrion crow
That picks the bones of a dead buffalo."
Said Kamayana: "Pundit, priest and lord,
I do repent me of my hasty word.
Prithee no more!" "'Tis only natural
That thou wouldst hate my homilies all in all
With all the fervor of thy blackened heart
Because they show the world how vile thou art.
But ere the holy hermit hence doth go,
I will have him and even his slave to know —"
"Fool!" said the treasurer, "Dost thou not see
The piper stirs up strife twixt thee and me
To give the rest their sport until the dawn?
How like an old bell wether thou art drawn!"
"Friends," said the pundit, "I shall show in full
Myself beside this man like washen wool,
He seeking to defile me with his tongue;
And when the evil of his song is sung
And mine the second part, 'O turn again!
He says, 'Thou art a butt!' And I'll make plain,
So that I be not fore Benares' king

The depth of Hell his soul is entering!
Art not alone a liar, thou churl and cur!
Full many a graver charge I will prefer
Against thee! Yea, musician, grasp him tight!
I am a man of peace who may not fight.
Stop fast his mouth! The royal guard is gone.
For us and for the holy man alone,
Whisper the secret that the south winds blow
Around about Benares to and fro!
Thou art not he who stole the royal pearls
For any one, still less for dancing girls!
Thy knavery disdains a single string
Of pearls, thou steadfast robber of the king!
Out of the royal treasure for one year
A shortage in his tablets doth appear
Of half a crore of rupees; and 't is said
How do I know who nothing am afraid
To tell? Ask Nanda of the gold bazaar
How he gets diamonds, what avatar
Brings to him gems of lustre far more clear
Than all Golconda gave us for ten year!
I took his conscience coin! 'T is my belief
Lord Kamayana is the biggest thief
In all the kingdom! greater yet I ween,
Who is full fain to steal the king's own queen,
As all about Benares now is blown
Save by the winds that eddy round the throne!
In alley and bazaar, 't is known full clear
I brush the rumors from the king's right ear!
I took thy hush money! Undutiful,
My shame beside thine own is washen wool!
How shall I fear thee now in anything
Who art a double traitor to the king?"
So at the closure of that brahmin chant,
The hermit's helper, whom the gods did grant
Great majesty in rags, did sudden cry

With a loud voice and beat his breast: "Ai! ai!
Dishonored! vile beyond all punishment!"

"My son, it is enough. The gods have sent
Sorrow on all, even on Benares' king."

So spake the holy hermit, beckoning
The guard, who, starting forth, obeisance made
Under the shadow of the colonnade.

"Conduct us hence," the hermit gave command,

"My son, curb the hot tears and stay thy hand!
Yea, guard, conduct us quickly in good sooth;
For here there is much talk and little truth!"

When both were at the palace; "Out, alas!"
Groaned the great king, "that this should come to
pass!"

So with a veil he covered up his head
And down he fell and lay there as one dead.
Into a secret chamber, bore the king
The hermit and he took the signet ring
And summoned forth a lord who came at call
And bowed before the ring. "How doth befall
The search?" the hermit questioned. "None hath
heard

About the peerless pearls." "I trust thy word,"
The hermit answered, "Neither man nor woman
Is found. The robber can be hardly human
Thus to evade. 'Tis perfect wisdom pleads,
Go to the trinket vendors; buy glass beads;
Take thou the beads and make a dozen string;
Get thee twelve apes; girdle their capering
And let them loose! But this is first to see;
The king in secret chamber needeth thee
Where thou shalt find him heavy and sore oppressed,
The goblin of black care upon his breast.
Look to the king and buy me of glass beads
And Wisdom is rewarded of wise deeds."

III

The yellow bhunders leapt from palm to palm
 And vexed the vernal breezes and the calm
 Of noon; and all hilarious were their deeds,
 Whose hairy shanks were fulgent with glass beads.
 Anear the pool King Brahmadata sate
 Beside the Bodhisatta in high state.
 Amid the branches of a wisdom tree
 Where the ripe figs were many for to see,
 A yellow bhunder perched in a shrill chatter
 As if uneasy o'er a weighty matter;
 And round the fragile waist like cummerbund
 More precious than a kingdom's yearly fund,
 Gathered in far Ceylon, down in the whirl
 Of the green water, pearl engirdled pearl,
 Lucent and round and rosy and as bright
 As peakèd Himalay in sunset light.
 "So", said the king, "We have the pearls at last!"
 And a swift coolie his brown body cast
 Against the trunk and climbed from limb to limb
 Where bhunder upon bhunder screeched at him;
 And in the topmost branches at the last
 He caught and held the yellow bhunder fast.
 Then as the coolie breathless toward the king
 Held up that wrathful bhunder chattering,
 People were ware who called their wits to aid,
 The monkey was no man nor yet a maid.
 "So," said the king, "it truly doth befall
 A woman stole the jewels after all.
 I marvel not; for never 't was the plan
 Of God such baubles be beloved of man;
 But woman loves the showy gaud, I ween,
 Whether an ape or like my faithless queen."
 So spake he bitterly upon that day.
 Then to the Bodhisatta he did say:

“Father, thy holiness hath pleased me well;
Thy placid wisdom is my citadel;
Thy counsels be the very prop of kings;
Lo! I beseeth thee ask me for three things
And I will grant them whatsoe’er they be.
In word and deed thou hast been true to me.”
The Bodhisatta bowed his holy head
In reverence, but never a word he said.
“Bring forth the captives!” Soon they came all
bound,
And fell before him, prostrate on the ground.
“Lo,” said the king, “what rascal fools they be
Who seek the robbers’ gallows eagerly!
Which were their due, but Justice must relent
Save for that lie, if they be innocent.”
“Yea king,” they answered, “save for that one lie,
We are innocent before thee utterly.”
“Let Siri go and bring the bhunder here
And thou, my pious pundit, draw thee near
And look upon the moon of dancing girls
For whose sweet sake thou stolest of the pearls.
Yea, both I’ll shut within the selfsame cage
To be the scorn and wonder of the age.”
“King,” said the hermit, “in humility
I pray thee let the ape go in the tree;
'Tis the first boon.” “Yea, father, thou hast right;
Sorry am I, thy favor is so slight.
Take off the pearls and when the ape is gone,
We will enclose her paramour alone.”
So all about the group in the open air
Loud laughter filled the forest everywhere,
Save for the brahmin who unceasingly
Cried mercy on his shame and misery:
“Oh king of truth and justice, deign awhile,
Have pity on our woe, however vile!
Haggard in watchful hunger! Oh, relent!

Lo, at thy throne thy servant doth repent!"
 "Art hungered?" said the king, "It was my will
 That each and all of you should have his fill
 of rice!"

"King, there was none! an abject slave
 Whose duty bears dead bodies to the grave—
 Even us by the lie brought low and vile,
 Nor I nor any could our caste defile;
 For still a little of our former pride
 Within our captive bosoms did abide.
 He offered some chance food, some carrion meat
 By us reject. The girl alone did eat,
 Never by prostitution brought as low!
 O just and powerful monarch! 't was not so
 Thou wouldst provide unto a poor soul's need,
 Heavy at heart even at a small misdeed!
 Pity us all an-hungered!" Said the king:
 "I know your fast. O blind unreasoning
 Brutes! it was I who proffered you that dole."
 So saying, he beckoned and one brought a bowl
 Of earthenware and gave it in his hand;
 And he, uprising from his throne, did stand
 Over them all and held on high that bowl
 And fear came over either caitiff soul;
 And Brahmadata frowned upon them all:
 "O ye dishonorable! who play at ball
 With folly and lies! Thou pundit and high priest,
 Who from thy craven lies hast never ceased!
 And thou who for long years hast used by stealth
 The treasures of the realm for private wealth,
 Who, dearer than my kingdom and my life
 Hast riven my honor and debauched my wife;
 And thou who knewest about my faithless queen,
 Who worse than any open foe hast been,
 Whose wit is even less than thine honesty!
 What can be said or done for thee and thee?"

Unto what torments do they both belong
Who thus my meanest servitor would wrong?
Take both these men who thus have wronged me,
Into my palace. Let the rest go free.
And since my proffered food they both gave o'er
So let them keep their fast forevermore;
Let the soul linger and the tortured breath
Till for long hours they wish and pray for death;
Let the slow torment eat the soul away
Little by little, as for death they pray;
So let them vainly pray nor death come soon!
Father, ask if thou wilt, thy second boon!"

"King of the time," the Bodhisatta said,
May never evil light upon thy head!
I pray for second boon that thou remit
Thy threat of torture, every jot of it."

"Why," said the king, "more easy 't were for me
To give an hundred tuskens unto thee,
Laden with gold; and yet I grant." "And so
May'st thou misfortune never undergo!
Thirdly as boon, I pray that thou restore
To these the honors they have lost before!"

"Ha!" said the king, "I'd liefer give thee all
The power and pomp Benares doth enwall!
Ask me some other favor!" "King that is
My boon. Yet if thy promise go amiss—"

"Nay!" said the king, "why wilt thy give them back
The fortune that my justice made them lack?
Thy boons are strange and quaint and out of hand.
I ask the reason ere I give command.
Why dost thou beg my bounty for two slaves
Whom I do know for traitors, fools and knaves?
Why give the greater offices of state
To men on the highway to prison gate?"

"Great king," said he, "'Tis perfect Wisdom pleads.
The two poor fools repent them of their deeds.

With lust and lies whereof they were full fain
 They are not like to foul themselves again;
 They have the terror of their lesson; they
 Are cowed in soul, Truth's mandate to obey.
 Lo, in this world the little and the great
 Are given over unto lust and hate;
 Brahmin and splendid lord alike they be
 All steeped in sin and ancient misery.
 Again I say 't is perfect Wisdom pleads;
 Those erring men repent them of their deeds;
 They know thy law to hearken and obey;
 Where couldst thou find thee better men than they?
 Nay even mid the bhunders overhead
 With sacred cowl of yellow and of red,
 The little ancients gadding in the trees,
 Where couldst thou find thee better men than these?"
 Said Brahmadata: "Pariahs could greet
 Their equals in the purlieus of the street;
 But on my wanton queen comes vengeance now,
 Meteor swift, impeded by no vow.
 The seething of a cauldron I command."
 "Thou hast no proof! I pray thee hold thy hand."
 "Proof!" said the king, "go ask the wind that blows,
 Whose bawdry mocks my name for friends and foes.
 He robbed her from me, who has robbed my good.
 So let her feel the pangs of widowhood!"
 "Hādst thou fair proof, 't were thine to let her live.
 Virtue and royalty alike forgive."
 Then Brahmadata's soul was like the field
 Of battle, where no warrior deigns to yield;
 Under infernal banners Hate and Pride
 And domineering Wrath, vermillion dyed,
 Strove against Truth and Justice from above
 Wisdom and Mercy and Uranian Love.
 Then Brahmadata's fury died away;
 For Self Renunciation gained the day.

By former vows of mercy unconstrained,
A great forgiveness had his soul ordained.
So to his conquering nobleness of soul
Came Arhatship like fourfold aureole;
In his mild aspect greater glory shone
Than all the rubies of his royal throne.
The new perfection all that Karma wills
Outshone, as far upon the silent hills
The splendor of the dawn turns twilight gray
To burnished gold, in promise of glad day.

After the master told the stories twain;
One modern, one for days of ancient pain,
He now as Buddha perfect upon earth
Connected and identified the birth:
"Behold how many lives men multiply
Ere they the lust of earth may purify;
Before the perfect insight we can find,
How many lives our footsteps leave behind!
The lord and brahmin were reborn in hell
Where they revolving æons still must dwell;
Ananda now was Brahmadata then;
And I, the recluse, loved of all good men."

SEVERUS AT EBORACUM

"Omnia fui et nihil expedit."

Oh! draw the curtains away, and away with your
honey in wine!

I will have the lustre of day! I will have the glad
sunshine!

I will have the wind of Britain blow over me as I lie
Low by the great gods smitten in the pangs of my
majesty!

For mine eagles are flown in their flight and the dreams
of my power passed o'er

And I stand on the borders of night as a child by the
lone sea shore!

Doctors and lords, give place, who abide till I cease
to be;

Yea! Leave us a little space, my wife and my sons
and me!

Julia, my wife divine, the stars of a Syrian sky
Immutably marked thee mine in the orbit of Destiny;
And the tumults of all thy tears are a final balm for
the blest

When, heavy with carés and years, I turn to a longer
rest.

O Geta with Julia's brow; little Geta with eyes like
mine;

And thou, Bassianus, thou, Bassianus and Antonine!
Oh! I pray you love one another, I entreat your
discord cease!

I pray you be brother and brother, and so may the
realm have peace!

Oh! Life is all blurred with error and Time as a lame
man runs

And the dynasty totters in terror at the discord of
my sons!
Though the legionaries were mine as motes in my
brighter beams,
Though I drave the people like swine as I dwelled
in my hopes and my dreams,
Like the all awakening sun over land and sea as I
burst,
My course was the happier run; for I was eclipsed
and accurst;
For Jove in the pitiless skies rains down on Promo-
thean fire
And sweet is the sacrifice of a human heart's desire!
For I had no power to brave the bane of my marriage
fruit,
One boy with the soul of a slave and the other the
soul of a brute!
Thou Rome! imperial, immortal, with the blood of
centuries imbued,
Whose heart is a closèd portal to the prayers of the
multitude,
Ye glorious world debaters, who turn for your latter
joys
To the blood of your gladiators and your curlèd Syrian
boys,
You eat and you drink for the day, and you dwell at
ease in your lust,
You sicken and die away, and the soul goes out in
the dust;
And of all mine eyes have seen, and of all my hands
have tried
And tested, I found unclean; for I knew in your hearts
ye lied;
For I knew your own black hate of me for a low-born
man
Who fathomed your vile estate, if only an African!

And the tramp of a barbarous horde, the ravages
wild and rude,
The frown of a bestial lord, the shame and the servi-
tude,
From the plaster beds of thy brothels to the height
of thy Pantheon's dome
Shall come to thy last betrothals, thy dower, im-
perial Rome!
For the pride and pomp and treasure that Mars and
Apollo have won
Must go at my death to pleasure the soul of mine
eldest son
Who heartily hated his brother, more gently informed
and reared.
Ye heartily hated each other ere bulla gave way to
beard;
Hate for his boyish dreams and hate for his prattle
and play!
Unto you all gentleness seems a weak and womanish
way;
And like as the leopard and fawn, afire to fly and
pursue,
Or the darkness unto the dawn, my Geta hath hated
you!
In your anger you palpitate to look on his form from
afar,
And his heart is heavy with hate that he finds you
what you are.
Wherefore in violent ways, the gleaming edge of your
hate
Will dissever his younger days, and an empress desolate
In her garment of sorrow, shall cry to the days of her
latest breath,
That or ever Severus die, ye gat not your meed of
death;

For none in Pannonian land, at corn mill or quarry
or plow,
On the wide arena's sand or behind the galley's prow
Or to wash the jockeys' feet that race for the red and
the blue
Could the Senate as Emperor greet, less worthy of
rule than you.
O Julia! thy tears are in vain! O Geta! thy days
are undone,
Were Severus the Emperor slain, I cannot give death
to my son;
And I know that his hate will bring forth, unto mother
and brother a foe!
I have flown like a flickering moth, up, up to my ruin
and woe!
'T was vainly and fondly I thought your hate was a
city growth
And Folly upon you wrought in the purple of your
sloth;
And I called you away from Rome as away from
carrion vile,
With me and my men to come afar to the northern
isle,
The isle of Britain, cliff bound and washed by a peri-
lous sea
Where billows and billows resound with the noise of
a people to be;
Where beyond the crest of the waves and the drift
of the mist at morn
Resound old ocean's caves with the music of realms
unborn:
For I deemed, in the land where the mist was an
ambush to foes on the lea,
On the cliffs by the sea wind kissed and the wild,
white spray of the sea,

In trouble and toil ye might learn what folly to hate
 one another,
And at last unto love to return and to be as a brother
 and brother.
But the wild, rough life that is sweet to nourish the
 soul of the brave
With the bitter of poison will eat at the heart of the
 beast and the slave.
I parted you. Geta I left by the shores of the
 southern sea
And of hope I was half bereft when you went to the
 North with me.
We passed where the north wind wails on the walls
 of Antonine,
Where the daystar earlier pales and the moons more
 tardily shine;
We forded the wild morass where the water was black
 in the sun
And Fever was fated to pass with the lives of my
 warriors won;
And the breeze in the rushes breathed low to the
 naiades far beneath
To uprise at the overflow and to carry us down to
 our death;
And the painted tribes that met us, like frogs went
 far and wide,
And the wind and the mist beset us and my men
 dropped down and died;
Until on a final morn, by the Hebrides afar
Where seagulls screamed their scorn, my litter and
 and gilded car
Stopped still by the waves; and I rose and set my
 foot on the shore
Where the north wind comes and goes and the breakers
 crash and roar,
Against tall cliffs that stand, indomitable and forlorn

At the end of the Roman land and the ocean's farthest
bourne.
The tide was all at the full for the stolèd augur and
priest
To offer the milk white bull for the sacrificial feast;
And the legions incessantly poured down from the
rocks above
Like the arm of another sea, as I prayed to ambrosial
Jove.
But the foolish feathered fowl before the sacred grain
Turned away nor ate from the bowl and I read that
omen plain.
In the van of my retinue, as I rode at the dawn of the
day
Where the purple genesta grew mid the moss that
covered the way
And storm scarred rocks rose high and hemmed us
on every side,
I turned me about at the cry of my cohorts terrified.
For stealing o'er moss and heather with a gleaming
sword, I saw
My boy and Murder together behind me: the foam
on the jaw
Of his charger; I gave one look; his horse stopped
short; not a word
I spoke; but his right hand shook as he fumbled
with scabbard and sword.
And the dreams of my power were broken, with the
power of paternal love
And I knew that the omen had spoken the will of
an adverse Jove;
And the terrible eagles that flew where the Senate
and People had willed,
Were passed as the winds that blew and their ardor
of flight was stilled;
Gone, like an old man's power and a lust all satiate,

And the joy of a dying hour and the dust of departed
Fate!
And the crown of my laurel was rent and the robe of
my purple was torn
And all my paludement waxed thin and threadbare
and worn;
For Bellona had given me power to grapple the world
in my rule
And made me the god of an hour and given me the
heart of a fool.
Yea! bring me the porphyry urn, the temple of my
repose,
When dust unto dust I return and my soul to Orcus
goes!
When mine ashes are waxen cold as the fire that burns
in my brain,
Little urn, you then shall hold what the world could
not contain!
Rome! Rome! thou mother of strife, thy people are
cruel as the sea,
And hate unto all is their life and full of the hatred
of me!
Crowds in my judgment hall! they crowd me and
crowd me around!
Shall my throne be over them all and never sink
underground?
Give place, ye Scipios, place ye Metelli and Dolla-
bellas!
For you all have Geta's face and you all have Cara-
calla's
And my throne goes down in your hordes like a cir-
cling barque in the main
And Rome and its peoples and lords will never rise
up again!
My Julia, bend low! bend low! for I sink and I sink
away;

For I have been all things now and in vain hath been
my day!
And I pass I know not whither in a region dark and
wide;
I wander hither and thither with never a place to
abide;
And all in the frozen night, down, down my soul must
fall
Where there is no love nor light nor any comfort
at all!
O Life is sweet at the end when all is manifest
When we know where all things tend and there is no
peace nor rest!
O Life and thy vain turmoil! I am fain we were
never to part!
I love thee in sorrow and toil! I love thee with death
at my heart;
For the suns of the world are bright and the skies of
the world are blue!
Ye gods who endowed me with might, give me one
more deed to do!

THE COURT JESTER

OR

THE SOUL OF SATIRE

'T was in the golden days of old Provence
When merry were the loves and dalliance;
And of all days, forsooth the merriest day
When bloomed these roses on the first of May
And he o'er Aragon who erst did reign
Took homage from the Duke of Aquitaine.
Bravely the duke in mantle of the blue
Strode at the head of all his retinue;
So as he stepped upon the palace stairs
Full solemnly, as nobleman who fares
On weighty business, from the throne room out
His ears were greeted with a mighty shout
Of laughter, that the stone steps rang again.
As he made entrance, unto him was plain
Where neath a canopy with lions red
On argent, with gold crown upon his head,
With grizzled beard hale in his forty years
Sate the good king, the first among his peers.
And on the cloth of gold before the throne
Save for the king at ease, reclined alone
A fool in motley with a bauble stick
While crouched a white wolf-hound his hand to lick.
And all adown the triple archèd hall
The belted knights and the fair ladies all,
The high and low, the noble and the vile
Hand upon lip, were fain to hide a smile,
Fain to gloze o'er their merriment and glee
To do the duke a better courtesy.
Out spake the duke as toward the king he came,

“Sire, I prithee tell me of this game.”
“Why my good Aquitaine,” replied the king,
“’T is but a tale, a light and foolish thing,
I cannot ape the words and manner well.
Saint Barnabas, ’t were merry for to tell!
Look at him there, sitting alone fore me,
My fool! He tells the tale and only he.
Look you, he starts, even as I name his name.
Come, come Sir Folly, here’s a merry game!
Look you upon this man, my vassal he,
His crest an eagle over land and sea,
Whilst thou hast chosen with a fool’s own art
For thy device, of gules a bleeding heart!
Look you, lord duke, he wears the silly crest
Upon the purfild sleeve and on the breast!”
“Nay,” said the duke, “the fool hath a sad face.
Why doth he make for laughter in this place?
Down at the mouth, the corners both be drawn;
On the broad brow, deep wrinkles there be worn;
And in the eyes there lurks a famished fire,
As one who may not win his heart’s desire.
Is he your jester?” “Nay there is no rule
To say that this or that will make a fool!
To you he may look grim; yet we all know
Whene’er he opes his lips our lungs loud crow
Like cockerels the courtyard walls between.
We wot not of his dole nor of his teen!
So! tell us, fool! you in all wisdom know
How ’t is you make us laugh!” High on tiptoe
The fool, upleaping, did a pirouette;
Bowed low before the duke as one who met
His master; rang his bauble with brass bells
As who from town to town alarum tells.
Then came his words, fast in a loud sing-song
’Mid the low laughter of the courtly throng.
“You ask me why ’t is given unto me

To kindle your hearts in merriment and glee.
I answer you that all my words be thus
For you yourselves be all ridiculous.
I, being a fool, am in good truth allowed
To be the only wise man in a crowd.
I therefore in my game, make mock at one
Of you to show him what he is; and none
Of all the rest in hearing of the half
The story can do otherwise than laugh!
I tear the man's whole heart out and I show
The faults and foibles that he would not know
In otherwise, and blame his virtues rare,
Showing them vain and empty as the air.
And you, like hounds to whom the master throws
The leavings of the feast, jump up and nose
About me. Ignorant of all annoy
You wag your tails and slobber in your joy,
All save the dog at whom I throw the bone.
Him doth it catch between the eyes alone!
Down drooping at the tail, he slinks away
To yelp at other hounds another day,
For his will come, and every — mother's son
Will have his day, if only he have one!
When you know well what curs each other be
You yelp upon that knowledge greedily!
The more ye know your comrade's ugliness
The more ye love your knowledge and not less!
At every stroke I feel you all to stir
In admiration! Thus I minister
Unto your lust that grovels in the dirt,
The lust to see a fellow creature hurt!
Amid your lives, sordid beyond all measure,
In torture of the heart ye take your pleasure;
To gall the place that is most sensitive,
Watch the flesh quiver till you are twice alive,
While gentle pity you are fain to press

Under the crust of your small callousness!
To scoff and leer at what is noble and fine
Liefre than to be drunken at the wine,—
That is your sport, when you're not tourneying
Or betting on the roosters in the ring
Or playing hazard false as e'er you can
Or making cuckold of another man!
And what makes all the game even more funny
And all my words like thrice distillèd honey,
The most outrageous things I say of you
Are on the whole most piteously true.
For the one thing whereto ye all aspire
That in your heart of hearts ye most admire,
The goal that fleeter feet alone may gain
Looms out of reach, beyond your toil and pain.
In drudgery the days go by and they
Lightened but little with your game and play.
The shimmer of silk robes upon the stair,
The lute attuned to drive away dull care,
The banner bright that makes men's blood to run,
The manly joust under the morning sun,
Or when you be waxed old, yourselves to sit
In chimney corner, there to try your wit
On your grown son, his children and his wife,—
That is the outer fantasy of life;
But when beneath the froth you fain would see
The waters, these are bitter as the sea!
Though all your paltry pleasures may not lack
Think but upon them and they vanish back
To Limbo, and unless there's one loved face
To irradiate the emptiness of space,
The roses that are red, the grass that's green,
The charger in the list, the spearpoint sheen
Are all alike as pastimes to be tried —
And still the soul remains unsatisfied.
Would ye know more and would ye fondly turn

Unto the joys the parson calls eterne?
These also, yea these also be as joys
That ailing children clasp as painted toys!
Because the loud Te Deum stirs the blood
And through the jewelled windows in a flood
Streameth the sun, you on the pavement feel
That you before immortal glory kneel.
Or kneeling at your priedieu, ye bid fair
To take the titillation of a prayer!
What are these joys eterne? Only the sense
Pricked into pleasure all the more intense
Because the kingdom that they glorify
Is all a hollow mockery and a lie!
Unto poor human nature toil and stress
Are real and all the rest is emptiness!
Love is not love but only love doth seem;
Beauty is beauty only in a dream;
Beauty alone in truth may beauty be
Behind the veil of unreality.
To you the more unreal because alsò
Of beauty and truth there's little you may know
Save that one truth full plainly you may see,
You may not compass all you are fain to be!
Ye lords in ermine and in minivere,
Ye men in leather jerkins on the stair,
Ye curled and essenced ladies proud, who lean
To watch the fountains play, tall elms between,
There's none who is not secretly at strife
With some disaster that doth dwarf your life!
The lord whose villains pine upon his fief
And hath an ailing daughter to his grief;
The lady wife who sits beside the board,
Whose bosom swells in anger at her lord,
Whose nuptial vows have branded her a liar
Because her heart was lost on a young squire;
The tire woman who hates her comrade's charms,

Whose hazel eyes capture the men at arms;
The comrade who her beauty carrieth
Into the halls of Sin and Shame and Death;
The doctor who for favor and for pelf
Gives learning up to quackery and to self;
The chaplain who to souls' confession goes
To prate about a God he never knows;
All, all alike in their unworthiness,
That pitiable failure name success;
And all alike down in the dust heap hurled
Deem their vile selves better than all the world,
Happy if hoodwinked for their whole life long
Their neighbors only see how they be wrong!
Only the total fool may happy be
Who takes for truth his own hypocrisy;
Who, even as God, under the Heavens' blue vault
Smiles down to find his neighbors all at fault!
His neighbors' be these futile frets and fumes,
His neighbors be the daws in borrowed plumes,
The fox without the tail, the trap within,
The ass beneath the tawny lion skin.
So, when your lies and follies I would air,
And all your peccadilloes I lay bare,
The little blemishes of one another,
The mote beneath the eyelid of a brother,
Ye curs do gather and do bark aloud,
Apparently, indeed a merry crowd!
Nay often at your own inanity
Ye laugh and with your own faults make you free
Because your sins the little and the great,
Ye blame upon the world and unkind Fate,
Ignorant that Justice lays the whole
Of your ill deeds upon your willing soul!
And all's ridiculous in age or youth
When as I make you see it as a truth.
Of all dark truths under the sun or moon

Who tells the most will be the best buffoon!"
 He ceased, and sudden silence filled the hall
 Where he'd abused not one, but all in all.
 And over all the tessellated floor
 They shrugged the shoulders where they laughed
 before.

Unto the ladies turned the knights away,
 On the loud viol began the jongleurs play,
 Outside the door the guards spat on the stones,
 And the rogue pages played at knucklebones.
 Only the duke stood still and with his palm
 Smoothed the furred edge that kept his fingers warm.
 "Duke," said the king, "Think lightly of his pule!
 'T is but the babble of a madcap fool!
 Ofttimes in bedlam doth that fool belong,
 Hardly worth good clean straw and leathern thong!"
 "Nay, sire," replied the duke, "Your fool's not mad.
 I have not hearkened to a tale more sad.
 If life is vain and strife alone be true,
 Why doth the knight ride forth to dare and do?
 Yet welcome we the struggle and the strife!
 If Pain be all our god, yet life is life.
 Also 't is written in the stars above
 There is one woman who knows how to love!
 Sire, mine annual homage I would pay
 Ere Death to you and me give holiday.
 We are puppets in the game, both you and I,
 Our devoir still to do nor question why!"
 "Nay brother," said the fool, "at the hour when
 You in your coronet help your fellow men
 To fight against the lie for cause of truth
 You'll give more joy than maiden unto youth;
 And all my wit will be like passèd pain
 When Reason guide men's lives and Love sustain!"

GENTLEMEN OF THE ROAD

(AN EIGHTEENTH CENTURY BROADSIDE)

Into the saddle and up we go
Before the morrow of day!
We are three good gentlemen! tally-ho!
Upon the king's highway!
To ride on the king's highway, boys,
To ride on the king's highway!
Tally-ho! tally-ho! when the cock doth crow
We sleep on the break of day!

'T is ten good miles to Brampton Heath
And seventy miles to town.
And there, the hills of Surrey beneath
We are going to run them down
For a thousand pounds and more, boys!
A thousand pounds and more!
At the hour of two, Lord Scroop is due
To ride in his coach and four.

Then tie the muslin o'er your face
And prime your flintlock well.
Your filly must go at a rattling pace
To the toll of the midnight bell.
Then fare thee well, my buxom Nell
And landlord, fare you well!
You 'll know it before the day blows o'er
A brand new tale to tell!

Gallop and gallop and on we go
 And spur the mettlesome bay!
 We are jolly good gentlemen, tally-ho!
 And well on our destined way
 Across the Kennet Burne, my boys,
 Across the Kennet Burne
 Where the coach and load on the Reading Road
 Must come to a good sharp turn!

To stalk the stag in covert wood
 Or ride with the hounds is tame.
 The kind of sport for a man of blood
 Is a hunt for nobler game!
 My lord is going to court, boys,
 He and my lady to court
 And jolly are we, who gentlemen be,
 For a gentleman loves good sport.

The light of the moon turns night to noon;
 The towering elms are near;
 Then hide and hist and patiently list
 The rumbling wheels to hear!
 Where the elm tree shadows play, my boys,
 The pistol brings to bay.
 Be sure not crowd her with too much powder
 To stop them on the way!

Halt! halt! my lord! don't struggle with us!
 Don't let your fellows try
 To cock the loaded blunderbuss
 Nor gallop the horses by!
 They never may onward roll, my boys,
 They never may onward roll
 Till we open the door of the coach and four
 To take a nobleman's toll.

We've little time the words to broach;
My lord, pray let me pass.
They are in the lining of the coach
Beside the looking glass.
Beside the looking glass, my lord,
The small Venetian glass!
Don't budge for your life, nor your lady wife
Nor your saucy serving lass.

I hope my jack-knife credits me;
I've ripped the satin clean.
Ah! there the golden guineas be
And the banknotes in between!
And the banknotes in between, my lord,
A thousand pounds between!
You 'll pardon our haste. 'T is very bad taste.
Necessity makes us keen.

Your double fob I now must rob;
Your snuff box, too, my lord.
Your diamond ring's a pretty thing;
Be pleased to keep your sword.
We never will take your sword, my lord,
Never a gentleman's sword.
Your money's a goner but not your honor
And the dross you can well afford.

My lady's jewels I must maroon.
I have no time to spare.
I trust that madam will not swoon.
Hey! bring her the brandy there!
Pour out the brandy there, my lord,
And reach me the casket there!
The good French brandy is always handy.
Make room for her! give her some air!

Unloose her stays you pale-faced jade
 And stop your snivelling sound!
 What! you afraid, and a lady's maid?
 Come, bring your mistress round.
 So bring the lady around, my girl,
 So bring the lady around.
 If you do your duty, my nut brown beauty,
 We 'll quit you safe and sound.

We 'll only take a chaste salute
 And wish you all good day.
 Then lift the mail for us out of the boot
 And hey! bully boys away!
 Then hey, boys! away, boys!
 In silence, lads away!
 Hist! hist! yo-ho! and we go and we go
 To cover before the day.

'T is leagues beneath old Brampton Heath
 And many a league from town.
 But the region where we take the air
 Will never have great renown.
 But the good old wine goes down, boys,
 Both port and sillery down,
 And a very good health to a nobleman's wealth
 In a quiet country town.

The tradesmen take what money you make;
 The parson takes your wife;
 The barrister, he, your land in fee;
 And the doctor takes your life.
 But we who are gentlemen bold, lads,
 Honest and gallant and bold,
 Enjoy the fruit of occasional loot
 Of silver and ruddy gold.

And whether we ride the countryside
Or high upon Tyburn Hill
The world will know, wherever we go,
By God, we are gentlemen still.
We ride cross country still, boys,
And live as the nabobs will.
We are gentlemen born and we hold in scorn
The plow and the trader's till.

CAROUSAL

SCENE: *A guardhouse. Drinking table, surrounded by men at arms, and serving women.* TIME: *the middle of the Sixteenth Century.*

MAN AT ARMS

Give goodbye to care and sorrow
And the welfare of your soul!
What care we for night and morrow
All around the foaming bowl?
What if Youth and Hope go sinking,
Derelict for many a year?
Still a clinking, still a drinking,
We be all companions here!

CHORUS

Hear! hear! hear! hear!
Jolly companions round their beer!
Never too aged, never too stale,
Jolly companions round their ale!
All around the welcome bowl,
Jolly companions, body and soul!

Then pass around the flagon, boys
And strike another stave!
For many a man's an honest man
And many a man's a knave;
And many a man's a gentleman
And many a man's a clown;
But when a man is born a fool
'T is ours to pull him down, my boys,
'T is ours to pull him down!

Down! down!
 Knave and clown!
 That is the way we topple him down!
 Down! down!
 If he wears a crown
 His folly alone will tumble him down!
 Tipple-topple! tumble-rumble,
 Folly alone will make him humble!

MAN AT ARMS

In the burst of youthful powers
 Hugh was like a yearling foal
 Spurning at the pastured hours,
 Prancing fillies for his goal!
 Guy to back the stallion, steady;
 Pons with partisan and bill;
 Rupert with the maidens ready,
 As with any gray goose quill!

CHORUS

So! so!
 Bend the bow!
 Feather a message to wing the foe!
 Kill! kill!
 Bow and bill!
 That is the way to stick 'em and kill!
 Bill and bow and sword and targe,
 We are men at arms and the world is large!
 After the brawl, we doubly dine
 And buss the wenches over the wine!

MAN AT ARMS

How we roared it all together
 When a naughty page came plumed
 With a great white heron's feather
 From my lady's bower perfumed!

Comrades all in jest and story,
 Life! ah then, how life pulsed high!
 Oh! the glamor! Oh! the glory!
 Deeds of arms and lover's sigh!

Guy hath passed the Spanish borders;
 Gilbert begs upon the way;
 Hugh hath taken holy orders,
 Tells his beads, a friar of gray.
 Pons got gold; his heart is callous
 And to former friendship rude.
 Rupert rides upon the gallows
 In predestined altitude.

CHORUS

Dearest friend!
 That is the end!
 There your merit and fate shall tend!
 There's the top of the goal to gain!
 There's ambition to attain!
 People see
 How high you be
 Fruit upon the gallows tree!
 At tolling of the dead men's bell
 You cut your capers fair and well!
 Whether you're lean or whether you're fat,
 You dance on the wind with a tight cravat!
 There on high
 The ravens fly
 And the carrion crow will not pass by!
 Soon you find your eyes and nose
 Torn away by carrion crows.
 Eyeballs, fingers, lips and ears
 Carried away for souvenirs!
 To and fro
 And around you go

Your body above and your soul below!
 Out and in
 And around you spin
 And Christ assoil you of your sin!

MAN AT ARMS

Some have ta'en immortal trover;
 Some are passed beyond the seas.
 Then the bowl of life brimmed over;
 Now we taste the dregs and lees.
 Then a good girl's eyes were sparkling;
 Then the blood proclaimed the man;
 Ere our days began a darkling
 And the world was charlatan.

Gather round us, all good fellows!
 Pledge the time when Youth and Spring
 Did not need the fire and bellows,
 But the wild fire on the wing!
 We have all, alas, been younger;
 But Old Age is not the worst
 When the whetting of our hunger
 Wakes the flame of lambent thirst!

CHORUS:

Thirst! Thirst!
 Never you durst
 Grapple us long, you burning Thirst!
 Thirst! Thirst!
 Ready to burst!
 Drink her down and kill that Thirst!
 All alike in hovel or court
 Thirst is long but Life is short!
 Only a span
 And the sands that ran,
 That is the Life of mortal man!

Mortal man
Must clink the can
When the world is charlatan.
Clink the can and drink her down
And let your memories all go drown!

So pass around the flagon, boys
And strike another stave!
For many a man's an honest man
And many a man's a knave;
And many a man's a gentleman
And many a man's a clown;
But when a man is born a fool
'T is ours to pull him down, my boys,
'T is ours to pull him down!

THE DOOM OF MIDGARD

The gods of Asgard dwelled in upper air;
The sunlight blazed above their cloud-capped walls,
Bridged o'er to earth with rainbows, everywhere
Buttressed by giant crags. Below, their thralls,
The sons of men abode where ill befalls
And there was discord mid the sons of men;
Envy and hate, whose every motion galls,
Gave way to blood and crime, and it was then
Primeval oceans rose to whelm them once again.

The monster of the deep rose from his lair
To whelm the generations of mankind;
Thor's foe, the Midgard Snake, with claws to tear
And fangs to rend and ravin. Leagues behind
Streamed forth the dragon's tail, whose scales would
blind
Any on them who haply dared to gaze.
A fury's face, swart hair fast intertwined
With shells and seaweed; and wild eyes to raise
Despair amid the nations, trembling in amaze.

So came the snake, encompassed with a noise
Of myriad monsters, horrible to see,
Who shrieked their hateful terrors and vile joys,
Clotted with gore of all fair things that be.
The kine at pasture and the woodland tree,
The thrifty village and whole countryside
Were whelmed in weltering death all utterly.
The waters in his wake full soon were dyed
Deep red with swollen corpses on that eventide.

But while those grisly waters roared and surged
 Around the rainbow bridge and mountain's base,
 In Odin's burnished hall, the gods did urge
 Each unto each their bright abiding place
 To guard against all harm. They, face to face,
 Pallidly made grave question for a boon
 To quell that onset. Whether 't were disgrace
 To parley with the foe, who, late and soon
 Rose, horrible to view, beneath the drifted moon.

While these debated in the hush of night,
 Hugin and Munin croaked the drear night through,
 Ravens of Odin. Lo, his sidelocks white
 Trembled about his cheeks! His brand he drew
 Halfway from out the scabbard. "All too few
 My horde of heroes! 'T were a hope forlorn
 To stem the onrush of that hellborn crew
 In doubt of darkness like our foes, hellborn.
 I speak, the great world-father. Friends, abide the
 morn."

But when the morning dawned, the world lay dead
 O'er all that waste of waters — heroes bold
 And lovely ladies lowly ravishèd;
 And all alike the younglings and the old;
 And those whose pride ran high and those whose
 hold
 On human life waxed feeble, all lay low;
 And hearts once warm with hope, were now grown
 cold
 Alike to summer flowers and winter snow
 And mortal griefs that come and mortal joys that go.

But o'er this waste of ruin, towering high
 Unto the gods who still be ruled by Fate,
 That face rose up against the shuddering sky

To make the house of Asgard desolate.
 'T was no more time for warriors now to prate
 Nor in close council wrangle and delay;
 But all the gods, uprisen in proud state,
 Flashed forth in heavenly mail and bright array,
 Unmoved as double rainbow when the tempests
 play.

