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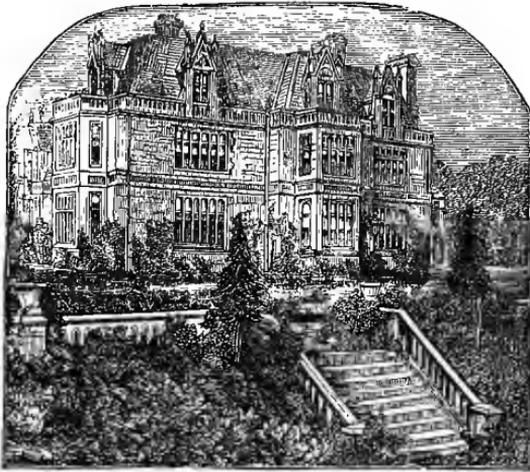


THE
COMPLETE WORKS

OF

ALFRED TENNYSON,

POET LAUREATE.



ALDWORTH.—Mr. Tennyson's Residence.

ILLUSTRATED EDITION.

NEW YORK:
R. WORTHINGTON, 750 BROADWAY.
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TO THE QUEEN.

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

Victoria, — since your Royal grace
To one of less desert allows
This laurel greener from the brows
Of him that utter'd nothing base ;

And should your greatness, and the care
That yokes with empire, yield you time
To make demand of modern rhyme
If aught of ancient worth be there ;

Then — while a sweeter music wakes,
And thro' wild March the throstle calls,
Where all about your palace-walls
The sun-lit almond-blossom shakes —

Take, Madam, this poor book of song ;
For tho' the faults were thick as dust
In vacant chambers, I could trust
Your kindness. May you rule us long,



TO THE QUEEN.

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

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

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

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



POEMS.

CLARIBEL.

A MELODY.

I.

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

II.

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

LILIAN.

I.

AIRY, fairy Lilian,
Flitting, fairy Lilian,
When I ask her if she love me,
Claps her tiny hands above me,
Laughing all she can ;
She'll not tell me if she love me,
Cruel little Lilian.

II.

When my passion seeks
Pleasance in love-sighs,
She, looking thro' and thro' me
Thoroughly to undo me,
Smiling, never speaks :
So innocent-arch, so cunning-simple,
From beneath her gather'd wimple
Glancing with black-beaded eyes,
Till the lightning laughters dimple
The baby-roses in her cheeks ;
Then away she flies.

III.

Prythee weep, May Lilian !
Gayety without eclipse
Wearieth me, May Lilian :
Thro' my very heart it thrilleth
When from crimson-threaded lips
Silver-treble laughter trilleth :
Prythee weep, May Lilian.

IV.

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

ISABEL.

I.

EYES not down-dropt nor over bright,
but fed
With the clear-pointed flame of
chastity,
Clear, without heat, undying,
tended by
Pure vestal thoughts in the
translucent fane
Of her still spirit; locks not wide-
dispread,
Madonna-wise on either side her
head ;
Sweet lips whereon perpetually
did reign'
The summer calm of golden charity,
Were fixed shadows of thy fixed mood,
Revered Isabel, the crown and
head,
The stately flower of female fortitude,
Of perfect wifehood and pure low-
liness.

II.

The intuitive decision of a bright
And thorough-edged intellect to part
Error from crime; a prudence to
withhold ;
The laws of marriage character'd
in gold
Upon the blanched tablets of her
heart ;
A love still burning upward, giving
light
To read those laws; an accent very
low
In blandishment, but a most silver
flow
Of subtle-paced counsel in dis-
tress,
Right to the heart and brain, tho'
undescried,
Winning its way with extreme
gentleness
Thro' all the outworks of suspicious
pride ;
A courage to endure and to obey ;
A hate of gossip parlance, and of
sway,



Crown'd Isabel, thro' all her placid life,
The queen of marriage, a most perfect wife.

III.

The mellow'd reflex of a winter moon ;
A clear stream flowing with a muddy one,
Till in its onward current it absorbs
With swifter movement and in purer light
The vexed eddies of its wayward brother :
A leaning and upbearing parasite,
Clothing the stem, which else had fallen quite,
With cluster'd flower-bells and am-hrosial orbs
Of rich fruit-bunches leaning on each other—
Shadow forth thee :—the world hath not another
(Tho' all her fairest forms are types of thee,
And thou of God in thy great charity)
Of such a finish'd chasten'd purity.

MARIANA.

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

WITH blackest moss the flower-plots
Were thickly crusted, one and all :
The rusted nails fell from the knots
That held the pear to the gable-wall.
The broken sheds look'd sad and strange :
Unlifted was the clinking latch ;
Weeded and worn the ancient thatch
Upon the lonely moated grange.
She only said, "My life is dreary,
He cometh not," she said ;
She said, "I am aweary, aweary,
I would that I were dead !"
Her tears fell with the dews at even ;
Her tears fell ere the dews were dried ;
She could not look on the sweet heaven,
Either at morn or eventide.
After the fitting of the hats,
When thickest dark did trance the sky,
She drew her casement-curtain by,
And glanced athwart the glooming flats.
She only said, "The night is dreary,
He cometh not," she said ;
She said, "I am aweary, aweary,
I would that I were dead."
Upon the middle of the night,
Waking she heard the night-fowl crow :
The cock sung out an hour ere light :
From the dark fen the oxen's low
Came to her : without hope of change,
In sleep she seem'd to walk forlorn,

Till cold winds woke the grey-eyed morn
About the lonely moated grange.
She only said, "The day is dreary,
He cometh not," she said ;
She said, "I am aweary, aweary,
I would that I were dead !"
About a stone-cast from the wall
A sluice with blackened waters slept,
And o'er it many, round and small,
The cluster'd marish-mosses crept.
Hard by a poplar shook alway,
All silver-green with gnarled bark :
For leagues no other tree did mark
The level waste, the rounding gray.
She only said, "My life is dreary,
He cometh not," she said ;
She said, "I am aweary, aweary,
I would that I were dead !"
And ever when the moon was low,
And the shrill winds were up and away,
In the white curtain, to and fro,
She saw the gusty shadow sway.
But when the moon was very low,
And wild winds bound within their cell,
The shadow of the poplar fell
Upon her bed, across her brow.
She only said, "The night is dreary,
He cometh not," she said ;
She said, "I am aweary, aweary,
I would that I were dead !"
All day within the dreamy house,
The doors upon their hinges creak'd ;
The blue fly sung in the pane ; the mouse
Behind the moulderting wainscot shriek'd,
Or from the crevice peer'd about.
Old faces glimmer'd thro' the doors,
Old footsteps trod the upper floors,
Old voices called her from without.
She only said, "My life is dreary,
He cometh not," she said ;
She said, "I am aweary, aweary,
I would that I were dead !"
The sparrow's chirrup on the roof,
The slow clock ticking, and the sound
Which to the wooing wind aloof
The poplar made, did all confound
Her sense ; but most she loathed the hour
When the thick-moted sunbeam lay
Athwart the chambers, and the day
Was sloping toward his western bower.
Then, said she, "I am very dreary,
He will not come," she said ;
She wept, "I am aweary, aweary,
O God, that I were dead !"
TO —.
I.
CLEAR-HEADED friend, whose joyful scorn,
Edged with sharp laughter, cuts
atwain



The knots that tangle human creeds,
The wounding cords that bind and strain

The heart until it bleeds,
Ray-fringed eyelids of the morn
Roof not a glance so keen as thine :
If aught of prophecy be mine,
Thou wilt not live in vain.

II.

Low-covering shall the Sophist sit ;
Falsehood shall bare her plaited
brow :

Fair-fronted Truth shall droop not
now

With shrilling shafts of subtle wit,
Nor martyr-flames, nor trenchant
swords

Can do away that ancient lie ;
A gentler death shall Falsehood die,
Shot thro' and thro' with cunning
words.

III.

Weak Truth a-leaning on her crutch,
Wan, wasted Truth in her utmost
need,

Thy kingly intellect shall feed,
Until she be an athlete bold,
And weary with a finger's touch
Those writhed limbs of lightning
speed ;

Like that strange angel which of
old,
Until the breaking of the light,
Wrestled with wandering Israel,
Past Yabbok brook the livelong
night,

And heaven's mazed signs stood still
In the dim tract of Penuel.

MADELINE

I.

THOU art not steep'd in golden
languors,

No tranced summer calm is thine,
Ever varying Madeline.

Thro' light and shadow thou dost
range,

Sudden glances, sweet and strange,
Delicious spites and darling angers,
And airy forms of fitting change.

II.

Smiling, frowning, evermore,
Thou art perfect in love-lore.
Revealings deep and clear are thine
Of wealthy smiles : but who may know
Whether smile or frown be sweeter,
Who may know ?

Frowns perfect-sweet along the brow
Light-glooming over eyes divine,
Like little clouds sun-fringed, are
thine,

Ever varying Madeline.

Thy smile and frown are not aloof
From one another,
Each to each is dearest brother ;
Hues of the silken sheeny woof
Momently shot into each other.

All the mystery is thine ;
Smiling, frowning, evermore,
Thou art perfect in love-lore,
Ever varying Madeline.

III.

A subtle, sudden-flame,
By veering passion fann'd,
About thee breaks and dances ;

When I would kiss thy hand,
The flush of anger'd shame

O'erflows thy calmer glances,
And o'er black brows drops down

A sudden-curved frown :
But when I turn away,

Thou, willing me to stay,
Wooest not, nor vainly wranglest ;

But, looking fixedly the while,
All my bounding heart entanglest

In a golden-netted smile ;
Then in madness and in bliss,

If my lips should dare to kiss
Thy taper fingers amorously,

Again thou blushest angerly ;
And o'er black brows drops down

A sudden-curved frown.

SONG.—THE OWL.

I.

WHEN cats run home and light is come,
And dew is cold upon the ground,
And the far-off stream is dumb,
And the whirring sail goes round ;
And the whirring sail goes round ;
Alone and warming his five wits,
The white owl in the belfry sits.

II

When merry milkmaids click the latch,
And rarely smells the new-mown
hay,
And the cock hath sung beneath the
thatch

Twice or thrice his roundelay,
Twice or thrice his roundelay ;
Alone and warming his five wits,
The white owl in the belfry sits.

SECOND SONG.

TO THE SAME.

I.

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

II.

I would mock thy chant anew ;
But I cannot mimic it ;
Not a whit of thy tuwhoo,
Thee to woo to thy tuwhit,
Thee to woo to thy tuwhit,
With a lengthen'd loud halloo,
Tuwhoo, tuwhit, tuwhit, tu-
whoo-o-o.



RECOLLECTIONS OF THE
ARABIAN NIGHTS.

WHEN the breeze of a joyful dawn
blew free

In the silken sail of infancy,
The tide of time flow'd back with me,
The forward-flowing tide of time;
And many a sheeny summer-morn,
Adown the Tigris I was borne,
By Bagdat's shrines of fretted gold,
High-walled gardens green and old;
True Musselman was I and sworn,
For it was in the golden prime
Of good Haroun Alraschid.

Anight my shallop, rustling thro'
The low and bloomed foliage, drove
The fragrant, glistening deeps, and
clove

The citron-shadows in the blue:
By garden porches on the brim,
The costly doors flung open wide,
Gold glittering thro' lamplight dim,
And broider'd sofas on each side:
In sooth it was a goodly time,
For it was in the golden prime
Of good Haroun Alraschid.

Often, where clear-stemm'd platans
guard

The outlet, did I turn away
The boat-head down a broad canal
From the main river elucied, where all
The sloping of the moon-lit sward
Was damask-work, and deep inlay
Of braided blooms unnown, which
crept

Adown to where the water slept,
A goodly place, a goodly time,
For it was in the golden prime
Of good Haroun Alraschid.

A motion from the river won
Ridged the smooth level, bearing on
My shallop thro' the star-strown calm,
Until another night in night
I enter'd, from the clearer light,
Imbower'd vaults of pillar'd palm,
Imprisoning sweets, which, as they
clomb

Heavenward, were stay'd beneath the
dome

Of hollow boughs.—A goodly time,
For it was in the golden prime
Of good Haroun Alraschid.

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

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

Above thro' many a bowery turn
A walk with vary-color'd shells

Wander'd engrain'd. On either side
All round about the fragrant marge
From finted vase, and brazen urn
In order, eastern flowers large,
Some dropping low their crimson bells
Half-closed, and others studded wide
With disks and tiars, fed the time
With odor in the golden prime
Of good Haroun Alraschid.

Far off, and where the lemon grove
In closest coverture npsprung,
The living airs of middle night
Died round the bulbul as he snng;
Not he: but something which pos-
sess'd

The darkness of the world, delight,
Life, anguish, death, immortal love,
Ceasing not, mingled, unrepress'd,
Apart from place, withholding time,
But flattering the golden prime
Of good Haroun Alraschid.