Hard in the van pressed one of swarthy hue;
 A ruddy beard descended on his breast;
 The strongest god of all that retinue.
 Dark were his garments as the clouds that rest
 Till driven by the stormwinds o'er the crest
 Of towering hills. His iron mailèd hand
 Brandished an iron hammer. From the west
 He turned and in a tone of high command,
 "Sons of bright Heaven" he cried, "the rest of you
 may stand!

"Stand firm with grounded arms. My pastime here
 Is to fare forth alone against the foe;
 Whom once with hook and line, full many a year
 Agone, as o'er the sea my boat did go,
 I hauled from midmost depths. 'T is mine to show
 The powers of hell must vanquish first mine arm,
 Ere they can whelm in chaos of wild woe
 Our bright abode, arising from the charm
 Of power divine, unmarred by any power to harm."

So fared he down the bridge, along the cliff,
 Right to the place where surged the raging main.
 Hammer on high and arm full stout and stiff,
 He smote that forehead and he smote again.
 Then grievous cries came forth of rage and pain.
 Full fain the monster was once more to seek
 The midmost ocean, dragging in his train

Troubles unnumbered. Down from peak to peak
They surged. Against themselves, their fangs would
vengeance seek.

Against the wind, the victor faced the void;
And his red beard streamed out across the sea.
"Have joy!" he cried, "Old Evil is destroyed
Who cast his coils about eternity!"
"Never," the great waves thundered, "Shall that be!
Old Evil lives. Against thy hills and shore
Again it rises in despite of thee,
Scarred by thy blows but stronger than before,
Whereby the gods of earth shall perish evermore!"

And those insurgent seas swept back again,
Bearing once more the monster in fresh might,
Bearing the woes of ages in his train;
And lo, once more Thor's hammer rose to smite,
When Asgard's gate gave forth a blinding light
As mid men's happiness, a nobler joy
Revivifies the baser while our sprite
Flames forth and purifies the gross alloy
Of trivial bliss, whose sweetness of itself would cloy.

So streamed the light from Asgard's lofty portal;
For on its threshold stood a being of light,
A stalwart youth, more fair than any mortal;
With hair like rising sun's effulgence bright,
Adown his ample shoulders, richly dight
In azure; at his throat a brooch of gold.
But none might look upon his face; the sight
Was all too fair with beauty manifold.
Against his knee, an aureate harp that youth did hold.

With smoke and flame and poison, breathèd fierce
The snake. The embattled gods would fain recoil;
For vain was brand to hew or dart to pierce;

And greater grew the terror of that broil; -
 When sweet uprose over the harsh turmoil
 The voice of Balder on the threshold there,
 Who sang as never sang poor men who toil
 Nor maid at maytime ever sung so fair.
 Alone his music stilled the tumult on the air.

He sang of plenty and he sang of peace
 And the brave days when hate shall have an end;
 Amid the sons of men all fraud shall cease;
 And all man's rule, the love of friend for friend.
 And all men's wills in harmony shall blend,
 With never any selfish wile to see.
 While crownèd over all, gray Time shall spend
 Full gently there his days; for all are free
 And none shall mar what draweth to eternity.

While thus he sang, the shoalèd monsters cried
 In dreadful agony, full harsh and loud
 At first; then feebler as they drooped and died
 And all their horrid heads were lowly bowed;
 Until at last, slow changing like a cloud,
 He who engendered all the lesser woes
 Drooped with swart head down sideways, once so
 proud
 In his fell triumph — now like melting snows;
 At last like trodden worm, his belly to disclose.

Once more the hand of Balder swept the strings
 In melody the whole wide world might hear;
 As if the spirit of life in all sweet things
 By mountain peak and forest, year by year
 Echoed a mother's love, the moan and tear
 Of bearing pain, turned to a greater joy —
 The love abiding death, that laughs at fear.
 There is no future can her love destroy,

Whispering: "My dear, I trust you, for you are
my boy!"

Full soon the silent horror on the ocean,
Of livid hue, like pestilence, I wist,
Bubbled and steamed and mixed in wondrous
motion,
Purple and black and changeful amethyst;
Then all at once dissolvèd in a mist
That overlay the waters all at rest;
And this did pass. Full soon the breezes kissed
Waters clear green, like seas beyond the west
That soothe in peace eterne the islands of the blest.

Then over all that green, transparent main,
Once more the harp was vibrant and the voice
That called on humankind in nobler strain
And bade the generations to rejoice;
For everything in nature hath its choice,
The cave born beast, the crawling worm below,
And all winged creatures in the air that poise,
And the clear stars that in their orbits go,
All, all through whom the tides of being ebb and flow.

He sang a song before the night or day,
Older than time, before the world was young;
How one soul finds another on the way,
Like two sweet instruments together strung;
Like dulcet echoes, hills and dales among,
Wandering together, evermore beside;
One, sturdy as the oak in norlands sprung,
One, bountiful as palm in desert wide;
Together evermore, betide what may betide.

He sang of man and woman, ever joined
In that sweet bond, no change may ever strain,
How both shall thrid the mazes of the mind

And wrest Earth's happiness from Hate and Pain;
 How he grows stronger still, Life's bliss to gain;
 And she more strangely subtle. For the stress
 Of that stern struggle, he must court amain
 To dare and still to dare and win success;
 And she their lives to crown with truth and tenderness.

Her glance dispels the shadows on his face,
 With radiant beauty all the heavens above.
 Upon his breast, she finds her resting place,
 Whispering: "I trust thee, for thou art my love!"
 Thence grew the nations mighty; once who strove
 In rivalry of hate. Now all is done,
 Ruled by that triple law that still doth move
 Friend unto friend; the mother to the son;
 And lover to beloved, forevermore at one.

While, flushed with joy, the victor carolled out
 Loud melody for all glad gods to hear,
 Back sank the circling waters roundabout;
 Far in the east, fresh verdured hills did rear
 Their dripping heads; the steaming earth grew clear
 Of slime and sordor; for the smiling sun
 Engendered grass to sprout and flowers to peer
 And birds to sing and beasts to creep and run;
 And a new morning for the world was there begun.

For Hate, fell despot of the past, lay dead;
 And all the world was hale and glad and free;
 And a young race, in joy of lustihead,
 Uprose. Their terraced homes from sea to sea
 Shone white through vine and budded almond tree,
 Olive and silvery myrtle, Beauty's crown;
 O'er fields of golden grain with windswept lea
 Narcissus blown, those cherished homes looked down
 More fair than bright abode of Odin's long renown.

Evil was dead and nevermore to be.
As sun-bright Balder gave his music o'er
Immortal hearts throbbed with new melody;
Man's pæan of boundless joy that more and more
Swelled jubilant below from farthest shore
To Asgard's towers of bliss. Odin on high
Hands unto mouth in trumpet wise he bore;
And over all the world went Odin's cry;
Word of a new born Hope that nevermore shall die.

THE HARROWING OF HELL

A MYSTERY

“Venit ergo Dominus ad infernum superiorem
ut redimerit captivos a tyranno Vincitos vocat, qui
erant in pœnis, alios vero in tenebris, quos omnes ab-
solvit et in gloriam duxit rex gloriæ.”

PROLOGUS

Behold the grisly gates of Hell,
Where Beelzebub and Satan dwell
And damnèd spirits know full well
 The fruit of Satan's lies;
But in these outer courts, behold
God's chosen from the days of old
Who wait His promise long foretold,
 When they with Christ shall rise.
All round the dim, low vaulted space,
Behold full many an upturned face,
Lit from within by God's own grace,
 As stars at midnight glow.
Hell's viceroy with his meiny there,
Draws nigh to them as devils dare,
His crafty face lit by the glare
 Of the red flames below.
And all the devils roundabout,
Within the courtyard and without
Even as the blessed angels shout
 Hosannah in their song,
So they below and all around
Wild cries to Beelzebub resound;
And Hell re-echoes back the sound
 Unto the Lord of Wrong.

HYMNUS AD BEELZEBUB

Hail thee, dark prince! We cry thee hail;
 Before thy banners, all men pale;
 Nor tears nor gnashing teeth avail
 Nor Man's most desperate word.
 There is no easement for his pain.
 The worm shall bind him like a chain,
 Let human anguish all in vain
 Beg respite from the Lord.

BEELZEBUB

Whence comes this light upon my gates
 Whose purple glamor violates
 The darkness of my ancient states
 With dreadful orb of gold?
 In flaming caves, like whirlwind's voice,
 The damnèd legions all rejoice.
 My ears are deafened by their noise;
 Mine eyes can scarce behold.

ADAM

O Light of Life! O Love divine!
 In Eden's greenery thou didst shine
 Before the snake on me and mine
 Wrought shame and toil and woe!

ISAIAS

He comes, Messiah, anointed one,
 As I foretold in Zebulun
 And Naphtali, bereft of sun
 Beyond the Jordan's flow!

JOANNES BAPTISTA

A voice from out the wilderness,
 I cried; and now in Hell's duress

I cry once more! He comes to bless
 Man's miserable state!
 O Lamb of God! O Star of Day!
 Ye gates of Hell his hest obey!
 Prepare ye for the Lord, his way
 And make his pathway straight!

SATHANAS

I come instead, who victory
 Have gained. My mortal enemy
 Is crucified on Calvary,
 Jèsus of Nazereth!
 I crowned with thorns His royal pride;
 I thrust the spear point in His side;
 A man of sorrows, He hath died;
 For Sorrow leads to Death.
 He raised the dead, in spite of us;
 He gave back life to Lazarus;
 For flouting of our kingdom thus,
 Fore God, we served Him well!
 Let the five Marys, moaning, lave
 The limbs that angels could not save;
 For Death and I have made His grave
 And haled Him down to Hell!

BEELZEBUB

Thou sayest once He raised the dead,
 And never a prayer to God was said?
 What think you of that lustihead
 Above your might and mine?
 I do adjure thee by our power
 Bring Him not here upon this hour
 Lest thou and I should captive cower
 Before His wrath divine!
 Up! up! and bar the gates again!

Make fast the iron doors amain!
 Go! reinforce the goblins twain
 Who guard them, Death and Sin!

DAVID

Rise up, Messiah, where Adam fell!
 Lift up your heads, ye gates of Hell,
 Ye everlasting doors as well;
 And let the King come in!

HYMNUS SANCTORUM ET PROPHE TARUM

Who bears the red cross banner bright?
 Who treads afar the realms of night,
 Irradiant as the morning light
 Upon resounding seas?
 'T is Christ the Saviour, Christ the Lord,
 Victorious in His works and word!
 O save us from these pangs abhorred
 And cursèd tyrannies!

JOANNES BAPTISTA

Before the gate the Saviour stands;
 Loud groans this wilderness of lands;
 The dismal doors at His commands
 Shriek and asunder go.
 Loud crash the chains and bolts and bars
 With riven rock and splintered spars;
 And o'er the gulf the wrathful stars
 Peer proudly down below.

DAVID

His frown is like the lightning fleet;
 He casteth Sin from off her seat;
 The dragon writhes beneath His feet.
 My prophecy fulfilled!

DIABOLI

Art Thou invincible to pain,
 Man, born of woman without stain?
 Thee blameless we acclaim again,
 Even as Thy Father willed.

BEELZEBUB AD SATHANAN

Thou fool and traitor to thy cause
 And mine; who broke the Lord, His laws;
 And thought to drag Him in the jaws
 Of Death forevermore!
 Behold, He comes and tramples thee,
 Unto thy pregnant infamy;
 And sets ten thousand sinners free
 That were thy right before!
 Why hast thou this one crucified
 Who blameless lived and blameless died,
 Whereby a million woes betide
 Both thee and all thy host?

SATHANAS

I nailed my Foeman on the cross,
 I sealed His body in the foss
 And though my triumph turned to loss,
 My pride is still my boast!
 But more than this my heart doth grieve
 That ye should tremble and believe
 Who still His vengeance must receive,
 Ye doubly cursèd brood!
 But shall I bow beneath His rod?
 Shall I abase me at His nod?
 I, reckless of the wrath of God,
 Forever unsubdued?
 I hold and keep a constant mind.
 'Tis I have cunning yet to bind

The generations of mankind,
 Who followed Adam's fall.
 Gleam the red fires for mile on mile
 And torments upon torments pile!
 I captive, I abject and vile,
 Am greater than you all.

MORS

Undying Glory from on high,
 Against Thy cross my dart flew nigh
 But could not strike. Lo! therefore I
 Thee welcome on this day!
 'T is joy to know Thee, joy to hear
 Annihilation waiteth near
 When, symbol of a crownèd fear,
 My power shall pass away!

PECCATUM

Well mayst thou prate, thou Lord of Death.
 To all in pain who draw their breath,
 When the creator beckoneth
 Thou comest at His word.
 Thou dost His work. But I—but I—
 The living semblance of a lie,
 My very soul doth horrify
 This coming of the Lord.

SATHANAS

O daughter mine, take heart of grace!
 The Son of Man must yield thee place
 To roam on Earth a little space,
 Until the final doom!
 When thou returnest here to dwell
 With those, alive who loved thee well
 The adamantine vaults of Hell
 Shall hardly find thee room!

HYMNUS SANCTORUM ET PROPHE TARUM

Lord Christ, Thine oriflame is set
 In Heaven! On Earth Thy cross shall get
 Glory; and here the hour is met
 To raise Thy cross once more!
 Yea, in the depths Thine ensign show
 That, by the portent all may know,
 In nether Hell, Thy glories go
 Where Death has gone before!
 Through Hell's abyss, resounds Thy word!
 Old Adam clasps Thy hand, O Lord!
 We hail Thee, all with one accord
 Redeemer of mankind!—
 Arise, ye saints! arise and sing
 Uplifted as on eagle's wing!
 Round sun and moon our plaudits ring;
 And Hell-Gate flares behind!
 Joy to the world and all who weep!
 Sound the loud timbrel o'er the deep!
 Behold the mighty mountains leap
 And clap their hands and shout!
 Beyond the dome of raptured skies
 We tread the meads of Paradise.
 Behold the New Jerusalem rise
 With jasper walled about!

ADAM

Whence come ye, O unblemished twain!
 Whose limbs have never known Death's pain,
 Whose radiant faces bear no stain
 Of any ill desire?

ENOCH

I walked with God on Earth. I stand
 In Heaven's bright bliss.

ELIAS

At His command
I rose from Jordan on the strand
In chariot of fire.

JOANNES BAPTISTA

What manner of a man art thou?
Under the cross thy shoulders bow.
Thy face is like a thief; thy brow
Is agonized by Time;
Thy hands and feet all wried and torn,
Why dost thou greet this happy morn?
Why art thou thus in Heaven reborn,
A man of grief and crime?

DIMAS

I was that robber, crucified
On His right hand. Before I died
To Him I clave; on Him I cried,
"O Lord, remember me!"
Beyond the grave, by Goddes fay,
I drag my cross on Heaven's high way
To dwell in Paradise for aye
With Him who died on tree.

HYMNUS SANCTORUM ET ANGELORUM OMNIUM

Hope of the world, immortal power!
Fruit of a nobler Eden's bower!
Child of the pure, white lily flower
Baptized in Jordan River,
When heaven and earth shall pass away
And Time no more hath baneful sway
And night shall be as dawn of day
Thy love endures forever!

And Thou, Celestial Trinity,
Thou Three in One and One in Three,
Unbounded by eternity

By whom the world is bound!
Drawn from the grave, beyond Death's pall,
We praise Thy name at festival;
Our adoration all in all,
While the nine spheres go round!

IN NOMINE
PATRIS ET FILII ET SPIRITUS SANCTI
FACTUM EST LUDUM
AMEN

MELUSINA

MELUSINA

A TRAGEDY

Dramatis Personæ

LORD LUSIGNAN
RAYMOND, *His Son*
DON DAMIEN, *a Chaplain*
CARMAGOLE, *a Jester*

RAOUL

JOHN
FRANK
CHARLES
PETER
ANDREW

} *Fishermen*

LADY LUSIGNAN
ADELE, *betrothed to Raymond*
BERTA, *a Nurse*

URSULA
JEANETTE
MARIANNE
MELUSINA

} *Fishwives*

LORDS *and* LADIES, MEN-AT-ARMS, SERVITORS,
FISHER-FOLK *and* SPIRITS OF THE SEA.

SCENE: *the Coast of Brittany.* TIME: *the Sixteenth Century.*

A C T I

BETROTHAL

SCENE I: *The Great Hall in the Castle of Lusignan. Walls and ceilings are draped in gala. At the left, a Gothic doorway, surmounted by the family device, a syren argent on a field of azure. In front stands a sentinel on guard. Time: the night of Shrove Tuesday.*

Enter RAOUL, BERTA and SERVING WOMEN. *They crowd about the sentinel.*

FIRST WOMAN

The doors all closed?

SECOND WOMAN

Betrothal doth belong
In open hall!

THIRD WOMAN

God grant there's nothing wrong!
The County Guy is lauded everywhere
And Heaven's bounty bless the bridal pair,
Raymond, the good earl's son, Adele, his ward!
But still there be strange rumors noised abroad
Of the black magic! Aye, 't is that I mean.
I speak no names.

RAOUL

You speak of Melusine.

SECOND WOMAN (*crossing herself*)

You dare to speak her name?

THIRD WOMAN

Only three days
Ago, a poor old charcoal burner says,

In forest far beneath the living shade,
Where, on the fitful noon, a fountain played,
He saw the sight. Through dazzling water flashed
What first he deemed a fish, that splashed and splashed
O'er moss and rock and vine. . . But, drawing near,
Before his eyes a spectre form did rear,
Hands, head and breast, a radiant woman, dight
Below the waist with tail of blue and white,
All diamond enamelled, scale on scale.
Behold our colors!

RAOUL

'T is an ancient tale.

A learned clerk wrote the whole matter down
In an old book of very high renown;
And there be princes, emperors and kings
Proud of her lineage and all it brings.
From her three lordly houses draw their day,
As Luxembourg, Rohan and Sassenaye.
Beside Lord Lusignan, whom now we serve.

GUARD

And who a loyal silence doth deserve.

FIRST WOMAN

A fabled fantasy and bogey show!
Why, she was dead three hundred years ago!

BERTA

Speak not so lightly; for old people say
She but departed like a fading flame.
They say, along the bottom of the sea,
There 's no more dying, for old age is dead;
And there she dwells in palaces of pearl
Amid the souls of drownèd mariners,

In crash of nightly revelry for aye
And baneful beauty of a youth eterne.

SECOND WOMAN

When comes the bridal?

RAOUL

After close of Lent

In forty days.

FIRST WOMAN

I trow, behind closed doors?

GUARD

In open chapel, fore the eyes of all.

FIRST WOMAN

Short time to serve a lady!

SECOND WOMAN

All too long

Before the consummation of true love.

BERTA

Aye, all too long for any Lusignan
To bide on his betrothal. Mark my words,
Old Evil comes at midnight. Mark my words,
There's evil omens in these marble halls.
A cloudy night . a very evil sign!
Aye, flout and sneer and say an old witch dreams!

(noise of storm without)

O God in Heaven, have pity on poor souls!
I hear the woman's moaning once again!

GUARD

The moaning of the wind, old Berta, come!

BERTA

The moaning of the years of long ago!
 God rest unhappy creatures! O the day,
 The dreadful day the Lord Raymond was born!
 I see the pallid face, I hear the voice!
 I hear the shrieks of torment on the night!
 Aye, call me mad old Berta if you will!
 God grant it were my madness!

SECOND WOMAN

What's the matter?

RAOUL

Poor soul, her heart is fevered with a dream
 That came upon her twenty years ago.

Enter CARMAGOLE and DON DAMIEN

DON DAMIEN

What's all this idle gossip at the door?
 Have ye no reverence your lords before?
 For shame! for shame! what may such manners mean?

GUARD

Your reverence, all did talk of Melusine.

CARMAGOLE

The riddle of the Lady Melusine—
 I'll tell you, I of Melusina's rede.

DON DAMIEN

Peace to your words, idle as thistledown!

FIRST WOMAN

Is then the tale portentous?

DON DAMIEN

Idle waste
Of time, old woman's horror! let it go!

RAOUL

Let him go on! let him go on, I say!
The idle tale befits the idle hour
The better.

WOMEN

Tell the rest! Let him go on!

CARMAGOLE

When the black cock at midnight crows three times
In silent space between the midnight chimes;
When Firmin's bells the Lenten season greet
At midnight and the triple peal repeat;
When an old dame brings trouble in the room;
And when the bride shall question of the groom;
Then, for love-longing of an earth born lord
The Lady Melusina walks abroad
And draws disaster unto maid and man
And ruin to the house of Lusignan!

(sounds of music)

FIRST WOMAN

The doors burst open! viol and flageolet!
Hark! hark! they come! the guests! the bridal train!

CARMAGOLE *(to DON DAMIEN)*

God rest your Reverence, 't is no time to fret,
Nor no faint heart must here remember pain!

THIRD WOMAN

Lord Raymond, doth he know the idle rhyme?

DON DAMIEN

He, you and I and all the parish too!

SECOND WOMAN

Hist! hist! they come!

WOMEN

We dance upon the time!

All hail Lord Lusignan, his retinue!

*Enter musicians and a chorus of youths and maidens,
followed by lords and ladies.*

SONG FOR THE ENTRANCE MUSIC

There is rapture in the viol!
 How it thrills, thrills, thrills!
 There is rapture in the lilting
 Of the hautboys' trills!
 There is rapture in the bosom
 Of thy loved one nigh!
 Oh! enjoy the tuneful hour;
 For the time goes by!

There is rapture in the music,
 In the time, in the tide,
 To greet the happy trothal
 Of a sweet young bride!
 Fresh crowned with opening roses,
 Lo, her cup brims high!
 Oh! enjoy the fragrant hours;
 For the hours go by!

Come forth! come forth! O promised bride!
 Resound again
 Loud music! hail the bridegroom!
 Hail the lordly train

To drown her bashful whisper :
 "Dearest, come to me!
 O fain and fair and tender,
 To be loved by thee!"

The glory of the moment
 And the joy supreme
 Is fleeter than the splendor
 Of the Morning's beam;
 More fleet than driven seabird
 O'er the wine dark sea,
 But worth the weight of æons,
 To be loved by thee!

Enter LORD and LADY LUSIGNAN with RAYMOND and ADELE. Flourish.

ALL

All hail the promised bride of Lusignan!

LORD LUSIGNAN

We welcome the glad hour to greet your loves.

USHER (*announcing guests*)

The County Blois and Lady! Comes my Lord
 Of Coucy! Comes the Cardinal of Rennes!
 The Dowager and County Perigord!
 My Lord of Bourbon, Constable of France!

CARMAGOLE

Announce me to my gossip, yellowstick,
 Before them all, the grand climacteric!
 Behold at bridals, Folly leads the van.
 Announce me a good fool and a true man.
 In Life's glad prime, ere Age men's blood can cool,
 I, good and true, most truly am good fool.

(to ADELE)

Why wearest thou white silk?

RAYMOND

For Purity

Is white.

CARMAGOLE

So are men's lies and both well wove!

ADELE

I hope some candor yet becometh me.

CARMAGOLE

Like any other opposite of love.

(sings)

White and red! white and red!
Love is born and Love is dead!
Red and white! red and white!
When her beauty is most bright,
Red and white together be—
And that, for Love and Purity!
(snaps fingers)

LORD LUSIGNAN.

Have the fool whipped!

ADELE

Nay, pass his folly o'er,
Though contumelious, I, my lord, implore.

DON DAMIEN

Let's leave him to digest his own bad words.

ADELE

I wish him no worse pain.

RAYMOND

How say you, lords
And ladies? Lo! the hours of night advance
And the loud music summons all to dance.

FIRST LADY

The dance! the dance! my feet be on the move!

SECOND LADY

More than the fool, Lord Raymond entertains.

FIRST LORD

'T is the world's way, when hearts beat high with love
And Youth more sweetly sings than yon sweet strains!

SECOND LORD

The dance! the dance! come forth the joyous dance!
The music calls! the torches flare! and round
We go!

FIRST LADY

They burn more bright!

RAYMOND

Let's all advance
To bathe our souls in oceans of sweet sound!
And round and round in rhapsody of joy,
We dance in wild abandon, girl and boy!
(they dance)

SONG

Dance, dance away!
The viols play!
Forget to-day and yesterday!
Dance, dance around

To that sweet sound
And taste the joy that comes with May!

Oh! fair betide
The blushing bride,
Her lord and servant at her side!
To bride and groom
Give dancing room
When Love is to be glorified!

And to and fro
The couples go
In many and many a measure, O!
With damsels merry
Whose cheeks are cherry
And shining bosoms white as snow

There comes a call
Throughout the hall
For faster music over all;
Around and around
In a whirl of sound,
Wild soul of wildest festival!

SCENE II: *A window embrasure. Wind and rain are beating on the casement. A silver lamp, wrought in syren shape, sheds its light over silken hangings of sea green with a crimson shimmer, on which is depicted the story of the first Lord of Lusignan and his spouse. Raymond and Adele are together on an oaken settle, whose sides are carved in the image of a mermaid. Music and dancing in the hall beyond.*

ADELE

Now all are gone, my darling and my lord,
My fairy prince, with roving eyes and hair
Of raven! Thou, thou and I —

RAYMOND

And forty days

Delay!

ADELE

Dost dread, me joyful at thy side,
To wait on final joy?

RAYMOND

A month and more?

I dread it.

ADELE

When each little moment holds
So much of sweet, so much of every joy,
To taste the whole of it, were gluttony
Indeed. Let's treasure it like epicures
And sip it kiss by kiss and so love on,
Where every little makes a little more.

RAYMOND

Adele, as I do kiss thy crimson mouth,
My soul takes fire! Perish the forty days!
The Lord of Love knows neither space nor time!
Jove sets no boundaries to his eagerness!
Open thy hazel eyes! their tender gleam
Fulfillment cannot fathom! Forty days!
Let us have all, all, all! Ours then to die
Or let Love grow in radiant loveliness
For years on splendid years! But this brief space,
These forty days are forty centuries,
Worse than God's storm that overwhelmed the world
For vengeance on mankind! Thy lips again!
O love my love, I know not any joy
But thee and the gold glory of thy hair,
Thy sweet soft red and white, thy curling lip

Where kisses lie like honey in the rose,
So sweet and yet so strange!

ADELE

Yea, passing strange
That thou and I from babyhood have grown
Together, and together played at ball;
Together conned the painted missal o'er,
Adam and Eve embowered in Eden's green;
Together loosed the tiercelet for the kite
And the gerfalcon for the trembling hare;
Together read of Launcelot of the Lake,
His love for Guinivere, until our curls
Over the page were tangled, black and gold —
All this in fellowship of girl and boy.
But here and now I view thee all in all
As I had never dreamed of thee before,
Like some young pagan god from kindlier skies,
In thy glad glory, Fancy never feigned
For maiden dreaming! Yea, 't is passing strange,
This other thou, who wast a friend before
And now a lover!

RAYMOND

Nay, 't is no more strange
Than wise Adele, who lets her little heart
Cozen her soul to make a god of me,
Poor mortal, restless in his discontent,
Who cannot brook the passing of the hours!

ADELE

Raymond is aught amiss?

RAYMOND

Those forty days.

ADELE

Those all alone?

RAYMOND

Impatience were enough.

ADELE

Truly is there naught more?

RAYMOND

Oh! credit me

That Lent is long I therefore do complain.

ADELE

Let 's do away with all dark frowning care;
 When thou art moody, Raymond, that makes me
 Unhappy too.

RAYMOND

Why dearest, what may now
 Trouble the little lady, doth she deem
 Her Raymond doth not love her more than life?

ADELE

Not more than secrets, or they else were told.

RAYMOND

Why, 't is a very slight, unworthy shade;
 I would not tell thee lest it trouble thee.

ADELE

Raymòn, wouldst call me baby? come, my love!
 "I would not tell thee lest it trouble thee!"
 Thou dost not well to hide a little woe
 From thy dear love. This heart were more than frail
 Could I not bear a little pain for thee.

RAYMOND

But love, it is not all a little thing.
It is —

ADELE

A menace? Some dark, heinous deed
That makes thee clench thy teeth and clench thy hand
And frown on vacancy? Why, then, dear love,
Men say we women are too curious;
And yet, and yet, my heart, I love thee so
I know thou knowest what is good to tell
And what to leave untold. Raymòn, my lord,
Kiss me once more. Hark to the chime of bells.

(bells without)

RAYMOND

Adele, Adele, thou stirrest in my soul
Unfancied raptures! O thou noble soul!
True nobleness in woman!

ADELE

Is to love.
O golden chime of old Saint Firmin's bells,
Our last Shrove Tuesday!

RAYMOND

Aye, our separate last.
Once more to kiss. Good night!

ADELE

Thou leavest me
So soon?

RAYMOND

Is midnight soon?

ADELE

Again that frown
 And set resolve. Thou shudderest. Thou must go.
 An if thou must, why so, my lord, good night.
 I'll find the way to my apartment now
 Most readily.

Enter BERTA

For here's old Berta come,
 Ready to guide me.

BERTA

Aye, my pretty bird.
 There is no sleep to-night for thee nor me!
 My Lord Raymòn, on peril of thy soul,
 I charge thee, give it over and not go.

RAYMOND

I stay too long. Old woman, go thy ways.

BERTA

Thine follow worse than death!

ADELE

Raymòn, doth she
 Know all the secret chambers of thy soul
 And not thy promised bride? Is Love to be
 Blind, blind forever? Love, thou dost not well.
 I would not know thy heart for anything
 If all were common rumor. Raymond, lord,
 Thy soul is troubled even as my soul!
 Oh! tell me all!

RAYMOND

Why, now 't is time to part.

Unclasp the little fingers, thus and thus.
I told the woman nothing. Bide thou here.

ADELE

But she knows all! I cannot understand.
Why dost thou bar me from thy last embrace?
Where dost thou go? Why wilt thou not confide
In me? That hesitation! Out, alas!
Is this the man who stole my heart from me?

BERTA

Oh! chide him not!

RAYMOND

I never told her aught
Nor any one, but —

ADELE

Therefore tell me now!
(bells again without)

RAYMOND

The second peal! Again Saint Firmin's bells?
Why, that is all unwonted!

Enter DON DAMIEN

Ha! Don Damien,
Why now this repetition?

DON DAMIEN

When Saint Firmin
Founded our fabric, centuries ago,
He made the rule, that every hundred years,
Foundation night the brethren should observe,
That once again for every hundred past,

They ring the midnight peal. Two hundred years
Are now gone by. Wherefore the triple peal
Rings wonder in our ears.

(aside to RAYMOND)

I come to thee
Fair son, to pray thee venture not abroad
To-night. For though these all be idle tales
And superstitions fit for village boors,
These dying embers of old heathendom
Let die, nor fan them into lambent flame
By any act of thine. Lord Raymond, son,
I pray thee tell me that thou wilt not go.

RAYMOND

I must and will.

DON DAMIEN

I pray thee think again
And grant my prayer.

ADELE

No need to whisper more.
My heart and soul have heard. Thy retinue,
Priest and old dotard know thy works and ways;
But not thy bride, too fond to trust in thee!
May God forgive you!

(turns to go)

RAYMOND

Stay, my ladylove!
Wilt thou forsake me with an angry word?
Little thou knowest the anguish of my heart!

ADELE

Aye, when from me that anguish is debarred;
But any groom or scullion reads it there!

DON DAMIEN

Daughter, there be grave reasons.

ADELE

Reasons! aye!

When Love is sick and wounded, overborne,
Why, then 't is time to reason!

BERTA

Foolish girl!

ADELE

Raymond, an, thou dost love me tell me all.
If not, farewell.

BERTA

You ask of him your doom.

RAYMOND

Hush, mother, hush!

DON DAMIEN

You know not your desire.

ADELE

And if I knew, I would not ask it here.
Raymond, if thou dost love me —

RAYMOND

If thou wilt—

BERTA

O fatal question!

ADELE

Love doth mock at Fate.

RAYMOND

Why, then as I do love thee, I must tell.

(bells again without)

ADELE

So thou art willing, love, 't is more than all.

BERTA

Ask for his silence, then. You've proved him true!

ADELE

Nay, then as I do love thee, I will hear;

And these old women shall not cross our loves.

RAYMOND

It is an ancient custom of our house,
The eldest son, upon his bridal eve —

DON DAMIEN

My son!

BERTA

My lord, beware!

ADELE

My love, tell on!

RAYMOND

Leaving the dance and midnight festival,
Should pace alone upon the lone sea shore
And turn his glances westward o'er the sea,
Thrice calling on a power invisible
To answer for his marriage. Furthermore
If he did tell his ladylove the cause
And time and place of his departure, then

His bride must be a widow on the noon
 Of that sweet night that sealed their marriage vows.
 Sorrow for her and ruin for the power
 Of Lusignan; and as all omens point
 To some such ending, I had left the tale
 Of brutal superstition all untold,
 As not to mar our loving festival
 Nor bring foreboding on a night of joy.

ADELE

Dost thou believe?

RAYMOND

Adele, am I so dull?

Do I believe in Bogey or in Lob
 Who lies by kitchen fires at Halloween?
 Who milks the kine and scares the dairymaids,
 Sours the milk in churn, blows out the candle
 For grandam and Jack Goodman? Nay, my love
 These are but empty rumors, idle tales.

ADELE

If these be empty rumors, idle tales,
 Then why go forth to-night?

(cock crows)

BERTA

One omen more!

God grant it's not the black!

ADELE

Stay, let us laugh

At browney men and spectres of the sea!
 If thou goest forth, thou dost confess their power!

RAYMOND

It is—it is our custom.

ADELE

Let it go,
Belief and custom too. When one hath died,
The other follows to dishonored grave.
Hark to the moaning of the wind outside!
The storm blows wild. I pray thee, bide with me.

RAYMOND

After belief is gone, the custom bides
And we observe in incredulity.
Dearest, I—I—there came a call for me
And I must go. Farewell.

(Exit RAYMOND. Cock crows twice..)

ADELE

Raymòn, oh! stay!

BERTA

It is the final omen.

Enter CARMAGOLE with a black rooster under his arm

DON DAMIEN

Carmagole,
Why comes that sound unusual at this time?

CARMAGOLE

Why, Gilbert Firebrand wagered Pothouse Paul
The ruddy rooster in the guard-room hall
Could spur the black, Sir Sable Chanticleer.
We drew the list. Behold the champion here!
For after peck and spur and squawk and clack,
The red lay dead. We hailed the victor black

Who flapped exultant pennons on the air
 And crowed out victory at midnight prayer
 And — look you now, I am indeed a fool!
 Why, there's an omen! Raymond my good lord,
 Is he not here?

DON DAMIEN

Gone, gone, you well know where.

I follow.

CARMAGOLE

And I too follow.

ADELE

And I — alas

Can this be true? O miserable me!
 Why do our motions spur to headlong deeds,
 We must repent, or ever these be done?
 Raymòn, Raymòn! I'll go beyond Death's doors
 To share all fates with thee!

CARMAGOLE

Lady, good night.

[*Exit.*]

DON DAMIEN

Abide thou there. Lord Raymond comes anon.
 Thine to abide in honor of thy lord
 To greet his kinsmen.

[*Exit.*]

Enter LORD and LADY LUSIGNAN

LADY LUSIGNAN

What! the promised bride
 In tears alone with parson and old nurse?

LORD LUSIGNAN

Raymòn, where 's he?

BERTA

Gone, gone!

ADELE

He's gone away
A moment hence. He will be back anon.
He —

LORD LUSIGNAN

I commanded him, who disobeyed
And followed.

ADELE

Followed where, good father dear?

LORD LUSIGNAN

Nay, that I cannot tell thee, for to hear
Would bring thee sorrow; yet I would my son
Were back again; but naught can be undone.
It booteth not; and what can fears avail?
I know there is no truth in that old tale.
I know there's nothing. Get we to our beds
Lest on the morrow all be sleepy heads.

Enter the GUESTS who take ceremonious leave

SONG OF DEPARTURE

There is slumber in the music.
Deep it thrills, thrills, thrills
From the lutany and dulcimer,
For all men's ills.

And it lies upon Love's eyelids,
When the hour draws nigh
To the soul of sweetest roses,
That they droop and they die.

There is slumber for all feasting,
And the torch burns pale.
Yea, the flames are ever fading.
They must faint; they must fail;
And sorrow all upcloses
And the cares that blight.
Now Love with Life reposes
Mid the dreams of night.

ACT II

UNDER THE OCEAN

SCENE I: *The Breton coast in a rising storm. At the left, a ledge of rock juts out into the water. Time: Ash Wednesday, six hours before sunrise.*

Enter CARMAGOLE and DON DAMIEN.

CARMAGOLE

Raymòn, dear lord! ahoy! ahoy! ahoy!

DON DAMIEN

Ahoy! thy bride awaits thee! lord, return!

VOICE

Ahoy! ahoy! ahoy! return! return!

DON DAMIEN

His voice!

CARMAGOLE

Or devil's counterfeit.

DON DAMIEN

Ahoy!
Art thou in peril, Raymond? Tell us where.

VOICE

In peril.

DON DAMIEN

In grave peril?

VOICE

In grave peril.

DON DAMIEN

A rescue, then! a rescue! where art thou?
Far?

VOICE

Far, far, far!

CARMAGOLE

Come, brother, come! Let's on.
Talk to the winds no longer. On, ahoy!
Religion goes with Folly hand in hand,
To save the souls of men.

DON DAMIEN

Our own liege lord!

[*Exeunt.*]*Enter RAYMOND enveloped in a mantle*

RAYMOND

The billows rumble and the billows roar
And crash to hissing phosphor on the crag
And hurtle backwards, seething in fierce foam!
Is this a night for bridals? What is this
That drags me forth on my betrothal night
To seek the unattempted and unknown?
Adele, Adele! but half an hour gone by
The world was like a garden of sweet years
Where hope and joy were like full throated birds,
Thou, thou and I forever side by side!
But there's another demon in a man
That drives him forth from happiness and ease

And all secure conditions, for the night
 Of nameless horror, strife and troubled years,
 Fiends faces and hard hatreds, treacheries
 And all the fears and dark desires of man
 And most unheard of tortures of the mind—

VOICE

And beauty, fairer than thy fondest dreams.

RAYMOND

Who art thou there? I call thee once again.
 Who art thou there? I call thee twice and thrice.
 Who art thou, riding free on yon black cloud?

VOICE

I am the spoken fate of Lusignan.

RAYMOND

You speak in riddles.

VOICE

Riddles may be read
 By those who have the craft and heart to dare.

RAYMOND

My marriage, what of that?

VOICE

Oh! follow, follow!

RAYMOND

Where wilt thou guide me?

VOICE

To my bowers of pearl.

RAYMOND

Which way to go?

VOICE

Thy feet shall know the way
Better than thou. Walk even as thou wilt,
Thy steps end there. Abiding in thy place,
Thou still shalt find thee at thy journey's end.

RAYMOND

The wind calls and the sea! I come, I come
Unto the memories of an elder home.

(he approaches the rocks)

VOICES

The cavern yawns in the light of the moon;
The foaming breakers roar;
The seaweed hangs in a black festoon
To drench the walls and floor;
And over the noise, beyond the light
Abides the spirit of endless night.

RAYMOND

Is it here that I must enter, where the waves
Surge like damned souls?

VOICE

Aye, thou hast gone aright.

RAYMOND

I may not enter.

VOICE

Only cowardice
Recalls thy bosom's duty. Enter here

And break with custom, habit and belief
 And maiden Shame, with veiled, averted eyes.

RAYMOND

Say all thou hast for me! I'll walk no more.

VOICE

I've no more words, only a sign to show;
 Then follow, follow me.

RAYMOND

By boyhood's pride
 And manly love and honor, I'll not go.
 On one side looms unutterable desire;
 On the other, holier memories and the vows
 Of knighthood, I'll not go.

VOICE

Thy knighthood's vow!
 What are these words against a heart's desire?
 Now, now it grasps thy heart. Are all men's words
 Proof against this?

(A flash of lightning rends the clouds and reveals for an instant, the form of a woman, robed in black and girt about with crimson seaweed.)