Black the garden-bowers and grots
Slumber'd: the solemn palms were
ranged

Above, unwoo'd of summer wind:
A sudden splendor from behind
Flush'd all the leaves with rich gold-
green,

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

Dark-blue the deep sphere overhead,
Distinct with vivid stars inlaid,
Grew darker from that under-flame:
So, leaping lightly from the boat,
With silver anchor left afloat,
In marvel whence that glory came
Upon me, as in sleep I sank
In cool soft turf upon the bank,
Entranced with that place and time,
So worthy of the golden prime
Of good Haroun Alraschid.

Thence thro' the garden I was drawn—
A realm of pleasance, many a mound,
And many a shadow-chequer'd lawn
Full of the city's stilly sound,
And deep myrrh-thickets blowing
round

The stately cedar, tamarisks,
Thick rosaries of scented thorn,
Tall orient shrubs, and obelisks
Graven with emblems of the time,
In honor of the golden prime
Of good Haroun Alraschid.

With dazed vision unawares
From the long alley's latticed shade
Emerged, I came upon the great
Pavilion of the Caliphat.
Right to the carven cedarn doors,
Flung inward over spangled floors,
Broad-based flights of marble stairs
Ran up with golden balustrade,
After the fashion of the time,
And humor of the golden prime
Of good Haroun Alraschid.





The fourscore windows all alight
 As with the quintessence of flame,
 A million tapers flaring bright
 From twisted silvers look'd to shame
 The hollow-vaulted dark, and stream'd
 Upon the mooned domes aloof
 In inmost Bagdat, till there seem'd
 Hundreds of crescents on the roof
 Of light new-risen, that marvellous
 time
 To celebrate the golden prime
 Of good Haroun Alraschid.

Then stole I up, and trancedly
 Gazed on the Persian girl alone,
 Serens with argent-lidded eyes
 Amorous, and lashes like to rays
 Of darkness, and a brow of pearl
 Tressed with redolent ehony,
 In many a dark delicious curl,
 Flowing beneath her rose-hued zone ;
 The sweetest lady of the time,
 Well worthy of the golden prime
 Of good Haroun Alraschid.

Six columns, three on either side,
 Pure silver, underpropt a rich
 Throns of the massive ore, from which
 Down-droop'd, in many a floatingfold,
 Engarlanded and diaper'd
 With inwrought flowers, a cloth of
 gold.

Thereon, his deep eye laughter-stirr'd
 With merriment of kingly pride,
 Sole star of all that place and time,
 I saw him—in his golden prime,
 THE GOOD HAROUN ALRASCHID !

ODE TO MEMORY.

I.

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

II.

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

III.

Whilome thou camest with the morn-
 ing mist,
 And with the evening cloud,
 Showering thy gleaned wealth into my
 open breast
 (Those peerless flowers which in the
 rudest wind
 Never grow sere,
 When rooted in the garden of the
 mind,
 Because they are the earliest of the
 year).
 Nor was the night thy shroud.
 In sweet dreams softer than unbroken
 rest
 Thou leddest by the hand thine infant
 Hope.
 The eddyng of her garments caught
 from thee
 The light of thy great presence ; and
 the cope
 Of the half-attain'd futurity,
 Tho' deep not fathomless,
 Was cloven with the million stars
 which tremhle
 O'er the deep mind of dauntless in-
 fancy.
 Small thought was there of life's dis-
 tress ;
 For sure she deem'd no mist of earth
 could dull
 Those spirit-thrilling eyes so keen and
 beautiful :
 Sure she was nigher to heaven's
 spheres,
 Listening the lordly music flowing
 from
 The illimitable years.
 O strengthen me, enlighten me !
 I faint in this obscurity,
 Thou dewy dawn of memory.

IV.

Come forth, I charge thee, arise,
 Thou of the many tongues, the myriad
 eyes !
 Thou comest not with shows of flaunt-
 ing vines
 Unto mine inner eye,
 Divinest Memory !
 Thou wert not nursed by the water-
 fall
 Which ever sounds and shines
 A pillar of white light upon the wall
 Of purple cliffs, aloof desried :
 Come from the woods that belt the
 gray hillside,
 The seven elms, the poplars four
 That stand beside my father's door,
 And chiefly from the brook that loves
 To purl o'er matted cress and ribbed
 sand,
 Or dimple in the dark of rushy coves,
 Drawing into his narrow earthen urn,
 In every shlow and turn,
 The filter'd tributes of the rough wood-
 land.
 O ! hither lead thy feet !



Pour round mine ears the livelong
 heat
 Of the thick-fleeced sheep from wat-
 tled folds,
 Upon the ridged wolds,
 When the first matin-song hath wak-
 en'd loud
 Over the dark dewy earth forlorn,
 What time the amber morn
 Forth gushes from beneath a low-hung
 cloud.

V.

Large dowries doth the raptured eye
 To the young spirit present
 When first she is wed ;
 And like a bride of old
 In triumph led,
 With music and sweet showers
 Of festal flowers,
 Unto the dwelling she must away.
 Well hast thou done, great artist Mem-
 ory,
 In setting round thy first experiment
 With royal frame-work of wrought
 gold ;
 Needs must thou dearly love thy first
 essay,
 And foremost in thy various gallery
 Place it, where sweetest sunlight
 falls
 Upon the storied walls ;
 For the discovery
 And newness of thine art so pleased
 thee,
 That all which thou hast drawn of
 fairest
 Or holdest since, but lightly weighs
 With thee unto the love thou bearest
 The first-born of thy genius. Artist-
 like,
 Ever retiring thou dost gaze
 On the prime labor of thine early
 days :
 No matter what the sketch might be ;
 Whether the high field on the bush-
 less Pike,
 Or even a sand-built ridge
 Of heaped hills that mound the sea,
 Overblown with murmurs harsh,
 Or even a lowly cottage whence we see
 Stretch'd wide and wild the waste
 enormous marsh,
 Where from the frequent bridge,
 Like emblems of infinity,
 The trenched waters run from sky to
 sky ;
 Or a garden hower'd close
 With plaited alleys of the trailing rose,
 Long alleys falling down to twilight
 grots,
 Or opening upon level plots
 Of crowned lilies, standing near
 Purple-spiked lavender :
 Whither in after life retired
 From brawling storms,
 From weary wind,
 With youthful fancy reinspired,
 We may hold converse with all forms
 Of the many-sided mind,

And those whom passion hath not
 blinded,
 Subtle-thoughted, myriad-minded.
 My friend, with you to live alone,
 Were how much better than to own
 A crown, a sceptre, and a throne !
 O strengthen me, enlighten me !
 I faint in this obscurity,
 Thou dewy dawn of memory.

SONG.

I.

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

II.

The air is damp, and hush'd, and close,
 As a sick man's room when he taketh
 repose
 An hour before death ;
 My very heart faints and my whole
 soul grieves
 At the moist rich smell of the rotting
 leaves,
 And the breath
 Of the fading edges of box beneath,
 And the year's last rose.
 Heavily hangs the broad sunflower
 Over its grave i' the earth so chilly ;
 Heavily hangs the hollyhock,
 Heavily hangs the tiger-lily.

ADELINE.

I.

MYSTERY of mysteries,
 Faintly smiling Adeline,
 Scarce of earth nor all divine,
 Nor unhappy, nor at rest,
 But beyond expression fair
 With thy floating flaxen hair ;
 Thy rose-lips and full blue eyes
 Take the heart from out my breast.
 Wherefore those dim looks of thine,
 Shadowy, dreaming Adeline ?

II.

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



III.

What hope or fear or joy is thine ?
 Who talketh with thee, Adeline ?
 For sure thou art not all alone :
 Do heating hearts of salient springs
 Keep measure with thine own ?
 Hast thou heard the butterflies
 What they say betwixt their wings ?
 Or in stillest evenings
 With what voice the violet woos
 To his heart the silver dews ?
 Or when little airs arise,
 How the merry bluebell rings
 To the mosses underneath ?
 Hast thou look'd upon the breath
 Of the lilies at sunrise ?
 Wherefore that faint smile of thine,
 Shadowy, dreaming Adeline ?

IV.

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

V.

Lovest thou the doleful wind
 When thou gazest at the skies ?
 Doth the low-tongued Orient
 Wander from the side of the morn,
 Dripping with Sabæan spice
 On thy pillow, lowly bent
 With melodious airs lovelorn,
 Breathing Light against thy face,
 While his locks a-drooping twined
 Round thy neck in subtle ring
 Make a carcanet of rays,
 And ye talk together still,
 In the language wherewith Spring
 Letters cowslips on the hill ?
 Hence that look and smile of thine,
 Spiritual Adeline.

A CHARACTER.

WITH a half-glance upon the sky
 At night he said, "The wanderings
 Of this most intricate Universe
 Teach me the nothingness of things."
 Yet could not all creation pierce
 Beyond the bottom of his eye.
 Hespake of beauty : that the dull
 Saw no divinity in grass,
 Life in dead stones, or spirit in air ;
 Then looking as 'twere in a glass,
 He smooth'd his chin and sleek'd his
 hair,
 And said the earth was beautiful.
 He spake of virtue : not the gods
 More purely, when they wish to charm
 Pallas and Juno sitting by :
 And with a sweeping of the arm,
 And a lack-lustre dead-blue eye,
 Devolved his rounded periods.

Most delicately hour by hour
 He canvass'd human myeteries,
 And trod on silk, as if the winds
 Blew his own praises in his eyes,
 And stood aloof from other minds
 In impotence of fancied power.

With lips depress'd as he were meek,
 Himself unto himself he cold :
 Upon himself himself did feed :
 Quiet, dispassionate, and cold,
 And other than his form of creed,
 With chisell'd features clear and
 sleek.

THE POET.

THE poet in a golden clime was born,
 With golden stars above ;
 Dower'd with the hate of hate, the
 scorn of scorn,
 The love of love.

He saw thro' life and death ; thro'
 good and ill,

He saw thro' his own soul.
 The marvel of the everlasting will,
 An open scroll,

Before him lay : with echoing feet he
 threaded

The secretest walke of fame :
 The viewless arrows of his thoughts
 were headed

And wing'd with flame,
 Like Indian reeds blown from his sil-
 ver tongue,

And of so fierce a flight,
 From Calpe unto Caucasus they sung,
 Filling with light

And vagrant melodies the winds which
 bore

Them earthward till they lit ;
 Then, like the arrow-seeds of the field
 flower,

The fruitful wit
 Cleaving, took root, and springing
 forth anew

Where'er they fell, behold,
 Like to the mother plant in semblance,
 grew

A flower all gold,
 And bravely furnish'd all abroad to
 fling

The winged shafts of truth,
 To throng with stately blooms the
 breathing spring
 Of Hope and Youth.

So many minds did gird their orbs
 with beams,
 Tho' one did fling the fire.

Heaven flow'd upon the soul in many
 dreams
 Of high desire.

Thus truth was multiplied on truth, the
 world

Like one great garden show'd,
 And thro' the wreaths of floating dark
 upcurl'd,
 Rare sunrise flow'd.



And Freedom rear'd in that august
sunrise

Her beautiful bold brow,
When rites and forms before his burn-
ing eyes
Melted like snow.

There was no blood upon her maiden
robes

Sunn'd by those orient skies ;
But round about the circles of the
globes
Of her keen eyes.

And in her raiment's hem was traced
in flame

WISDOM, a name to shake
All evil dreams of power—a sacred
name.

And when she spake,
Her words did gather thunder as they
ran,

And as the lightning to the thun-
der

Which follows it, riving the spirit of
man,
Making earth wonder,

So was their meaning to her words. No
sword

Of wrath her right arm whirl'd,
But one poor poet's scroll, and with *his*
word
She shook the world.

THE POET'S MIND.

I.

VEX not thou the poet's mind
With thy shallow wit :
Vex not thou the poet's mind ;
For thou canst not fathom it.
Clear and bright it should be ever,
Flowing like a crystal river ;
Bright as light, and clear as wind.

II.

Dark-brow'd sophist, come not anear ;
All the place is holy ground ;
Hollow smile and frozen sneer

Come not here.
Holy water will I pour
Into every spicy flower
Of the laurel-shrubs that hedge it
around.

The flowers would faint at your cruel
cheer.

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

In the heart of the garden the merry
bird chants,

It would fall to the ground if you came
in.