RAYMOND

I may not, will not go!
 What form is thine to ravish and appall?

VOICE

The world's desire that conquers all men's fears!

RAYMOND

I — I — alas — alas —

VOICE

Oh! follow, follow!

VOICES

On the verge to hesitate,
 Doubly craven, t'is too late.
 Where the sea doth ebb and flow,
 There the troubled soul must go.

(a flash of lightning followed by complete darkness)

RAYMOND

Into the brine! the waters wash me in;
 Legions of devils laugh upon the seas;
 And one swart wave, more horrid than the rest,
 Takes me up! All is white! O for the shock
 And darkness of the cavern! Woe is me!
 Adele farewell! and Brittany farewell!
 And happy hopes and joys of love, farewell!

VOICES

The coward fain would hesitate
 But nevermore the brave;
 Who doth respond for any fate
 At Melusina's cave.
 Spirits of the blast!
 Spirits of the wave!
 We hold the lover fast
 To torture or to save!
 For who shall fear
 To venture near
 Is whelmed in the salt sea wave;

But forward fare
 To do and dare
 Shall find and bind a slave.

SCENE II: *Under the sea. A dim light glimmers amid the waters of the lower ocean. Gradually, as the opening song proceeds, the shadowy vast becomes transfused with a golden radiance. A rock hewn chamber is revealed. At the back, a number of rough steps lead up to an arched door of panelled mother of pearl. At the right stands a couch, covered with some translucent, silken substance. The walls are hung with all varieties of bright seaweed. Goldfish, moonfish and delicately tinted aculephs are swimming up and down; and these, catching the light on head and sides, irradiate a thousand changing colors.*

VOICES

How sings the sea,
 The music of the waves,
 Sweetheart, for thee
 Mid palms and coral caves;
 Low, languid sound
 That dies upon the shore,
 Far from rocky bound
 Where the ravined breakers roar.
 Here the water lips at last
 On a charmèd strand,
 Deadly peril overpast,
 Heart's desire at hand.

Enter RAYMOND

RAYMOND

How green the water shines about me here;

And that sweet light that inly is diffused,
Where doth it come from? Lo, the fish that swim
With film of lazy fin and gleaming tail
And all their colors mingled in the sun,
Lucent and interfused and changing still
Even as glad creatures change about me here
That fall and rise and sport in spiral whorl
Over the gypsum floor. Come, Rest and Peace,
After the storm and wrench of head and heart!
Farewell, thou Breton seacoast, far away
As yesterday. There whether to return
Or still abide me here in peace and joy
I know not, I. So here as on a couch
On the soft seaweed, gay as autumn leaves,
Ephemeral in gay splendor, I lay me down;
And view the cause and front of this sweet light.
For over against me, up three steps rough hewn,
There gleams an oval door of polished pearl
Lucent with massy lock of burnished gold.
And O the petals of anemones
Around my feet. Yea, here I lay me down
Nor care for other places, other joys
And the fair faces of departed loves
And all old things forgot, or memories
Cherished the more for being in the past.
Mayhap these all return as one looks back
At parting from the thought of his beloved
Frail with the poignancy of vain regret
The soul hath half forgotten. Drowsiness
Steals over me. So let me sleep away
All trace of what was former toil and pain
And unrequited yearning and the quest
For what the troubled soul could never find.
So let me leave them all and sleep, sleep, sleep.

(Reclines on the couch in slumber)

VOICES

We travel afar
 From the southern star
 Where the sun kissed coral gleams
 And over the main
 They cast their seine
 To fish in the sea of dreams.
 The lover is come
 To his island home
 And the distant coral shore;
 And all in glee
 Down under the sea,
 We dance our queen before.
 The cymbal clashes
 The water flashes
 In torrents of gold and green;
 And we whirl and we whirl
 In the halls of pearl
 In the sight of our glorious queen.

OTHER VOICES

We dance to the lilt of a measure
 Ne'er footed in realms of the sun;
 Where Pain is the leman of Pleasure
 And evil and good are as one.

Fair fame cannot harm you nor hurt you,
 Nor Pride in his palace of ice!
 Here purity may not be virtue;
 Nor the flaming of passion be vice!

Awake to the sound of the morning!
 Awake from the torpor of night!
 Awake for our queen is adorning
 All ocean with splendor of light!

Awake unto beauty supernal
 For every light moment that flies!
 There's never a joy that's eternal.
 In the bud or the blossom it dies.

Awake in a frenzy of kisses
 On her lips and her eyes and her hair!
 On her mouth is the promise of blisses;
 Twin roses her bosom doth bear.

She holds out her arms to her lover;
 Oh! clasp her and know thou the place
 Where the joy of the sense goeth over
 In desire of a lasting embrace.

OTHER VOICES

Her bosom, fair and warm,
 A perfume doth exhale
 Like summer gardens ere the storm
 Of bleak autumnal gale.
 All the sweets and spice of the East
 For the eyes and the heart and the soul to feast!

Enrobed in ever shimmering white,
 She yearns to you.
 Like sunbeams o'er the ocean bright
 Her limbs burn through;
 All the curve of breast and side
 In trembling beauty glorified.

ALL THE VOICES

Awake! awake!
 She standeth at the door
 More fair than any mortal bride!

She yearns to greet you at your side;
 She treads the golden threshold o'er;
 And the music of our harps, the sea caves shake
 And our clarions resound: "Awake! awake!"

RAYMOND (*opening his eyes*)

What are these sounds that linger in mine ears,
 Insistent, loud and joyous, interfused
 With subtle sweetness that intoxicates
 And thrills from head to heel, so sweeping o'er
 That I nor feel nor see for eagerness?

(*The doors of pearl swing open;*

MELUSINA *appears in a burst of light.*)

Thou blinding light dissolvest walls and floor
 In dreams all realized of young desire,
 Resplendent, yet unearthly; strange and fierce
 As men have deemed hell fire; yet secure
 From ancient pain!

(*starts to his feet*)

Oh! let these arms embrace
 Thee, lady standing godlike mid the storm
 And vortex of intolerable joy!
 Who art thou there?

MELUSINA

'Tis Melusine revealed.

And I have called thee far from Brittany
 To dwell within the fastness of my sea
 Where trouble stirreth not, nor barren strife
 Nor aught of that ignoble commonplace
 That makes life baneful in men's happiest moods.
 I give thee to my realms of boundless joy.
 In every sense thy being is fulfilled.

RAYMOND

O Melusina of the raven hair
 And royal rounded breast and eyes of gray,
 Whose deeper light wells up and fires the soul
 With madness unto thee, O beautiful!
 The godlike arm, the flushed and supple thigh,
 The undulation and the ecstasy,
 The beauty grave men worshipped ere the world
 From innocence and rapture turned again
 To servile morals. Clasp thee closer still,
 Breast unto breast all trembling with desire!
 Breast unto breast subjected all in all,
 Till current answers current and takes flame
 And two lives multiply! My pulses beat
 Even as thine! Yea, once embracing thee,
 I clasp the world and all the lights and shades
 Are merged and mingled in a rainbow light
 Irradiating gladness to mankind!
 O sweet, sweet, sweet! our virtue doth combine
 To give an added glory to the world!

MELUSINA

The world is thine! O, try thy bliss again!

RAYMOND

Art thou immortal, being all beautiful?

MELUSINA

All beauty is immortal. Only Pain
 Dies. Pluck the rose, ere Sleep thy senses lull.

RAYMOND

Once more, once more, O thou for transports made!
 Lips unto lips and more than eyes can see,

The nameless loveliness that doth pervade
Thine every motion!

MELUSINA

All possessed by thee!
I yield me, ever changing, changing ever!
Too sweet to last, a sweeter doth succeed;
And every little moment, Love must sever!
Hither and yon they fly, nor give them heed!

RAYMOND

Oh! strive with me to mingle body and soul!
The clinging lips on inner lips set fast!
Within our veins volcanic oceans roll!

MELUSINA

Oh! never was a moment like the last!

RAYMOND

I would it were eterne!

MELUSINA

Not once again
That joy shall ever dawn on thee or me.

RAYMOND

To-morrow's light shall find us laced in twain
And gild our slumbers underneath the sea.

MELUSINA

Nay, love, not so. I nevermore may come
As I have found thee now. In different guise
We 'll meet again.

RAYMOND

No better for the change.

MELUSINA

Better or worse, the change is yet to come.
 For joy or grief, to-morrow's not to-day.
 We, while the tides of ocean ebb and flow,
 May meet and love in many a wondrous wise;
 For we can change to seafowl, circling o'er
 The sunlit billows of the swollen main
 What time black clouds, that break upon the morrow,
 Give over to gray dawn and troubled day.
 We, flying still before the raging gale,
 May love as in a storm; or diving deep
 Below the foam and thunder of the waves
 May flash like serpents, ever intertwined
 In dark, unshaken depths of ocean;
 Or, changing in those depths like two sweet streams
 That course the bed of ocean side by side
 And brave his brackish fury hardily,
 Still keeping side by side; or like two winds
 That chase each other, eddying in a storm,
 One, stern with all the portents of the north,
 One, soft with orient balm of summer seas;
 Still, still to move over the ocean foam;
 Still, still to love in ever changing love
 Forever in the passage of the world!

RAYMOND

But nevermore to see thee beautiful,
 Thy form, thy face?

MELUSINA

One of a million more.
 I hold no form, forever to remain

Like monumental marble that thy gaze
 Grow weary with the selfsame loveliness,—
 The same light in the eyes, the same old tale
 Of kisses on the lips, and laughter too
 That rings the selfsame peal, until thine ears
 Ache for the very sound of novelty
 That cometh not to thee nor any man
 Who sets his rest on loyalty of soul.

RAYMOND

But nevermore to see thee beautiful
 Beyond all other women? Only as birds
 That dart and soar above the troubled waves;
 Or streams below the round of ocean,
 Where all is gray as with primeval eld
 Save for the glimmer of serpents as they wind
 Along the oozy bottom?

MELUSINA

Nay, sweet love!

Wherever Ocean washes on the shore
 In lispng tides, or drives and crashes on,
 By Polynesian reef or Arctic floe,
 Wherever Ocean thunders, is our home.
 So, swift ascending on the sea-ribbed sand,
 We still endue us with the forms of men;
 As on the burning sand of the Red Sea,
 I, formed like swarthy Arab, white enveiled
 And thou a noble knight of Christendom
 To do me knightly service!

RAYMOND

Wondrous deeds

Against proud paynim would I do for thee
 And for mine honor.

MELUSINA

Nay, my love, not so.

There is no honor. Only the strong arm
 And subtle brain. Honor's a harlot's lie
 That fools may do more reverence to the brave.
 There is no honor for the doughty wise.
 My heart's own fire, why wrinkle up thy brows
 In that dark frown? So! kiss it all away.

RAYMOND

Kiss! there's no honor more for thee nor me;
 But leave these lands of paynim.

MELUSINA

Let us leave

Arabia and fare forth on Hadrian's Bay
 Where crownèd Venice rises o'er the wave
 With fairy pinnacles and golden domes
 That glitter o'er the green of her lagoon
 And opalescent gold of sunset skies;
 But we at eve will float on her canals,
 I, a grand lady in my gondola,
 And thou, my chaplain, seated me beside,
 Thy breviary lying on thy knee.

RAYMOND

Well learned in holy writ and charity
 To all men.

MELUSINA

Nay, dear love, 't will not be so.
 There is no charity by land or sea.
 Only a fool, who deems him great of soul,
 Scatters a largess of his garnered gold
 And calls the slight diversion, charity.

There is no charity, save in the dreams
 Of dolts and gulls. I'll have thee priest for love.
 Thou, as the sun sinks down upon the bay
 Below the rondure of Salute's dome,
 Wilt hold my hand and whisper words of love
 That float abroad upon the evening air
 To mingle with the music of the day
 Slow dying, loath to fade upon a scene
 So fancy strange and lovely over all.

RAYMOND

Comes glory too?

MELUSINA

We'll play at kings and queens
 Grand lama, pope or anything thou wilt,
 So that we stay in hearing of the sea.

RAYMOND

Then, lovely Melusina, soon to change,
 For now I view, down gulfs of drowsy hours
 The advent of false dawn. Love, is it not so?
 Kiss me once more! Once more the strange embrace;
 Though languid now, as dying in our joy,
 More lovely for that languor. All forgot
 Honor and charity and virgin love.
 Take this, this, this; and rosy fingered sleep
 Doth close the silken fringes of our eyes.
 When shall I find thee farther?

MELUSINA

Ere Sleep lulls
 Thy senses, name thou me the time and place
 And what thou wilt become and what shall I.
 Say me the word.

RAYMOND

Why then I choose — I choose —

I knew her once. She was my little bride
 Of Brittany, all tender, pure and true.
 And when we spoke on summer afternoons
 Of love and all the promise, her soft cheek
 Was all ablush! But now 't is all gone by.
 She would not greet me if she saw me now;
 She'd mourn me as one dead before his prime.
 Honor and charity are all forgot.
 With both her maiden breast was girded round.
 Oh! but I loved her, more than heart can tell!
 Beyond the dreams of beauty all men prize!
 Come thou to me like loved and lost Adele.
 Meet me to-morrow in that maiden guise.

MELUSINA

Fool! fool! thou knowest not what thou sayest! Ha! ha!
 The fool would have me maiden!

RAYMOND

Like Adele.

Meet me to-morrow on the Breton shore
 Like her, my heart's desire.

MELUSINA

Waves, do your work!
 Come forth, ye sleeping demons of the storm!
 Sweep in! 'T is the command of Melusine.

CHORUS OF DEMONS

Smite with brine and lightning fire
 Him who belies his heart's desire!
 Ho! for the howling of the wind!

Smite! ye spears of the icy blast!
 Let the ravening whirlpool find
 Him whose love is doomed to last
 When desire is overpast!
 Smite him, water! and smite him, wind!
 Let the fool in folly be shent!
 Terror before and Torture behind,
 The bolts are broken, the doors are rent!
 Ho! for the orgies now to begin!
 Turbid, turbid we all rush in!
 Snatch him and tear him! rend him away,
 Of virtue and vice neglected spawn!
 Here is a toy and we 'll play, we 'll play!
 Rack him abroad till comes the day,
 In thunder comes the light of the dawn
 And the clouded rack and sleet and hail!
 Raise the billows and raise the gale
 Where the cliffs are lone and the dawn is pale!
 There, mid the pilèd ruin and rack,
 Seafowl, fish and timbers of ships
 Shivered and rent; and clammy lips
 That show where the seaweed is loose and slack,
 Fling him, fling him away on the shore
 Over the crash and the breakers' roar,
 Over the swollen waters green!
 Fling his body away on the sand!
 The sea will not have him, nor yet the land!
 Let him lie with the waters in between
 To and fro
 With the tides to go
 Who angered the Lady Melusine!

 Come away! come away! the ocean roars!
 And never the wild waves wait!
 Away from combers and beaten shores!
 Away! for the hour grows late!

And, down in the ravening depths of the sea,
'T is ours to stir the tempest's glee
 Ere yet the hour goes by!
Ravin and rend! ravin and rend!
 We fling the waves on high
 And the foam, it dashes
 Like fire it flashes!
Ravin and rend! ravin and rend!
 Glory and Hate
 In the realms of Fate!
 Destroy and destroy
 Is ever our joy
In change without an end!

ACT III

DAYBREAK ASHORE

SCENE I: *The Breton coast at dawn. On the extreme left, a crag juts out above the beach and overhangs the sea. The force of the wind has somewhat abated but the waves are running all the higher.*

Enter CARMAGOLE and DON DAMIEN, dishevelled and drenched with rain.

DON DAMIEN

Ahoy! ahoy! ahoy!

CARMAGOLE.

No more! no more!
By towering cliff along the lone sea shore
Behold this very spot we started from
To follow devils' ditties all night long.

DON DAMIEN

This very spot?

CARMAGOLE

Aye, 't is the Devil's Mount.
Why, brother, even thou must know that name.
Men say there 's a huge cavern there below
The jutting crag, which like a giant's jaw
The fury of this tempest everhangs.

VOICE OF RAYMOND

Melusine! Melusine! no more! no more!
Lord, let them give these torments o'er.

DON DAMIEN

His voice at last! God save him and preserve!

CARMAGOLE

Amen! that was his voice! At last I heard.

DON DAMIEN

Raymòn, can this be true? Art thou suborned
To some fell sprite, existent in the sea?
Yet will I save thee if men's prayers can save
And strength be mine to win to yon dark cave!

CARMAGOLE

Wouldst climb the crag? Thou stumblest even now.
'T is help for us and him. Get thou and I
Back to the castle. 'T is the only way
To save Lord Raymond!

DON DAMIEN

Yea, we learn from fools
Our own blind zeal! Poor mortals, weak in all
But charity. Back to the castle, ho,
To save Raymòn! It is God's will to go.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II: *The same. The dawn is growing brighter over the cliffs. Occasionally, above the roaring of the waves, can be heard the groans of Raymond.*

Enter ANDREW, URSULA, JEANETTE and MARIANNE.

URSULA

Sure, 't is a misery, all the lonesome night
To walk and walk; for sleep will never come

When John and my boy Peter go for herring.
Why did they not come back?

ANDREW

Poor fools! poor fools!
Now don't you cry. We 'll find 'em right enough!

MARIANNE

Aye, for the sea doth always give his dead.

ANDREW

I say we 'll find 'em and we surely shall;
So don't you cry, you Marianna, you!
I tell you there's no danger.

JÉANETTE

None for you
Who stays among the women when it rains
And tells 'em not to be affrighted! You!
A horseshoe crab were better help than you,
Stuck with his tail a sitting on the sand.
You cast-up jelly-fish, where is our dearies?
Out on the raging waters! and you says:
"We 'll find 'em soon!"

MARIANNE

Find 'em at Judgment Morn!

ANDREW

Find 'em with Davy Jones for all I care!
Find 'em yourself! Here I comes out at night
Because you women worrit me to come;
And now I get your curses that I came.
One calls me blob and one a horseshoe crab
Soon as I speaks of comfort! That's the way

Of women. High and low, they 're all the same.
 The little and the lean, the fat and broad
 Was put on earth to harry up the men
 Ready for Satan. Don't you hear that noise?
 There be your sweethearts and your dearies both.
 They 've landed on the other beach and now
 They be a shouting. Hi! haloo! haloo!
 We 've been a seeking you the whole long night
 Out of our warm, snug beds! Can't you come here?

VOICE OF RAYMOND

Help! help! Oh! help!

ALL

Where be you?

VOICE OF RAYMOND

Let me die!

ANDREW

Living or dead, we want to find you out.
 Where be you? Can't you answer to the words?

VOICE OF RAYMOND

Are you the devils still?

MARIANNE

Poor soul, poor soul!
 He thinks we 're devils!

JEANETTE

Sure his wits be gone.

ANDREW

He's got his brains. He'll not have nothing wrong

With him! A sound and seasonable brain!
 He knows a woman and a woman's ways.
 I guess he knows a thole-pin from an oar.

MARIANNE

It sounds just like your Frank.

JEANETTE

That's not his voice;
 It's much more like your Charles.

MARIANNE

My husband, marm,
 Would never speak of women in that way.

ANDREW

How do you know, if not behind the door?
 Come, come, old girls! cheer up! no more of this;
 Here comes a louder shouting. There's your Charles
 And there's your Frank and John and Peter boy;
 And all of 'em a-coming o'er the cliff!
 See 'em dark red against the morning sky!
 Glory to God!

URSULA

I knew they'd come at last,
 Come home to mother!

MARIANNE

See old Andrew there!
 He's glad enough for all we devils be!

VOICES OF FISHERMEN

Ahoy! ahoy! good morning for us all!

Enter JOHN, FRANK, CHARLES, and PETER, breathless and bruised, with torn and soaked garments. They fling themselves on the sand. The others gather round.

URSULA

Get blankets!

ANDREW

Pile the driftwood! Light the fire!

MARIANNE

O Charles, it's good to kiss your rough old beard!
It's saltier than salt mackerel.

URSULA

Wrap you up
And warm yourselves!

ANDREW

Where be the dories, boys?

CHARLES

They're battered up upon the little beach,
Battered and beaten by the cursèd waves!
The nets all broke! Good God! it was a night!

URSULA

Praise Peter and praise Paul, you got safe home!

JEANETTE

The nets all broke?

FRANK

Yea, broke from float and stake
And carried clean away with all our haul;
It's not no paying job, this devil's storm!

CHARLES

They say there's devils on the midnight sea
That sing their hymns to Davy the Old Boy.
And Satan, down in Hell, beyond the storm.

PETER

I heard 'em too.

ANDREW

You heard the devils, boy?
They told you lies, I reckon.

VOICE OF RAYMOND

Woe is me!

PETER (*screams*)

Ah! ah!

VOICE OF RAYMOND

Thick brine!

PETER

Oh! there it goes again,
The weary voice I heard upon the sea!
Father, there's devils round! Come let's go home!

VOICE OF RAYMOND

There is no honor and no charity
And all are devils' lies.

CHARLES

It sounds out there,
The little beach where we our dories drew.

FRANK

It can't be there. There was n't nothing there
When we come in!

URSULA

It sounds between the cliff
And ocean breakers. Underneath that rock
Where boy nor man can climb or scale or swim
Or land with dory or with arms and legs, —
We all have seen that cave. It comes from there.

VOICE OF RAYMOND

Honor and Charity and Love are dead.
They all went out on Melusina's smile.

MARIANNE

God guard our souls!

URSULA

What are you doing now,
Casting aside your blanket?

VOICE OF RAYMOND

Melusine!

JOHN

I'm going round, where there's a man to save!

FRANK

And I!

CHARLES

And I!

PETER

And I!

JOHN, FRANK, CHARLES *and* PETER

And all of us

To save him from the Lady Melusine!

ANDREW

Nay, nay, there 's an old song. Don't risk your bones
 Twixt rock and water. Let us go our ways.
 There 's not no woman with a fish's tail.
 God made 'em queer, but not as queer as those.
 There 's not no mortal man in yonder cave.
 No mortal man could ever crawl in there.
 'T is some rock devil, whining in the dark
 To catch you all for gudgeon. Warily,
 My old horse mackerel, don't you take that lure!

JOHN

I know a good, safe ledge eyes cannot see
 From top or bottom. There I used to climb,
 A lad to poke for eggs of gull and tern.
 You women knot a bowline, o'er the face
 O' the crag to let us down in the cave's mouth.
 Follow me, messmates. When a man has been
 All night the toy of every ocean wind,
 His heart grows large for woes of other men.
 Come, comrades. Let us find the Devil's cave;
 For if it be a man, we'll surely save!

(Exeunt JOHN, FRANK, CHARLES and PETER.)

MARIANNE (*ascending cliff*)

The cliff juts out and hangs right in the air.
 No way to see the bottom from the top.

ANDREW

The rope grows slack!

VOICES OF FISHERMEN

The waves have borne us in
All safe and sound!

VOICE OF JOHN

Belay there!

VOICE OF RAYMOND

Once again
The devils? Oh! give o'er! I've had enough,
Enough of torment for a thousand years!

VOICE OF JOHN

Hold hard, my hearties! Set your teeth and grit!
God knows there is no peril for the brave!

VOICE OF CHARLES

Dost hear his words?

ANDREW

How do we hear so plain
Both him and you?

VOICE OF JOHN

Some passage of the rock,
Some hidden cleft is trumpet for our speech
That here within the cave is thunder loud.

URSULA

Sure 't is a world of wonders!

ANDREW

Where is now
The goblin?

VOICE OF FRANK

It grows darker as I crawl
And I find nothing!

VOICE OF CHARLES

Oh! I feel, I feel
A something soft and slippery and cold!

VOICE OF FRANK

And I! It is a man!

VOICE OF CHARLES

A mortal man!

VOICE OF JOHN

Fore God, it is the heir of Lusignan!

*Enter LORD and LADY LUSIGNAN, ADELE, BERTA,
CARMAGOLE, DON DAMIEN and search party.*

CARMAGOLE

Below that crag he lies!

DON DAMIEN

The rope! the rope!
Lord! Lord! my prayers are granted!

LORD LUSIGNAN

Where's my son?

ANDREW

Your servitor, my lord, he 's down below!

ADELE

Raymòn? where? where?

MARIANNE

Inside the Devil's Cave
So please your gracious ladyship!

VOICE OF JOHN

I come!

Hold fast, my lord! hold fast as drowning man!
Now! cast off! now! heave away!

JOHN is raised with RAYMOND in his arms. The people at the rope then busy themselves with raising CHARLES and FRANK.

CARMAGOLE

They are safe and sound!

ALL

All hail! all hail Raymòn of Lusignan!

URSULA

My John once more!

LORD LUSIGNAN.

My son! my son! my son!

ADELE

Awake my love! dost know me? Answer me?

URSULA

Some brandy for them both!

MARIANNE

How white! how pale!
The poor, pale face like flesh of drownèd men!

ADELE (*to JOHN*)

'Tis thou who saved him? Take thou this cross
of gold!
Oh! canst thou not revive him?

JOHN

Have no fear.

URSULA

Come! chafe him! Here 's the brandy.

RAYMOND (*opening his eyes*)

Melusine!

ADELE

Raymòn, look up at me, Adele, thine own!

LORD LUSIGNAN

Ill-omened boy! give o'er!

RAYMOND

O Melusine!

Is this thy greeting on the Breton shore?
Is this the goodly gathering of our kind
To witness our fair dalliance, Melusine?
Who is that elder, with the fish's eye?
Crown him with seaweed! He 's the driftwoods' king!
O Melusine! O Lady Melusine!

Let the waves roll and let the fishhawk soar
And scream above our transports! Where's the girl
I was to marry? Some one says she's gone
To Venice in a gondola to sing
Of common love above the still lagoon!
Ha! ha! you blood red fiends, rend her away!
Her innocence is green as sea water!
Rend her away, for love will pass and die,
Always to change into a Melusine!

LORD LUSIGNAN

Boy! boy! dost know me?

RAYMOND

Aye, you man-eater!
You eat the body and soul of all poor men!
Go back to ocean's bed and vex no more
The puny little dogfish! I'll have none
But these fair moonflowers for my Melusine!

LORD LUSIGNAN

Delirium! O come, good friends away,
And hold for secret all that he doth say
And every motion of his fevered strife,
If each man sets a value on his life.

ACT IV

FORTY DAYS AFTER

SCENE I: *Courtyard of the Castle of Lusignan. A carousal is discovered of servants and men-at-arms. At the left a chapel porch surmounted with the family device. In front of this, the statue of a warrior, painted as with chain armour. At back, the castle gates, bolted and guarded. Time: Easter Morning.*

Enter CARMAGOLE, DON DAMIEN and BERTA.

MAN (*sings*)

Drink! drink! the noon is nigh!
Soon the bridegroom will pass by!
Clink the can and drink her down!
Don thee, bride, thy veil and gown!
Clang ye bells and cannon boom!
Welcome! welcome! bride and groom!

CHORUS

Clang ye bells and cannon boom!
Adele and Raymond, bride and groom!

GIRL (*sings*)

First the groom and then the bride!
Then the pageant shall betide;
Then high mass the priest will say.
Then the bells on Easter Day
Toll and toll, mid cannon's boom!
Te Deum for the bride and groom!

CHORUS

Clang ye bells and cannon boom!
Adele and Raymond, bride and groom!

BOTH (*sing*)

Toils and perils everpast!
Marriage for their loves at last!
Happy lovers now for aye,
Joy begins on Easter Day!
Toll ye bells mid cannon's boom
Joy forever, bride and groom!

CHORUS

Clang ye bells and cannon boom!
Adele and Raymond, bride and groom!

BERTA

Let drunkards troll their carols free from care!
I spell disaster on the morning air.
Yon pageant starts; high mass may follow still;
Joy goes; disaster comes; all ends in ill!

CARMAGOLE

Though black Disaster clomb this ivied wall.
To meet him point by point and over all
Behold this image, every inch a man,
The old Raymòn, first Lord of Lusignan.
Thus on his valor if our Raymond stands,
Lord of his bosom, mighty of his hands,
There 's no disaster on the noon or night
Can harm his spirit while his honor's bright.

(*noise at the castle gate*)

GUARD

Ha! who comes here?

DON DAMIEN

Open the wicket wide
 And this unseemly riot I will quell
 With round rebuke.

(The guard obeys DON DAMIEN and reveals the faces of the fishermen and their wives, with MELUSINA, disguised in the background.)

What means this insolence?

ANDREW

We come to see the bride.

GUARD

Assail the door
 Upon your peril!

JOHN

Wife and I be come
 To find a girl whose hearty once I saved
 From drowning. Take you there this cross of gold
 Go, cry it through the castle!

RÂOUL

Why! 't was worn
 By Lady Adele!

BERTA

I'll find her. Give it me.

GUARD (*to* JOHN)

How came you by that token?

DON DAMIEN (*at wicket*)

Let them in

All! all! no farther parley! I can answer
Myself for all.

(The guard unbars the gates. The fishers are revealed against a vista of hillside crowned with pine and poplar, and a glimpse of the ocean on the horizon.)

FISHERS

God save you!

Enter JOHN, CHARLES, FRANK, ANDREW, URSULA, JEANETTE and MARIANNE. As MELUSINA would enter, DON DAMIEN confronts her on the threshold.

DON DAMIEN

Ha! there 's one

I see, less favored than the rest of these.
Who may this be?

JOHN

We know her not.

ANDREW

We never

Seen her before. She hove in sight to-day.
She flew fair signals. She 's a jaunty barque
For rage and play, she 'd grace a bridal feast
Nor never need no nuptials of her own.

MELUSINA

Why, fish be fain at weddings, my old spark!
They make a lusty groom, a buxom bride.
Look you this turbot, white as bridal veil,
Fit for a famished bridegroom or a king!

CARMAGOLE

Good wife, your wares are fairer than your tongue.
I 'd rather them than you.

GUARD

Cry out your fish
Along the village street!

CARMAGOLE

Hale her away!

DON DAMIEN

That woman is all evil! Send her hence!

GUARD

You hear his reverence, woman, get you gone!

MELUSINA

Get gone yourself! I 'll never budge, not I!
Perhaps a double twenty year ago
Sir Priest were fain to shrive me anywhere
His eye could find me, lived I in those days.
But now the eyes are bleared. The jaundiced cheeks
May burn no more. The fountains of young life
Are dry and stagnant, and the heart is cold.
Then comes Religion; then comes Piety.
But you, my merry masters, quick and free,
Will grant me that I enter.

GUARD

What 's your fee?

MELUSINA

I 'll pay you ducats down.

(kisses him)

FIRST MAN

A smacking bride!

GUARD

Alas! alas!

SECOND MAN

Look you, he 's drunk with wine!

DON DAMIEN

It is the foul enchantress, Carmagole,
And charmer of men's weakness!

CARMAGOLE

Hale her out,
Good men and true.

MELUSINA

They do not hear you, they!
Nor will they hear you though ye loudly cry.
My gentle comrades, let us bide awhile
Or I will cast my kerchief in your face
And of a truth we 'll see what we shall see.

SECOND MAN

That woman 's not ill favored. Ruddy cheek
And deep gray eye and haunch broad as a boat!

THIRD MAN

Remark thee, comrade of her piercing gaze.

FIRST MAN

Good woman, you may stay; but stand aside.

SECOND MAN

I 'll stay and thou shalt stay and we 'll be two!
Salute! salute!

(tries to kiss her)

MELUSINA

Aye, marry have it back!

A grand salute!

(boxes his ears)

ALL

Huzzah!

SECOND MAN

Alas, I 'm drowned!

Thick brine is in mine eyes! they burn! they burn!
Oh! oh!

CARMAGOLE *(to DON DAMIEN)*

Dost leave us?

DON DAMIEN

Yea, in haste!

CARMAGOLE

Not so!

Abide thou there. Lord Raymond comes anon!
We need thy solemn ritual.

DON DAMIEN

Stay me not!

I 'll have Te Deum and high mass precede
The bridal pageant, grant there yet be time.
His menaced destiny, I 'd exorcise
Before Lord Raymond's coming. Bide thou there.

[Exit.]

MELUSINA

Why, what 's yon noble statue, armour clad?
It hath Lord Raymond's likeness.

RAOUL

It was hewn
With him, the gracious model.

BERTA

Where hast thou
Seen the original?

MELUSINA

Long years ago.
I viewed him on the midnight he was born.

BERTA

Thou liest, may the devil rend thy tongue!
Oh! oh!

[Exit.]

FIRST MAN

Thou art too young, my goodly jade.

MELUSINA

Why, clap me on the shoulder, broad and bare.
I 'll carry Father Time and lightly too.
I saw him. Ask of Berta.

(chime of bells)

FIRST MAN

She hath gone
As one half crazed.

RAOUL

She muttered an old spell

FIRST MAN

The residential doors are open wide,
The pageant starts.

CARMAGOLE

Fore God, the bells at noon!

MELUSINA

What think you of the statue, Carmagole?

CARMAGOLE

I think no thoughts, for I was born a fool.

(Flourish of trumpets. At the open door of the residence, a herald appears. He is followed by three squires of the body, who bear the banner of Lusignan.)

Don Damien has failed!

MELUSINA

It looks to me

More like the elder than the younger lord.

I'd view the face more plain.

(sotto voce)

Three hundred years!

Are gone, and yet thy sculptor of new days
Had potent inspiration! Sweet my lord,
Ready for all, my beauty gave to thee,
So dear, so deadly! Now Destruction comes
On thee and all the splendor of thy line;
But I alone with yearning must remain!

CARMAGOLE

Avaunt! vile witch! the bridal pageant comes!
Wouldst thou thy curse intrude?

MELUSINA

Aye, good Sir Fool;

If Beauty be a curse and hearts are frail
 And Youth is ever wayward as the rose
 That wafts wild fragrance o'er the purple sea;
 If Beauty be a curse, the Lord Raymòn
 Is doubly cursed in body and inmost soul.
 Frail as the breeze upon a summer eve
 That wanders, who knows whither, or white sand
 Blown in the whirlwind o'er the ocean spray.
 And if in the long hours of latter days,
 Once at his heart he felt the yearning stir
 In poignant memory of my loveliness,
 In spite of all the heavens, his soul and mine
 Like wanton winds and waves forevermore,
 Must mingle with the joyance of the storm
 And tribulation of the moaning wave!
 Better than thou, I know the Lord Raymòn,
 All night and day how throbs his heart at ease.
 Before he weds, I've wiled him from his bride,
 And all thy folly shall not hinder me.

URSULA

They come! they come! they crowd the open door!
 The pageant starts!

CARMAGOLE

Fore God, the bells at noon!

VOICES OF MONKS (*within the chapel*)

Ab insurgentibus in me, libera me, Domine, quia occupaverat animam meam.

MELUSINA

What sounds are these, before the marriage vows,
 All out of human custom?

CARMAGOLE

Listen thou!

CHOIR (*within*)

The dawn empurples Heaven;
 The morning stars resound;
 New joy to Earth is given;
 Hell trembles at the sound.

Have done with tears and sorrow
 And all abounding shame.
 Glad angels on the morrow
 His victory proclaim.

MELUSINA

By all the gods of old, I can no more!
 Ai! ai! men's hearts are broken with remorse!
 But thou, primeval Chaos, lend thy force
 And grant that I return, ere day blows o'er!

(She vanishes in a burst of thunder and lightning; a shaft of lightning strikes the statue, shatters and overturns it.)

MEN AND WOMEN.

Back! back! the statue falls! alas! alas!
 Lord Raymond's down! alas! alas! alas!

CARMAGOLE

Raymòn the elder, champion of old,
 How low thou liest, founder of thy line!

SECOND MAN

The woman was a witch. She cast a spell!

GUARD

The fishers were her leaguers. Down with them.

ALL

Down! down!

CARMAGOLE

Good friends, no riot! Let them speak!

JOHN

We're all good men and true.

FRANK

We know her not.

ANDREW

We never saw her face before to-day!
But if you ask me where 's the woman gone,
I'd answer, in the ocean.

FIRST MAN

What 's her name?

ALL

Her name!

ANDREW

You know her name as well as I.
Look at her emblem o'er the chapel door.
You know her name and we 'll not say no more.

Enter RAYMOND at the door of the chapel; from the door of the residence enter LORD and LADY LUSIGNAN with ADELE and the wedding procession. Tableau.

ACT V

THE WEDDING FEAST

SCENE I: *The bower of ADELE. The walls are hung with lilac. At the right is a priedieu, carved with the figures of cherubim. A lute is lying on a settle by the latticed window. From the hall and courtyard below, there comes a sound of music and of revelry; and the chapel bell gives an answering peal to the bells of the cathedral in the town.*

Enter ADELE hurriedly

ADELE

Why came I here, thus restless to evade
My husband, my dear husband, newly wed?
At Berta's crazy bidding am I come.
What profitable secret can she know?
Yet will I hearken, for I doubt and fear
My Raymond beareth, branded on his soul,
The burning memories of a love betrayed.
I rise at morn and listen to the birds:
"There is no happiness for him nor thee;
No happiness, no happiness for him,
For him, for him, for him, nor yet for thee!"

(kneels at priedieu)

Oh! hark! the bells at noon! they chime afar!
Resounding harmonies, how glad ye are!
O sacred melody, that upward wells
Unto His throne, ye blessèd Easter bells.
I pray you in your gladness that ye bear
Unto His ears the burden of my prayer!

VOICES FROM THE BELLS

Toll! toll!
 Holy is the air.
 Behold the soul
 Of maiden at her prayer!

ADELE

O Lord of Life, our pilot and our guide,
 Whose spirit brooded o'er the waters wide,
 Whose lightest whisper stills their loudest roar,
 I pray for Raymond. Heal him and restore.

VOICES FROM THE BELLS.

Thy prayers are borne
 Beyond the morn;
 Then hearken to his word
 And thou shalt find
 On adverse wind
 The mercy of our Lord.

ADELE

Lord Christ, I thank thee and thou Lord of Days,
 Disdain not thou my thanks. Be thine the praise.
 The night is passed. No longer need I grope.
 There 's mercy on the noonday. Love and Hope
 Uprise o'er all. Here's Berta. Heart, be brave.
 'T is in thy power alone thy love to save.

Enter BERTA with the cross of gold

BERTA

My gracious lady, take thy cross once more.

ADELE

This cross? My fisherman, where 's he?

BERTA

But now

Gone with the rest. I bribed 'em, one and all,
 With hoarded wages. I have heard his tale.
 Then take thy cross of olive wood and gold.
 Raymòn on God's fair noon hath still to fear
 Damnation!

ADELE

Calm thee, Berta, thou dost rave.

BERTA

Lady, I 'm calm, who calmly fear the worst.
 Dost thou now know the portent in the court;
 The breaking of Raymòn, his effigy;
 The woman, borne away, mid smoke and flame
 Before the eyes of all?

ADELE

When lightning flares
 It smites and rives; and statues may fall down;
 And even fishwives vanish in a crowd
 Like wind on waves that leaves no trace behind.

BERTA

Look to thy cross. 'T is graved with ancient rune.
 A necromancer graved it, when he raised
 The proud and potent spirits of the air
 And earth and fire, against insurgent seas.
 Oh! greet Lord Raymond with this amulet!
 The chain must gird his throat ere noon goes by,
 For safety of his soul. No time to waste
 When erring mortals cope with Melusine.
 Her spell begins again upon this hour
 When cease the bells, and lasteth on and on

Till consummation of the marriage vows.
Now is the hour to save him if thou wilt.
Each moment brings him danger unawares.

ADELE

Did I believe in any magic spells,
I would not use them on my wedded lord.
But I have credence in the word of God
And human souls and Nature at the root
Of all things. Bodily and mental ills
Have differing sources. Often times the mind
Becomes the body's thrall. That man is lost.
There is no magic charm to make him whole.
And oftentimes the two be all at odds
As once with Raymond. He hath conquered now
And he and I have plighted faith anew.
This much I say to thee, old servitor,
Who hast all kind desires; but urge no more.
I hear his footstep on the turret stair.
Then get thee gone, good Berta, from my bower.
I 'll hold Raymòn by his dear loyalty,
Not by a charm.