In the middle leaps a fountain
Like sheet lightning,
Ever brightening
With a low melodious thunder ;

All day and all night it is ever drawn,
From the brain of the purple moun-
tain

Which stands in the distance yonder :
It springs on a level of bowery lawn,
And the mountain draws it from

Heaven above,
And it sings a song of undying love ;
And yet, tho' its voice be so clear and
full,

You never would hear it ; your ears
are so dull ;

So keep where you are : you are foul
with sin ;
It would shrink to the earth if you
came in.

THE SEA-FAIRIES.

SLOW sail'd the weary mariners and
saw,

Betwixt the green brink and the run-
ning foam,
Sweet faces, rounded arms, and bosoms
prest

To little harps of gold ; and while they
mused,
Whispering to each other half in fear,
Shrill music reach'd them on the mid-
dle sea.

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

Whither away from the high green
field, and the happy blossoming
shore ?

Day and night to the billow the foun-
tain calls ;
Down shower the gambolling water-
falls

From wandering over the lea :
Out of the live-green heart of the dells
They freshen the silvery-crimson
shells,

And thick with white bells the clover-
hill swells

High over the full-toned sea :
O hither, come hither and furl your
sails,

Come hither to me and to me :
Hither, come hither and frolic and
play ;

Here it is only the mew that wails ;
We will sing to you all the day :
Mariner, mariner, furl your sails,
For here are the blissful downs and
dales,

And merrily, merrily carol the gales,
And the spangle dances in bight and
bay,
And the rainbow forms and flies on the
land

Over the islands free ;
And the rainbow lives in the curve of
the sand ;

Hither, come hither and see ;
And the rainbow hangs on the poisoning
wave,
And sweet is the color of cove and
cave,



And sweet shall your welcome be :
O hither, come hither, and be our lords,
For merry brides are we :
We will kiss sweet kisses, and speak
sweet words :

O listen, listen, your eyes shall glisten
With pleasure and love and jubilee :
O listen, listen, your eyes shall glisten
When the sharp clear twang of the
golden chords

Runs up the ridged sea.

Who can light on as happy a shore
All the world o'er, all the world o'er ?
Whither away ? listen and stay : mar-
iner, mariner, fly no more.

THE DESERTED HOUSE.

I.

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

II.

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

III.

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

IV.

Come away : no more of mirth
Is here or merry-making sound.
The house was builded of the earth,
And shall fall again to ground.

V.

Come away : for Life and Thought
Here no longer dwell ;
But in a city glorious—
A great and distant city—have bought
A mansion incorruptible.
Would they could have stayed with
us !

THE DYING SWAN.

I.

THE plain was grassy, wild and bare,
Wide, wild, and open to the air,
Which had built up everywhere
An under-roof of doleful gray.
With an inner voice the river ran,
Adown it floated a dying swan,
And loudly did lament.
It was the middle of the day.
Ever the weary wind went on,
And took the reed-tops as it went.

II.

Some blue peaks in the distance rose,
And white against the cold-white sky,
Shone out their crowning snows,
One willow over the river wept,
And shook the wave as the wind did
sigh ;

Above in the wind was the swallow,
Chasing itself at its own wild will,
And far thro' the marish green and
still

The tangled water-courses slept,
Shot over with purple, and green, and
yellow.

III

The wild swan's death-hymn took the
soul

Of that waste place with joy
Hidden in sorrow : at first to the ear
The warble was low, and full and clear ;
And floating about the under-sky,
Prevailing in weakness, the coronach
stole

Sometimes afar, and sometimes near ;
But anon her awful jubilant voice,
With a music strange and manifold,
Flow'd forth on a carol free and bold ;
As when a mighty people rejoice
With shawms, and with cymbals, and
harps of gold,

And the tumult of their acclaim is
roll'd

Thro' the open gates of the city afar,
To the shepherd who watcheth the eve-
ning star.

And the creeping mosses and clamber-
ing weeds,

And the willow-branches hoar and
dank,

And the wavy swell of the songing
reeds,

And the wave-worn horns of the echo-
ing bank,

And the silvery marish-flowers that
throng

The desolate creeks and pools among,
Were flooded over with eddying song.

A DIRGE.

I.

Now is done thy long day's work ;
Fold thy palms across thy breast,
Fold thine arms, turn to thy rest.

Let them rave.

Shadows of the silver birch
Sweep the green that folds thy grave.

Let them rave.

II.

Thee nor carketh care nor slander ;
Nothing but the small cold worm
Fretteth thine enshrouded form.

Let them rave.

Light and shadow ever wander
O'er the green that folds thy grave.

Let them rave.

III.

Thou wilt not turn upon thy bed ;
Chanteth not the brooding bee
Sweeter tones than calumny ?

Let them rave.

Thou wilt never raise thine head
From the green that folds thy grave.

Let them rave.

IV.

Crocodiles wept tears for thee ;
The woodbine and eglare

Drip sweeter dews than traitor's tear.
Let them rave.



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

v.

Round thee blow, self-pleached deep,
Bramble roses, faint and pale,
And long purples of the dale.
Let them rave.
These in every shower creep
Thro' the green that folds thy grave.
Let them rave.

vi.

The gold-eyed kingcups fine ;
The frail bluebell peereth over
Rare broidry of the purple clover.
Let them rave.
Kings have no such couch as thine,
As the green that folds thy grave.
Let them rave.

vii.

Wild words wander here and there :
God's great gift of speech abused
Makes thy memory confused :
But let them rave.
The halm-cricket carols clear
In the green that folds thy grave.
Let them rave.

LOVE AND DEATH.

WHAT time the mighty moon was
gathering light
Love paced the thymy plots of Para-
dise,
And all about him roll'd his lustrous
eyes ;
When, turning round a cassia, full in
view
Death, walking all alone beneath a
yew,
And talking to himself, first met his
sight :
" You must begone," said Death,
" these walks are mine."
Love wept and spread his sheeny vans
for fight ;
Yet ere he parted said, " This hour is
thine :
Thou art the shadow of life, and as the
tree
Stands in the sun and shadows all
beneath,
So in the light of great eternity
Life eminent creates the shade of
death ;
The shadow passeth when the tree
shall fall,
But I shall reign for ever over all."

THE BALLAD OF ORIANA.

My heart is wasted with my woe,
Oriana.
There is no rest for me below,
Oriana.
When the long dun wolds are ribb'd
with snow.

And loud the Norland whirlwinds
blow.

Oriana,
Alone I wander to and fro,
Oriana.

Ere the light on dark was growing,
Oriana,
At midnight the cock was crowing,
Oriana :
Winds were blowing, waters flowing,
We heard the steeds to hattle going,
Oriana ;
Aloud the hollow hngle blowing,
Oriana.

In the yew-wood black as night,
Oriana,
Ere I rode into the fight,
Oriana,
While blissful tears blinded my sight
By star-shine and by moonlight,
Oriana,
I to thee my troth did plight,
Oriana.

She stood upon the castle wall,
Oriana :
She watch'd my crest among them all,
Oriana :
She saw me fight, she heard me call,
When forth there stept a foeman tall,
Oriana,
Atween me and the castle wall,
Oriana.

The bitter arrow went aside,
Oriana :
The false, false arrow went aside,
Oriana :
The damned arrow glanced aside,
And pierced thy heart, my love, my
bride,
Oriana !
Thy heart, my life, my love, my bride,
Oriana !

Oh ! narrow, narrow was the space,
Oriana.
Loud, loud rung out the hngle's brays,
Oriana.
Oh ! deathful stahs were dealt apace,
The battle deepen'd in its place,
Oriana ;
But I was down upon my face,
Oriana.

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

O breaking heart that will not break,
Oriana !
O pale, pale face so sweet and meek,
Oriana !



Thou smilest, but thou dost not speak,
And then the tears run down my cheek,
Oriana :

What wastest thou ? whom dost thou
seek,
Oriana ?

I cry aloud : none hear my cries,
Oriana.

Thou comest atwixen me and the skies,
Oriana.

I feel the tears of blood arise
Up from my heart unto my eyes,
Oriana.

Within thy heart my arrow lies,
Oriana.

O cursed hand ! O cursed blow !
Oriana !

O happy thou that liest low,
Oriana !

All night the silence seems to flow
Beside me in my utter woe,
Oriana.

A weary, weary way I go,
Oriana.

When Norland winds pipe down the
sea,
Oriana,

I walk, I dare not think of thee,
Oriana.

Thou liest beneath the greenwood tree,
I dare not dis and come to thee,
Oriana.

I hear the roaring of the sea,
Oriana.

CIRCUMSTANCE.

Two children in two neighbor villages
Playing mad pranks along the heathy
leas,

Two strangers meeting at a festival ;
Two lovers whispering by an orchard
wall ;

Two lives bound fast in one with gold-
en ease ;

Two graves grass-green beside a gray
church-tower,
Wash'd with still rains and daisy-blos-
somed ;

Two children in one hamlet born and
bred ;

So runs the round of life from hour to
hour.

THE MERMAN.

I.

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

II.

I would be a merman bold ;
I would sit and sing the whole of the
day ;

I would fill the sea-halls with a voice
of power ;

But at night I would roam abroad and
play

With the mermaids in and out of the
rocks,

Dressing their hair with the white sea-
flower ;

And holding them back by their flow-
ing locks

I would kiss them often under the sea,
And kiss them again till they kiss'd me
Laughingly, laughingly ;

And then we would wander away, away
To the pale-green sea-groves straight
and high,

Chasing each other merrily.

III.

There would be neither moon nor star ;
But the waves would make music
above us afar—

Low thunder and light in the magic
night—

Neither moon nor star.

We would call aloud in the dreamy
dells,

Call to each other and whoop and cry
All night, merrily, merrily ;

They would pelt me with starry span-
gles and shells,

Laughing and clapping their hands
between,

All night, merrily, merrily :

But I would throw to them back in
mine

Turkis and agate and almondine :
Then leaping out upon them unseen

I would kiss them often under the
sea,

And kiss them again till they kiss'd
me

Laughingly, laughingly.

O, what a happy life were mine
Under the hollow-hung ocean green !

Soft are the moss-beds under the sea ;
We would live merrily, merrily.

THE MERMAID.

I.

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

II.

I would be a mermaid fair ;
I would sing to myself the whole of the
day ;

With a comb of pearl I would comb my
hair ;

And still as I comb'd I would sing and
say,

"Who is it loves me ? who loves not
me ?"



I would comb my hair till my ringlets
 would fall
 Low adown, low adown,
 From under my starry sea-bud crown
 Low adown and around,
 And I should look like a fountain of
 gold
 Springing alone
 With a shrill inner sound,
 Over the throne
 In the midst of the hall ;
 Till that great sea-snake under the sea
 From his coiled sleeps in the central
 deeps
 Would slowly trail himself sevenfold
 Round the hall where I sate, and look
 in at the gate
 With his large calm eyes for the love
 of me.
 And all the mermen under the sea
 Would feel their immortality
 Die in their hearts for the love of me.

III.

But at night I would wander away,
 away,
 I would fling on each side my low-flow-
 ing locks,
 And lightly vault from the throne and
 play
 With the mermen in and out of the
 rocks ;
 We would run to and fro, and hide and
 seek,
 On the broad sea-wolds in the crimson
 shells,
 Whose silvery spikes are nighest the
 sea.
 But if any came near I would call, and
 shriek,
 And adown the steep like a wave I
 would leap
 From the diamond-ledges that jut from
 the dells ;
 For I would not be kiss'd by all who
 would list,
 Of the hold merry mermen under the
 sea ;
 They would sue me, and woo me, and
 flatter me,
 In the purple twilights under the sea ;
 But the king of them all would carry
 me,
 Woo me, and win me, and marry me,
 In the branching jaspers under the
 sea ;
 Then all the dry pied things that be
 In the hueless mosses under the sea
 Would curl round my silver feet
 silently,
 All looking up for the love of me.
 And if I should carol aloud, from aloft
 All things that are forked, and horned,
 and soft
 Would lean out from the hollow sphere
 of the sea
 All looking down for the love of me.

SONNET TO J. M. K.

My hope and heart is with thee—thou
 wilt be
 A latter Luther, and a soldier-priest
 To scare church-harpies from the mas-
 ter's feast ;
 Our dusted velvets have much need of
 thee :
 Thou art no sabbath-drawler of old
 saws,
 Distill'd from some worm-canker'd
 homily ;
 But spurr'd at heart with fieriest en-
 ergy
 To embattail and to wall about thy
 cause
 With iron-worded proof, hating to hark
 The humming of the drowsy pulpit-
 drone
 Half God's good sabbath, while the
 worn-out clerk
 Brow-beats his desk below. Thou from
 a throne
 Mounted in heaven wilt shoot into the
 dark
 Arrows of lightnings. I will stand and
 mark.

THE LADY OF SHALOTT.

PART I.