BERTA

My lady has fine words.
And if thy Raymond had a tertian
Or gruel in the throat, wouldst tell the leech,
By loyalty alone he could be cured,
And inborn virtue, that would make him whole?
I tell thee, Raymond stands in peril dire,
Amid the fiend's enchantments, from an old
Enmity of bad spirits. We can save
Him from his fate by this!

ADELE

And our good deeds.
Have done with thy forebodings and the event
Will prove a nobler happiness for all.

Enter RAYMOND.

RAYMOND

Adele, why hast thou fled me?

ADELE

Berta here,
Entreated audience. She hath a charm
To hang about thy neck and keep thee whole
From demons and foul spirits.

BERTA

Furthermore
I pray thee, Raymond, thou my foster child,
Thou nourished on this breast, who hast a place
Within my heart of one who died too young,
I pray thee shun the feast and pass the hours
Till vesper bells in chapel and at prayer!
Nay, hear me out! I beg thee on my knees!
So may our gracious Lord, victorious
Over the grave, redeem thee from thy fate;
And I in peace may die.

RAYMOND

Thy head is turned.
Thine amulets and prayers are not for me.
What, Berta, kind old nurse, all sobs and tears?
There, still thy troubled bosom. I'm all safe.
I'm married, Berta.

BERTA

Out, alas! I knew
Thy fate and grieve not less that all comes true.

[Exit.]

RAYMOND

Adele, our cares are ended and our joys
Are now begun with love forevermore;
As even on the ocean, calm and blue
Neath smiling sunlight, so our souls may sail
Together onward.

ADELE

Thou art all for me!

RAYMOND

Oh! thine and thine alone, my own true heart!
Thine, thine and thine alone; if ever I
Took fancy for another, let me now
Be swallowed in the foaming of the sea.
What 's there?

ADELE

You start!

RAYMOND

What was it passed the door?

ADELE

Why there was nothing there.

RAYMOND

Aye, now I know.
Only a thought that like a shadow came,
Like a chill breath; full fain were I to know

The whence and whither; for as one it seemed
That knows the secrets of the ocean.

ADELE

Alas! alas! it is the same old tune!
My lord, my lord, remember I am here.
Remember I am here to charm away
This restless yearning. Bend thou over me
And I 'll protect thee. Long before the night
Our hearts shall be at peace forevermore.

RAYMOND

Adele, thou stirrest always the old love,
Like balmy breeze, that blows the mist away
From heather on the moor and eglantine
And gorse and hairbell. All the forest side
Whispers of gentle hours. Oh! trust me still;
For I to thee will swear as belted knight,
May life and love depart if evermore
In word or deed my spirit rest untrue.

ADELE

Give me my lute. I 'll sing thee one sweet song.

RAYMOND

Thy words are sweeter still.

ADELE

Nay, listen now
Before we join the feast and noisy throng,
A lover's answer to thy lover's vow.

SONG OF ADELE

Far, far away, where the silver myrtles blow,
Under their spray there 's a heart that beats for thee.

Come to my arms where the healing waters flow,
Far, far away from the perils of the sea.

Long have I waited for my own true love;
Lonely I listened and I longed for thee.
Come to my breast as flies the homing dove,
Far, far away from the changes of the sea!

RAYMOND

Oh! glory of our dream!

VOICES (*without*)

Raymond! Adele

ADELE

They call us, Raymond.

RAYMOND

Wait you there below;
We 'll join you presently.

VOICE

We 'll find you there.

ANOTHER VOICE

We come! we come! we 'll find you where you are!

Enter CARMAGOLE with a rout of guests

FIRST LORD

Already closeted?

FIRST LADY

The feast is toward.

SECOND LORD

A marriage, what? a marriage? buffets give.

(*buffets* RAYMOND)

RAYMOND

And buffets take.

(*buffets* SECOND LORD)

FIRST LORD

And buffets all around!

CARMAGOLE

"O rapture," quoth the turtle, "Give me corn,
I 'll do my cooing after!"

SEVERAL GUESTS

To the feast!

SECOND LADY.

Look you, Adele doth bridle with a blush!
Let 's bear them to their places.

FIRST LORD

Buffets all!

(*Amid the scuffle that ensues, CARMAGOLE mounts the window-seat and with mock solemnity enforces silence.*)

CARMAGOLE

Each dainty lady choose a gentleman.
The bride and groom and Folly lead the van.
Forever joined alike in weal and woe.

ALL

Then hey! together to the feast we go!

SCENE II: *The great hall of the castle. The tables are spread. On the dais are seated the bridal party, with CARMAGOLE on the steps of the dais. The other guests, with DON DAMIEN, are grouped round the lower tables. Servants are coming and going with meats and wine.*

LORD LUSIGNAN

A pledge to all fair friends.

DON DAMIEN

May this fair feast

Prepare the path for many riper years;
And all the joys of earth, when over all
Doth brood the holier joy of married vows.

Enter trencherman with swan

Behold the swan! I pledge thee, royal bird!
And may this life of marriage be as down,
Warm in thy nest about thine infant brood.

ALL

The swan! the swan!

CARMAGOLE

A flock of lustier birds
I'd pledge. The jangling jay, the gabbling pie,
The water wagtail and the laughing loon,
The popinjay and goose, the bride and groom!

FIRST LORD

Once more to pledge the bridegroom and the bride!

ALL

The bride and groom! the bride and groom! all hail!

RAYMOND (*rising*)

Kind friends, I have not many words to say.
This joy gives greater solace —

FIRST LORD

Solace never
Came to a happy honeymoon before.

RAYMOND

Our marriage, duly solemnized, remains —

ALL

All hail the groom!

RAYMOND

Like unattempted seas.

ADELE

Enough, my lord!

FIRST LADY

Your pardon, lady mine,
We want his words.

FIRST LORD

The lady hath the power
To do the talking in the after years.

SECOND LORD

What ho! the bridegroom, singing like a swan!

FIRST LADY

It is the swan song of a bachelor.

THIRD LORD

Alas! alas! but give us leave to weep
 His prone departure into other lands.
 For single men must grieve, when their good sect
 Is thus diminished.

FIRST LORD

Let us have his words.

RAYMOND

Kind friends, upon this grateful afternoon,
 My joy is such, the ultimate of woe,
 I 'd give you anything my heart may hold;
 But words alack, I may not for pure joy.
 Then here 's to all around us, father, mother,
 Dear friends and life companions.

ALL

Hail! all hail!

*Enter a chorus of youths and maidens crowned with
 roses*

SONG

Bloom, ye meadows on Easter Day!
 Ring ye valleys! with music ring!
 Laugh, ye lovers, the world is gay!
 Ho! for the bounty of the spring!

Crown with myrtle, crown with bay!
 Sparkling wine and roses bring!
 Fie, to-morrow and yesterday!
 Ho! for the bounty of the spring!

Drive dull care and sorrow away;
 Leave the nightingale to sing!
 Leave the lark his roundelay!
 Ho! for the bounty of the spring!

Blood is red and the days are rare;
 Youth and Love will have their fling!
 Better than gold, a maiden's hair!
 Ho! for the bounty of the spring!

Seek the bower in twilight air,
 When the bells at evening ring!
 Wait your lady, fain and fair!
 Ho! for the bounty of the spring!

Love is here and Love is there.
 Love is ever upon the wing.
 Meet him and greet him everywhere!
 Ho! for the bounty of the spring!

CARMAGOLE

They sing their words accordant to their wits.
 Love is but known by poets and by fools.
 'T is Folly's poesie and Wisdom's bane.
 Then, shake my bells, I'll drink a pledge to her,
 The Lady Adele, the Lady Paragon,
 Whom Folly crowns.

LORD LUSIGNAN

Fool, give me forcèd leave.
 I'll pledge the bride!

CARMAGOLE

The father and the fool
 Will pledge the bride together.

GUESTS

Drink we all.

To her! . . . to her! . . . Lord Raymond! . . . paramours!

RAYMOND

I drink to her whom Fate and my own will
Have made my own forever!

GUESTS

Drink we all!

RAYMOND

You need not move nor smile that smile of Hell!
Give o'er that leer! Have I not drunk a health
To her who bound me with a golden chain?
What would you here, you devil woman you?

ADELE

My gracious lord, what makes your words so wild,
So rough and broken?

RAYMOND

What is this I see?

Before mine eyes, there rises up a form,
Stern, horrid and yet beautiful as night
In every facial contour. Lips apart
And eyes that take away Medusa's stare
In fierce, condensed fire. Her brows are crowned
With raven locks! Her face, though deadly pale,
Full of the power to wake a man's desire
And nameless agonies. Thus in my sleep
Ofttimes I've seen her on a nightmare cloud,
Black vested, rose engirdled and a brooch
On the left shoulder of a roseate stone
That flames as with a million fires of Hell!

Now flushes up the crimson of her cheeks
 And kindles anger in immortal eyes!
 It is the fatal spirit of our house!
 It is, it is the Lady Melusine.

MELUSINA *appears before them all.*

MELUSINA

It is the time, it is the place at last.
 And I must be myself and thou thyself
 And both must dwell together evermore!

RAYMOND

What is the dreadful meaning of those words?

MELUSINA

Desire and doom! the whirlwind of desire
 On damnèd seas, but thou and I are one!

RAYMOND

Adele, thy word will wrest me from her spell.
 (*ADELE falls, fainting into the arms of LADY LUSIGNAN.*)

LORD LUSIGNAN

She cannot answer.

LADY LUSIGNAN

Oh! you've broke her heart
 As you have rent his life and ours in twain.

MELUSINA

I do my will.

(*Vanishes.* RAYMOND *falls across his chair in the convulsions of death.* LORD LUSIGNAN and DON DAMIEN *rush forward and bend over him.*)

ADELE (*reviving*)

I dreamed a shadow came
Between thy love and mine! What! liest thou there?
Without thee, all is void and desolate.
Eternal torments let me share with thee,
So that thy spirit come once more to me!

DON DAMIEN

Let's bear him to his chamber. Last repose,
If not the tortured soul, the body knows.
And thou, dear daughter, unto thee 't is given
For thy lost love to pray. There's hope in Heaven.

FINIS

THE ISLES OF GOLD

To A. C.

THE HEROINE OF MY HAPPIER MOMENTS
AND ALWAYS AN INSPIRATION

INVOCATION

Oh, for the blessed Isles of Gold,
Where still the mighty loves of old
Abide secure and free from care,
Divided here, united there!
Spurn the base earth where time and fate
Bar the highway to heaven's gate;
Where still the strife of fate and time
Are discords on the morning chime;
And where a mellow sadness wells
On every peal of wedding bells.
Oh, come away beyond the dark
Where carols loud the morning lark,
Where brighter beams immortal light,
And where the noonday is more bright!
Immortal glory on the dawn,
O'er babbling spring and tender lawn;
Immortal glory o'er the sea,
And on the vast o'er shadowing tree
Where still the tameless winds blow wild
For any little earthborn child,
Who, wafted on a cloud of dreams,
Or ever yet the morning beams,
To that fair isle is borne afar
Beyond the bourne of any star;
Where love and hope and joy abide
Beyond the flowing of the tide.
Fond mortals turn ye not away!
To fading dawn and tragic day;
In answer to the heart's own prayer
'T is joy, 't is joy abideth there!
Bright joy that brings eternal youth,

The rainbow gold of love and truth,
No mortal man may hope to find
Who leaves not far on earth behind
The demon hopes, fond mortals ken,
The evil ways and works of men.

OUR VILLA

When in the air the springtime thrills
Ho, for our villa in the hills!
Come, my dear one, come with me;
All our joy is yet to be!
Girl of mine whose radiant eyes
Teach me virtue, fair and wise:
When there 's no more ice and snow,
Let us then together go
Far above the little town
Lowly in the dust adown,
High upon the mountain side,
There to spend our summer-tide.
You and I are all alone
When the carping world is gone.
In the sunbeams we will fare
With the spirits of the air
And the spirits of the trees
Whose whisper steals upon the breeze,
Mid the peeping Alpine flowers,
That give gay color to the hours.
Ever joined in love we dwell
By jutting peak and ferny dell
Happy as two mountain rills.
Ho, for our villa in the hills!

Look! upon the mountain side
How the dreams are glorified
By the loves of me and you —
The only place where dreams come true!
And every wish and every word,

Swifter than the falcon bird,
Compels dull dross to its command
In every corner o' the land!

You crafty gnomes who delve in caves
Below the water as it laves
The sun kissed mountain at the base,
I call from your abiding place
What time the sunset colors take
The hushèd waters of the lake
And Twilight with her wild sweet words
Doth put to sleep the nestling birds.
When in the dark the world goes round,
Leave your dwellings underground;
Hasten up the mountain tracks
Ten thousand stones upon your backs!
Parian marble gleaming clear,
Like the noonday all sincere,
Jaspar flaming in the night,
Lapis lazuli, malachite,
Purple porphyry in its pride
Like Augustus glorified
Or him who dwelled in Tivoli;
And all the gorgous hues that lie
Under fretted spire and dome
Where tombèd bishops make their home
Amid the dreams of an old world;
Like a garden all unfurled
In tropic colors manifold;—
And bring the yellow Indian gold
And bring the gold of ruddy hue
Until my lady hath her due
And all your labor and your art
Can match the treasure of her heart.
Or if ye tire of the task,
One less arduous to ask,

Ye gnomes and kobolds sturdy made,
Wield the pick and ply the spade
And hoist your derricks in the air
And craft and cunning do not spare.
Join the framework; build the walls
Around the court and vaulted halls
Until our villa, rising high
Above the scope of Envy's eye,
Gives greater glory, when the dawn
Glowes iridescent and the lawn
Upon the slope grows doubly bright
With daisies yellow and daisies white;
And violet and anemone;
And purple bellflowers merrily
Nod upon us as we pass
And brush the dewdrops from the grass.
Look you that your task be done
Ere the coming of the sun;
And our elfin palace rise
Spire on spire beneath the skies,
With crystal domes as fragile fair
As fragrance on the morning air.
Then you and I, my lady dear,
Upon the pleasure of the year
Bathed in the morn, may stand before
Our own dream villa, at the door.

How the joy of morning thrills
Over our villa in the hills!
Come my dear one to the door,
Aged bronze, encrusted o'er
With tracery of beaten gold
And the storied loves of old;
The rumor of whose deeds, blown o'er
Even to this, our inland shore,
Doth put to sleep immortal Pain

And hearts desires are born again.
Youths and maidens, crowned with vine,
Round the portals intertwine
With ivy of a love eterne;
And hymeneal altars burn;
And over all doth proudly go
Eros of the charmed bow;
And joy of all things fresh and fair
Gleams golden through the portals there.
Who's the porter at the gate,
Robed in hues of royal state,
Wingèd like the afterglow
Over peaks of roseate snow?
At his wand the doors will ope;
Lady mine, his name is Hope.
Look, the double doors are wide!
You and I may pass inside.
Lo, the sober vaulted hall
Where little Hopes crowd over all,
Each a curly silken page!
Down the staircase how they rage!
How they rush the hallway through
In tumult of glad retinue!
Lady let us pass along
Mid the welcome of the throng,
With a solemn step and slow
To a court whose virgin glow
Rivals the Himalayan snows
Or candor of an Alpine rose.
Round the court on every hand
Rise the doric columns grand,
As of jasper glorified,
Where the hues of summer hide
And flash again and hide again
Like sunbeams through an April rain.
In the midst a fountain plays

Where myrtle grows in divers ways
And little Joys of quiet hours
Around the fountain bloom like flowers;
And all about and all around
Are intuitions of sweet sound
Where harps and viols in tuneful maze
Swell to the music of your praise —
With music sweet as nightingale
Or woodlark o'er the dancing dale;
And mighty as the storm-tossed seas
And calm as June on sunlit leas
Come Love's primeval harmonies.
Within the court a noisy throng
Of Hopes and Joys are come along;
Nor tongue nor pen can ever grace
The beauty of each radiant face,
Who in a happy hour are come
Eager to greet us at our home.
Aspirations everywhere
Hover on the morning air,
Clothed in hues of sunset fires,
Winged with beautiful desires,
Color that rises, falls and dies
Like wings of those ephemeral flies
Whose myriads on the waters play
In joy of one brief summer day.
Evermore the fountain plays
Mid the murmur and the maze;
And the limpid waters run
O'er the red carnelian;
And the living water seems
To mix and mingle with our dreams.
Lady, you are all mine own;
And you and I are all alone;
And you and I together now
In veneration lowly bow

Before the spirit of our Love
That lifts us all the spheres above;
And oh, the brown and golden hair!
And oh, your smile beyond compare!
And oh, your look so tender mild!
As any trustful little child
Who knows not any fret or shame,
All innocent of the crass game
Of life! My lady, lovely fair!
And you and I together there,
And only joy for you and me,
And love in maiden purity!
So your lips in laughter spread
Like a flower opening red,
Fragrant as the summer rose
That in its beauty doth unclose
Beside a honeysuckle bower;
And oh! the breath of orange flower
When lips touch lips in a suspense
Of pleasure many times intense
As on the rack the tortured pain!
And so again and yet again
Dawns in your lips and cheeks and eyes
The tumult of a glad surprise;
And like God's bounty from above
Surges o'er both the mutual love
That far from man's unnumbered ills
Builded our villa in the hills.

LOVE'S DISCORD

The trogan, he was a beautiful bird;
The hill and the dale reëchoed his word;
His crimson breast and verdant tail
Were borne upon the favoring gale
In lands beyond the summer seas,
Where hover the joys like humblebees,
And rosemary grows without the rue,
And hearts' desires may all come true.
He warbled his song all over the hill
And lovely and long by meadow and rill;
He sang of truth and triumph of right;
For the day will follow the darkest night,
And winter gives way when summer is warm,
And the sun will shine beyond the storm.
Oh! how the little trogan sang,
And how the lively flowers upsprang!
Pink and white all over the lea
They were a beautiful sight to see.
He sang and he sang by meadow and rill
And the song came down all over the hill
And the sunlight came in a golden flood
Sure to be there to warm your blood.
And *she* was there, the maiden fair,
With tender eyes and rippling hair;
But how she came to that far land,
She never quite could understand.

Beyond the charmèd hill there stood
A wilderness of charmèd wood;
And in the midst, where shady streams

Babbled the joys of nobler dreams
And far off memories of fair earth
And high desires of human birth;
Between the clusters of the trees,
Still rustling with the fragrant breeze,
High overhead the sunlight shone
On an old, old wall of marble stone.
Around that wall, a circle ran
Of columns all corinthian
With crumbling shaft and capital;
And the ivy, climbing over all
Within its clasp did still retain
Vague memories of ancient pain.
'T was Eros' temple in the wood,
Avoided by the trogan brood;
In that elysian land of spring,
Avoided as a usual thing;
But in the light of Dreamland's day,
'T was there the maiden held her way
Beyond the hills, beyond the shore;
And the little trogan flew before.
The chequered sun and eddying shade
A thousand, thousand patterns made
That flickered and changed like elmo fires
Or a maiden's fancies and desires.
So, mid the music of the trees,
Still guided onward by the breeze,
They came upon an open space
Before that consecrated place,
Ere yet the brighter gods did fall,
For ages immemorial
To winged Eros dedicate;
Now banished by an adverse fate.
But guarded still by some strange spell
In myrtle grove and mossy dell,
Where violets all their hues combined

Mid columns ivy intertwined,
Sweet spirits came invisible;
But by their voices you could tell
In recreant ages all did move
In sorrow of departed love.
The girl drew nigh the temple there
Her heart more silent than deep prayer;
And the trogan stopped and sudden and solemn,
With folded wings he sat on a column.
And so the murmur swelled to sighs
And old, forgotten melodies
Where interwoven still was heard
By ravished ears, the selfsame word,
All other whispered words above,
The word of the world, the word of Love.
Of Love! create the spheres among,
Forever fair, forever young
And over all the sceptered throng
Of elder gods, forever strong!
Above religion's gain and loss,
Above the crescent and the cross,
His word was borne eternally,
That youngest, eldest deity.

Within those columns clear of shade
A fountain in the sunshine played,
Flashing the fulgence of the sky
Whose burning blue might never die.
And where those living waters ran,
Before the maiden's eyes, a man
Appeared whose features bore the trace
Of that undaunted soldier race,
That long ago came fiercely forth
In raven galleys from the north.
When his blue eye met her brown eye,
It kindled in intensity;

For in the realms of earth or air
He saw not anything more fair,
Whether his wandering way might go
On highland moors and heather blow;
Or where in immemorial lands
The pyramid eternal stands
With the great sphynx, crouched on the sands.
Over the olive cheek that there
Was shadowed by the rippling hair,
Stole a faint blush as on the morn
When dawn awakens at the horn
Of some far huntsman in the vale
Reëchoing over hill and dale.
All that was tender in her eyes
Was kindled in a bright surprise;
And parting still, the crimson lips
Smiled bright as Hebe when she dips
The nectar that the great gods crave;
And oh, the kiss he took and gave!
So from the myrtle flowers among,
Over them all, the trogan's song
Which at his heart did merrily stir,
Came forth in melody for her.
And all around the freshening gales
Loudly over the hills and dales
Carolled their joy; and merrily
The wild birds warbled in every tree;
And woods and winds and waters gave
Back to their souls in one great wave
The triumph and wild harmony
Of Love, the primal deity.
Then, following on that crash of sound
That thrilled and thrilled the forest round,
The maiden knew her southern charms
Were all enfolded in his arms;

And trembling as in fear they stood
In Eros' temple in the wood.

They say who wander by those streams,
Sorrow comes to the land of dreams;
But how it comes and when and where, —
Whether 't is wafted on the air;
Whether it creeps along the ground;
Whether it grows the rocks around
Or from the branches of the trees;
Or on the eddying of the breeze
Slides down from heaven at break of day;
Far wiser tongues than mine must say.
Unto the lovers, for their shame,
I only know that sorrow came,
And she and her companion, sin
Even in dreamland, entered in.
And joy who fain would hesitate
To leave the lovers to their fate,
Lingered upon that fairy morrow
Companioned by a later sorrow.
Low whispered the Italian maid:
"Of all this love I am afraid!"
And pushed against his breast away
Like a wild creature brought to bay;
And fought and struggled to be free.
He only held the tighter, he.
Her palms were pressed against her brow;
And once again she whispered low
In tones too desperate to be sad:
"Your kisses! they will drive me mad!
Why do I love you, darling? why?
Is there no answer in your eye?
The others! Oh, you must confess!
Your lips are closed, your eyes say, 'Yes'!"
"Light loves," he whispered, "Nothing more;

I never loved a girl before
As I love you." Her eyes were stern;
There seemed an angry fire to burn
Deep underneath, the cheeks aflame
In a wild agony of shame.
He stood with an averted gaze;
And underneath the pouring rays
Of that dream sun, as spark from glead,
He felt his own red heart to bleed.
And far and near and late and soon
As weary as the seawind's rune
Of the gray norms; or as the wave
Where frenzied Sappho found her grave;
The threatening spirits of old times
Of guilty loves and ancient crimes
Thundered about them where they stood
In Eros' temple in the wood.
So, when once more he put his mouth
To hers, and she as one in drouth
Still shuddering with the sense of sin
Felt all the sweet to drink it in:
"Those lips!" she cried as he caressed,
"How many hundreds have they pressed?"
And all the nobler, happier loves
Fled back to their immortal groves;
And left the twain abiding there,
One heart, one soul and one despair.
And as upon a desert blast
The deep divergence of the past
Uprose against their heart's desires.
And hers were hot with southern fires,
Where the old pagans wiled away
Passionate hours on Baiae's Bay.
And his all drenched with wind and wave,
Where fiord and cliff and yawning cave
Grow red in the Aurora's gleam;

Where shrill the lonely eagles scream
Above the stern, embattled walls;
Where freedom lives, and thanes and thralls
Alike were stalwart with the cause
To shape new manners and new laws.
And hers — the vision came between
Of a world empire that had been,
Where slavery ravaged all the land
With subjugation, hand in hand;
Where rose the triple crownèd state
Over the world to dominate;
To sap the life of young desires,
And blast conviction with her fires,
And chain the passions with her chain,
Though still the tortured years retain
The tenderness and cruelty
That e'er hath been and e'er shall be
Where steal blue Baiae's waters o'er
That smiling, false Italian shore.

And on his side and on her side
The generations did divide;
With equal heart and all their might
Eager to win that elder fight,
She for the old, imperial south;
And he as from a trumpet's mouth, —
For love and for religion, she;
And he for love and liberty.
Each bent on an opposing way
Even in Dreamland and its day;
Each unto each alike to prove
So joined, the pain of parted love,
And even in the parting's pain
To feel Love's rapture and his gain.
Fated afar at heart to bleed,
But where their wandering steps might lead,

Fated forevermore to know
True love and all the joy and woe.

And so the gracious vision did dissolve
And faded on the morning as they stood;
And theirs a darker problem still to solve
Afar from Eros' temple in the wood.

Slowly the mystic columns, towering high,
Grew pale and filmy; and the grass beneath
Faded away; and faded the dream sky
And rhapsody of love and gathering death.

To unavailing gods did either pray
To linger for a while upon that shore;
And fate that soon would drive them far away
Left them together for one moment more.

And all about their heads and all around
Their breaking hearts, forevermore did seem
To swell the pain of ages and the sound
Of love and grief, eternal dream on dream.

The land where happy dreams abound
Is always ready to be found
By little children in their moods,
Who love the meadows and the woods
And carolling of morning birds;
And all the mother's loving words,
And all the father's loving care;
But ye who court the world's despair
Too soon, the touch of mortal pain
Must call you back to life again.
But the boys and girls are happy at play
In the lands beyond the promise of day;
Where over the dale and over the hill

The trogan warbles with many a trill;
And over the hill in the floods of light
The flowers are blooming pink and white;
And the trogan warbles from tree to tree
In melody glad as glad can be;
For sure as the robin will eat the cherry.
The trogan is always happy and merry.

THE SECOND BIRTH
OR
THE LIVING CHRISTMAS TREE

The Persons

In the World

THE LITTLE BOY
THE MOTHER
THE PRIEST

Beyond

THE LION
THE TROGAN
THE TROGAN'S MOTHER
THE MOUNTAIN KING
HUMPY, *his General*
TRON, *his Counsellor*
OLAF
SANTA CLAUS
THE SPIRIT OF THE LITTLE BOY
CHILDREN, FLOWERS, TROLLS,
ROSMARINES *and* SPIRITS
of LETHE

PROLOGUE

SCENE: *Inner room of tenement house. A small Boy is playing on the floor. His toys are a rubber lion and a colored print of two tropical birds. A lamp is burning dimly on a shelf. Time: Christmas Eve.*

BOY

I wish I had a Christmas tree
For love and not for charity.
I couldn't go to church to-night;
Dey told me dat my head was light;
So Fader Brady sends to me
Dem tings from off de Christmas tree.
De priest, he gives 'em all de word
To send to me dis beast an' bird;
An' dey is good, but mudder dear,
I wish dat you was also here.
It 's lonely when youse gone away
An' won't be back till close of day,
A leaving me alone to try
An' wash de close of some rich guy.
You rubber beast, upon my cheek
I squeezes you to make you speak;
An' youse a baby lion, I guess.
Your words, dey breaks my loneliness.
You baby bird, your mudder's true;
She allus stops an' stays by you.
I hope we finds it pleasant wedder,
De time we stops an' stays togedder.
Youse all dat's comin' in to me.
If Santa Claus would bring a tree —

He would n't never come, because
 I don't believe in Santa Claus;
 An' if dere was one, he won't come;
 Dere ain't no winder in dis room.
 An' down de chimney, he would move
 Himself inside de air tight stove;
 An' dere he would n't boil or fry;
 He 'd freeze to death; dat's how he 'd die!
 Dey says he comes to udder boys
 An' gives 'em several hundred toys,
 De little ones dat 's pure an' good
 An' has de cash an' close an' food;
 Dat has de pretty shoes to wear
 An' never hears a word of swear.
 When all dose little children sleeps
 Den Santa down de chimney creeps,
 An' if de goodness round 'em beams
 Dey don't have no unpleasant dreams;
 But round dere pillars, angels sings.
 Dey say dose mugs has colored wings,
 An' takes de boys to pleasant places
 Where flowers bloom wid sweet girl faces,
 An' everyting is like to be
 A labor picnic by de sea.
 O baby beast an' baby bird,
 You stay wid me an' hear de word;
 Wid me alone you 'll have to stay
 For youse de only ones to play.
 You lion, youse all fat an' neat;
 You won't get nuttin' here to eat;
 An' birdy, don't you be afraid
 At all dese words what I have said;
 For dough dere's nuttin now inside,
 I could n't eat you if I tried.
 I wish my fader now was here
 For Christmas present or New Year.

He'd put dose children in dere place
Dat says my birth is a disgrace;
He'd put the truth inside my head;
For mudder tells me fader's dead,
But all de guys dat wish me ill
Dey says he's live an' kickin' still.
My mudder says it's better far,
We two togedder as we are;
But she so poor an' I but five,—
I wish my fader was alive!
Dem millionaires may have dere troubles
Wid racin' yachts an' auto-bubles
An' cash for everything dey wants
An' every week a pair of pants!
We calls 'em piggies in de pen
But sure dey must be happy men;
An' when a handsome one I see
I tink, "If only dat was he!"
If Santa Claus would bring him now
An' hang him from de Christmas bough,
I'd cut him down before he's hurt
Dough hangin' may be his desert!
De Devil's took what he has gave.
Some faders better will behave,
Like Jimmy Grady's, who can vote
An' get his coal an' winter coat;
If we had one like dat, you see,
De boss would help my mudder an' me;
For he 'd go votin' to de polls
An' we would get our winter coals;
But now we 'll freeze along widout,
Dere's nuttin more to talk about!
O baby beast an' baby bird,
Of all my troubles you has heard!
Sometimes dey goes an' leaves me be
An' den dey all comes back to me.

For many days I had n't cried;
 I felt 'all frozen up inside,
 An' mudder begged a bit to eat
 Offen de copper on de beat.
 He follored mudder into here,
 An' winked de udder eye all queer,
 An' all in his brass buttons fine
 Says he: "A present? Not in mine!
 Sure dat would be a give-a-way,
 For what we gets we has to pay.
 An' you can pay me well, you know;
 Women like you in want of dough,
 A pretty woman in your place!
 An' "— Here my mudder slapped his face.
 He swore an took her by de arm;
 Says he: "My girl, you 'll come to harm!
 I 'll learn you how to put on airs!"
 An' somehow he went down the stairs
 Backward; an' mudder slammed de door
 Fell on her knees upon de floor!
 Wid streamin' eyes an' streamin' hair
 She knelt an' prayed our lady dere!
 An'— oh, de boiling tears dey come!
 Mudder an' me is on de bum!
 Against de world we holds our head
 Wid tea an' cheese an' bits of bread.
 Six days we had n't had no meat!
 We ain't had nuttin fit to eat!
 Dese walls an' floor, dey needs a broom
 An' sure it is a rotten room
 An' cold an' damp an' glory be
 I wish I had a Christmas tree!

(Crosses to bed. Flings himself down and weeps bitterly.)

O baby beast an' baby bird,
 Of all my troubles you has heard!

De coverlid keeps out de cold;
De afternoon is growing old;
An' baby bird an' baby beast,
We 'll go away out of de east;
An' all we tree will go, will go—
Hark to de singing soft an' low!
De fairies flutters round an' sings
An' say, dose mugs has angels' wings!
Crimson an' gold wid purple stains,
An' white as daisies on de plains,
An' liquid blue of noonday sheen,
An' olif green an' meadow green!
De Lord has painted up dose wings
Wid colors of all livin' tings
To enter in my lowly door,
Even de dwelling of de poor!

ACT I

*The SPIRITS OF DEEPER SLEEP are carrying the
BOY, and singing as they go:*

Over the mountains far away,
After many a mile — o,
Over the line of night and day,
Lies the land of Byelow.

Close the eyes and then you 'll see;
Close the eyelids weepy;
Little one, now you 'll joyful be
Sleepy, sleepy, sleepy.
Lift you up and carry away;
All the stars are winking;
Silver and gold for children's play,
All to come for thinking.

Over the river, murmuring low,
After many a mile — o,
Silver and gold for daisies grow
In the land of Byelow.
Silver and gold are everywhere,
No more tears or sorrow,
Nobody there to curse and swear;
That will be to-morrow.
Lift you up and carry away;
Never a hard word spoken,
Never a whisper to betray,
Never a heart that's broken.

Set you down and end the song;
 Leave you here to smile — o;
 Summer for winter all day along
 In the land of Byelow.

Over the river and hills we go
 Many and many a mile — o,
 Far from where the poppies blow
 In the land of Byelow.
 Only this that we can tell
 Santa Claus, he loves you well.
 Farewell, farewell!

*(They set the BOY on the farther side of the stream and
 vanish)*

BOY

Now all dem singing mugs is flown
 It 's kind o' lonesome here alone;
 For do' de night is like de day
 Dere aint no children here to play;
 And over all de shinin' land
 I did n't see no peanut stand.
 Dere aint no sporty little boys
 To run about and make a noise,
 No little girls to win de heart;
 Dere ain't no hokey-pokey cart,
 Dere ain't no chance to rush de can,
 Dere ain't no hurdy-gurdy man,
 Nor hook and ladder two-horse teams.
 But glory be, de lovely dreams!
 Oh, see dose dreams a-flying round,
 And never making of a sound;
 And some is black as hopping fleas,
 And some as big as bumble bees,
 And dose in red, dey sets de tone,

As if dey was de devil's own.
 Oders have wings like peacock's eyes,
 And all de colors of de skies;
 And tru' dose wings de light-beams shiver
 Along de bosom of de river.
 And see dem tall, white fellers dere,
 Come slowly tro' de shinin' air,
 As if dey went a crooked road.
 I guess dat dey must have a load.
 Down on dere hands and knees dey sink,
 And bends de head to get a drink;
 And mid de poppies dey lies low,
 Like jags a-sleeping in a row.
 But what's de queerest of it all,
 I cannot hear dem when dey fall.
 Dey takes a drink, and den drops down
 Like guys on fedder-beds in town;
 De reeds and poppies nods dere head
 As do' dey'd like to go to bed.
 I did n't think of it at first
 But sure, I got an awful thirst;
 Oh, see the waters deep and still
 A flowin' from dat shinin' hill!
 I 'll get upon my hands and knees,
 And glory be! what's dis' I sees?

A SPIRIT rises from the reeds in the river. She is clothed in the hues of twilight, and holds in her right hand a cup of gold, filled to the brim with river water.

SPIRIT (*sings*)

Would you know the living joy
 Of another land?
 Take the beaker, little boy,
 Drink and understand.

CHORUS OF DREAMS

Take the beaker in your hand,
 Pretty little boy,
 Yours it is to understand
 Innocence and joy —
 Innocence that fled from earth,
 Joy that knew not mortal birth.

Lo, the cup is freighted now
 With our joys outpoured,
 All the love you did endow
 Unto you restored.
 All the love in mortal years
 Paid on earth with burning tears!

BOY

I 'll take a little, not too deep;
 I 'd be awake and not asleep.

CHORUS OF DREAMS

Forget the trouble and the toil
 And all the ill that seems;
 Forget the city's wild turmoil,
 Remember only dreams.
 The hearts that ache, the hearts that fret,
 Their world, thy woes forget, forget!

BOY

I 'm wide awake in shinin' night,
 My foot is light, my heart is light.
 How did I happen to get here?
 Where did I come from? Aint it queer?
 Sure, I remember more and more
 Than ever I forgot before.
 But where and how and when and why

I came,—dere is no use to try.
 I don't remember. Mudder dear,
 I only wish dat you was here.

CHORUS OF DREAMS

Thy mother dwells with birth and death
 Like the pale shades you see
 Who would not barter failing breath
 For immortality.

When they give over toil and strife,
 And all the woes they weep,
 There 's nothing left them in their life
 But everlasting sleep.

They come white-robed, from every land
 And shrouded in their grief.
 The waters bear them on the strand,
 Deep peace and sweet relief.

SPIRIT WITH CUP

But theirs is not the joy
 Like yours, my little boy
 In all the pleasures that immortals take.
 Amid the reeds and flowers
 They spend forgetful hours;
 They sleep and sleep and nevermore awake.

CHORUS OF DREAMS

Lo, the beaker, little boy,
 In thine hand to take;
 Theirs is only sleepy joy,
 Thine is to awake.

BOY

I take de beaker in my hand;
 I drink and drink and understand.
 All Heaven is Fairyland for me;
 And Oh, de tall and handsome tree
 A-standing up against de sky,
 Wid yellow buds and flowers on high!
 Over de reedy path I go;
 Over dem sleepers lying low;
 And comin' underneat' de tree,
 Why, what is dat bright bird I see,
 Dat sits and waves his long green tail
 And sways upon de fragrant gale?
 I don't remember him no more,
 But, say, I seen dat bird before!

TROGAN (*sings*)

Would you walk the ways along?
 Would you walk the poppies among?
 Tarry and tarry and tarry here,
 Pretty little boy, with eyeballs clear
 Tarry and listen to my song:
 Here upon the quinine tree,
 Buds and blossoms all among
 Hardly I perch upon the bough,
 Slowly I sway upon the bough;
 All the beautiful soul of me
 Pouring forth in marvellous song,
 Grand and beautiful song!
 Oh, the bark of the quinine tree
 Tells me why and tells me how!
 See my shadow bob and bow,
 Long and little, and little and long,
 Changing over the grasses green!
 Tell me, little one, am I now

Not the prettiest bird you 've seen?
 See my shadow bob and bow,
 Changing over the grasses green!
 Long as a crane on tall tiptoe,
 Long as any scrawny crane!
 Then it changes back again
 Short and fat as parroquet,
 Or as bantam hen on eggs,
 Or as puffin with red legs,
 All too lovely to forget!
 See me over the grasses bend
 Tell me, tell me, little friend,
 Am I not the loveliest ever seen?
 Travel no more the ways along,
 Travel no more the poppies among;
 Pause and pause and hark and hark,
 Harken to the quinine's bark,
 Harken to the trogan's song!
 Liefer than the quinine's bark,
 Harken, harken, harken, to the trogan's song!

BOY

I hear de song dat comes from you
 Go, tell it to de birds.
 It don't say nuttin what to do,
 It 's just a lot of words

TROGAN (*sings*)

Over the world where men grow old,
 Calendar months go by;
 Ever too hot and ever too cold,
 Ever too moist and dry.
 In every land men gather together
 To talk about the dreadful weather.
 But there 's a fairyland for thee

Lies beyond the sapphire sea!
 Lion and tiger both go there,
 Narwhal, auk and polar bear,
 Yellow mackaw to charm the ear,
 Antelope and tall reindeer,
 All as happy as happy can be,
 Far beyond the sapphire sea!

VOICES

Far, far away,
 Beyond the sapphire sea
 Children to play
 Are waiting for thee.
 There for your toys
 Are diamonds and pearls,
 Pretty little boys
 And pretty little girls.

BOY

Dere 's boys and girls at where you tell?
 I 'd like to go dere mighty well.
 Its lonesome here widout de boys
 And little girls to make a noise.

TROGAN (*sings*)

Flutter, flutter from the tree,
 Circle in the air.
 If you want to go with me,
 You have no time to spare.
 Hear me, hear me flutter and trill!
 Come away to the elfin hill,
 Where the summits rosy be
 Looking o'er the sapphire sea!
 More I cannot, cannot tell.
 Santa Claus he loves you well,

Santa Claus he loves you well.

(TROGAN *flies down path and BOY follows*)

BOY

What are dose flowers doin' here,
A-standing straight and stiff and queer?

TROGAN (*sings*)

Here they slumber, trusty flowers,
Till the ending of the hours.
Over all the listening land,
Ready to wake at my command;
Ready to pour, like mackerel shoal,
Against old Humpy and the troll.

BOY

Old Humpy and the troll, what 's he?

VOICE

Give us leave and you will see.

TROGAN (*sings*)

Come, little boy, away, away!
Folly, folly, folly to stay!
Hear me, hear me, flutter and trill;
Up you climb the elfin hill!
Up you climb with foot and knee;
I can fly from tree to tree.
Would n't you like my wings to try?
 When I go
 High or low,
I can flap my wings and fly.
Would n't you like to be as I?

BOY

If I was you, and you was I,
 I 'd show you how birds ought to fly;
 I 'd show you how to do dem tings
 If I was born wid tail and wings.
 What 's dat upon de mountain track
 Alone against de sky, all black,
 Wid muzzle pointed to de east?
 I tink it is a hairy beast.
 I hear a noise, a lonesome roar.

VOICE

It is the surf upon the shore.

SECOND VOICE

It is old Ocean in his caves.

THIRD VOICE

It is the music of the waves.

TROGAN (*sings*)

The sun peeps o'er the rim of the sea
 To wake the maiden day;
 To gild the baby lion and me,
 And light us on our way.
 The surf is like to distant drums!
 Oh, baby lion, he comes, he comes!

BOY

De baby lion stands up still
 Alone upon de elfin hill.

LION

Even when they 're good and sweet,
 Little boys, I never eat.

VOICE

Oh, little boy, who come along
Drawn by the trogan and his song,
Hark to my music, from the grove.

TROGAN

It is the voice of one I love.

TROGAN'S MOTHER (*sings*)

Oh, boy, to birds a brother,
Boy-brother of bright birds,
Hark to the trogan's mother!
Hark to the tuneful words!

There's a boat on the ocean
Of the sapphire sea,
Where a wonderful emotion
Is waiting for thee.

For thy glory and thy pleasure
On the waters to ride;
My little trogan for a treasure
And a comfort and a guide.

There's an isle on the breast
Of the sapphire sea,
Where the joys of the blest
Are waiting for thee.

TROGAN (*sings*)

Quinine trees are plentiful there
No more trouble to borrow;
Nobody there to comb your hair,

That will be to-morrow.
 Cocoanut trees all over the place
 No more trouble to borrow,
 Nobody there to wash your face,
 That will be to-morrow.

ALL THREE

More we cannot, cannot tell,
 Santa Claus he loves you well

VOICES

Gruffly mutter, for we must, —
 But our words are true and just, —
 In their promise put no trust,
 Child of frailty and dust.
 Lion's word and trogan's song
 Make a little boy go wrong.
 Trogan's song, lion's word,
 Addle headed beast and bird!

THE TROGANS

Back to your holes, back to your holes!
 You lie, you lie, you mountain trolls!

VOICES (*confused*)

Ha, ha, ha! ho, ho, ho!
 Say ye so, say ye so?
 Mother bird and baby bird,
 Give you back again the word.

MOTHER TROGAN

You dare not tell us that we lie.

VOICES (*confused*)

Rack and ruin utterly!

MOTHER TROGAN

Full well they know their mountain hall
Would in a thousand fragments fall;
For every stone to spoken lie
Would vibrate in a sympathy.

LION

Come, little boy, let us away,
Down to the ocean, ere noon day.

TROGAN

Lion, adown the mountain track,
Bear thou the boy upon thy back.

BOY

Which way?

LION

Down here.

BOY

I would n't go.

TROGAN

You will be carried, sure and slow.

LION

Though somewhat steep the rocks incline,
Here is a foothold.

BOY

Not in mine.

TROGAN

Are you afraid?

BOY

You bet I am,
Dese rocks will give us all de slam.

MOTHER TROGAN

Who braves no peril, gets no joy.
Go to thy fate, O craven boy!

(She flies off in anger)

TROGAN

Oh! here is ruin, here is harm!

LION

Yea, here is cause for just alarm;
For when a soul doth doubt and fear,
The lying troll again comes near!

TROGAN

The mountain rumbles loud and shakes;
The rock beneath us cracks and quakes,
Like roll of a titantic drum!

LION

The trolls are victors, and they come!
We cannot now climb down the steep.

TROGAN

There is but time to fly or leap.

LION

Little boy, there is one more chance;
Valiant heart, may yet advance.
Trust our honor, and they still
Cannot harm thee if they will.

TROGAN

Leap down, leap down and have no fear!

LION

The trolls alone are danger here.

BOY

I guess I 'd make a lonesome lump,
If I did go to take a jump;
I 'd rudder have the trolls around,
Than fall upon de rocky ground.

TROGAN

Do you fear the leap to see,
Close your eyes and follow me.

(TROGAN *flutters down*)

LION

Still do you fear to stub your toes,
Then down the precipice, here goes.

(LION *leaps*)

BOY

Oh, stop, stop, stop!

VOICE

What a leap!

SECOND VOICE

The rock is hard, the cliff is steep.

THIRD VOICE

The sea below is cold and deep.

FIRST VOICE

Under the billows monotones,
The marrow freezes in their bones.

SECOND VOICE

They beat their brains out on the stones.

FIRST VOICE

The hill is high and nothing low.

THIRD VOICE

The boy was wise, and would not go.

FOURTH VOICE

See his tear-drops, how they flow,
Out of either eye!
Come around, would you know
How these mortals cry!

FIFTH VOICE

Have you sorrow, being wise?

SIXTH VOICE

Look at us materialize.

SEVENTH VOICE

Why sit you here and make your moan?

BOY

We all has troubles of our own.
 Oh, baby beast and bird, good-bye!
 I had forgotten how to cry.
 Dey come! dey come! de dreadful shapes
 Like owls and ravens, bears and apes!
 And, oh, I hate to see 'em round!
 I wish dey all was under ground!

TROLLS

Out of caverns and of rocks,
 Out from under stones and stocks,
 Out of cloud-burst in the air,
 Like to frogs, down we rain;
 And our hordes go here and there,
 Over forest, peak and plain;
 On the glaciers, by the fjords,
 We the victors, we the lords!

A LOUD VOICE

Do not shiver, little boy!
 Greater shame thou shalt be shent;
 For the king will soon enjoy
 Torture of thy punishment!

ANOTHER VOICE

Old Humpy comes, the son of the king,
 And Tron, with the long, red nose!
 And loud the horns and trumpets ring,
 Old Humpy comes, the son of the king!
 And loud his marshalled armies sing
 On the bitter wind that blows:
 "Make way for Humpy, son of the king,
 And Tron, with the long, red nose!"

(Fanfare of trumpets; the tramping of many feet.)

ARMY (*sings*)

Old Humpy, he comes
With fifes and drums
And Tron, with the long, red nose;
They call and call,
To their merry men all,
"Ho! ho!" when the north wind blows,
The hoar frost whines
On the shivering pines;
And the gray wolf over the grave;
And the landslide sweeps
Adown the steeps
To trouble the storm-tossed wave.
The hunter so bold,
He feels the cold,
And frantic he winds his horn;
We'll freeze him stiff,
On the seaward cliff,
In the pallid light of morn.
And the shepherd and flocks,
Among the rocks
When once his path is crossed;
No more they'll graze,
In the reddening rays,
And he and his dogs are lost.
When Tron he blows
His long, red nose,
There's thunder across the seas;
And trembles the whole
Of the frozen pole,
Way down to the Hebrides.
And our king in his hold,
From his bowl of gold,
Drinks deep to his absent thanes.
Strong ale he quaffs
And loud he laughs

And snug as a bug remains;
 For his kingdom is strong
 And his arm is long,
 To harry all hateful times
 When men bow down
 To knave and clown
 And fraud and force and crimes.
 Strong ale he quaffs,
 And loud he laughs,
 "Ho! ho!" when the North Wind blows,
 And Humpy, he comes
 With fifes and drums,
 And Tron, with the long, red nose.

Enter army with HUMPY and TRON

HUMPY

That little boy, the deadly foe
 Unto my father?

TRON

Even so.

HUMPY

A worm to crush under our heel,
 His only power the pang to feel.

FIRST TROLL

Fear makes him dumb.

SECOND TROLL

His cheek is pale.

HUMPY

Let there be silence on the gale.

TRON (*to Boy*)

The mountain king glad greeting sends,
For doubt and fear are still his friends;
And he commands you over all
To come inside his wassail hall.

HUMPY

Speak, for you must.

BOY

I'd like to die.

TRON

We can do anything we try.

HUMPY

The body lies upon the bed,
The fire burns low, the soul is fled.

TRON

Yea, thou shalt dwell among the dead.

HUMPY

Or come with us.

TRON

Without more talk.

BOY

Dead fellers cannot run or walk.

TRON

I'll carry you, where the north wind blows

Up on my nose, up on my nose!
 See, 't is red as any rose,
 Like the living coals it glows!

BOY

I won't get up.

TRON (*beckoning to his men*)

Come to my side,
 Lift up the boy, set him astride,
 And give him just a little whiff.

BOY

I'll jump! oh! oh!

TRON

He's frozen stiff
 Full soon a longer leap you'll take,
 Enough to make your belly ache.

HUMPY

My child, you need not be afraid,
 For as of iron, you are made.

TRON

We stay too long, my throat doth parch
 For the king's ale.

HUMPY

Yea, forward march.

TROLLS

The mountain spreads in fissure wide,

The mountain rumbles loud inside,
And under foot and over head.

BOY

De baby lion, he 's all dead.
He 'd bite you well, you ugly troll.

TRON

Now, little boy, you see that hole?
Into its depths my nose I poke —

HUMPY

Yea, Tron will have his little joke.

TRON

Scratch you off, and down you go,
Ha! ha! ha!

HUMPY

Ho! ho! ho!

TROLLS

Ha! ha! ha! ho! ho! ho! ho!
Down you go! down you go!
Oh, you feared to take a fall
Off the precipice to leap;
Now you 've got one after all
Down inside the mountain deep!
You shall bear the wassail bowls
At the drinking of the trolls.
Ha! ha! ha! ho! ho! ho!
Down you go! down you go!
Shriek the wind, and hiss the rain!
Oh, the tumult and the joys

Of the sudden hurricane,
And the avalanche's noise!
Ho, for Humpy! Ho, for Tron!
Ho, for the king on his iron throne!
Go down, go down
To the king and his crown
In his glory all alone!

ACT II

Banquet hall of the MOUNTAIN KING. Dais at end, where sits the KING on his iron throne. The roof of the hall above the dais, is cracked; and in the fissure, clings the little BOY.

BOY

Oh, what an awful fall I 've had!
My head and heart they feel so bad!
And, oh! dat room, wid cut stone wall,
And devils' faces over all!
For sure dey's all like devils here,
Dey grins and scowls and looks so queer!
And dat old guy, a-sitting down,
Wid whiskers and big ears and crown,
I tink he 's head of all de gang;
And here above his head I hang.

TROLLS (*sing*)

Hoorray! hoorray!
Drink to the king!
Hoorray! hoorray!
Ting-a-ling, ling!
Drink to the king
Ting-a-ling, ling,
The king! the king!

KING

We are uneasy and our throne
Rumbles and totters; we alone

The craft and secret malice know,
 And all the venom of our foe.
 Our banquet cavern rocks and shakes,
 The mountain yawns, the round earth quakes.

Enter HUMPY and TRON with retinue

KING

How now, Old Humpy?

HUMPY

Ho! ho! ho!
 There 's not a vestige of the foe.

KING

That *you* feared most.

HUMPY

Not I, but Tron,
 He gave such counsel to the throne.
 His long, red nose, without a doubt,
 He thought had smelled a foeman out.
 And you, the drum across your ear,
 Trembled the foeman's tread to hear.
 But both, O gracious sire! did make,
 With nose and ear a grand mistake!

PARTY OF TROLLS (*sing*)

Hoorray! hoorray!
 Drink to the king!
 Hoorray! Hoorray!
 Ting-a-ling, ling,
 Ting-a-ling, ling,
 Good old king.

FIRST TROLL

Good old king,
He's got one eye.

ALL

Ting-a-ling, ling!

SECOND TROLL

Hooray for the eye!

THIRD TROLL

And his mouth is awry!

ALL

Drink to the king!
The king! the king!

FIRST TROLL (*feebly*)

Good old king!

KING (*to HUMPY*)

What did you find?

HUMPY

Only a boy.

KING

A what?

HUMPY

A child.

THIRD TROLL

O joy! O joy!
A nice, ripe, juicy, roasting child!

TRON

He 's in cold storage, don't get wild,
I froze him.

KING

Then he 's safe outside,
And frozen stiff? so let him bide!
What 's that up in my skylight there?
It dangles by a single hair.

SECOND TROLL

Only a shadow on the wall.

KING

Over my throne the shadows fall.

FIRST TROLL

Sire, the royal ale I fear
Hath made the royal eyesight queer.

KING

Olaf, where 's Olaf? loggerhead!
Bring me my whip!

TRON

In the thong's stead
You 'd make a good impression, sire,
On Olaf 's back with copper wire.

(OLAF is dragged before the king)

KING

You snivelling drudge, here, get a broom,
And sweep that spider from my room!

OLAF (*grumbling and whining*)

That 's what I get, and all I get,
After long years of toil and sweat.

SECOND TROLL

Olaf working? Day of days!

OLAF

How that spider sticks and stays!

KING

Sweep it off, and let it fall.

OLAF

Sure, it will not come at all.

FIRST TROLL

Give my spear, with point to prick,
Then we 'll see it if will stick.

KING

Give the sorry sweeping o'er.

ALL

Lo, 't is fallen on the floor!

SECOND TROLL

See it sprawl!

HUMPY

A pretty toy!
A living, breathing little boy!

KING

Lift him up and set him there
Hard beside me on the chair;
And pray, good sir, will you begin
And tell us why you have dropped in?

TRON

He cannot speak; he's blue with cold.

KING

And here must be our foeman bold,
So young, so frail? What power is there
To shake my kingdom unaware?
Nay, 't was another. Set him down!
He is unworthy of our frown.
And bring him ale, and bring him bread;
I 'll thaw the tongue inside his head!

TROLLS (*sing*)

Good old ale, good old beer,
Brewed in the vats of yester year!
It brewed very long,
And it grew very strong!
Hoorray for the ale and the beer!

Say we guzzle, if you wish;
Rant and tear your hair!
When we all are liquorish,
We don't care!

We don't care
 For anybody there;
 When we all are liquorish
 We don't care!

Drink to women and gold to win!
 Drink to the cloven hoof!
 Drink to the devil and glorious sin!
 Whoop and raise the roof!

Let the tempest howl and bawl
 And smite the hillside bare!
 When we all are at the brawl,
 We don't care!
 We don't care
 Whatever may be there;
 When we all are at the brawl,
 We don't care!

KING (*to BOY*)

You tremble, silent little friend;
 Good ale and merry cheer must blend
 To loose your tongue.

BOY

Oh, oh! I'm cold!

KING

But here the fire burns bright and bold.

VOICE (*in the air*)

You cannot warm you at their fires;
 For these are fed by lost desires,
 And all vain faiths by men most prized,

And all high hopes unrealized;
 For though these all like tinder burn,
 Their flame is cold as funeral urn
 To any man who doth entreat
 The baneful magic of their heat.

KING

Give good ale to old and young;
 It warms the heart and thaws the tongue.
 Why did you come upon our way?
 Speak, I command.

BOY

Late yesterday,
 Dere 's some one carried me out here
 Away from home an' mudder dear!
 An' dere 's a baby beast and bird,
 About a happy land they heard
 Across a handsome sapphire sea;
 And both was going, and taking me,
 And —

KING

Have some ale, 't is ripe and sweet.

TRON

And share a little of our meat.

BOY

Why, dis is like a drink I had
 I don't remember, 't aint so bad,
 And so dis baby bird and beast —

TRON

Here is your meat whereon to feast.

(A silver dish is brought to the boy)

BOY

Dey and de trogan's mudder and I
Up where de mountain is most high,
All got togedder —

KING

Pile your plate,
Frogs' legs are always delicate.
So.

BOY

Thank you kindly, dat will do.
And on dat mountain —

KING

Two by two —

BOY

Yes, four of us. Why, what's de matter?

KING

My dainties do not love your chatter.

BOY

Dey 's hoppin' like dey was alive.

KING *(with emphasis)*

As sure as two and two make five —

BOY

Make four, you mean.

GUST

They leap!

TRON

They bound!

KING (*severely*)

Your calculation is unsound.

BOY (*aside*)Dose hoppin' legs I would n't eat,
Not if I never had no meat.

KING

My counsellors will answer you
What is the sum of two and two.

TROLLS

Five.

TRON

All is quiet on the plate.

HUMPY

Yea, that 's the way to calculate.

TRON

For one and one —

BOY

Is allus two.

TRON

Yet if you reason as we do,
I think you 'll heartily agree
That one and one are sometimes three;
For when a certain kind of sin
Twixt one and one would fain slip in —
Your father and mother, one and one,
Taken together had a son.
So add these two and so shall come
The number five.

HUMPY

The devil's sum!

BOY

You — you — my mudder —

KING

Don't you stir!

TRON

Don't lose your temper, my dear sir!

FIRST TROLL

Look at him frozen on his chair!

SECOND TROLL

Look at him choke in anger there!

KING

My little guest, bear it in mind
And peace and plenty you shall find
And even get to power and glory,

If you will hearken to the story
That two and two —

BOY

Is allus four.

(Legs hop. Distant thunder.)

KING

Make always either less or more.
Then quiet lies your dainty dish,
Ready for eating at your wish.
I say that two and two make five,
And I and all my vassals thrive;
For here we have the saving clause
Of all our manners and our laws.
But if you hold these figures err,
Why, one or three you can prefer,
Or seven or nine —

BOY

And all is lies.

ALL

Thunder, thunder from the skies,
How it rumbles, cracks, and crashes!
Oh, the hiss of lightning flashes!

BOY

The wall is caving now, like din
And de stone devils twist and grin,
And how dese living devils howls!
And how his royal nibs he scowls,
When four is made from two and two!

KING

You are — you say what is not true!
My sceptre trembles and my crown.
Rise, my merry men! strike him down!
With the gleaming of your swords,
Make him swallow his vile words!
Make him own his words are foul!
Smite and cleave him, cheek and jowl!

HUMPY

Lo, I lift my sword elate!
I warrant it will break your pate.

TRON

Tell us now his hand to stay,
Two and two are five alway!

KING

Tell us, if you 'd be alive,
Two and two are always five!

BOY (*screams in terror*)

King of the trolls, you lie, lie, lie!

TROLLS

Ruin! ruin from the sky!

*(Thunder bursts; one of the walls caves in bodily;
sunlight streams into the hall.)*

KING

Ruin, ruin from the sky!
Sunlight, sunlight from on high!
O'er my throne the shadows fall

Deeper than a funeral pall!
 For my kingdom and my crown
 Smite the little bastard down!

HUMPY

Ho! ho!

TRON

Dost wait upon the stroke?
 Smite!

KING

Smite him down!

HUMPY

My sword is broke!
 The sword I wield, is broke in twain!

BOY

You wid de nose, you lie again
 About my mudder, free from stain!

TROLLS

The fire is faint and the lamps are few;
 And over the wall the shadows go!
 The fire is red and the lamps burn blue;
 The fire is dim and the lamps burn low;
 And our kingdom draws to its overthrow!

(The song of birds)

KING

Ruin, ruin! where 's my sword?
 Oh, that little voice abhorred!

TROLLS

Close our eyes and close our ears
 For the sunlight peeps and peers;
 And upon the beam of light
 Worse than anguish of old night,
 All too dreadful to be heard,
 Comes the twitter of a bird!

TROGAN (*invisible, sings*)

Hear me, hear me flutter and trill!
 You can see me when you will.
 Hear me, hear me, flutter my wing;
 Thaw you out, I merrily sing!
 How the stones in hurry and rush
 Rumble and tumble and fall and crush!
 How the myriad sunbeams play!
 How the frogs' legs caper away!
 Hear me flutter and hear me trill!
 How the trolls run out of the hill!
 Forward, forward! Soldier flowers!
 'T is the ending of the hours!

VOICES OF FLOWERS (*in the distance*)

Rub-a-dub-a-dub!

Rub-a-dub-a-dub!

Rub-a-dub-a-dub!

We come, we come!

We are the flowers

At the ending of the hours

And we march to the sound of a
 drum, drum, drum!

Rub-a-dub-a-dub!

Rub-a-dub-a-dub!

Rub-a-dub-a-dub!

The raindrops go.
 Patter, patter, patter!
 'T is a mighty matter
 To batter, batter, batter
 The frozen snow.

And under our feet, the glad grass springs;
 And over our head the rainbow beams;
 And hither and yon the sea-wind sings
 Of truth and the triumph of nobler dreams.

For the sunlight tells to the wakening plain,
 And the torrent roars to the wondering sea,
 What a heart desires, a heart shall gain,
 When Love is at dawn, and the world is free!

TROLLS

Ho, for the biting sleet and hail!
 Ho, for the ice and freezing gale!
 Bang the drum and screech the fife,
 For we fight for life, life, life!

(They rush out in tumult. Sound of battle, near at first, and then far off. Enter LION hurriedly.)

LION

Oh! at last I cannot choose
 But roar for joy!

TROGAN

Quick, quick! What news?

LION

The trolls, hooroo! They 're put to rout!

BOY

Dey ain't done much to talk about!

LION

Ere they follow on our track,
Little boy, get on my back.

TROLLS

Ruin, ruin! lord and master!
Ruin, ruin and disaster!
Humpy and Tron,
Humpy and Tron
Utterly, utterly overthrown!
Shrieking down the wind we go,
Scattered! scattered! woe! woe! woe!

KING (*in the distance*)

Rally your ranks and stand again
Lords of the northern hurricane!
Frozen hearts whate'er betide,
God alone will crush our pride!

LION

Gallop and gallop and gallop along,
Unto the flowers' victory song!

FLOWERS (*in the distance*)

For the loves that yesterday all were fled
Return on the morrow at blush of morn;
And the hope of a world that is past and dead
Is the promise of nations yet unborn.

Glory at noon when the hills are green,
And a living glory across the sea!
And the hope of a world that once hath been
Is the joy of a world that is yet to be!

LION

Lo, the waters of the sea!
Life and joy and liberty!

BOY

Where 's de boat?

LION

On the other strand
It will carry us all inland
Down a clear and calm canal,
To our Christmas festival.

TROLLS (*in the distance*)

Everywhere our path is crossed;
The little boy is lost, lost, lost!
Melted ice and melted snow!
Wind and water! woe! woe! woe!

ACT III

*The open sea. LION swims slowly with BOY on back.
TROGAN flies slowly overhead.*

VOICES

O for the vast and sunlit sea
That whispers of eternity!
The noonday sun is bright and high;
There 's not a cloud upon the sky;
The ocean swell is long and slow;
And the light breezes come and go,
Even as our gentler spirits creep
Into the depths of dreamless sleep.

TROGAN

Lion, lion! look at the land!
Look at the far and gleaming strand!
Paddle your feet and soon you 'll find
All your labor left behind!

LION

Ah! my feet not far from land
Tread upon the welcome sand!

BOY

I guess we got here now all right.

LION

Overhead the sun is bright;
But ere it rises on your day
Poor little boy, you must away.

TROGAN (*sings*)

Climb and climb and leap and fly
 Over the island high and dry!
 All the rivers are made of milk;
 All the flowers are made of silk!
 From the branches overhead
 Pluck the pendant gingerbread;
 If you've taken cold at sea,
 Here is a comely quinine tree.

BOY

Why, sure de gingerbread is fine;
 But for dat udder, not in mine!
 An' where is all de girls an' boys?
 I did n't hear 'em make no noise.
 An' what is dem tings three an' three
 A walking down upon de sea,
 Wid heads like what I never seen
 An' short hind legs an' tails between?
 An' one of 'em dives off kerswish,
 An' now he comes up wid a fish.

LION

And where 's the boat and the canal
 To take us to the festival?

TROGAN

There 's the canal in the evergreens;
 The boat, I'll ask the rosmarines.
 Tell me, tell me, rosmarine.
 Ever changing black and green,
 Tell me now and tell me true,
 Climbing cliffs for morning dew,
 Where the golden boat may be
 Sailing on the sapphire sea?

ROSMARINES

The boat has come upon the strand;
 The boat is gone afar from land;
 But whether this be ill or well,
 We cannot tell, we cannot tell.

BOY

An' down along de beach dey go,
 An' dere ain't nuttin dat dey know.

TROGAN

Still we have to do and dare;
 Still we have our way to fare.
 Down the winding path we go
 Where the cocoanut bushes grow.

LION

Look at the wide and shining gate.
 It stops your path.

BOY

I tink we 'll wait.
 It's cruel hard, dat lonesome door.
 What 's all dese knubs?

VOICE

'T is studded o'er
 With your former doubts and fears;
 And every knob outbraves the years
 Whereby the gate is stubborn strong.

LION

Alas! the journey hath gone wrong.

TROGAN

Oh! let me fly
 To the quinine tree!
 And there I'll cry
 In a minor key!
 Hear me, hear me sob and cry!
 Sorrow, sorrow! let me die!
 Fateful moment! horrible morn!
 Poor little boy from his mother torn!

LION

We came too late, we came too late!

BOY

I tink I 'll push dat knubby gate.
 I 've had enough o' stoppin' now.

LION

'T is closed against you with a vow.

BOY

I 'll push it all de same.

VOICE

Who knocks?

BOY

What's dat? a hurdy-gurdy box?
 De gate goes back, an' O de sound!
 Why, dere is music all around!
 An' all is light, an' glory be!
 De little children comes to me!
 O little children at de gate!
 A long, long time I had to wait!

CHILDREN (*sing*)

Who may this gentle spirit be
 Who comes afar?
 Come to the living Christmas tree
 And the morning star.
 Merry, merry the welcome sing!
 Merry, merry in everything!
 Come away! come away!
 Happy, happy all the day!
 Here 't is never hot or cold;
 Here the children never grow old;
 But in the light of love and truth
 We dwell in playtime of glad youth.
 Happy, happy, happy to be,
 Before the living Christmas tree!
 More we cannot, cannot tell.
 Santa Claus, he loves you well.

BOY

Where is de baby bird an' beast?
 Sure dey's all comin' to de feast!
 Here, here! come here!

LION AND TROGAN

Farewell! farewell!
 More we cannot, cannot tell!

VOICE OF LION

Sometimes upon the golden shore
 You 'll see me gambol and hear me roar.
 But longer here I cannot bide,
 Nor wholly share your Christmas-tide.

BOY

Good bye, you lion! soon again
I'll stroke you on de curly mane.

VOICE OF TROGAN

Little boy, afar I go
Where quinine tree and cocoanuts grow;
But some fine day you'll visit me
And climb upon the quinine tree.
More I cannot, cannot tell.
Dear little friend, farewell, farewell!

CHILDREN (*sing*)

O the glory of our hall!
The living tree is over all!
Crash the music, crash and blare!
Lo, the wide and shining stair!
Ascend! ascend! and make your pause
Before the throne of Santa Claus!

SANTA CLAUS

Hello, my hearty!

BOY

Is dat you?
Why den you must be real and true,
And I can climb upon your knee.

SANTA CLAUS

And, lo, the living Christmas tree!

BOY

I'd ought to have been here sooner.

SANTA CLAUS

Aye,

'T is but a brief space a soul can stay,
 Who doth the mortal body leave.
 'T is nearly past, your Christmas eve,
 And in the city shall be born
 Full soon, the joy of Christmas morn.

BOY

De city? What 's de city?

SANTA CLAUS

Pray,

Still to forget till dawn of day
 And turn your eyes in jollity
 Upon the living Christmas tree;
 Over its top from earth afar,
 Trembles with hope the morning star,
 So near to us, so far from them,
 The morning star of Bethlehem.
 Yea, speak your will, and even now
 It blooms before you on the bough.

BOY

But look, beneath the Christmas tree
 De boys and girls dat came for me!
 Why does de little children stand,
 All holdin' out an empty hand?

SANTA CLAUS

After thy wish, 't will be their turn;
 Till then they all must wait and yearn;
 For on the earth, their lives entire
 Were never balked of heart's desire.

BOY

Why, den I wish dey'd get it now!

CHORUS OF CHILDREN

Oh, the toys upon the bough,
 Fruit and flowers for our joys!
 Pretty, pretty, pretty toys!
 Hold your dress, or they 'll be hurt,
 Tumbling down in dust and dirt!
 Blocks and picture-books and dolls,
 Barley candy, fol-de-rols,
 Silken hose and pretty boys' ties,
 Grapes and raisins and mince pies,
 Cotton flannel dog that pants,
 Cotton flannel elephants,
 Train of cars with truly steam,
 Automobile and four-horse team,
 Jumping-jacks, and, goody, goody!
 Fifty shows of Punch and Judy!
 Is n't it lovely, isn't it fine,
 Is n't it really life divine?
 Who would go to say their prayers,
 Up and down the golden stairs;
 Take a harp and chant a hymn,
 Mid adoring cherubim?
 Here we stay, day by day,
 Heaven for us is ever to play!

SANTA CLAUS

You make them happy, all in all,
 And crown their Christmas carnival!
 But still you look with longing eyes.
 O, little child who hast grown wise!—
 For sorrow bringeth wisdom,—how
 Shall any gift fall from the bough

For thee, who knowest not how to play,
Knowing the pain of night and day?
Lo, unto thee, a second birth
Comes knowledge of the heavens and earth!
Then shall thy play be joyful wild
As any other little child.

BOY

What is dat great, big shiny ball
Dat rises here inside your hall?
I tink it must be made of ice,
Only the colors is more nice.
Dey twist and turn and round dey wind,
All bright enough to make you blind.

SANTA CLAUS

Within that crystal you can see
What is and was and is to be.
With steady gaze, put forth your will,
The colors blend in pictures, till
You break the spell, and let them range
Like human dreams that fade and change.
Be steady, now!

BOY

De colors die!

SANTA CLAUS

A small black alley greets the eye
Unlighted by the fitful glare
Of gas-lamps dimly burning there.
And down the dark, uneven street,
That cleanseth not in cold or heat,
Shivers a solitary form,
Wrapped in a shawl to brave the storm.

It is the city whence you come;
 'T is all too near your earthly home!
 Why doth the quick desire return,
 Where human hearts must always yearn
 And leave the loves beyond the skies,
 And raptures of our paradise?
 For now the woman in the shawl
 Doth plunge into the glare and brawl,
 Of crowded street and bustling square;
 A silent shadow, hurrying there
 Amid the buzzing of the crowd,
 The shout and jest and laughter loud,
 As by the lighted stores they go,
 And push each other to and fro,
 Eager for plunder never gained,
 And hearts' desires all unattained,
 And under ripe or rotten joys,
 For men and women, girls and boys.
 They spurn the wisdom of clear skies,
 The conquering love that never dies.
 Though love and wisdom hold the key
 To prison all that infamy.
 But men are cowards, nothing bold;
 They cheat and lie for love of gold.
 Amid the pangs of mortal birth
 It is Hell's viceroy rules on earth;
 And stark and strong abideth still,
 The troll king in his hollow hill.
 Wilt thou, being wise, for what men strive
 Return on earth and be alive?
 Wouldst thou return to taste the pain
 Of poverty and life again?

BOY

I'd rudder die dan go down dere,

Wid sin and suffering everywhere.
Dis life is better dan dat udder;—
But what will happen to my mudder?
My mudder, wrapped inside dat shawl,
She 's down among 'em in it all!
I want you, oh, my mudder dear!

SANTA CLAUS

Nay, she shall follow ere New Year.
Look! she ascends a narrow stair;
And two strong men a burden bear
Behind her. Look! the little room,
The lowly bed all wrapped in gloom,
The little form upon the bed!
It is thy body, lying dead.
Bend o'er the crystal with thine ear,
Thou canst their earthly grieving hear.

Boy bends over the crystal and listens to

THE EPILOGUE.

EPILOGUE

MOTHER (*entering room*)

To all the saints may glory be!
Sure, Mr. Goodman's given a tree,
And all the fixin's fresh and new!
Candles and gilt contraptions too,
And paper moons and paper stars,
And decorated ginger jars,
And dolls that goes to sleep and cries!
Och! sure, 't will be the grand surprise!
The little shadder on de bed,
Poor, tired, little sleepy head!
Shut de door softly, when you go.
I 'll put de spangled, cotton snow
All round de roots. Whose at de dure?
Why, dat is Father Brady, sure!

Enter PRIEST

God bless ye, Father, look and see!

PRIEST

Why, what a splendid Christmas tree!
No money could be better spent.

MOTHER

Sure, Mr. Goodman had it sent.

PRIEST

Ah, God on all his blessing sends
And man will sometimes make amends.

I came to tell you, my poor soul,
A rich man gave three tons of coal
Into my charge, and you 're the one
That 's going to burn up every ton.

MOTHER

May God in glory get the praise!
Dere 's no more long, cold nights and days!

PRIEST

Warm as your heart.

MOTHER

And, glory be!
The fine an' elegant Christmas tree.

PRIEST

Hitch on the little candles, so!

MOTHER

And the glass ice and cotton snow
And here 's de doll, of finest wax
Wid hair as smooth as yellow flax,
And hobby horse —

PRIEST

I 'll strike a light
To make the little candles bright;
And now the game is just begun.

MOTHER

Wake up, wake up, my little son!
An' is it sleeping you would be?
I 'll have to get to shakin' ye,

And Father Brady waitin' here!
 Respect the holy father dear!
 Come, wake, *wake*, *WAKE!* Why don't you stir?
 Come over here, good, reverend sir
 And rouse my boy! His hands is cold!
 His eyes is open, starin' bold
 At nuttin'!— Ah, his mouth's agape!
 Oh, sure, he 's jokin' in his slape!
 Wake, in the Holy Virgin's name!
 Don't look like dat, for very shame!
 Your mother knalin' on the floor,
 An' —

FATHER BRADY

Quiet, quiet! all is o'er.

MOTHER

You martyrs that in glory be,
 Look down on me and pity me!
 De misery and shame I 'm in
 De wild, wild love, de woman's sin,
 De man all safe, and married too!
 And me cast off like an old shoe!
 And my poor, only little boy,
 De only image of my joy,
 He too, he too, has got to go!

FATHER BRADY

My daughter, it is better so.

.

SANTA CLAUS (*shading his eyes with his hand*)

The crystal bursts, the life is done!
 The mother hastens to her son!
 The blinding light is everywhere;
 Lo! 't is the granting of thy prayer!

VOICES

Now fades the night on Christmas morn
When fly the shadows from daylight,
And promise of a hope unborn.
For sure as day shall follow night
Somewhere, somehow is wrong made right.

Oh, for the far-off Christmas time
When every one on earth shall find
In other souls, the sense sublime
That Pride and Hate are trebly blind
In sight of Love for all mankind!

Come, Widsom, robed in queenly state
And conquering Love that never dies!
Welcome on earth from Heaven's gate
For mighty voices cleave the skies
In triumph of loud harmonies!

THE PRIZE OF LIFE

“Thou wast all that to me, love,
For which my soul did pine:
A green isle in the sea, love,
A fountain and a shrine.”

EDGAR ALLEN POE.

The Persons

THE BOY
THE GIRL
THE TROGAN
THE QUESEL
THE CURUCUI

SCENE: *A grassy dell overshadowed by a tall and drooping evergreen, under the base of which issues a spring of sweet water. To the east a stony bluff overhangs the sea.* TIME: *a Lifetime.*

ACT I

Daybreak in the early Spring

TROGAN (*sings*)

Here I carol and carol all day;
Here I warble and warble alway;
Here I warble and carol and sway
 All upon the evergreen tree!
Here I warble and warble my song
Loud and lovely, loud and long;
Whether you think it right or wrong
 Oh! it is all alike to me!
Whether you go or whether you stay,
Or take my words in a merry play,
Or take my words in a solemn way,
 Oh! it is all alike to me!
Trogan, trogan, hearty and hale,
 On the beautiful evergreen tree!
Over the hill and over the dale
 Wells my liquid melody!
Oh! my melody wells and wells
Like the toll of wedding bells,
Bells of silver and bells of gold
To sound the mighty loves of old, —
That ring and clang, that ring and clang
As in the brazen tower they hang,
That clang and ring, that clang and ring
To hail the nuptials of a king!
'T is thus I sing, 't is thus I sing!
 In melody wells the soul of me!

I tell of triumph in everything,
Unending joy and victory!

Enter QUESEL and CURUCUI flying from opposite directions

CURUCUI

That carol hath a noble tone.
The sentiment is all mine own.

QUESEL

I came to hear, I came to see
His beauty and his melody.

TROGAN

You come with joy, you come with light.
I pray you take an upward flight.
The evergreen tree, you 'll find very high;
Over the top to fly and fly.

CURUCUI

'T is well to contemplate the sky.

QUESEL

I hop and I hop
From bough to bough.
I am going to stop
On this one now.
Oh, the branch is bare
Both high and low!
'T was different there
Long years ago.

CURUCUI

The quesel feels his age to-day

He hath no mind for sportive play;
 But hearken to the voice of him
 For wisdom shines when eyes are dim.

QUESEL

My feathers are gray
 That once were blue
 Whatever I say
 Is always true.
 And as the mortal days go by
 I meditate and prophesy.
 As sure as time and fate shall last
 Too much hath happened in the past;
 And sure as men are always men,
 There 's more to happen now as then;
 And sure as the sun illumines the moon,
 Something is going to happen soon;
 As sure as souls be born again,
 There 's too much pleasure and too much pain.

TROGAN

Upon my word! Upon my word,
 The quesel is a melancholy bird!

CURUCUI

The shamèd East is blushing red
 O'er the white plume upon his head.

TROGAN

And o'er the wide and shining sea
 A child is coming to our tree.

CURUCUI

Upon the bluff before the hill

She stops a moment, biding still;
 The wind doth rustle through her dress
 And in a happy wantonness
 Tangles the yellow of her hair —

TROGAN

And blows it o'er her shoulders bare.
 Now! Now she turns!

CURUCUI

Her eyes are blue;
 Her cheeks are of a roseate hue —

TROGAN

Save where the dainty turn-up nose
 Is more the lily than the rose.

QUESEL

Yellow and blue
 And rose and pink,
 There 's color for you
 To stop and think!
 'T is trouble and fright,
 As I suppose,
 That makes her white
 About the nose.

Enter GIRL

GIRL

I dreamed that I was wandering in a park —
 I did not know the name — and all was dark;
 And lots of funny little goblins came
 And carried me, as surely as my name
 Is — is — what is my name? Why, now that 's queer! —

They carried me away and left me here
And — where is here? Green grass and yellow sand
And a big tree? I do not understand.
Where 's nurse? where 's mother? Both are far away,
And no one here to stop me when I play,
And no one here to play with! Oh, dear me!
What are those birdies perching on the tree?
Why, all their songs are made of human words,
Like people in the opera! Funny birds!

QUESEL,

For shame, a great big girl like you!
I don't know what you 're coming to.
Try to remember. Fie, for shame!
She does not even know her name!

GIRL,

You talk like nurse.

CURUCUI

She hath a lovely face!

GIRL,

Can you please tell me why I'm in this place?

QUESEL,

O witless one,
You take your stand
In the rising sun
Of Fairyland!

TROGAN

Pretty little girl, look down and see
The fountain of this charmèd tree!

Like the sound of rain and thunder
 How the water wells from under!
 How it bubbles and bubbles in haste,
 Clear to the eye and good to the taste!
 Drink of it, drink of it! Then your joy
 Will be to love a little boy!

GIRL

I think you're jollying.

QUESEL

Thunder comes with rain,
 And love for any one will cause you pain.
 Night follows noon; you get not what you gave.
 Mine are the words that measured be and grave.

TROGAN

You measure them with many a peck
 Like crow's *caw, caw!* or duck's *queck, queck!*
 But mine are musical and many,
 I speak a hundred for a penny.

QUESEL

Vain babbler! Mine are chosen few,
 And worth a thousand spoke by you.
 My thoughts are slow; my brain is old;
 My words are worth their weight in gold.

TROGAN

Then weigh them ere the gold of morning pales.