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

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

By the margin, willow-veil'd,
 Slide the heavy barges trail'd
 By slow horses ; and unhail'd
 The shallop flitteth silken-sail'd
 Skimming down to Camelot :
 But who hath seen her wave her hand ?
 Or at the casement seen her stand ?
 Or is she known in all the land,
 The Lady of Shalott ?

Only reapers, reaping early
 In among the bearded barley,
 Hear a song that echoes cheerly
 From the river winding clearly,
 Down to tower'd Camelot ;
 And by the moon the reaper weary,
 Piling sheaves in uplands airy,
 Listening, whispers " 'Tis the fairy
 Lady of Shalott."



PART II.

THERE she weaves by night and day
A magic web with colors gay.
She has heard a whisper say,
A curse is on her if she stay

To look down to Camelot.
She knows not what the curse may be,
And so she weaveth steadily,
And little other care hath she.
The Lady of Shalott.

And moving thro' a mirror clear
That hangs before her all the year,
Shadows of the world appear.
There she sees the highway near

Winding down to Camelot :
There the river eddy whirls,
And there the surly village-churls,
And the red cloaks of market-girls,
Pass onward from Shalott.

Sometimes a troop of damsels glad,
An abbot on an ambling pad,
Sometimes a curly shepherd-lad,
Or long-hair'd page in crimson clad,
Goes by to tower'd Camelot ;
And sometimes thro' the mirror blue
The knights come riding two and two :
She hath no loyal knight and true,
The Lady of Shalott.

But in her web she still delights
To weave the mirror's magic sights,
For often thro' the silent nights
A funeral, with plumes and lights,
And music, went to Camelot :
Or when the moon was overhead,
Came two young lovers lately wed ;
"I am half sick of shadows," said
The Lady of Shalott.

PART III.

A BOW-SHOT from her bower-eaves,
He rode between the barley-sheaves,
The sun came dazzling thro' the leaves,
And flamed upon the brazen greaves
Of bold Sir Lancelot.

A red-cross knight for ever kneel'd
To a lady in his shield,
That sparkled on the yellow field,
Beside remote Shalott.

The gemmy bridle glitter'd free,
Like to some branch of stars we see
Hung in the golden Galaxy.
The bride bells rang merrily
As he rode down to Camelot
And from his blazon'd baldric slung
A mighty silver bugle hung,
And as he rode his armor rung,
Beside remote Shalott.

All in the blue unclouded weather
Thick-jewell'd shone the saddle-leath-
er,
The helmet and the helmet feather
Burned like one burning flame to-
gether,
As he rode down to Camelot.
As often thro' the purple night,

Below the starry clusters bright,
Some bearded meteor, trailing light,
Moves over still Shalott.

His broad clear brow in sunlight
glow'd ;
On burnish'd hooves his war-horse
trode ;
From underneath his helmet flow'd
His coal-black curls as on he rode,
As he rode down to Camelot.
From the bank and from the river
He flash'd into the crystal mirror,
"Tirra lirra," by the river
Sang Sir Lancelot.

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

PART IV.

IN the stormy east-wind straining,
The pale yellow woods were waning,
The broad stream in his banks com-
plaining,

Heavily the low sky raining
Over tower'd Camelot ;
Down she came and found a boat
Beneath a willow left afloat,
And round about the prow she wrote
The Lady of Shalott.

And down the river's dim expanse—
Like some bold seer in a trance,
Seeing all his own mischance—
With a glassy countenance
Did she look to Camelot.
And at the closing of the day
She loosed the chain, and down she
lay ;
The broad stream bore her far away,
The Lady of Shalott.

Lying, robed in snowy white
That loosely flew to left and right—
The leaves upon her falling light—
Thro' the noises of the night
She floated down to Camelot :
And as the boat-head wound along
The willowy hills and fields among,
They heard her singing her last song,
The Lady of Shalott.

Heard a carol, mournful, holy,
Chanted loudly, chanted lowly,
Till her blood was frozen slowly,
And her eyes were darken'd wholly,
Turn'd to tower'd Camelot ;
For ere she reach'd upon the tide
The first house by the water-side,
Singing in her song she died,
The Lady of Shalott.

Under tower and balcony,
By garden-wall and gallery,



A gleaming shape she floated by,
Dead-pale between the houses high,
Silent into Camelot.

Out upon the wharfs they came,
Knight and burgher, lord and dame,
And round the prow they read her
name,

The Lady of Shalott.

Who is this? and what is here?
And in the lighted palace near
Died the sound of royal cheer;
And they cross'd themselves for fear,
All the knights at Camelot;
But Lancelot mused a little space;
He said, "She has a lovely face;
God in his mercy lend her grace,
The Lady of Shalott."

MARIANA IN THE SOUTH.

WITH one black shadow at its feet,
The house thro' all the level shines,
Close-latticed to the brooding heat,
And silent in its dusty vines:
A faint-hine ridge upon the right,
An empty river-bed before,
And shallows on a distant shore,
In glaring sand and inlets bright.

But "Ave Mary," made she moan,
And "Ave Mary," night and morn,
And "Ah," she sang, "to be all
alone,
To live forgotten, and love for-
lorn."

She, as her carol sadder grew,
From brow and bosom slowly down
Thro' rosy taper fingers drew
Her streaming curls of deepest
brown

To left and right, and made appear,
Still-lighted in a secret shrine,
Her melancholy eyes divine,
The home of woe without a tear.

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

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

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

And "Ah," she said, "but I
wake alone,
I sleep forgotten, I wake forlorn."
Nor bird would sing, nor lamb would
bleat,

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

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

Dreaming, she knew it was a dream:
She felt he was and was not there.
She woke: the babble of the stream
Fell, and, without, the steady glare
Shrank one sick willow sere and small.
The river-bed was dusty-white;
And all the furnace of the light
Struck up against the blinding wall.

She whisper'd, with a stifled moan
More inward than at night or
morn,
"Sweet Mother, let me not here
alone
Live forgotten and die forlorn."

And, rising, from her bosom drew
Old letters, breathing of her worth,
For "Love," they said, "must needs
be true,
To what is loveliest upon earth."
An image seem'd to pass the door,
To look at her with slight, and say,
"But now thy beauty flows away,
So be alone for evermore."

"O cruel heart," she changed her
tone,
"And cruel love, whose end is
scorn,
Is this the end to be left alone,
To live forgotten, and die for-
lorn!"