QUESEL

I would not weigh them on your scales!
 I'll teach the little girl to know

The poignant sunset and the glow,
When mortal woes and lives are done
And the immortal life begun.

TROGAN

Better to wait until she 's dead,
And not a living sleepy-head.
Now 't is time to tell her here
How to live with merry cheer;
But merry cheer, she knows it all
And so we tell her nothing at all.
Happy, happy, in the light of day,
Leave her alone and let her play!

GIRL

And here 's another thing so queer to see;
A little cloud has nestled on the tree
Like snow on Christmas pines, and now doth go
Away upon the breeze like melted snow;
And so, departing, leaves behind it now
A little boy asleep upon the bough;
And oh, the brown and red upon his cheek!
Wake up, you little boy! He will not speak.
Perhaps in this far island, human words
Are spoken not by people but by birds.

BOY

Where am I? All that fog is blown away.
Where did I come from? Is it night or day?
For when I left 't was all electric light,
The clock struck nine, it was a cloudy night;
And here 's the sun! I don't see how I came.
Hello, you little girl! What is your name?

GIRL

I don't remember.

BOY

Well, you are a silly!
My name is — Sam? No! What?

GIRL

It looks like Willie.

BOY

Sam, Ben, John, Henry — Henry must be right,
Or Charlie — no, it can't be Charlie Knight.

GIRL

Who 's silly now?

BOY

It can't be Charlie Day;
Or Smith, or Jones.

GIRL

You wont find out that way:
I tried it.

BOY

Anyway, I know I'm I.
Where do you live?

GIRL

Don't know.

BOY

No more don't I;
'T was in the city — where I cannot think;

I'll tell you presently;— I want a drink.
Where's water?

GIRL

Ask the funny little bird.

BOY

You little girl, you really are absurd!

TROGAN

Oh, the clear and bubbling spring,
Bubbling up like anything!
Here it splash and hear it well
Like a beautiful wedding bell,
Under you and under me
And underneath the enchanted tree!
Climb you down and then you'll see.

BOY

I see it now and I am climbing down.

GIRL

You are a naughty boy to scowl and frown.

BOY

I tore my stocking and I barked my knee.
Look out, I'm coming!

GIRL

Don't you jump on me!
How will you get the water?

BOY

In my hand.

GIRL

I hope it's clean!

BOY

I'll rub it in the sand;
And then I'll wash it in the clear cascade.
You take a drink and don't you be afraid
Of any dirt.

GIRL

You dearest little boy,
I'll be your little sweetheart, O my joy!

BOY

You ought to be ashamed for talking so,
Five years at most!

GIRL

Let the sweet water flow
Between the smiling lips. Take but one sip,
And don't you put your lip upon my lip,
For —

BOY

Why, you sweet and lovely little girl.
I kiss you — and — and my head is in a whirl
And —

TROGAN

They are lovers playing at love's game!

GIRL

Say, can you tell me now what is your name?

BOY

Until our names fly hither on the air,
I'm going to call you little Goldenhair.
Your hair of gold, your eyes of violet blue;
Why, when you come beside I feel with you
The sun doth shine in skies more brightly bold,
And all the air is filled with quivering gold!

GIRL

And you, — the rounded cheek is brown and red;
And the brown hair thick curling on your head;
And when you kiss, your closing eyes in joy
Shine brown! You are my little Brownie boy!
See that old bird! He looks just like my popper —
Oh, stop it, you! He thinks we are improper!

BOY

I'll take another right within his sight
To show him that it 's proper and all right.
I never knew before why girls were girls.
They seemed like dolls, all silliness and curls
And fibs and giggles.

GIRL

What a thing to say
To me! And yet you speak it in a way
That makes me love you more.

BOY

It 's different now,
You and those other girls — and anyhow
I see them how they laugh and why they might
At cows and serpents get into a fright;
What the girls do no longer may surprise;
For all they are, I read it in your eyes.

GIRL

Then if you know them, you 'll be leaving me
For other little girls that you may see.

BOY

I love you only and my love you know.
The others, let them come or let them go,
And play at tennis or at basketball!
But you I love. You 're different from them all.
And some are jolly girls, and some are clever,
But you I love forever and forever!
Sealed with a kiss and there's a promise made
On lips and eyes!

GIRL

Oh, Brownie! I'm afraid
When you return into the light of day
You will forget your promise and you 'll say,
When you are eating porridge and thick cream:
"Last night I had a very lovely dream."
And when you go to supper and to sleep,
And heavenly dreams around your pillow creep,
Ready to carry you afar from there,
There 'll be no room for little Goldenhair.

BOY

I love you always and I love you true.
I 'll never love another girl than you.
Over the sea how the bright sunbeams play!
But you and all are fading far away.

TROGAN

The Dawn doth triumph over the world
And all his banners are unfurled.

Go back, you little girls and boys
To the real world and all its joys!

CURUCUI

Over the world afar they rove
But still they must remember Love,
Whose dreaming of immortal birth,
Makes poor and pale the joys of earth.

ACT II

A Spring Morning

TROGAN (*sings*)

Hear me sing, hear me sing!
Here my melodies how they ring
For meeting in the Maytime air
Of Brownie and his Goldenhair!
They part in the world where love but seems
And are hither come to the land of dreams.
Oh, what a treat where now they meet
To dream and dream and find it sweet!

O elfin band

Of Fairyland,

The boy and the girl come nigh!

And here I see

The curucui

And the quesel flying high.

He flies on high

All over the sky

Like one who knows of fate

From the fiery well

In the void of Hell

To the glory of Heaven's gate.

Enter QUESEL and CURUCUI flying from opposite directions

QUESEL

I am the quesel gray and blue.
Whatever I say, it all comes true.

I tell you now and I tell you here
 Something is going to happen queer.

TROGAN

The boy and the girl are borne once more
 Over the ocean's shining floor;
 And the spirits who bring them here
 Will never wet the tip of the toe,
 As over the rolling waves they go
 Like the hours that fly and the winds that blow
 In the fullness of the year.

CHORUS OF SPIRITS

Fly and fly and gently bear
 Brownie and his Goldenhair!
 Lovely girl with hair of gold,
 Here is Dreamland to behold!
 Manly boy with hair of brown,
 Gently, gently set you down!
 Here to dream a moment's space
 In our island resting place
 That love and joy shall conquer pain
 And hearts' desire be born again!
 Here a moment you shall meet
 To make the severed lives complete
 And dream and dream and find it sweet.

QUESEL

In the world below
 They dwell apart.

CURUCUI

But here they go
 With heart on heart.

QUESEL

They burn in the fire
Of parting's pain.

CURUCUI

In a dream's desire
They meet again.

TROGAN

"Alas, alas!" the queasel sings;
But the curucui is happy alway
And so his melody rings and rings
To wake the joys of a holier day;
And for the perfect of this joy,
Awake, awake, O girl and boy!

GIRL

Brownie! What's Brownie? Why will that sweet
name
Perturb with grief and send the maiden shame
Over my cheek in fearful roseate joy?
For here he lies asleep, my Brownie boy,
Asleep amid the mayflowers soft and low.

BOY

My little sweetheart of the long ago!
I dream — I wake! And by the soul of me,
What is the vision I most gladly see?
The tree and the strange birds and the spring air
And here I clasp my little Goldenhair!
Oh, better than the world and joys that seem
Is even this, the shadow of Love's dream!
In glory of our youth again to meet
And so our love is crowned!

GIRL

O sweet, sweet, sweet!

BOY

Down in the world our lives are far apart;
But here as always, heart to beating heart!

GIRL

Why, Brownie, what a great, strong man you've grown!
And what a bicept muscle, all your own!
And what a head and what a strong, brave chin!
I know that love and valor dwell within.
And that great brow that overhangs the eye,
What thoughts betide you? Brownie, I could cry
For love and joy, all fearful what I see,
So much the wiser you are grown to be.

BOY

There is no learning that can come between
'T is only for the glory of my queen.
And — you how you have grown!

GIRL

In the bright sun
Let us sit down and tell what we have done.
Brownie, you stop! You always were so rash!
The birds are looking!

BOY

Don't you talk that trash!
Here in the place where all deeds are confessed,
We side by side. My head upon your breast!

GIRL

Well, I awoke those fifteen years ago,
 After I met you and I loved you so;
 And thought to see you with my earthly eyes
 But suns did set and other suns arise
 In pining for my Brownie.

BOY

And I too;
 But both got well. It was the deed to do.
 The maiden health that mantles in your cheek, —

GIRL

I knew I had my Brownie still to seek;
 And to be ready, any time he came.
 And so I played at every outdoor game,
 And in my studies now and yet again
 I read of lovers and their joy and pain;
 And still I felt the absence of my boy
 Was greater pain and meeting greater joy.
 Oh, Brownie! I 've been brave and will be brave
 Even if I never see you till the grave!

BOY

My Goldenhair! Love never is 'Time's fool!
 And you have played your games and gone to school
 Even as I, a schoolboy, where I played
 At football, and a little muscle made,
 And came to college, fresh from boardingschool,
 A great, strong, lubberly, conceited fool.

GIRL

Why, Brownie, don't you talk that way! For shame!
 I wont have any one call you that name.

BOY

I was one.

GIRL

Stop it!

BOY

Well, if a young fool
Gets kissed for being one at boarding-school,
Then what 's the use of trying to be wise?

GIRL

And did not other girls have violet eyes?

BOY

Why, sure they did.

GIRL

And lovely golden hair?

BOY

Why, sure they did.

GIRL

Well!

BOY

What do you think I care
For all the pretty ways and all the sham
Of sentiment and charm? Why not one damn!

GIRL

O Brownie, you have said a naughty swear!

BOY

You had a naughty thought, you Goldenhair!
Another kiss will make us good I know.

GIRL

But really truly, Brownie, and no show,
You say that never in your whole life long
When you had mingled with the giddy throng
And all the girls went down upon their knees
To you, a football hero, at their teas,
At senior promenades and coaching tours —
We know that more than common charm is yours
And in the world I know such men as you
Will always find a thousand things to do.
In all that whirl of work and gaiety
How often, Brownie, did you think of me?

BOY

Why every day that dawned within the week!
I thought of you when I ground up my Greek;
I thought of you when pain would make me yield
Over the ball upon the football field;
And gripped the tighter when I thought of you;
And made the single touchdown, driving through!

GIRL

Where do you play?

BOY

Back of the line, my pet.

GIRL

What college?

BOY

Oh, the name I still forget
 With every other place and every name
 Except my Goldenhair!

GIRL

And I the same!
 O Brownie! Brownie! What a dreadful thing
 To love and know another love would bring
 Fulfilment, with the lover at your side
 You may not find, still seeking far and wide
 At twilight's glimmer and at morning's gleam!
 Oh, grief to love when love is but a dream!

BOY

Poor little lady! Drive away the tears!
 We may meet still. We both have years on years
 And all the world to travel! Slow or fast,
 We cannot keep apart; we 'll join at last!

GIRL

Why, Brownie, don't you see? the place, the name,
 The city where we live may be the same
 In the same street, upon the self-same square?

BOY

Oh, if I ever saw you, Goldenhair,
 I 'd know you! Naught would keep me from your
 smiles,
 Poverty, sickness or a thousand miles!
 O love, our cities of forgotten name
 Are not the same.

GIRL

I fear they are the same
Try to remember once.

BOY

Oh, how I've tried!
Even as you have striven and have cried
Upon your pillow, thinking so of me!

GIRL

I know, I know!

BOY

And yet our love shall be
Right in the end; and be it here or there
I know I'll find my little Goldenhair;
And so in thinking more and more of you,
I worked in college and the law school too,
I'm going to meet the world, and make it seem
The nobler unto all men for my dream!
I'm going to fight injustice to the poor;
I'm going to turn the rich man from his door
Who piles the unjust dollars. All things frail
From that injustice I will make prevail.
If by my deeds, old age and ardent youth
Are happier in freedom and in truth,
And wayworn love may find a happier day,
I know that unto you I'll clear the way.

GIRL

And I—I will be worthy of my fate;
To the world's grief my life I'll dedicate
Amid the rolling smoke of battle-fields
And booming guns where still the coward yields,

And where the ranks of heroes make their bed,
The pale, set faces of unnumbered dead;
I give my life to lighten war's grim curse;
Unto the wounded I will be a nurse
Until my charities o'erflow the sum
Of my desert and we together come!
O Brownie, is it ended all so soon?
See the bright sun!

BOY

It is the hour of noon.
The sunshine blinds us both and melody
Floods from the air into the soul of me
And this green island paradise is gone
Into a greater ecstasy!

GIRL

At one
Our loves, though blind and failing! Brownie, come!
Let us together seek our earthly home.
The blur, the darkness! lean you down, dear heart!
And kiss me and once more!

BOY

'T is time to part.
Come sleep forevermore and grief amain,
After the sunbeams falls the bitter rain!
I cannot find my loved one anywhere.
Farewell! farewell!

GIRL

Remember Goldenhair!

QUESEL

Oh, down in the world

They both must go
In a tragedy whirled
Where the storm winds blow;
For the brain is weak
And the heart is blind.
They seek and they seek
And they never find.
They must not wait,
The dawn comes still
And I sing of fate.

CURUCUI

And I, free will.

ACT III

A Summer Afternoon

TROGAN (*sings*)

Oh, for the sunbeams over the sea
In the beautiful month of June!
And the warblers carol on every tree
In the golden afternoon.
The old bird sings, "tra-la-la-la-la!"
The young bird carols, "pe-wee! pe-wee!"
For the world is far and the night is far
And the heavens are clear and the loves are free.

Over the ocean as the wild winds blow
Merrily eddying on every air,
To and fro and above and below
Hither and thither far away
The spirits hover and fly;
They hover and fly and they soar on high
And their wings flash back the light of the sky
For they herald the loves of an earlier day
And the boy and the girl are there!
They are coming near;
They 'll soon be here
The joy of their love to take!
In the realms of sleep
Where the ocean is deep,
Awake, awake, awake!

QUESEL

Oh, the woman's years
Have passed her by

And the man appears
 With a sober eye;
 For the hopes are dead,
 And the lives are lone,
 And beauty is fled,
 And youth is flown.

TROGAN

The quesel's words are solemn and sad;
 I fear the quesel, he must feel bad,
 The quesel's words are thorns to prick;
 I hope the quesel, he wont be sick.

QUESEL

I tell the past, and I foretell
 The future, and I feel quite well.

TROGAN

See the sleeping girl and boy,
 How their faces light in joy
 The harvest of their love to make!
 Awake, awake, they are both awake!

BOY

I know that face, though times and faces change.

GIRL

What is this place, so lovely and so strange?
 And all the grass is watered with my tears
 And green it groweth still, through barren years!
 And the bright birds loud singing in their joy
 And O my Brownie! There 's my Brownie boy!
 Why, Brownie, don't you know me? How you stare!

BOY

I know you are my little Goldenhair—
Before mine eyes the shadows come and go.

GIRL

There came a look that I did never know,
A downward glance. We both have older grown.
Why do you shudder?

BOY

I 've grown old alone.

GIRL

See now the selfsame Brownie as of yore,
Only a man who was a boy before.
There 's nothing that mine eyes may see in you
That is not manly, beautiful and true,
And splendid as the west wind on the day.
Why do you look upon me in that way?

BOY

Because all words be idle as I ween
To hide from love the thoughts we do not mean.

GIRL

Why, Brownie, do you think that I would tell
A—

BOY

Goldenhair, I know your spirit well;
Down in the world without a spot or stain,
Like budding snowdrop in the bleak March rain,
All this I know.

GIRL

You do not answer me.

BOY

All this I know and also I would see —

GIRL

Brownie, you 've learned to talk against the time;
 And when the brazen bells at morning chime
 And all the deep, hoarse throated whistles blow,
 In the gray mist both you and I must go,
 Forever parted. On this fairy coast
 For one glad moment let us greet Love's ghost.
 Let us not tarry while the hours go by
 Over the subtle meanings of a —

BOY

Lie!

Must lies still follow in the lands above,
 Still, still to sunder me from my true love?
 In this far isle where love-joy only seems
 Must lies come also to the land of dreams?
 Oh, then the pangs of actual life for me
 Where lies but shadow unreality!

GIRL

And separation's real.

BOY

Alas, my love

It is not meant to struggle here above.
 My dearest you are you and I am I,
 So never mind the shadow of a lie.
 In the blest isle of fairyland I ween

Your battle stainèd knight and you my queen, —
Why the quick shadow flitting on your face?

GIRL

For chivalry 't is not the time or place
Nor am I stainless; so, the shadows come;
And all my heart is growing cold and numb.
O Brownie, how I've waited and I've prayed,
And many times I failed and was afraid
The time I met you, for my punishment,
I could not tell of years that were well spent;
And now —

BOY

Poor girl!

GIRL

Not poor. Why don't you know
The lovers' vows we made so long ago,
What time the serried hoards of tyrant Wrong
Were still to conquer by the pure and strong;
And Virtue was a pilgrim on the way
To light the path of truth as bright as day;
And we went forth to conquer and to save
With love, against the ravage of the grave?
Do you remember?

BOY

Why, 't is even yet
Fresh graven on my soul ne'er to forget.

GIRL

I dreamed that every victory I won
Would bring me nearer at the setting sun
To you in realization of my love;

And so I entered and I haply strove;
And when the first white ambulance went by
Laden with wounded men, I lived a lie.
For unto the far region of that land
They carried bad supplies all underhand;
The purse, they said, of government was large
And all contractors made a double charge.
And down among us chosen men were sent
To make a "safe" report for government.
So in the tent of hospital supply
All the false vouchers I would certify;
For if, protesting, I had quit my place
For one who did not deem it a disgrace,
She, overlooking drugs and clothes and food,
Would do much harm, where I a little good
Might do; and so the crates all came and went
Under the canvas of the sweltering tent
Where the gaunt typhus held his horrid reign,
And the men shuddered at the cries of pain,
And men lay dying in delirium,
Hearing the din of battle and the drum
And boom of cannon at their stricken beds.
Wild were their eyes, and restless were their heads,
And lips all black with thirst and white with foam,
Still calling, calling on the far off home,
For wife or mother or the girl they left
Less than a wife or mother, but bereft
Of love, even as arbutus in the snow,
Never a wife's or mother's joy to know,
Only the far off rumor of his deeds
And sorrows of a maid and widow's weeds.
Outside the tent 't was all glad holiday,
Loud played the band, flaunted the banners gay
Under the tropic skies of burning blue,
To greet the coming of that retinue.
And nearer, nearer still the pageant came.

Inside the tent the nurses called my name.
 "Come out! come out!" I heard the voices cry,
 "The whitewashing committee passes by."
 And there in fevered hands I bowed my head
 And brooded o'er the dying and the dead.
 O Brownie! Brownie! had you been beside
 To tear away the canvas that would hide
 The shame and destitution on the way,
 And show the dying men to outraged day—
 But I alone, Brownie, I did not dare.

BOY

Alas, alas! O my lost Goldenhair!

GIRL

Dear heart, don't cry so loud, in such a tone!
 Say, do you blame me? I was all alone!

BOY

Blame you! (*aside*) If I were weak enough to say
 The truth that was, 't would only take away
 Her last illusion! (*aloud*) What can mortals do
 To right the world?

GIRL

I read you through and through;
 And plain as noonday unto eyes that see,
 There 's one thing more your heart would hide from me.

BOY

Were I to tell, 't would one more sorrow prove.

GIRL

You owe the truth to duty and to love.

BOY

Over my desk, I labored day by day
Mid the law's dust that grew more thick and gray;
And life grew dim and young desire burned low
Where use and wont constrained me still to go;
And I had failed to teach the world my lore,
And I with error was encrusted o'er;
The lines below the eyes, the lips clenched tight,
Told of the long duration of the fight;
But sometimes was the very soul of me
Thrilled in a moment with a victory
Afar; and all the clouds of my disgrace
Were parted by the vision of your face,
As when the dawn in floods of happier light
Makes cliff and headland gleam upon the night.
And then I knew all trickery and deceit
Must fail before the fulgence of love's heat
And though a million men may palter and prate,
That love is always love and hate is hate;
And while great suns give gladness to the skies,
The truth is always truth and lies are lies!

GIRL

There Brownie speaks once more.

BOY

I made a plan
My friends and I, and each a chosen man,
Amid the tangled wiles of knave and fool,
Out of their hands to wrest the national rule,
Give victory to freedom, and the crown
To love and truth, and cast the impious down.
We waited on the time and we rose high
In party counsel, my good friends and I;
But while our plans grew ripe, in lands afar

There burst an indignation of red war;
And poisonous rumors did our land invade
How thieving knaves our armies had betrayed
To typhus and the ravings of disease;
Which proven, would alone our foemen please,
Drown our ambitions in a nation's tears,
And all the well wove plans of many years
For national salvation were laid low.
In alien lands of war, 't was fated so,
I was commissioner. There came the test.
Outside the tent I, I—

GIRL

Tell me the rest!

BOY

My name was borne on eddies of the air
In cheer on cheer.

GIRL

O God! I heard it there!

BOY

I heard men's groans; I knew that if I saw
The men inside, 't would rub upon the raw,
And all the glory of my nobler dreams
To aid mankind, would vanish with the schemes
And toil of others. If I closed an eye
To present evil, if I passed it by,
If I restrained my heart, counted the cost,
If for the future I the present lost,
'T was the one time I faltered with a lie.
I did not enter.

GIRL

Oh, 't were well to die!
O Brownie, Brownie! we must leave this place!
We may not look each other in the face!

BOY

The shadows once again! the mortal fret!
Stay by me dear! Why can I not forget?

GIRL

Though young desire doth seek the world to mend,
The world is still a victor in the end.

QUESEL

The truant years are fled away.
Call them again, they will not stay.
Pleasure is gone and now comes pain;
For the past will ne'er come back again.
And sure as day is followed by night
Two wrongs will never make one right;
And sure as the night is dark and long,
Too many things have happened wrong;
And sure as bad is followed by worse
Men must endure their fortune's curse;
And sure as pain is followed by grief,
From some of those ills, there's no relief.

ACT IV

An Autumn Evening.

Enter QUESEL and CURUCUI flying from opposite directions.

CURUCUI

O queasel, quickly fly to me
And the fairy isle beyond the sea!

QUESEL

'T is an autumnal eve
And all good birds the dreams of summer leave;
Faded the flower and fallen is the leaf,
Like frailty of love. We in our grief
Around Love's fountain mourn the idle toys
Of life and love and all unrealized joys.
The skies, all gray and ashen overhead,
Bemoan the little trogan for he 's dead!

TROGAN (*sings*)

Hear me, hear me flutter and cry;
Hear me, hear me never say die!
Morn and eve I 'm still on the wing;
Hear me, hear me, flutter and sing!
Poor old queasel, happier be
Like the happy old curucui;
For none shall grieve in the world above
That life is life and love is love;
And do not grieve in a voice of tears
Because their love outbraves the years;

But all glad birds will carol in joy
 At the coming of the girl and boy,
 To the isles of gold in the setting sun
 Where the souls of the blest with love are at one.

BOY

The well known shore and fullness of the sea,
 And all the setting sun's immensity,
 And royal purple asters everywhere,
 And balm of everlasting on the air,
 Glamour of dying sunbeams on the sea,
 And whispers of wild breezes in the tree,
 And the strange birds in jargon there above,
 Bespeak the fullness of remembered love.
 And though I'm old and bent and cannot see
 But dimly, still I feel the life in me;
 And there comes back the rhapsody of joy
 That moves the ardent memories of a boy,
 The breadth of moving waters and the light
 And the young tenderness upon the night,
 And all is bright and fervent now once more
 Like her mine eyes have seen so long before.
 And all the elder failures and the tears,
 And the long heaviness of latter years,
 And all heartbreaking ills are rolled away
 To greet the glory of an earlier day
 When love and honor burned in living flame
 And life was only one great gorgeous game!

GIRL

I totter down the bluff o'er stocks and stones
 'T is very painful for my poor old bones;
 And — here is all the world has left of me;
 And feeble, Brownie, and I can't well see,
 But still I know there 's love upon the air
 And all past hopes; for Brownie boy is there.

BOY

My Goldenhair, the world is wholly gone;
And you and I and love are all alone;
And these gray hairs.

GIRL

Mine are all grizzled through.

BOY

But lo, the love that now comes back to you!

GIRL

We have turned the corner, we are grown so old.

BOY

Before us now the scroll of life unrolled
Reveals the past in glamour of glad truth,
With all the joy and sting of untried youth.
Back, O my love, into our lives we go
Where failures are not any more to show;
And mortal error and the fawning lies
Are like bad dreams that turned out otherwise;
And we the banner of our life unfurl
Again as man and woman!

GIRL

Boy and girl!

BOY

Again as children!

GIRL

All our souls are clean!

BOY

And all desires are as they might have been,
And everything accomplished that we willed!

GIRL

And all our aspirations are fulfilled!

BOY

And the dark world is now a brighter place
That thou hast lived thy life!

GIRL

And by thy grace,
The winds are wilder and the skies more free;
And Love and Truth all tremulous in glee,
In shining raiment with glad voices sing
Unending song; and the red roses spring,
And the pure lilies, ne'er to pass away,
Give an eternal joy from day to day
Unto mankind, and Heaven smiles above
Upon the adoration of our love!
Wild songs of victory upon the dawn
And all fresh odors over field and lawn,
And how the mighty mountains give the sound
Unto the fury of the sea profound!
And where the ragged chimneys lifted high
Smear with black smoke the pale blue of the sky,
And gallant men and women do and dare
'Mid teeming miles of sordor and despair,
There 's a great joy surpasses any spring
Or joy of wild fowl on their northern wing
To greet the life and tenderness come forth
Even from the frozen bosom of the north;
And men uplift their voices in great joy
For thou hast saved them, O my Brownie boy!

BOY

My Goldenhair, there 's one more kiss to take!
How could I save mankind even for thy sake?
The light grows pale, my dear, and gathering clouds
Cover the setting sun with purple shrouds.
Behind the solemn veil one beckoneth
And we must answer to the call of Death.

GIRL

Is it the end, O Brownie?

BOY

Not the end.
Though dissolution on our spirit spend
The pangs of Hell, there 's something yet above
Even his power.

GIRL

The knowledge of our love!
Kiss me once more! O mountains, vales and streams,
I parting now even in this land of dreams,
Even at the moment when my love grows fair,
Have loved and am content!

BOY

My Goldenhair,
There is an aureole around your head
To light the pallid regions of the dead.
And in the pangs of death we know love's joy.
Farewell, my love!

GIRL

Farewell, my Brownie boy!
Love shall dispel the terrors of the grave.

The healing sleep comes o'er us like a wave
 To wash the wind-blown sand upon the shore;
 And we have had our love forevermore;
 And pain is past, and this alone is true
 That you and I are one; for I am you!

QUESEL

Oh, the world is revealed
 To a heart that dies;
 And a soul is healed
 Of earth born lies;
 And dreams and desires
 Are all as one;
 For life expires,
 And love is done!

CURUCUI

Love cometh again
 When the warm winds blow
 And he smiteth amain
 The pride of the snow;
 And the flowers unfurl,
 And the tide runs high.

QUESEL

But the boy and the girl
 Must pass and die.
 Like the melted snow
 On the April tide
 The old loves go.

CURUCUI

But Love shall abide.

QUESEL

Dust unto dust
 They wholly seem
 Who put their trust
 In an empty dream.

CURUCUI

When all is done
 Of trouble and strife
 Such dreams have won
 The prize of life.

QUESEL

So at debate
 We are sitting still;
 For I sing of fate.

CURUCUI

And I, free will.

VOICE ON THE WIND

Trouble no more your souls for them;
 For the west wind breathes their requiem.

CHORUS OF WINDS

Breathe it on the tidal gale
 At the leaping of the spring.
 Tell the robins of the tale,
 Tell the warblers, how they sing,
 They shall never waken there
 Brownie and his Goldenhair.

They have lived and loved apart,
 All unheeded they must weep!

Now together heart with heart,
Let them sleep, oh, let them sleep!
Lovers here and lovers there,
Brownie and his Goldenhair.

Blessings on you, girl and boy,
Ever sleeping side by side!
Nevermore the days annoy,
Nevermore the hours divide
Now at last a happy pair,
Brownie and his Goldenhair.

THE END

THE GARDEN OF
THE HEART

“Amore e cor gentil sono una cosa.”

LA VITA NUOVA

“Così trapassa al trapassar d'un giorno
Della vita mortale il fiore e verde;
Nè, perchè faccia indietro april ritorno,
Si rinfiore mai, ne si rinverde.”

TASSO

TO MY MUSE

(A CONFESSION OF FAITH)

Return, my muse, return again!
For thee too long, I've sighed in vain.
Return, return!

Thy crocean curls by zephyr blown,
Thy rose tipped hand within mine own,
Return, return!

Kindle once more the fire divine!
Once more my brows with myrtle twine!
Return, return!

Whisper the words that lead me nigh
The unseen realms of poesie!
Return, return!

By thee, I know the toil and strife
And consecration of Man's life.
Return, return!

By thee, I know these worlds that seem
Victorious, are but dream on dream.
Return, return!

Full well I know by charm of thee,
Mankind at last grows wise and free.
Return, return!

By thee inspired, I fain would make
 This world the nobler for thy sake.
 Return, return!

Give eyes unto my heart and mind,
 For the salvation of mankind!
 Return, return!

O come once more, my muse to me,
 Fair daughter of eternity!
 Return, return!

THE HILLS OF BETHLEHEM

(A CHRISTMAS CAROL)

'T is night, when all things silent be
 Over the hills of Bethlehem;
 The sheep are asleep on a grassy lea
 And the star, it shineth on all of them.

Dark shadows fall from glistening rocks
 Over the hills of Bethlehem.
 The shepherds in silence tend their flocks
 And the star, it shineth on all of them.

Behold it moves in the realms of air
 Over the hills of Bethlehem;
 Unto a manger drawing them there,
 The star that shineth on all of them.

A light below and a light above
 Over the hills of Bethlehem.
 Where a baby croons to a mother's love
 And the star, it shineth on all of them.

Mary mother and all in prayer
Among the hills of Bethlehem
Worship the Christ-child smiling there, —
And the star, it shineth on all of them.

Full well they know, who vigil keep
Among the hills of Bethlehem,
The shepherd hath come to fold his sheep
And the star, it shineth on all of them.

And the tears of men and women shall cease,
For over the hills of Bethlehem
Comes peace on earth and perfect peace —
And the star, it shineth on all of them.

To —

It was my fate uncaring friends among,
Lonely along Life's pathway still to fare;
And when the glory and the shame I sung,
You were the first to care.

Good lives are gardens, glad and free,
Where early violets, side by side
With damask rose and fleur-de-lis,
Bloom beyond the harvest-tide;
Side by side, all sheltered warm
From the black frost and ravening storm.

But ah! these earthly posies yearn
For dews that fall from loftier skies,
Where seraph wings, without return,
Waft o'er the streams of Paradise
Eternal blooms, whose odors meet
Before the Father's mercy-seat.

The world was one grand rhythm all to-day
And all the joys of earth, they flocked in haste;
I could not catch them, so they flew away;
Full many a noble thought was doomed to waste;
But others still abide and they shall be
The charmèd brood of immortality.

NOISETTE

Were you and I together
And both with love at one,
No storm our lives would sever;
But both with love together
In warm or wintry weather
Would bloom beneath God's sun,
A double rose forever
When Earth's desires are done.

A CHILD'S GARDEN

Olga plucked the lavish flowers,
Black eyed Susan's golden pride.
In the passing of the hours
All their petals drooped and died.

Still there grew, from earth apart,
Other flowers immortal made
In the garden of her heart,
Memories that shall not fade.

In her heart they grow and blow,
Perfect for a little while.
Immortality they know
In the sunshine of God's smile.

O children of the morning light
When summer fills the sky,
Fair morning glories, opening bright,
Only to close and die!

Ye tell of hopes unfolded soon
Upon the dawn of day
In shadow of life's afternoon
Only to pass away.

THE HONEYMOON

A smile for your smile,
And a tear for your tears!
'T is sweet to beguile
A smile for your smile.
They are not for long while
In the vista of years,—
A smile for your smile,
And a tear for your tears.

A BOWL OF ROSES

A great, substantial, portly china bowl
With curious, Chinese figures all in blue,
Fat mandarins, and trees that never grew
In Nature's soil. The body 't was; the soul
Bloomed forth and spread a langorous perfume round.
It was a bunch of roses, fresh and fair,
With petals pink as coral. Gazing there
I stood in dreamy fancies all spellbound,
As, with the sweetest of all soundless sound,
They breathed their praises to the morning air.

To E. W. W.

Friend who wanders with me far
 In the lands that never are,
 All the charmèd ways along
 I beguile thee with a song.

On the far and charmèd way
 Out of ken of night and day,
 I the mammoth people find,
 Better, wiser than mankind.
 All the many faults of Man,
 All his little plot and plan,
 All his hope and joy and pride
 Are a folly to deride.
 All in all they pigmy seem
 To the race whereof I dream.

Friend who wanders with me far
 In the lands that never are,
 All the charmèd ways along
 I beguile thee with a song.
 Let the song beguile thee still,
 Thine and mine for good or ill.

BUTTERFLIES

How they flutter and flaunt and fling!
 Everywhere
 In the air,
 Butterflies, butterflies on the wing!

One is white as a bridal veil;
 One is red as a rose in May;
 Golden is one, and pearly pale
 As the afterglow of an autumn day.
 One hath color of heart's desire;
 One is hued like the burning pain
 Of failure or loss or youth's bright fire
 That flickereth once, but never again.
 One hath wings like a dying flame;
 One like lilies that fade and close;
 One with drifted leaves the same
 Or the purple shadows on mountain snows.

But all of them flutter lightly by;
 Bright and gay
 On a summer's day;
 Gone at eve ere the robin sings;
 Gone ere the swallow hath furled his wings;
 Gone in uncertain journeyings
 Or ever the sunsets die.

 Eddying ever
 Like flakes on a river
 Or the bubbles on a stream;
 Each fitful, fickle butterfly
 Flutters and flaunts and passes by;
 Flutters and flaunts to fail and die
 Like the fading of a dream.

DRIFTING

Drifting in our frail canoe
 On the dusky, silent stream
 Dearest, see! the sunset gleam
 Fires love's torch for me and you.

Coral clouds and pearly sky
Flaming in the farthest west
Softly whisper, "Peace and rest —
Peace and rest that never die."

Let us shun the sable shore,
Frowning at us, slipping by;
Let 's be happy, you and I,
Drifting, drifting evermore.

THE CLOUD PALACE

The floating cloud was bright within
With purple and roseate glow;
And far beyond this mortal din
Where no man's prayer could go,
Uprose the palace of the djin
Embuttressed white as snow.

The sun touched dome and minaret
And turned their gold to flame;
The hills whereon the fabric set
Were dark with earth's dark shame
Cast up o'er crag and rivulet,
Where never a pilgrim came.

The proudest conqueror would not dare
To brave that charmèd sway.
Not earth's embattled armies there
Could scale those rocks of gray.
But one light breath of summer air,
And the power all fades away.

THE SHOWER

Oh, the bounty of the rain
Sweeping over hill and plain!
Like a joy, dispelling care,
How it livens up the air!
See the larkspur's tangled blue
Where the bees go buzzing through,
How from drooping of its head
Now it stands up straight instead!
See the nodding lilies blow
All their petals to and fro;
And their brothers of the sword
Stand like soldiers at the word!
Though their leaves are beaten down
How they brave the heavens' frown!
The skies are wild and murky black,
Sudden cleft with lightning's crack;
Like the trolls at game of bowls
How the crashing thunder rolls!
How the crashing rain beats down
To wake the green from dusty brown!
From the parchèd brown of things
Lo, the verdure that upsprings!
How it makes the buds to burst
In mad revelry of thirst!
Oh, they need it every whit,
Need the lash and sting of it!
Under the wrath of the thunder roll
Still to bloom a perfect soul;
Like a double joy of earth
So to gain a second birth;
So to prosper and expand
Over all the sunlit land,
When the sun doth rise again

More benign for summer rain,
Through the azure of the skies
Touching life that never dies.

VIOLETS IN DREAMLAND

We walked in the dreams of a violet mead
And the grass and the flowers were very fair;
But little of all did I take heed
For a sunbeam shone in thy silken hair.

I was a knight and thou my queen;
Like an elvish queen, thy form was fair;
And there came a clarion call, I ween,
In tourney and joust to do and dare.

But the lovelight laughed in thine eyes of gray,
And thy parted lips were lovely fair,
And the tourney sounded far away
For thee and me and the love we bare.

For never a joy was like to this,
Thou in my arms both fain and fair,
A maiden's vow and a lover's kiss —
And of all this world I had no care!

Queen of the vision, my own heart's queen,
Thou like a violet fragrant fair,
When the skies are blue and the fields are green
'T is time to list to a lover's prayer!

List to a story always new,
Thou like a violet lovely fair;
And tell me if ever dreams come true
For thee and me in the violets there.

FULFILLMENT

Thou, love, and I went o'er a mighty mountain;
 Green was the grass whereon our feet would fare.
 Light from the sky was over stream and fountain;
 Songs of wild birds a-tremble in the air.
 Silent we trod before the dawning's portal;
 Eyes all undazed by any brighter beam.
 Surely our sight was over any mortal.
 O, for the joy and fullness of a dream!

Thou, thou and I forever in my dreaming,
 Soul unto soul forever fain and sweet,
 Under the sunbeams radiantly streaming,
 Gathered the violets growing at our feet.
 O tufted violet in the springtime growing!
 Thou in thy bloom more radiantly fair!
 I, in the rapture of the gods' bestowing,
 Made me a garland for my true love's hair.

Lo, in the blare and pageantry of morning,
 Brighter than hope that beacons from afar
 Even thy brow's white innocence adorning,
 Shone every blossom like the morning star!
 Brighter and brighter kindled they, outshining
 All happy suns that light the worlds above,
 Ever the beauty of thy brow entwining
 In exultation of the light of love.

Prized by my soul, thy love was but a vision
 Granted in vain by evanescent powers.
 Why did I wake to find it a derision
 All in the weariness of actual hours?
 Oh, let me dream where yearnings may be granted!
 Thou, thou and I forevermore to seem
 Always in light and loveliness enchanted,
 Thou for my dear one and a deathless dream!

A DOUBLE DIRGE

In the brown earth together we lie.
The sprouting grass our grave shall hide.
What care we for the blue of the sky,
We together and side by side?
Side by side forever, my love,
Side by side forever!
What care we for the summer's pride,
Or the bloom of grapes on the autumn-tide,
Or the silent snow that falls to hide
Our love, not Time shall sever?

LALAGE

O still beloved a hundred days apart!
I loved you in the laughter of a day;
And you, when love was stirring at your heart
You would not say.

Now, though the memories came crowding back
Revealing you the better part of me,
Revealing you my soul upon the rack,
You would not see.

And though my love were like the voice of birds
Or melody of angels in your ear,
The music and the meaning of the words
You would not hear.

And though for your sweet sake I dared a deed
To ease the burden all the world must bear,
Whatever I might compass for man's need
You would not care.

O still beloved, but careless and unkind!
May sorrow never lift your soul above
The maiden fancies of the blissful blind,
Who know not love.

AN OLD SONG

There were two girls of age to marry
A noble lord of high degree:
And one not long did maiden tarry
For gold was hers and land in fee.

And one was wed to tears and sorrow
For strangers gave her bed and board.
Alone she wept both night and morrow,
For alone she loved the noble lord.

And one was framed for rank and fashion
And pride of beauty overblown.
And one was framed for deeper passion,
Her doom to love and love alone.

The bride he loved and cherished blindly
And little love he gat in turn.
The maiden loved him all too kindly,
And lived her life to love and yearn.

SUNSET

Fervor of evening! o'er the whispering sea
Steals the light breeze, and every flower and leaf
Trembles in yearning of a soul set free
For love's wild joy and ease of ancient grief.

Now is the hour for lovers' charmèd way
 With crimson lips and throbbing of the breast;
 Long parted in the toiling of the day,
 Together joined and either heart at rest.

And what a healing for a soul bereaved,
 The chime of evening bells when day is done,
 The sheep enfolded and the grain upsheaved,
 And God's own glory in the western sun!

ONE LITTLE NO

One little no! 't is all absurd,
 Such burning pain for one small word!
 How could he hope to win success,
 Pursuing rainbow happiness?

He heeded not. The passing hour,
 Bitter in fruit, was bright in flower.
 Did he not know that Time has wings?
 Men are such very foolish things.

He said I've made the world a hell
 With my inconstancy. Ah, well!
 The past is past? One cannot be
 Constant through all eternity.

His grief and rage and dark despair
 Are very hard for him to bear.
 One little no! 'T is all absurd.
 Do men's hearts break for one small word?

HEARD BY THE WIND

Wandering o'er the whispering lea
Or the misty mountain side,
Wind of the world, have pity for me;
Wandering wild and wide.

Wandering always, day by day,
Without abiding place,
Like my sweetheart never to stay
For a well remembered face!

Wind of the world, by dale and down
Wandering wide and wild,
Hast thou ne'er in sleepest town
Heard of a heart beguiled?

Waft thy joys on the morning air;
Waft them wild and wide;
Only in silence, I must bear
Grief for a love that died.

LESBIA

Live we and love! the twilight hours go by!
Live we and love, nor ask the reason why;
My arms a tremble round thee, love, and thine
Around my neck and I may call thee mine!

Live we and love! the starlit hours go by!
Live we and love! the dawn is in the sky!
Give me one kiss and let ambition go,
The wide world waken and the west wind blow!

Live we and love, and let the hours go by!
 Live we and love, for man was born to die,
 And far more sweet thy love-look is to me
 Than all men's promise of eternity!

TO ONE WHO WAS WISE IN HIS OWN
 BELIEF

Am I a fool, that proudly I deny,
 There is no change in our frail human state;
 For hope is dead, and love must pass and die,
 And wrong endures, and therefore God is great?

Did hope not bud afresh at springtime's breath,
 Were man's mistakes each an eternal rule,
 Were love once blasted by the pangs of death,
 Your God, not I, were still the greater fool.

FROM HAFIZ

'T was roses, roses in my bower,
 Maiden roses, fair to see!
 Bursting bud and fragrant flower
 I plucked them in the twilight hour,
 My own heart's blood, for thee!

But while I bore them on the way
 The winds of heaven blew wild;
 The winds that breathe at close of day
 When the heart is best beguiled,

Blew them and blew them away from me;
 Bud and flower, 't was all the same,
 Out of my bosom a purple flame
 On the waves of the western sea!

"O love, my roses all are blown!
 I come to thee, empty of them all!
 Bursting bud and flower in bloom
 Over the sea like seabirds flown!
 Where, O where is the rose in bloom
 Not passed beyond recall?"
 "Beloved, at breast and garment hem
 Behold thy roses, all of them,
 The soul of the rose, the rose perfume
 At last for thee and me!"

TO A FRIEND

If ever our friendship fails
 Remember this;
 That never a dawning pales
 At morning's kiss,
 That never a sunset sky
 Is fair to see,
 But the sad eyed hours go by
 Remembering thee.

If ever our friendship fails
 And time is a lie,
 And the sad eyed hour bewails
 That love must die,
 And all for the loves that died
 Thou wear the rue,
 Remember at Christmas-tide
 I am always true.

TU NE QUAESIERIS

Believe that fickle love shall last forever
When steadfast are the waters of the main,
When backward flow the currents of the river
And all this Indian summer comes again,
When kisses will endure like marble stone,
And you and I at heart are truly one.

Pluck the red rose that blossoms while it may,
Beauty unfolding neath a noonday sky;
And when the fervid petals fade away,
Sooner or later know that all must die;
And summer, still departing from her bowers,
Leaves fragrant memories that once were flowers.

So let us love in flush of bounteous weather
And pluck the fleeting pleasure at the full
And down the blooming hedge-rows fare together
While both are young and all is beautiful;
Nor trouble for the future and the tears
That fall upon the passage of dead years.

And when the parting comes as partings must,
With sighs and tears, dear heart, we will not
strive
Nor seek to re-create, from senseless dust,
The soul of love that is no more alive;
Only remember when the song is sung,
How sweet it was to love when all was young.

SCATTER THE ROSE

Scatter the rose on the wind!
Rend the petals away!
Wide as the glare of the day,
Fair as the hours are fleet!
Let love last while it may
Broken and rended and torn
With its petals strown on the morn
And its perfume still more sweet,
Far more poignant-sweet,
Than a rose that blooms in the smile of May,
A virgin bud on a virgin spray,
To unclose on the quiet of garden bowers, when
the hours are fain to greet!

Scatter the rose on the wind!
Rend asunder the spray!
Let love last while it may
And leave regret behind!
What care we for the tears,
Or the lives that fade on the day,
Or the tumult of wasted years,
Or the promise that will not bind
Hearts that are weak and wild
As the will of a wailing child?
Hearts that are wild and weak,
Leave them to pine and peak.
There are other roses to seek,
More beautiful still to find!

A BALLADE OF SPRING

Heigh ho! the blood begins to rage!
 Heigh ho! the bursting of the spring!
 The time for lusty marriage,
 The time for love and love-liking !
 Heigh ho! the bushes burgeoning
 For a pair of lovers on the lea!
 Merrily, merrily how they sing
 Together neath the apple tree!

'T is: "Lady, vows may not assuage;
 The bird of love is on the wing!"
 'T is: "Sir, 't were better in his cage;
 And evil fall that issuing!
 The goodly daisy flowers I fling
 To teach you better modesty;
 Lest both be shamed a-dallying
 Together neath the apple tree!"

'T is: "Lady, lo the golden age
 That you and I be mimicking!
 Away with silly vassalage
 Of taper and veil and wedding ring!"
 'T is: "Sir, a mime must be a thing
 Semblant, and never verity.
 Not otherwise, our tarrying
 Together neath the apple tree."

ENVOY

Prince of the seasons, little king
 With hooded eyne that cannot see,
 Trow ye the fall came with the spring
 Together neath the apple tree?

A BALLADE OF WINTER

When the snowfall doth efface
Blackened vines about the door,
When Jack Frost doth silvery trace
With his runes the lattice o'er,
When the garden paths are hoar
For Love's feet in wandering,
Lo, thy heart is lone and sore!
How for thee may sweet birds sing?

When thou farest to the place,
Snow girt on a windy moor,
Where thy true love hid her face
On thy breast in days of yore,
Mid the circled pines that soar
Crust and rime enshadowing,
In the moonlight pale and frore,
How for thee may sweet birds sing?

Fool! that would not flee apace
Ere the loves had fled before!
Now are fled the summer days
With the broken faith she swore!
Nay, upon a summer shore
If thou hear sweet jargoning,
Will she not thy heart restore,
How for thee may sweet birds sing?

ENVOY

Heart, thou 'rt frozen to the core
Ne'er to wake at any spring.
Past is past forevermore.
How for thee may sweet birds sing?

A BALLADE OF FOLLY

He wears the scarlet cockscomb on his head,
 And in his hand he carries Cupid's bow;
 And many a lordly divan doth he tread,
 And many a lady's presence doth he know;
 For everywhere his painted minions go
 Like motes in air and bubbles on the stream,
 And withered leaves when autumn breezes blow.
 It is a world where Folly reigns supreme!

What matters all the past? The lives we led
 Let tarnished reputation take in tow!
 Let's all be merry, now the wine is red,
 And flaunting flushed, the faces in a row!
 Over the breast the wanton tresses flow
 By neck and shoulder, and the dark eyes gleam,
 And loud the strident laugh to hide the woe!
 It is a world where Folly reigns supreme.

Here faith is gone and hope is long since fled,
 And shame and fame alike for friend and foe!
 'T is here the last low spark of love lies dead
 That burned more brightly in the long ago.
 And health and youth and honor pass also
 The splendor and the glory and the dream,
 And all is lost in one great overthrow —
 It is a world where Folly reigns supreme.

ENVOY

Princess of heart and soul, to thee I owe
 New love, new faith and hopes that brightlier beam!
 Make pure my sullied life and hold it so,
 Far from the world where Folly reigns supreme!

A BALLADE OF OMNIPOTENCE

If I were Lord of life and light,
I would not make the prickly pear,
The gila monster and his bite,
The poison of miasmic air,
The fever pest, the cattle scare,
The blighted corn, the season's dearth, —
All should be happy, sound and fair,
Were I the Lord of heaven and earth.

I would not have enthronèd Might
Propped by the hypocrite, his prayer;
The "living wage," the labor fight,
The sweat shop on the foul, dark stair; —
But man and woman here and there
Around the world in all its girth
Plenty and peace alike would share,
Were I the Lord of heaven and earth.

If I were Father and God of right
My children's children I would spare.
Woman and man their troth would plight,
A blessing, not a curse to bear.
I would not have the pandar's snare,
Nor child misformèd at the birth,
Nor no love parting anywhere,
Were I the Lord of heaven and earth.

ENVOY

Prince of the spheres, thy creatures' care
For thee makes game and godlike mirth.
Better by far we all should fare
Were I the Lord of heaven and earth.

THE SILENT SONG

When, mid the stars, adorning
Grim night's eternity,
Or on the wings of morning,
Thou feel thy soul set free;
When, with the truth thou hearest
Thine inmost heart is stirred;
Unto thine own heart's dearest
Oh, utter not that word!

The future that thou seest
Would dazzle her bright eyes;
The past from whence thou fleest
Would never make her wise;
The dreaming of the ages,
The sifting of the sand,
The tempest when it rages,
She would not understand.

The songs thy soul inspire
Are not for her to share;
For women most desire
Some trifle, light as air.
Oh! leave what gods may tell thee
Although thy heart be wrung,
The word that doth compel thee,
Unuttered on the tongue.

But when thy soul is flaming
Walk forth into the night;
And there without thy naming,
The darkness shall, be light;
Though mountains may be rended
Asunder stone from stone,
The song of life unended
Is thine to hear alone.

A SONG OF THE Q. B. C.

Ere we toddle up to town,
Homeward bound, Quinsigamond,
Fill the stein and drink her down,
Bumpers round, Quinsigamond!
Sound her praises on the air!
As our fathers found her,
Still we find her wondrous fair
When we gather round her.

Here 's to thee, old Q. B. C.
Dear to each beholder!
Bumpers round and drink her down!
May she ne'er grow older!

Lapse of ages cannot tame
All your joys, Quinsigamond,
Old and young we 're all the same,
All your boys, Quinsigamond!
Comrades, here, 't is merry, merry cheer,
Any kind of weather!
And when the foam is on the beer,
We 'll be boys together.

Here 's to thee, old Q. B. C.
Dear to each beholder!
Bumpers round and drink her down!
May she ne'er grow older.

When the sunset lingers o'er
Spruce and pine, Quinsigamond,
All along your silent shore
Memories twine, Quinsigamond.
Welcome, welcome, to our strand,
Thine at twilight mellows!

Here you 'll find us, heart and hand,
Still the same good fellows.

Here 's to thee, old Q. B. C.
Dear to each beholder!
Bumpers round and drink her down
May she ne'er grow older!

BILLY DARE

Trot along, my Billy Dare!
Show the uplands how you go!
Red and gold the maples bear;
All the oaks, a crimson glow!

Trot! the elm trees, towering tall
Shower leaves upon our track!
Trot! the wind o'er rise and fall
Drives the pliant birches back!

How it plays in Billy's mane,
Roisters o'er the pasture wide,
Blows the fern to seed again
All along the forest side!

How it tingles on your cheek,
Stirs the currents of the blood,
Rouses up the heart to seek
Everything that 's pure and good!

Trot my Billy! leave behind
All that man has made for worse!
Trot! the bracing autumn wind
Blows away the primal curse!

All men's grief is turned to song
 In this keen October air.
 So we bravely trot along,
 Trot along, my Billy Dare.

Each from his lofty peak we two give call
 One to another; and in the vale below
 Sometimes the echoes of our meaning fall
 Where crowded men at barter come and go.
 For me the storied east; for you the west
 Boundless in prairie, rock, and flooded light
 With merriment of children manifest;
 For me, stars and the night!

You tell me of strange wisdom, man hath won
 But yesterday or hath not won at all;
 But far beyond the bounty of your sun,
 O'er ruined temple and broken city wall,
 Rises from out the immemorial east
 Dust upon dust, fraught with old crimes, old
 wars,
 And alien creeds and woes that have not ceased.
 For me, black night and stars!

SALUTATORY

O my fellow members, how I rub it into you!
 How I rub it into you and rub it all over you!
 I, no respecter of any personality,
 Who is not kind and wise and honorable!
 Brown be the hair or bald on the cranium,
 All are alike in the temple of my criticism,
 All alike at my oracle of criticism,

Seek it and find what other people think of them!
 Youth may be reverent, old age venerable;
 Any young man may yet be irreverent;
 Any old man may yet be unvenerable.
 Old men and young men, how I rub it into you!
 I, no respecter of any personality,
 Drudge in a bank or a worker in a factory,
 Doctor and lawyer and any professional,
 Doctor and lawyer, how I rub it into you!
 If you are free from a word of criticism,
 Then you may know you are very unimportant,
 Infinitesimal in the community,
 Only a flea in a swarm of parasites,
 Only a mite in the mold of the camembert.
 If you are pierced all over with my criticism,
 If you are full of my quills as a porcupine,
 Then you may know you 're a person of importance,
 Then you may know you 're a man in the community.
 Only a finger nail to crush the parasite,
 But for the man, you need the battle axe!
 I, no respecter of any personality
 Who is not kind and wise and honorable,
 What unto me is the proud individual
 Lost in the manifold pride of humanity?
 What unto me is the pride of humanity,
 Lost in the boundless riddle of the infinite?
 Vainly the loves and the pride of humanity
 Tempt the unutterable silence of deity!
 I, no respecter of any personality
 Who is not kind and wise and honorable,
 What care I for a person of importance,
 Any important person in particular?
 I, who contemplate universality
 What unto me is a man in the community?
 Only a minnow in a pool of the rivulet,
 Only a leaf in the forest of the universe!

I, who contemplate universality,
What unto me is a person of importance?
Only foam on the billows of the infinite,
Only a drop in the waters of oblivion.

THE VEILED SPIRIT

When Dante sang of joys eterne,
He tuned the lute for lovers' lays.
For Beatrice, his heart did yearn
And all the spheres rang back her praise;
The words were sweet upon his tongue,
But love indeed he never sung.

O ye, the Sistine's vault beneath
Who view the dreams of Angelo,
Their youth untouched by change or death,
For him remained true joy to know;
Immortal glory he hath gained;
But aspiration ne'er attained.

Truth, veiled by vast eternity,
Is there no measure to express
What heart can feel but eyes not see,
The soul of all her loveliness?
We know she dwells beyond the earth;
But not the secret of her birth.

A truce to words. What tongue can tell
Her power, prevailing everywhere?
We find her not in heaven or hell,
At morning song or evening prayer.
Yet, darling, for one raptured while,
In thy dear eyes, I saw her smile.

NOBODY KNOWS.

Nobody knows the meaning of evil;
 Nobody knows the nature of sin;
 Nobody knows the wiles of the devil,
 How to get out or how to get in.
 Whether a deed will aid you or hurt you,
 East and west on the wild wind blows;
 Be it a vice or be it a virtue,
 Ask in vain, for nobody knows.

Nobody knows the call of the ocean;
 Nobody knows the bourne of time;
 Nobody knows the birth of motion;
 Nobody knows the glory of rhyme.
 Search the womb of the rocks below you,
 Climb to the cold of the mountain snows,
 Ask the midday sun to show you,
 Ask in vain, for nobody knows.

Nobody knows the world's creator,
 Nobody knows the primal cause,
 Fate or chance for an abitrator,
 Heart's desire or nature's laws.
 Nobody knows the loves that love us
 Or the soul of a white, white rose;
 Would you be as the gods above us,
 Ask in vain, for nobody knows.

THE OCEAN OF REST

O peace to thy sleep! let no mortal disturb
 Thy cares upon earth that distract and perturb!
 Winged angels uplift thee and bear thee away
 From the lives that all fade in the glare of the day.

They bear thee away to the beach and the boat
All calm at its moorings the waters afloat.
They cast off the painter and spread the bright sail
That knows but the breath of a favoring gale.

And over and over the watery plain
Mid tremulous silence thou glidest amain;
O'er dark, gleaming waters thou glidest along
To a sound half unheard, like the ghost of sweet song.

Far circling birds from their courses descend;
And, hovering o'er thee, in harmony blend.
Then over the waters they flutter and glide
And gleam in the dusk of that infinite tide.

Thou glidest and glidest mid music away
Till o'er the horizon, in place of the day,
Uprises a glory, undreampt by the sun
When fate had the world in its courses begun;

And louder and louder the harmony sounds;
Reëchoes again and more sweetly resounds;
And brighter and brighter the radiance grows
Yet soft as the breath of an opening rose.

Then all in the midst of that radiance and light
Uprises an island, unknown of the night,
O'erarched with wide elms, and with many a glade
Of violets and ivy that never shall fade.

Stop here, t'is the end! t'is the lost thou hast found!
Tread lightly! immortals have trodden this ground!
All ended thy sorrow and portion of death
Where men speak of love with a catch in the breath.

From the hours that fail and the hopes that betray,
From the shadows of earth is thy soul fled away.
Oh sleep thou, my dear one! drive care from thy breast,
In the far isle of dreams mid the ocean of rest!

FLOWERS OF LETHE

On the banks of that still river
Where birth and death are one,
Pale flowrets droop forever
Beneath no smiling sun.

The whispering winds blow o'er them,
That in wet places blew
Where none have bloomed before them,
White poppy or green rue.

Unhappy phantoms hover
Along the stream of rest;
When life and love are over,
Forgetfulness is best.

But none may cull the flowers,
Whose hearts have e'er forgot;
Nor wander in the bowers,
Whom love remembers not.

Only pale phantoms flutter,
That neither live nor die;
Dumb life that may not utter
Dead yearnings long gone by.

Sweet words that once were spoken
Float down upon the wave;
Old vows forever broken,
That may not find a grave.

Here life may still remember,
And love outlive regret;
But April and December
Alike the shades forget.

Only the whispering river
Mourns to the listening breeze
Where leaves of aspen quiver
With heartfelt memories.

THE WANDERER

O for the western sky
When the fretful day is done,
And the lords of the hills and the lords of the plain and
the lords of the air look on!
The white mist rises high
From the river and the plain,
And the skies are red as a foughten field with a thou-
sand thousand slain.

O love of women and gold!
Yours is a mortal breath;
Ye trouble the years of youth and hope and meet in
a common death!
More wise, the nobly bold
Who dwell afar from these;
For the hills are high and the plains are wide and the
skies are eternities!

ULTIMATE

Far, far away
Beyond the day
And the splendor of skies aflame,
Oh, come ye blest
To sleep and rest
And the peace that hath no name!
And all whose hours
On earth like flowers
Are crushed by the heel of Time,
Shall find more high
Than the angels fly
The garden of life sublime;
And all whose days
Are a tangled maze
Of folly and strife and ill,
Shall find beyond,
Though dreams are fond,
The truth can save men still;
And all who are vexed
And sore perplex
Where life is a broken light,
Shall find afar
From adverse star
The glory beyond the night.

SONNETS

THE ALTAR OF POESIE

How far from thee I've wandered, brake and burn
Can tell; and ocean wind on lonely moor
That from far cities bears the burden o'er
Of all the million hearts that ache and yearn;
Of all the million brains that may not learn
Joy's truth, beyond the sordor of life's lore.
These left behind, how sweet it is once more
Unto the dreams of boyhood to return!
Temple of Poesie, my boyhood's shrine
How sweet to enter, in my heart a prayer;
To hear within thy chambers, line by line,
The cadence of thy praises on the air;
To see thee face to face! O goddess mine,
Thy presence glorifies the world's despair!

PROSPECT

I will not grieve because it faileth me
Through lack of fortune or through lack of power
To glitter on the summit of an hour
Like foam upon a ripple of the sea.
Let victors wear the laurel. I am free
To fructify a talent yet in flower,
To smile at all the fools that carp or cower
At lack of worldly opportunity.
I will not grieve, if all I do or say
Through years of patient labor be in vain.
I still am free a profitable day
To dwell with men of mightier heart and brain,
To loiter at the knees of Thackeray
Or listen to the wisdom of Montaigne.

To B. W.

The crossroads! See! We journey on apart.
 You've taught me there's a brighter, nobler end
 In life, than trafficking to get and spend;
 For faith and hope inspire human art.
 Let's linger at this tavern ere we part.
 Your health, my plodding, helpful teacher-friend!
 Your oddities, a thousand discords, blend
 In human harmony of soul and heart.
 So jest and plod and serve the college bell.
 Your quips have told a mighty truth to me;
 As coral polyps, all unheeded, dwell
 In everlasting depths, build patiently,
 Cycle by cycle, each his insect cell;
 And lo, an island rises from the sea!

THE DAWN

The sun uprose and rent the mist away
 From off the rosy bosom of the morn,
 Who wept with tears of dew her mantle torn
 And drew about her thigh the shreds of gray.
 Over the shining hills they took their way
 Down to a valley by a river brink.
 He gave her there the wine of life to drink;
 And there I saw the nuptials of the day.
 With sweet division, o'er my tunèd soul
 There thrilled the warbling of an oriole:
 "Cull thou thy flowers ere summer's portal closes.
 Lo, the wine, brimming full thy cup of bliss!
 Lo, thy beloved, pouting for a kiss!
 Love thou amid the lilies and the roses!"

REGINA

My heart is thine O love! thine all in all!
Bare to thine eyes, its crimson mystery!
So wilt thou pause and hearken unto me,
And then thine answer give imperial,
The sound thereof, to me, thy bounden thrall,
Though harsh in anger and disdain, shall be
Sweeter than paradisaal harmony
In Eden's bowers before the sin and fall.
Whate'er thy will, who rulest o'er my days,
Thine be the glory, who in all thy ways
Art queenly, thou the pure and thou the strong!
And if for me the pain, yet from thy hand,
I, weeping, bless the wound, who understand
That thou, my lady queen, canst do no wrong!

WAYFARERS

If I with thee each crust might share and share,
Blithely I'd beg my bread from door to door,
Or sleep on haymow or on threshing floor,
Thy head upon my shoulder, and thy hair
Against my cheek. Nor ever should I care
For salutation from the passers by.
With thee beside me in thy constancy,
The shame and beggary were debonnaire.
Disowned and flouted and defamed by all,
Over our lot we'd waste no time in moan;
Nor rate him equal, who, in rise and fall,
Captain of Europe on his eagle throne
Proclaimed from cannons' lips imperial,
Or on Helena, still must dwell alone!

VIOLETS

These violets fade; for every stalk doth fall
 And every blossom, drooping of its head,
 Looseth its fragrance ere its days are sped
 And the sweet life be gone beyond recall.
 But there's a bower that's immemorial,
 Never by sun or dew or raindrop fed
 Where no flower blooms to perish mid the dead;
 And thou, the peerless violet of them all.
 So let the others fade and many springs
 Pass by with passing by of all frail things
 And the winged hopes that are most quick to fly.
 But far from that fair bower, Time shall forget
 To sever from its life one violet
 Whose fragrance and bright bloom shall never die!

THE AWAKENING

Poets whose words outlast the lofty line
 Of Charlemagne and Cæsar! Once I pored
 Over your measured truths and fondly ignored
 The only thing that makes the truth divine.
 Friends of my moods when solitude was mine,
 Those raptures that the generations move,
 Pale in the splendor of another love
 Whose brow nor diadem crowns nor laurels twine.
 No more may goodly lines on fair white page
 With imaged lives and loves the hours assuage,
 Nor touch with borrowed feelings, grave or gay.
 From others' dreams, I turn to dreams of thee,
 O love, my love! whose face I ever see
 So instant near — though far and far away!

IN ABSENCE

In place of pouring forth a song for me
Into thy listening ear, this Christmas-tide,
My thoughts, that fly from far where I abide,
Are tossed by winter storms upon the sea.
So is my spirit vexed continually,
That on the bitter gale of fate doth ride,
Hither and thither blown from side to side,
Trailing a broken pinion, far from thee!
Hither and thither blown with wind and rain,
Fugitive through the mist, where naught is plain
Save scud and towering cloud and sorrow and fear.
But on that barren sea without a shore
Where whirlwinds rave above the waters' roar,
Glimmers the dawning of a glad New Year.

THE DAYS OF CATULLUS

"Live we and love, my Lesbia! In the deep
The suns will set only to rise again.
But we, when our brief light is out, remain
In one perpetual night, there still to sleep."
So loved they in old Rome, and we who weep
Blind love and broken faith and passion's pain,
May we not catch the lilt of their refrain
Ye lordly loves who timeless vigil keep?
Hold we our faith unbroken, even so
As they at Rome two thousand years ago
Nor care thereafter what may hap to be;
For suns will set and other suns arise,
But ere the love light fadeth from thine eyes,
Our love will make its own eternity.

THE FALL OF EROS

Is it the shame of love that makes men sad,
 In deep dejection clothing every vow?
 Can we not pluck our pleasure even now
 From all the ancient splendor that he had?
 Is this the god whose arrows drove men mad,
 Before whose laughter even Zeus did bow,
 Whose promise did the elder days endow
 With pride of innocence, in candor clad?
 Why do men weep if love be love indeed?
 It is the joy of universal need;
 It is the freedom of a holier day!
 O man! why wilt thou take thy shame on trust,
 Converting to the fire of baser lust
 The spark that is immortal in the clay?

AT OLYMPIA

O craven is the breed of modern men!
 Impure of heart nor very stout of thew!
 The taloned passions torture and subdue
 Who haply dare to come within their ken!
 O for the promise of the ages, when
 For what men felt they nobler and wiser grew!
 O that Apollo's lyre might wake anew
 And Eros spread his pinions once again!
 Fled are the gods, far into baffling skies;
 Men toil in vain that life may be more fair.
 But I, belated votary, still surmise
 The stir of mighty wings upon the air,
 The sudden gleam of an immortal's eyes,
 The twining tress of hyacinthine hair.

THE ACCUSATION

The sunset sky, with royal purple ground,
Though golden tinged, yet bears a bloody stain.
Forests and rivers mumble their disdain
Of toiling man, by doubt encompassed round.
The terrible Unknown, whose laws resound
In ocean roaring or in thunder peal,
What recks He of His creatures' woe or weal?
Prometheus still by adamant is bound.
'T is all so empty, cruel and unjust,
Let folly's flicker light the eternal gloom.
Why strive for gilded truth that crumbles, dust
Within our grasp? If perfumed roses bloom,
Why trample them because they spring of lust
And feed on exhalations from the tomb?

IMMORTALITY

The world is old, alas, and I am old;
Older than sun or moon, alas, am I,
Condemned in other worlds for death to cry
When these are as a story that is told;
Condemned to traverse lives as manifold
As stars that burn the bosom of the sky,
Viewing my fellow creatures cringe and lie
And rob and war for laurel and for gold.
A lonely voice, chiding the morning lark,
A fear winged firefly, flitting through the dark,
I ever was and ever am the same.
Like Tantalus, with lasting thirst, I crave
Surcease, surcease, that in the restful wave
Of Lethe I may quench my vital flame!

STONEHENGE

Ere England and her empire had begun
 These stones were gray with eld upon this heath;
 And centuries went down to dusty death,
 And chartered liberties were lost and won,
 Since an unstoried race of Albion
 Worshipped their god who dwelled in changeful skies
 And on some dawn, 'mid primal sacrifice,
 Their priestly builders hailed the rising sun.
 The God we know shall change and pass away;
 The Resurrection and the Judgment Day;
 Our uncrowned hopes, our doubt and mockery.
 But these bleak stones upon the windy wold,
 Within their circled mystery, still shall hold
 Their altar to a nameless deity.

REDIVIVUS

If from these eyes the vision passed away
 And all were darkness over land and sea,
 And only by the warmth that came to me
 My tear stained face might know the light of day;
 If in that blindness, the bright ocean spray
 Dashed on my cheek; or one most dear to me
 Cried on my breast, yet unto deity,
 Could He my sight restore, I would not pray.
 Lord God of Hosts, created by mankind!
 Thy powers are blown abroad upon the wind;
 Before Thy rood the generations bow;
 But whether on the footsteps of Thy throne
 Or cast in outer darkness and alone,
 The soul of Man is greater still than Thou!

HIGH AND LOW

When I behold the petty heart and brain
Of those who, mad with trivial desire,
Scramble for gold like sparrows in the mire
Who soil their beaks with pecking after grain;
When I behold the aspiration vain
Of those whom restlessness and lust inspire
That burn across the soul like vagrant fire
Leaving behind a blackened path of pain;
The more I marvel at the godlike mode
Whereby, effulgent in a chosen few,
From mortals born, like other mortals blind,
The star of wisdom hath serene abode;
Whence these derive a peaceful power of view
That mirrors love divine to humankind.

AD ASTRA

One truth have sages uttered, poets sung,
One fragment of an undiscovered whole,
This I deciphered, faded on the scroll
Of thought, and written many lies among.
Great is mankind, though slave to weal and dole,—
Mankind to whom brute folly erst hath clung,
Mankind, from whom of old the wisdom sprung,
That shows to human sight, the eternal soul.
Therefore to man I turn; his joy, his care,
His glory and his shame I, mortal, share;
More of the truth I, mortal, cannot know,
Save that on fateful wings he soars afar,
Leaving the hell, he's made himself below,
Up, on, still up, still on, from star to star.

PICTURES IN FLORENCE

THE MEDUSA OF LEONARDO

Vacant thy gaze that turned men's hearts to stone,
 Gorgon of gorgons! severed lies thy head
 'Mid toads that crawl and batten on the dead,
 Amid thy snakes in gasping terror prone.
 Thy passèd agony no mortal moan
 Can voice; and all the evil yet to be
 Through undiscovered æons abides with thee
 'Mid caves to sun and stars alike unknown.
 Forth from thy parted lips once deadly fair,
 Now pallid with corruption utterly,
 Stealeth a vapor forth upon the air;
 Like to that fame that courts futurity
 With deeds that smite the angels with despair
 And wreaks a living death that cannot die.

MADONNA BY FRA LIPPO LIPPI

She wears upon her head no heavenly crown;
 And all her love, for one small child nearby.
 Her's not the empyrean but that calm sky
 That watches o'er a little Tuscan town;
 In prayer demure she hath her eyes cast down
 Her hands devoutly joined; but her bright eye
 Veils not the mother's pride in baby nigh,
 Who strokes her shoulder neath the dainty gown.
 Lippi, within thy heart the love divine
 Of Mary and her Son could never shine,
 Beyond the clouds, forever to abide.
 A wife and child thy vision, roguish boys
 Thy cherubim, who still for human joys
 In cowl and cloister yearned unsatisfied.

TO CHANTICLEER

(A SONNET TRIO)

"There is more day to dawn."
WALDEN.

I

Bird of the sun, awakener of the morn!
At thy glad voice the early sunbeams glance!
Thy music fills the valleys of old France
And rouses up the world with hope new born.
But we in other lands, by discord torn,
How slowly toward the light we make advance!
Vainly the hours would drag us from our trance,
Our night of darkness, prejudice and scorn.
But thy brave clarion thrills in rhythmic life,
And blends in radiant harmony the strife
Of all. Behold the hooded night goes by!
Our eagle greets thee o'er the ocean's roar;
And Liberty, long dormant on our shore,
Quickens to life at hearing of that cry.

II

Over thy soul, full many a shadow goes;
The hawk that hovers like autumnal cloud;
Less menace than the hateful feathered crowd,
Huddled in fear at every wind that blows.
The birds of darkness all alike thy foes,
Whose fell rapine thy dawns have not allowed;
The empty merle, the peacock, foppish proud,
Sworn to betray thee, champion of the rose.
But more than these, thy soul must rise above
The blandishment of poor, earth-blinded love;
Albeit at thy heart, her love did stir.

With burnished beauty, in thine eyes, she dreamed
To eclipse the rose of dawn; who fondly deemed
Betrayal of thy trust was truth to her.

III

Sing on! sing on! the dawning comes at will!
The line of poplars turns to lucent gold!
Behold the blue convolvulus unfold
On the old wall, and ivied window sill!
The sound of bees comes o'er the neighboring hill;
Amid the wheat, the poppies, bright and bold,
Burst scarlet! Joy of life glows manifold;
And faith in thine own song is victor still!
Woe to the land without a faith like thine!
In pride of power, like strong men flushed with wine,
Our sons go forth to vanquish tyrant Wrong.
"Behold he falls!" in unison they sing;
From sea to sea, the valiant tidings ring
Of man's advance — but not without thy song.

GROTESQUE

THE SPELL OF THE YELLOW BEAST.

Twister, he was a Chinese lion,
(Sing fol de rol de doodle de day!)
With claws of gold and muscles of iron.
(Sing fol de doodle de day!)

His body was pink and his mane was blue;
And his eyes, they shone as black as your shoe.

Twirler, his brother, was golden green,
And the tip of his tail was ultramarine.

They dwelt beyond the crystal sea,
Where the tulips grow to four feet three.

An amaranth vine, it veiled their cave
Hard by the charmed crystalline wave;

And every evening, they could smell
The languid meads of asphodel;

And when the dawn was fair to see,
They 'd hunt in the hills for the wild boree.

Now the wild boree is a succulent beast
Fit for an emperor's wedding feast;

But the brothers dwelt in concord rare
And each one had an equal share.

Their life was like a great, glad game
Until the trouble upon them came.

The trouble was hatched by an evil djin
Who envied the life they revelled in.

So he took a skin of tiger fur;
Also a giant canister

That usually held his strong, black tea.
(For the djin more large than mortals be.

For a djin in his body is rather more tall
Than the midmost tower of the Manchu wall;

And a djin in his legs is rather more long
Than the porcelain tower of Ah Too Tong.)

He took the giant canister
And wrapped it round with tiger fur;

And he made a beast in cunning wise,
A female beast with opal eyes.

He put the head where the head should be,
And he sprinkled the tail with strong black tea.

That the brothers might love her beauty well,
He crowned her with horns, like a wild gazelle.

And when she was done, she sprang afar
And fell from heaven like a shooting star,

Till she landed on a poppy vine
By the charmed waters crystalline.

She stood on the brink of the crystal sea
While the full moon shone all over the lea.

The asphodel she wandered through
Till her fur was moist with morning dew.

She halted by a bubbling brook;
From a browned pool a drink she took;

And her broken reflection no more queer
Than the original did appear.

But they love a curious sight right well
In the land of poppy and asphodel.

For to all who are not impossibly dull
The curious is the beautiful.

Next morn the brothers awoke with glee
To hunt in the hills for the wild boree.

They captured one in a very short while
And carried his bulk for many a mile;

And very little time they took
Before they came to the bubbling brook.

There at the marge with poppies grown
They stopped and laid their burden down.

And not very long their prey did last
When once they broke their morning fast.

Then Twister licked his chops with pride
When he thought of what he had inside;

And Twirler waved a feathery tongue
And broadly smiled the poppies among.

They quenched their thirst with might and main,
Till the cavernous throats, they hissed again;

And when their morning romp was done,
They stretched them out in the amber sun.

So, side by side, like fork and knife,
They thought of all the joys of life.

Each golden claw came out of the sheath
And daintily cleansed the pointed teeth.

When lo, upon the farther marge,
They spied the female all at large!

Then either raised a rigid paw
Half way up to a gaping jaw.

They gazed like Adam before his sin;
And gazed and drank her beauty in.

Twister his eyes grew brighter yet
Until they shone like polished jet.

Quivered the tip of Twirler's tail
Like aspen leaf or gossamer veil;

For both drank deep the joy and fire
Of love that makes the heart's desire.

Then either gave an admiring roar
And started out for the other shore.

When they emerged on the other bank
They both had grown more long and lank;

For the curly hair that made their pride
Was matted down on either side.

They shook themselves upon the sod;
They made a mist for many a rod;

They did not like their moist condition;
And they eyed each other with deep suspicion.

Said Twister; "What are you doing here
That beautiful female all too near?"

"Where else do you think I 'd be, I wonder?"
Said Twirler in a voice of thunder,

"Her hue has all the lustre rare
Of Ling Ho Dynasty lacquer ware!"

That was the first unkindly word
That either brother had ever heard.

The drops stood out on Twister's nose
Like dew upon the opening rose.

"Twirler," said he, "My heart's delight,
I do not want to have a fight;

"But by the oval peachblow shrine
That beautiful female, must be mine!"

Said Twirler: "If you allow her to choose,
I think you 'll find that she 'll refuse."

Said Twister: "If you care to look
At your reflection in the brook,

"You 'll see you 're in no fit condition
To offer any competition.

" Moreover, but a little more
And you 'll be homelier than before;

" For I 'll claw your face and tear your tail
And leave you here to weep and wail!"

Said Twirler: "Long ere that would come,
You 'd feel like a bad chrysanthemum;

" But let us talk to one another
As loving brother and loving brother.

" Why cannot the female choose between
The merits of the pink and green?

" We 'll happily end our sad division,
Submitting unto her decision."

Unto the female they approached;
In ardent tones, their suit they broached;

For Twister opened his jaws so wide
You saw the tonsils sway inside,
And he said: "I hope you 'll be my bride.

" For your praise is hymned all over the earth
By the thronèd æons at their birth;

" And your praises shall be hymned soon
In all the changes of the moon!"

The yellow beast, she ruffled her fur,
And vented a melodious purr;

And thrice she lowered a branchèd horn
Like an assenting unicorn.

Then Twirler sighed most piteously,
And made a simple and heartfelt plea:

“There are no words of his or mine
That may extol your charms divine;

“I therefore only tell you true
That madly I ’m in love with you!”

The female gave a little bow
And long and loud she cried, “Miaow!”

And thrice she lowered a branchèd horn
Like an assenting unicorn.

Said Twister: “As usual I am right;
In me alone she takes delight;

“For if my observation ’s true,
She purrs at me and miaows at you.”

But Twirler answered: “Every word
Of your remark is quite absurd.

“The purr, indeed, may be the measure
Of gentle and melodious pleasure;

“But in the long miaow doth sound
Passion instinctive and profound!

“And if this be not wholly plain,
I think you ’d better try again.”

“How interesting!” Twister quoth,
“Do you think she ’d like to have us both?”

Twirler was terrible to see;
He roared in outraged chivalry:

“The imputation put upon her
Doth her and me a foul dishonor!

“As sure as her hide is black and yellow,
You show yourself a vulgar fellow!”

Said Twister: “Our hearts have been as one,
But words like yours I ’ll brook from none!”

Said Twirler: “If you like them not,
You may put them in a ginger pot!”

Then Twister spread his claws in the air
And buried them in Twirler’s hair.

When Twirler felt them in his coat
He tried to get hold of Twister’s throat.

They clawed with many a snort and twitch
Till you could n’t fathom which was which.

Over they whirled and round and round
Faster and faster over the ground;

Like the purple fire whirled they,
That a mandarin lights on the New Year’s Day.

Under the sky of sapphire blue
The asphodel and poppies flew,

Till like a pin wheel when 't is tired,
The fight died down and then expired.

Then Twister rose and looked around
But Twirler lay upon the ground.

Twister was sore from end to end;
His left hind leg refused to bend;

The blood that flowed from many a gash
Made with his coat a color clash;

But, worse than all, his lady gave
No sign unto her warrior brave,

But stiffened out in every paw
Like an effigy of woven straw.

Twister gallantly limped anear
And put his nose up to her ear;

But the yellow beast gave never a stir,
Nor did she miaow nor did she purr.

Then Twister raised a paw defaced
To put his arm about her waist,

Whereat she gave a slight rebound
With a hollow and metallic sound;

Then down upon the ground she fell
With the clangor of a metal bell.

Off in a frenzy Twister tore
The horns that on her brow she wore,

And off he tore the tiger skin
And found the canister within;

And within the canister found he
A little heap of strong, black tea;

For the djin had rung his triple bell
And thus removed the magic spell.

Then Twister heard a voice behind
Like a troubled ghost upon the wind:

“Alas! alas! Why doth it follow
That love at last is always hollow?”

Turning his head, he looked upon
Twirler, all draggled and woe begone;

For the golden green came off in patches
Under the stress of his brother's scratches;

And the tip of his tail of ultramarine,
The joy of his heart, was not to be seen.

He gazed on Twister with mournful eyes
And said: “If either one of us dies,

“Let him not be borne away in a hearse
Beneath the ban of a brother's curse!”

Said Twister: “'T was my only worry;
For all our anger I'm truly sorry.”

Said Twirler: “The brute was n't worth discussion,
Let alone our ill advised concussion!”

Twister answered never a word,
But patted Twirler's spinal cord.

So, victimized by phantom charms,
They fainted in each other's arms.

Twister and Twirler are getting well
By the languid meads of asphodel.

Each day, they feel more bold and brave
Hard by the charmed crystalline wave.

At eventide, the poppied shore
Re-echoes with their leonine snore;

And when the dawn comes over the lea,
They bathe within the crystal sea.

To a coral beach they then repair
And carefully comb each other's hair.

Twister hath grown more pink in hue;
His mane is even a brighter blue;

Twirler is rather more gold than green,
And all of his tail is ultramarine;

And both consider brotherly love
A random passion quite above.

But both in agony, loud they bellow
At certain patterns of black and yellow;

And both regard with an hate newborn
A ruminant with a branchèd horn;

And both would cross the crystal sea
To avoid the odor of strong, black tea.

A MOTHER'S TEST

He was an infant Chinese lion,
A baby Dog of Fo.
He with his mother dwelt afar
Beyond the Hoang-Ho
Upon the Mountain of Desire
Where the pale, pink peonies grow.

In blossomy garden girded round
With rocks precipitously,
His mother taught him what the sun
And what the moon might be;
But never told him how, each morn,
He was more fair to see.

His ears were red like apple fruit;
His belly like the gold;
His frequent losses on backbone
Were pearly to behold
Amid the sheen of vernal green,
As when young leaves unfold.

His delicate and curly mane
He tossed like windswept bower;
He blessed the hour of his birth,
And blessed the present hour
As he trotted down the porcelain path,
In his mouth a peony flower.

Upon the porcelain as she lay
His mother roared her joy;
For he was wholly beautiful
Who also was her boy;
But hers was never one sweet word,
Obedience to destroy.

"Come here," she purred, "Mine errant child
And hearken unto me
For I will tell you what you are
And what you ought to be.
Lo, the Feitsui Cliffs that rise
O'er fell declivity!

"Hard by the base a dragon dwells
With pinions of sharp steel;
When once inside his nephrite lair
'T were all in vain to squeal;
For that bad dragon dearly likes
Young lions for a meal.

"Fain would I have a son of mine
In peril tested true.
Leap from the rocks and face the foe
And I will pray for you.
It does not matter what you dare
Nor matter what you do."

Upstarted every several hair
Upon the Dog of Fo.
Cried he: "By Brahma's lotus globe,
Mother, I will not go!"
"Shame! shame!" she growled, "My timorous cub!
'T is time indeed to show.

"You are a lion!" She lifted him
Full firm within her jaw
To carry him o'er rock and rock.
He neither heard nor saw,
But spat in vain and wriggled in vain,
Burling at every claw.

An upward rush of mountain air
Passed him; and he fell down.
He clawed and clawed in agony
As a kitten doomed to drown.
Then all became as emptiness,
Till slowly from a swown

He woke anear the nephrite cave.
A sharp and venomous thorn
Had torn the cushions on each toe.
Bleeding and all forlorn
He raised his baby voice, the day
To curse, that he was born.

Out of the fastness of the cave
In answer came there back
O'er barricado of white bones
Like a million geese at clack
A hiss and a roar; and more and more,
As angry cannon crack,

Smoke and red fire, forth issuing,
Blurred the clear light of day;
And the baby lion stood at gaze,
And the blue smoke cleared away.
Frozen with horror stood he still,
As a kitten brought to bay.

Before him rose a monster form
Too terrible to tell,
With fold on fold of scaly gold
Like the bright fires of Hell.
With iron lidded eyes that glared
Into the darkness well,

But blinked upon the sunlight. "Oh!
The dreadful, dreadful thing!"
Clamored the baby, "Me! ah me!
Ready to bite and sting!"
Again the hiss; again the roar,
As, like a spiral spring

The worm lurched out; and the lion leapt
For twenty feet in air.
By racial instinct well he knew
He had no time to spare.
Full firm he fell upon four feet
On the bones piled there,

Under a ledge with a beetling edge
As high above the ground,
As flies at kite a mandarin
With crystal buttons round.
Bracing again his hinder feet
The lion with a bound

Sped forth; and in his heart a prayer
Like a lily gan unfold:
"Lords of the skies, uphold me now
Who the bright birds uphold!"
And Sakka's grace o'er bridged the space
Or ever the prayer was told.

Upon the ledge with beetling edge
Grew a dwarf mulberry tree
Whereat he clutched, whereto he clung
Over inanity;
And down below he saw the worm
Who him on high did see.

When rich men dine on roast canine
And the gripes begin to stir,
Before dull eyes o'er lacquered screen
Floateth a small, black blurr;
So saw the worm that lion babe
And his wings began to whirr.

His wings gan whirr, his wings gan stir
Like bees on the green Chi-Li;
Into the air the spiral bulk
Moved imperceptibly.
"Now," cried the baby, "Fear is passed;
'T is time to leap or die!"

Now dragon wings be proper things
Afar from the daylight
To winnow the foul air in caves
Of subterranean night;
But never gawky popinjay
Hath more uncertain flight.

But wings be better than four feet
Even if wings be small
And the four feet be leonine,
Shapen to spring and crawl.
The rocks were sheer; the rocks were steep;
The steep, sheer cliffs were tall.

Nearer, nearer came the worm
 Around and yet around
Flapping upon a steely wing.
 And the mountain did resound,
And the baby lion sprang and sprang
 Frantic with every bound.

And lo! upon the startled air
 The worm uprose above
The spot upon the mountain where
 The lion still did move,
Ready to swoop with falcon stoop
 Down where the prey might prove

A dainty morsel; and the lion
 His very soul was cowed;
And all his little life passed by
 Like a white summer cloud;
All in his eye there passed him by,
 As faces in a crowd,

The memories fair, the memories vain,
 The memories of the past,
The mother's voice, the mother's air,
 The kiss that was her last,
The pale, pink peonies of Nepaul
 And the cliffs and the heavens' blue vast.

So passed him by his infancy
 That never again might be;
And still the dragon poised and poised
 Like a falcon steadily.
Then o'er the brown of the rocks came down
 On the quarry it could not see.

Heavy in flight and blurred in sight,
As lightning strikes an oak
It struck the rocks precipitate;
And dolorous was that stroke
With shattered mail and sharded scale
And both the pinions broke.

And round and round it made a sound
Like the storm ravined sea;
With smoke and fire in gyre on gyre
Down it fell dreadfully
And the barbèd rock gave shock on shock
Unto that agony.

Upon the topmost mountain peak
Staggered the lion at last;
His eyes were closed on the red west;
His full length he down cast
Unmindful of the safety won
Or the peril overpast.

And when once more he oped his eyes
He lay on a pillow beer;
Under the rafters of bamboo
His mother stood anear;
His bones were like the lukewarm tea;
His mind was far from clear.

"Sweet!" said his mother, "Curly lion,
Be nevermore afraid.
The moons in vain shall wax and wane;
Thy glory shall not fade;
Nor longer fearful fantasy
Thy riper days invade.

“For thou hast faced the foe that chased
Thee up the rocks in vain;
Braven the dragon in his lair
And come to me again
Unto mine eyes more beautiful
For travail of great pain.”

He is a curly Chinese lion,
A powerful Dog of Fo.
He and his mother dwell their days
Beyond the Hoang-Ho
Upon the Mountain of Desire
Where the pale, pink peonies grow.

And every night the starry choir
Is nearer to them both;
And every day the shade at noon
Is lief and never loath;
And every hour the mutual love
Grows with a larger growth.

But oft by the Feitsui Cliffs
That rise precipitously,
While in the rays of early morn
They bask full pleasantly,
The baby lion's heart stops still
With a poignant memory.

And oft upon his pillow beer
In the domain of night,
When sleep half closes both his eyes
But doth not close them tight,
His vision teems with horrid dreams
And he roars and roars in fright.

And always by the night or noon
 When with his mother he
 Remembers of her former deed
 And all his agony,
 He bears the stain of a deeper pain
 Than a mother's eye can see.

A BROWNIE CHORUS

We are the pipers of the pretty little fays!
 We fiddle and we flute ere the coming of the days.
 If a merry mortal man were to hear us late or soon,
 He will dance for a whole revolution of the moon!
 He will dance if he sit; he will dance when he stands;
 If a churl of little wit or a lord of many lands;
 For the elfin taper burns
 And he turns and he turns
 Like a wind in a wilderness of lands.

We work upon the night; we are lazy all the day
 In the cranny of the haymow where the guinea fowls lay.
 If your cow miscalves, or your horse goes lame,
 Or the cream doth curdle in the pan,
 Or cider turns to vinegar or tallow will not flame,
 You may know 't is the little Brownie man.
 When the tares in the barley begin for to sprout
 Oh 't is then you may know that we ought to be about!
 When the maggot's on the cheese or distemper in the
 mare,
 Oh 't is then you may know that the Brownie boys are
 there.
 Here and there
 Wherever grows a tare
 Oh 't is then you may know we are come to take the air.

So leave an oaten cake and a little bit of beer
On a good flat stone where the forest grows near,
 And beyond any doubt
 We will chase the humors out.
For the good flows in and the bad flows out;
And your cow double calves, and your horse is on the
 trot,
And the wheat grows thick and the cream you have got
 Is fit for the table of a king.
Then poverty and want, they are banished evermore,
And your farm brings double what it brought before,
 And health and happy days we will bring, we will
 bring,
And health and happy days we will bring.

THE OWL AND THE TURTLE DOVE.

O the garden seat,
 For lovers made
To meet and greet
 In the myrtle shade!
A fair red rose
 Near the myrtle grove,
It grows and blows
 Like promised love.

To the garden hies
 A turtle dove,
With eager eyes
 For a couple in love.
She coos in her bliss
 To the rose nearby:
"O the joy of a kiss
 When the noon is nigh!"

But the garden owl
Is much more wise;
For he wakes to prowl
When daylight dies.
He looks at the seat
In the light of the moon,
Where a couple meet
Again to spoon.

And the owl at night
Has grown very wise
Thro' the power of sight
Of his large, round eyes.
You may trust the word
Of a blushing rose.
'T is a wise old bird
And he knows, he knows.

Now the midnight fowl
Very wise is he;
And the turtle and owl
Together agree,
'T is a girl's own way
When a lover is blind,
Two times a day
To change her mind.

"But, coo! coo! coo!"
Says the turtle dove,
"A girl is true
To her own heart's love!"
"To who? to who? "
Says the owl to the rose,
"She 's fooling you."
And he knows, he knows.

THE BABY TROGAN

Oh! the baby trogan, he
Sits upon the cocoanut tree!
Oh! the baby trogan, he
Waves his tail all over the tree!
So he sits and all day long
Sweetly, sweetly warbles a song:
"I 'm a beautiful baby bird;
Look upon my pea green tail!
Long, is not the proper word.
Even lovely, won't avail."
(Long and lovely, lovely and long,
While the trogan warbles his song;
Look at the baby trogan's tail!
Look at the baby trogan's tail!)
"All unhappy at home to stay,
I had rather fly away
Where mine eyes no more might see
Quinine tree and cocoanut tree.
So I flapped my wings and flew
And my tail, it steered me too,
Till I came beneath a house.
There I lay as still as a mouse,
While above I heard the cry:
'Where did the baby trogan fly?'
Quinine tree and cocoanut tree
Vainly, vainly barked for me.
O 't was dark within that cellar;
There you could n't tell red from yellar.
O 'twas very dark and damp
And I caught a little cramp;
O 't was very damp and dark
And the floor was cold and stark;
Naught of value there to be seen,
Red or blue or yellow or green!

Vainly would I wave my tail,
 Vainly weep and vainly wail;
 Weeping, wailing all in vain
 How did I get back again?
 All the tale I need not tell;
 Mother found me fair and well.
 Quinine tree and cocoanut tree
 Proudly bear my mother and me.
 Peoples' eyes and souls we suit
 Better than the cocoanut fruit;
 Unto our music people hark
 Liefer than the quinine bark.
 So we sit and warble a song
 Loud and lovely, loud and long:
 'Trogan lost and trogan found!
 Trogan, trogan underground!
 Trogan, trogan hearty and hale!
 Look at the baby trogan's tail!
 Look at the baby trogan's tail!"

IN A SCRAP BOOK

These birds have never ope'd a beak,
 Nor never sung a song,
 Nor never an angleworm they seek
 Through all the summer long.
 Alive they nevermore may be,
 Although they never died;
 They 're never stuffed because, you see,
 They 've never an inside.

These flowers upon the summer air
 No pleasant perfume made,
 Nor blossomed in the sunlight fair,
 Nor slept in chequered shade,

Nor bee sought honey in their cup;
But never dawns the day
When they must languish and close up
And droop and fade away.

O birds and flowers! your lot appears
Most happy on this page.
For you no passage of waste years;
For you no pangs of age.
Thrice blessed in your beauty be
Bright bloom without an end,
Even as a happy memory
Or as a faithful friend.

A BIT OF OLD CHINA

Ever dwells a mandarin
On a Canton china plate;
And his name, it is Ah Sin,
And his life, it is to wait
For the lady Ah Lee Ho
By a bridge of indigo.

On the other waterside
From her lattice, Ah Lee Ho
Hath her mandarin espied
Many and many a year ago.
"Why delays he?" doth she cry;
Echo answers with a sigh.

Doth he fear the bridge is frail,
Triple arch of indigo?
Doth he wait a word of hail
From the lady Ah Lee Ho?
Ever 't is the same old story,
Mandarins are dilatory.

OLYMPIA

Would you marry a dancing doll,
 Flaxen hair and blue eyes bright,
 Ready to talk like pretty Poll,
 Every word will come out right:

“Ha! ha! ha!
 Ma and pa!
 Tra-la-la-la-la-la-la!”

“O my dolly, dolly my dear!
 Won't you marry me, tender, true,
 My little wife for year and year?”
 (Wind her up, she'll answer you:)

“Ha, ha, ha! Ha, ha, ha!
 Papa! papa!
 Tra-la-la-la-la-la-la!
 Mamma! mamma!”

List, O list to the dancing doll!
 “I don't know you. I can't tell.
 All men's words are fol-de-rol.
 You don't love me any too well.

“I don't know,
 While I go,
 Dancing, dancing, heel and toe.
 Ask papa!
 Ask mamma!
 Tra-la-la-la-la-la-la!”

So, in a dream, you 've won love's goal?
 Gallant youth, beware! beware!
 Would you win to heart and soul,
 Then you 'll find the sawdust there.

“Sawdust? Fie!
 That is why
 Married men are high and dry?”
 “Ask papa!
 Ask mamma!
 Tra-la-la-la-la-la-la!
 Ha! ha! ha! ha! ha!”

THE FROGS' WARNING

The people here will soon be killed
 The silly manner that they build;
 They build their houses in the hole
 Where dwell the frog and young tadpole;
 They build their houses in the bogs
 Amid the tadpoles and the frogs,
 And when they build them out of stone,
 They hear the frogs and tadpoles groan;
 They hear the poor young tadpole say:
 “Alas, alack and weladay!”
 But when the houses all are built
 And all the chandeliers are gilt,
 Then come the frogs in shoals and nations
 To curse them with their visitations;
 And round about the big front door
 The tadpoles pash and paddle o'er;
 And all along the area rail
 Each moulting tadpole hangs a tail;

And though they never will rejoice
 They make a most infernal noise.
 They croak and honk and hawk up grimly
 When evening twilight stirreth dimly;
 And when the moon is in the skies
 They gaze and gaze with myriad eyes;
 And when at morn the ewe lamb baas
 They crush the young begonias;
 At noon, along the gravel path
 They take on land a good sun bath;
 Over the lawn the tadpoles swim
 And raise their mournful matin hymn;
 Because the water floweth free
 Wherever hardy turf should be.
 'T is: "Weladay! alas! alack!"
 And the big bull frog echoes back.
 T' is: "Weladay! alack! alas!"
 And the big bull frog comes in bass.
 'T is "Rheumatism paineth you."
 The bull frog croaks: "And that's too true."
 'T is: "Death will put you in your bunk."
 And the big bull frog goes: "Cuttunk!"
 'T is: "Who come here must live on gruel."
 The bull frog answers: "Fate is cruel."
 And all together in the night
 When stars are pale in the moonlight,
 Join in a chorus grand and strong
 The flooded flower beds among.
 "Cuttunk! cuttunk! why came you here?
 Cuttunk! your meaning is not clear.
 Cuttunk! your voices must be harsh
 If you would drive us from our marsh.
 Cuttunk! this hole is too profound;
 You ought to live on higher ground.
 Go build! go build on yonder hill
 And leave us in the meadow still.

Cuttunk, cuttunk, cuttunk, cuttunk!
To stand the damp you 've not the spunk.
Cuttunk, cuttunk! and bye and bye
You 'll get malaria and you 'll die.
Cuttunk! disease is long and slow
And that 's the way you 'll have to go;
Take our advice, good people, pray,
And leave your home and go away;
For otherwise you 'll have to go
A longer journey than you know."
So sing the frogs on the evening air
But still the people linger there
To eat and drink; and, fool or knave,
They walk into the silent grave.
They do not take the frog's advice
And life is over in a trice.
They do not heed the tadpoles' song
And so their life is not for long;
But folks have no more brains than rabbits
To break away from evil habits.

FEMINA NOVA

They talk about freedom, how woman should stand
Man's equal by custom and laws of the land.
But of beauty essential and truth as such,
You never need think they will care very much;
Or their words and their actions would never disgrace
Our mothers, our homes and the dreams of our race.

THE LAMENT OF SUNDRY ANGLEWORMS
 INCARCERATED IN A WOODEN BOX
 AND THEIR PIOUS PRAYER FOR ONE
 WHO PITIED THEIR FLIGHT

Mewed in four wooden walls that cruelly
 Do chafe our tender, sinuous sides, we mourn
 The sweet, dark soil of our nativity,
 Our wives and little children all forlorn.

Happy our comrades whom the spade hath slain
 That split and rived our earthen corridors!
 Yea, happy they who wriggled in their pain
 Pierced with the hook, for yawning, watery jaws!

Cursed be the fiend who snatched us from our home
 And, still denying the poor boon of death,
 Dumped us in here and cast on alien loam
 And left us to our memories beneath!

We have no heart to tunnel galleries
 Amid that dirt, though rich it be and good,
 Teeming with larvæ of a thousand flies,
 And moisture grateful to our languished blood.

The wives we shall embrace ah! nevermore,
 The children from our ribband bodies sprung,
 Lonely shall trail the strawberry blossoms o'er,
 Lonely shall twine the sprouting corn among!

Within the halls of pleasance and of state
 Our vermin fathers reared in olden time,
 Our loved ones intertwist all desolate;
 On the brown pavement fall their tears of slime.

And yet we know nor grief, nor pain, say some,
 Because forsooth we have no nervous system.
 May all such go impaled to Kingdom Come
 Upon the hook where fishes rend and twist' em! ♣

Our intellects may ne'er be very clear,
 With brain, mouth, stomach into one compressed.
 How may we ponder all the talk we hear
 With organs mainly intended to digest?

Yet do we *feel*! Oh! what emotions quiver
 All up and down our alimentary duct,
 When we consider that we are forever
 From friends and fatherland untimely plucked,

Babblers and quibblers, ye who snatched us thence,
 Your adamantine hearts may never learn!
 Only a mind to vacancy prepense
 Can by its sympathy our plight discern.

THE PRAYER

Therefore we pray to the All Father Worm,
 The mystic Circle of Eternity
 On that dread day when all create shall squirm
 Prostrate before His coilèd majesty,

They who compassionate may be repaid
 While others at His mercy justly tremble;
 Since us whom in His image He hath made,
 They in their structure closely do resemble.

THE JOYS OF VENICE

(A. D. 1500.)

You may talk about your travel
Marco Polo to outface.
There 's a mystery to unravel
Here at home or any place.
But for happiness, gay or solemn,
Give me Venice, night or noon,
With the lion upon his column
Hard beside the still lagoon.

Proud you be as Moro or Dandola
Underneath the harvest moon,
While so silently glides the gondola
O'er and o'er the still lagoon.
For a gondola, I may mention
As inducement unto you,
Hath been framed with kind intention
To afford just room for two.

Soldier, sailor, great guild president,
Crowd the Rialto, end to end.
Hollander, Turk and native resident,
Any one who has gold to spend.
How they chaffar for silk and spicery,
Hazarding fortunes late and soon,
Fortunes fit for king or viceroy
All beside the still lagoon.

Then at eve with Nicholetta
Lustrous eyed beneath the moon,
Ogling on the Piazzetta,
Drifting o'er the still lagoon.

Though you pay your coin properly,
 Be you a gentile or a Jew,
 O'er her heart you 've no monopoly;
 There is always room for two.

Fairy Bride of the Adriatic,
 Wealth of ages in your halls,
 Still your revels shall be ecstatic,
 Glitter still your carnivals!
 When alone I suffer tedium,
 All the notes are out of tune,
 Quickly I get from bad to medium,
 Thinking of your still lagoon!

Oh! the Venetian girls are beautiful
 Underneath a harvest moon!
 Full lipped, broad hipped, not very dutiful,
 Hard beside the still lagoon!
 O Saint Mark's with gold leaf portico,
 Where the saints look down on you!
 Down the aisles a twenty and forty go;
 I prefer a place for two!

TO AN APE

You that are a simian,
 Would you rather be a man?
 Nay, when all his work is done,
 Man and simian are one.

EPITAPH FOR A NONENITY

Virtue he 'd none to show nor vice to hide;
 Nature abhors a vacuum, — so he died.

THE BALLADE OF THE TOURIST

Hail to thee, terrible typical tourist!
 Baedeker open neath thine eyes,
 Linen frayed and none of the purest,
 Trousers not of the proper size.
 Full of wonder and wild surmise,
 Seeing what there is to see,
 Where the locomotive flies;
 Hail! O typical terrible T!

Wind and wave thou gladly endurest
 Though the gorge within thee rise;
 Beds of the liveliest, fare of the poorest
 Ne'er thy zeal may jeopardize,
 Canst thou only scrutinize
 Every land indifferently;
 Scythian wilds or paradise.
 Hail! O typical terrible T!

Whether at home divine or jurist,
 Tutor of youth more wordy than wise,
 Doctor or quack alike who curest,
 Vendor of votes or merchandise;
 Here abroad in the selfsame guise,
 Peripatetic thy path shall be,
 Poking thy nose neath foreign skies.
 Hail! O typical terrible T!

ENVOY

Wandering Jew the curse and prize
 Now at length are reft from thee!
 Cease thy toil and join our cries!
 "Hail! O typical terrible T!"

THE BALLADE OF PETER

Peter, every cursèd night,
Did his turn in vaudeville play;
Smoked a cigarette, polite
As an English duke blasé;
Rode his wheel in brave array
Like an expert cyclist, he;
And the horsewhip was his pay.
Peter was a chimpanzee.

How he cried out in affright
When on him the lash they 'd lay!
How he 'd fain in sudden fight
Choke his owner, smite and slay!
But he ne'er could win the fray
Like the monarch of the tree,
King Gorilla, gaunt and gray.
He was just a chimpanzee.

He could only scratch and bite
When his soul was brought to bay.
Slavery and stripes, his plight.
So he saw his life decay,
Heartsick, hopeless, not a ray
Of delight for him to see,
Save in death, that flies away
Even with a chimpanzee.

ENVOY

Prince of heaven, whose ancient sway
Counts each sparrow separately, ☩
Pray Thee deal on Judgment Day,
Justice to this chimpanzee.

THE COMPLAINT OF A TRAINED NURSE
UNTRAINED IN LITERATURE

(A BALLADE IN HOSPITAL)

If people did n't read and write,
I 'd nurse 'em gladly, soon or late.
A good, smart novel goes all right,
If reasonably up to date;
And magazines, I think they 're great;
At dime romance, I'd tip the wink;
The Evening Journal is first rate
If people would n't write or think.

If they lie still and shut up tight,
I 'd serve 'em neat and delicate.
I 'd tend 'em up and treat 'em white
If only they 'd appreciate.
But when they read some queer old skate
Whose words would put you on the blink,
I 'd have a heart for any fate
Where people would n't write or think.

And where they scribble here in sight
The stuff itself, I tell you straight
I cannot stay and be polite;
I 'm going to go immediate.
If all good people in the state
Should take to using pen and ink,
I 'd even go away by freight
Where people would n't write or think.

ENVOY

Prince of the world, I 'll congregate
With downs and outs on Lethe's brink;
And let the current soak my pate,
Where people would n't write or think.

THE OLD MAN TALKS

Hello, young man! you want a job, you say?
There's plenty others wanting jest that thing;
We ain't got room for any one jest now;
Good morning. What! you say your name is Jones
From down by Hillsboro way? I do believe
You're Cynthy's son. Well, that's her writing sure;
A leetle quavery, but still the same.
I guess we both ain't what we used to be
Forty-five years ago. You've got her eyes,
That same peert gray; also you favor her
About the nose; yer mouth is more like Hank's;
Hers was more rounding as I recollect.
Young man, I'm glad to see ye. Set ye down.
About that job; I'll see what I can do.
You might step down to-morrow an' look round
An' sort o' kind o' get the hang o' things
Down in the lower office; and you'd hev
To make yerself familiar with the goods.
Them critters' hides piled in the tannery
Is all of different qualities an' kinds;
An' the more kinds you know, the better off
You'll be. Of course you can do figgering
The common sort; I would n't want no more.
This is my office and I keep my books
In my own way; not like them business schools
That sends their gradooates round hereabouts
To show what double entry ought to be.
We don't have no smart Alecs round this ranch.
You foller in the footsteps of my clerks
An' you won't have no chance of goin' wrong.
Now, if you're up in foreign languages
Like French an' Spanish, that might help us out
Considerable. We get a lot o' hides

From Argentine: We have an agency
 At Bonus Airs; its natural we 'd like
 To read our letters easily and fast.
 You do know French, you say? not Spanish though?
 Well, well, that ain't so bad. To-morrow then
 You come an' take your desk, and we will see
 Whether we suit each other; an' meanwhile
 Perhaps you 'd like to find some boarding house
 That 's handy, clean an' cheap. You might do worse
 Than call around at twenty Myrtle Street,
 The Young Men's Christian; they give references.
 An' if there 's any help that I kin be,
 Jest let me know; an' I stan' ready here
 To do ye all I can; for that 's my way.
 I think you 'll find you 'll get along right nice.
 You 've got the get there look all right enough.
 Only be prompt an' punctual, an' don't think
 You know the whole durn business right away;
 An' if promotion don't come every week,
 Or raise of salary but once a year,
 Don't cuss about your luck. I tell ye now
 There ain't no luck in all this whole, wide world.
 There 's pluck an' perseverance an' there 's brains;
 There ain't no luck at all. If you 'll excuse
 Me jest a minute — there 's the telephone.
 Hello! Yes? Down two points? Well, cover it all! —
 Set nothin' down to luck an' you 'll succeed.
 Do what you 're told an' think out for yourself
 What you 're not told; hustle an' look alive;
 Attend your church on Sunday. I tell you
 The business man, he knows the smart young man
 Out of a crowd o' rascals. Don't you booze
 An' don't you go with women. Keep away
 From all temptations of the devil, boy.
 You keep your spirit clean an' undefiled
 An' walk the way of vartu an' of peace;

An' look alive an' hustle an' get along.
Stick to your job an' don't you make a kick
At working half an hour arter time;
Be willing an' obedient; pleasant too;
An' if you 're sulky, jest you bottle it up
An' don't you show it here. I'm talking now
The same way I would talk to my own son.
That is the way a good man makes success;
A bad man won't succeed no kind o' way.
Do right by men an' they 'll do right by you.
I speak of business, not of politics
Or labor unions or them kind o' stuff,
The devil's own, I call 'em. Keep away
From all them forms o' sin; an' keep away
From this new fangled talk of freeborn men
Limiting labor an' the right o' work,
'The right o' doin' what a man kin do
For self an' family; the right to do
Jest what he pleases with the coin he earns;
'The right o' workin' hard as ever he kin
For jest what he an' his employer please;
'The blessed right to labor every day
Except the Sabbath, given by God to Man
An' prized by every trew American!
'The right of earning money, keepin' it,
An' doin' what he likes with what is his'n.
Why every man out in the shop you 'll find
With card an' number, ticketed like thieves,
An' that 's the union number an' they work
For jest ten hours a day, an' nothing more
Kin I get out of any of them fellars.
An' every other day's a holiday
An' honest labor turns to idleness!
Why don't they call the state milishy out?
High in the governor's chair sits anarchy
An' rank corruption in the noonday sun

Of sheer publicity, an' all around
 Is idleness an' insolence an' lies
 An' breaking the non unions o'er the head;
 The boycott an' the mob a-throwin' stones;
 The murder of the man who stays to work;
 An' every kind of reckless deviltry
 Them walking delegates hatch in their minds!
 You 'd think they run my business an' not I,
 Them walking delegates an' laboring men!
 Oh, what a name for them! the laboring man,
 Who only labors when you 're lookin on;
 Who hain't the manhood of a hog on ice!
 You keep away from them an' all they mean
 An' all they try to do an' all they think.
 You stay to home at evening; read the word
 Of God, the Holy Bible; then you go
 To bed an' shun the snares of union clubs,
 Socialist talk an' houses of ill fame
 An' rum an' rowdy actions an' the wild
 Deviltry that young men do nowadays!
 An' don't you try that other kind o' thing,
 Goin to the theeayter, readin' poems,
 An' listenin' to music, when you might
 Be studyin' the way young men get on.
 I don't say now an' then a little bit
 O' recreation doos a man much harm;
 Only don't get mixed up with all them things;
 There 's many fools around the city here
 Think some French novel's better'n holy writ;
 An' talks of Emerson an' Longfellow
 Like as if they was solid citizens.
 Don't think because a fellar rhymes his words
 He is a better man than Marshall Field.
 Keep your eyes on success. Let the rest go.
 It ain't wuth foolin' with; it ain't the thing.
 These hifalutin silly new ideas

Is wuss than rum an' women. That 's my mind.
 Keep your own way. Be smarter than the rest.
 Give God his due an' be an honest man.
 Good mornin. Come around to-morrow then
 Eight o'clock sharp. The business starts that time;
 Not half a minute later! Mind my words
 The Bible an' your native honesty!—
 Hello, hello! that 's Rawson? Mrs. White
 Can' t pay the money down? She says she 'll have
 It by to-morrow? But the time 's today!
 Loves the old place? Hain't nowhere else to go?
 Well, well, I don't know nothin about that;
 If she can't pay the cash, I must foreclose.

THE RED BLOODED HEROES

"The philosopher will admire them as the last incarnation of
 the heroic age, when the man is bigger than his work." RECENT
 NOVEL.

Oh! the city gal ain't got no pal;
 Her fellars are all too tony;
 An' all their stuff an' all their guff
 Can't break her a buckin' pony;
 An' every bore on the ball room floor
 Can just pull down his vest;
 She's given her heart till death do part
 To the woolly boys out west!

For a man who trains his body an' brains
 That gal ain't got no use.
 She 's read in a book of a cowboy crook
 An' a jack with spikèd shoes.
 He is allus broke an' cheats at poke
 An' allus needs a shave;
 But he comes at the end, his knees to bend
 An' be her lovin' slave.

Oh! his trousis bag an' his trousis sag,
 An' his hair falls over his ears;
 He ain't refined an' he hain't no mind
 An' he ain't got nice ideas;
 But his pictur if took an' put in a book
 Will make the red blood stir,
 For he is the child of the western wild
 An' that is the man for her!

She reads an' reads of cowboy deeds
 An' how they works an' fights.
 She dreams they all is heroes tall
 Like them Arabian knights.
 But if she knew 'em what they do,
 An' heered 'em what they say,
 She 'd turn her nose where the onions grows
 An' walk another way.

'T ain't often you meet on prairie or street
 A man an' a hero too;
 For ten to one he's a son of a gun
 Or else like me an' you.
 You may call him loud in a Broadway crowd
 Or scout him over the plains —
 An onery man on an onery plan
 An onery man remains.

But the gals, they fancies them romances
 Of cowboy heroes bold;
 An' they lie outright in black and white
 Who scribble their lies for gold.
 A hero ain't the thing they paint
 Who scribble the books to sell.
 He might instead be a thoroughbred
 An' a gentleman as well.

PUG AND PARROT

(AN URBAN DIALOGUE)

The snow was piled on Beacon Hill
And fast the ice did hold;
The coldest heart in Boston Town
Was warmer than that cold;
But in Virginia's library
Was comfort manifold.

The fire was bright, the lamp alight
To read the printed page.
Strong tea was there when she did care
That craving to assuage.
The fat she pug was on the rug
The parrot in her cage.

The fat she pug was Phœbe called;
The parrot, Mary Jane,
Who said: "Why don't Virginia come?
She 's staying out late again!"
Said Phœbe: "'T is the Woman's Club
That calls her to remain."

Said Mary Jane: "I hate a fool!
Odds zooks, they come our way!
Drat Browning! Drat that Wagner man!
And drat that Ibsen play!
Shiver my timbers, them damn clubs
Is more than hell to pay!"

The pug upturned a sable nose.
 Said she: "It were my prayer
 That on the steamer from Brazil
 You had not learned to swear.
 It gives your very best ideas
 A very vulgar air."

The parrot swelled from ear to tail.
 Said she: "You want me riled?
 You chuck that 'vulgar' overboard;
 I ain't a two year child!"
 Said Phœbe: "Feelings may be deep,
 But words may yet be mild.

"Instead of 'damn' I 'm sure that 'sham'
 Would answer quite as well.
 'The deuce to pay' is anyway
 Less impolite than 'hell'."
 Said Mary: "Split my mizzen-top!
 They be a blasted sell!"

Said Phœbe: "With the words you say,
 I 'd readily agree
 If you could only pass the day
 Without profanity.
 I don't approve her latest move
 In being late to tea.

"I long have felt Virginia
 Was getting out at heels."
 Said Poll: "Responsibility
 That woman never feels!
 Just think how late we have to wait
 To jine her at her meals!

“And when she comes from clubs and slums
What blamed ideas she brings!
Gets into fights on women's rights
And souls' awakenings
Women in art and Delesarte
And lots of foolish things!

“And that there weekly reading club
Is like an evil dream!
They set and sew and will not go
But read a steady stream.
They read all day and drone away
And make me want to scream!

“And when they blab about the books,
When they begin to jaw
About the most unpleasant play
Of Mr. Bernard Shaw,
Blow me, I 'd like to hop right down
And use my bill and claw!”

Said Phœbe: “Anger was born blind
And only children bawl!
Smile gently, when you 're most inclined
On Fate to squawk and squall.
It only ruffles up the mind.
And is no use at all!”

“Tut, tut!” said Polly, “Cut it out!
Odds bodds! don't talk to me!
It is my rule to hate a fool
And hate a reading bee!”
Said Phœbe: “I object alone
To immorality.

"When they begin on mortal sin
 This room in pain I leave,
 On the clean spread of the spare bed
 Some comfort to retrieve.
 Did I not know that good must grow
 Oh, Polly, I could grieve

"Over the horrid books they read,
 The modern problem kind!
 I cannot say in any way
 To horrors I 'm inclined.
 I only wish Virginia
 Had not so keen a mind."

Said Poll: "You balk at modern talk.
 You must be more than green!
 Why back into the bible times
 They said the things you mean.
 And that there Song of Soloman,
 I call it most obscene!"

The pug gave out a puzzled wheeze.
 Said she: "I only know
 The holy book was edited
 Three thousand years ago;
 And people then were different, dear,
 And men are always low.

"Let 's learn to look upon the good
 And overlook the bad.
 The world will be a better place
 And we ourselves less sad."
 Said Polly: "I ain't born that way;
 It 's natur to get mad."

Said Phœbe: "If you go my way
And read the books I read—
Emerson on the oversoul
Is very nice indeed,
And Samuel Crothers is a dear—
You 'll find there is no need.

"And think of all the gentlemen
That make us merry cheer.
The unitarian minister
Is such a perfect dear.
Though like the blessed Christmas-tide
He comes but once a year.

"His presence sheds a genial glow
When the afternoons are cool.
Why! when he leaves, I feel as though
I 'd been to sunday school.
O how I hate to see him go!"
Said Polly: "I hate a fool!"

"Now Mary Jane, I beg and pray
That vulgar phrase you drop.
Do you keep it up the livelong day
Your intellect to prop?"
Said Polly again: "I hate a fool!"
Said Phœbe: "Will you stop!"

"He stuffs the plumcake down his throat,"
Cried Polly, "Blast my jib!
He ain't got nuttin' but his bloat
For all he may be glib.
He may be whiskered like a goat.
He 'd oughter wear a bib!

“He may be good to finish food
 When others ain't began;
 And talk all day with nit to say
 Wuss than Virginia can;
 But blow my topsails, blast my jib!
 Why don't she take a man?”

Said Phœbe: “Bird, is there no word
 To make you hesitate?
 If all your phrases did not come
 Out of an empty pate,
 I'd clearly call them one and all
 Your most indelicate!

“You dare to name Virginia
 And a man in the selfsame breath?
 She's like the good Saint Ursula
 And Saint Elizabeth!
 Only the shame to couple her name
 Would drive her down to death!

“Her soul doth face o'er time and space
 How all things live and die;
 And roundabout and in and out
 The wherefore and the why.
 The poor love plan of any man
 She grandly would pass by.

“She hath full sure a spirit pure
 That vision to attain.
 She dwells above all earthly love
 And carnal joy and pain.
 The poor love plan of any man
 Would rouse her grand disdain.

"She loves the things of intellect
 And loves the household pet.
 She never turned to one who burned
 In baser passion yet.
 There 's never a man in the whole world's plan
 Could rouse her to forget."

"O fudge!" said Polly, "Go to grass!
 I hate a fool! good day!
 'T aint' a good plan for no male man
 To come around her way.
 A pair of pants don't take that chance —
 I hate a fool, I say,"

In wheeze and howl of rousèd growl
 Poor Phœbe did begin
 An answer plain to Mary Jane
 Rebuking of her sin.
 When at the door, the threshold o'er
 Virginia, she stepped in.

And when she came into the room,
 All conversation stopped.
 The firelight flickered on the floor;
 On the hearth the embers dropped;
 The pug rolled o'er on the hard wood floor;
 On her perch the parrot hopped.

For when she came into the room
 All evil turned to good.
 The angry word of dog and bird
 Subsided where she stood;
 And peace from out the jangle grew
 As hunger banished food.

And all the trio, a happy band,
 At tea or kettledrum,
 Full tacitly did understand
 The intellectual sum
 Of single female blessedness
 Where never a man could come.

ENVOY

Go little book, frail paper boat,
 Though painted brave with fancy free!
 The boy who made thee far to float
 Hath launched thee forth upon the sea.

Slow gliding o'er the shallow reach
 Where other children shout at play,
 The billows bear thee from the beach;
 The west wind wafts thee far away.

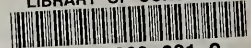
Fondly thy pilot hopes ere night
 Steal o'er the waves without a star,
 Some voyager view thee for a light,
 And hail thy passage from afar.

Alas, he knoweth, soon or late,
 Before Fame's harbor may be won,
 Thou and thy dreams will find their fate
 In oceans of oblivion!

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