But sometimes in the falling day
An image seem'd to pass the door,
To look into her eyes and say,
"But thou shalt be alone no more."
And flaming downward over all
From heat to heat the day decreased,
And slowly rounded to the east
The one black shadow from the wall.

"The day to-night," she made her
moan,
"The day to-night, the night to
morn,
And day and night I am left alone
To live forgotten, and love for-
lorn."

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



Heaven over Heaven rose the night.
 And weeping then she made her
 moan,
 "The night comes on that knows
 not morn,
 When I shall cease to be all alone,
 To live forgotten, and love for-
 lorn."

ELEANORE.

I.

THY dark eyes open'd not,
 Nor first reveal'd themselves to Eng-
 lish air,

For there is nothing here,
 Which, from the outward to the inward
 brought,
 Moulded thy baby thought.
 Far off from human neighborhood,
 Thou wert born, on a summer morn,
 A mile beneath the cedar-wood.
 Thy homteous forehead was not fann'd
 With breezes from our oaken glades,
 But thou wert nursed in some delicious
 land

Of lavish lights, and floating shades:
 And flattering thy childish thought
 The oriental fairy brought,

At the moment of thy birth,
 From old well-heads of haunted rills,
 And the hearts of purple hills,
 And shadow'd coves on a sunny
 shore,

The choicest wealth of all the
 earth,
 Jewel or shell, or starry ore,
 To deck thy cradle, Eleäncre.

II.

Or the yellow-handed bees,
 Thro' half-open lattices
 Coming in the scented breeze,
 Fed thee, a child, lying alone,
 With whitest honey in fairy gardens
 cull'd—

A glorious child, dreaming alone,
 In silk-soft folds, upon yielding
 down,

With the hum of swarming bees
 Into dreamful slumber lull'd.

III.

Who may minister to thee?
 Summer herself should minister
 To thee, with fruitage golden-
 rinded

On golden salvers, or it may be,
 Youngest Autumn, in a hower
 Grape-thicken'd from the light, and
 blinded

With many a deep-hued bell-like
 flower

Of fragrant trailers, when the air
 Sleepeth over all the heaven,
 And the crag that fronts the Even,
 All along the shadowy shore,

Crimsons over an inland mere,
 Eleänore!

IV.

How may full-sail'd verse express,
 How may measured words adcre
 The full-flowing harmony
 Of thy swan-like stateliness,
 Eleänore?

The luxuriant symmetry
 Of thy floating gracefulness,
 Eleänore?
 Every turn and glance of thine,
 Every lineament divine,
 Eleänore,

And the steady sunset glow,
 That stays upon thee? For in thee
 Is nothing sudden, nothing single:
 Like two streams of incense free
 From one censer, in one shrine,
 Thought and motion mingle,
 Mingle ever. Motions flow
 To one another, even as tho'
 They were modulated so
 To an unheard melody,
 Which lives about thee, and a sweep
 Of richest pauses, evermore
 Drawn from each other mellow-deep;
 Who may express thee, Eleänore?

V.

I stand before thee, Eleänore;
 I see thy beauty gradually unfold,
 Daily and hourly, more and more.
 I muse, as in a trance, the while
 Slowly, as from a cloud of gold
 Comes out thy deep ambrosial smile.

I muse, as in a trance, when'er
 The languors of the love-deep eyes
 Float on to me. I would I were
 So tranced, so rapt in ecstasies,
 To stand apart, and to adore,
 Gazing on thee for evermore,
 Serene, imperial Eleänore!

VI.

Sometimes, with most intensity
 Gazing, I seem to see
 Thought folded over thought, smiling
 asleep

Slowly awaken'd, grow so full and deep
 In thy large eyes, that, overpower'd
 quite,

I cannot veil, or droop my sight,
 But am as nothing in its light:
 As tho' a star, in inmost heaven set,
 Ev'n while we gaze on it,
 Should slowly round his orb, and slowly
 grow

To a full face, there like a sun remain
 Fix'd—then as slowly fade again,
 And draw itself to what it was be-
 fore;
 So full, so deep, so slow,
 Thought seems to come and go
 In thy large eyes, imperial Eleä-
 nore.

VII.

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



In thee all passion becomes passionless,
 Touch'd by thy spirit's mellowness,
 In a silent meditation,
 Falling into a still delight,
 And luxury of contemplation :
 As waves that up a quiet cove
 Rolling slide, and lying still
 Shadow forth the banks at will :
 Or sometimes they swell and move,
 Pressing up against the laud,
 With motions of the outer sea :
 And the self-same influence
 Controlleth all the soul and sense
 Of Passion gazing upon thee.
 His bow-string slacken'd, languid Love,
 Leaning his cheek upon his hand,
 Droops both his wings, regarding thee,
 And so would languish evermore,
 Serene, imperial Eleánore.

VIII.

But when I see thee roam, with tresses
 unconfined,
 While the amorous, odorous wind
 Breathes low between the sunset
 and the moon
 Or, in a shadowy saloon,
 On silken cushions half reclined ;
 I watch thy grace ; and in its place
 My heart a charmed slumber keeps,
 While I muse upon thy face ;
 And a languid fire creeps
 Thro' my veins to all my frame,
 Dissolvingly and slowly : soon
 From thy rose-red lips my name
 Floweth : and then, as in a swoon,
 With dinning sound my ears are rife,
 My tremulous tongue faltereth,
 I lose my color, I lose my breath,
 I drink the cup of a costly death,
 Brimm'd with delirious draughts of
 warmest life.
 I die with my delight, before
 I hear what I would hear from thee ;
 Yet tell my name again to me,
 I would be dying evermore,
 So dying ever, Eleánore.

THE MILLER'S DAUGHTER.

I SEE the wealthy miller yet,
 His double chin, his portly size,
 And who that knew him could forget
 The busy wrinkles round his eyes ?
 The slow wise smile that, round about
 His dusty forehead dryly curl'd,
 Seem'd half-within and half-without,
 And full of dealings with the world ?

In yonder chair I see him sit,
 Three fingers round the old silver
 cup—

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

Yet fill my glass : give me one kiss :
 My own sweet Alice, we must die.

There's somewhat in this world amiss
 Shall be unriddled by and by.

There's somewhat flows to us in life,
 But more is taken quite away.
 Pray, Alice, pray, my darling wife,
 That we may die the self-same day.

Have I not found a happy earth ?
 I least should breathe a thought of
 pain.

Would God renew me from my birth
 I'd almost live my life again.

So sweet it seems with thee to walk,
 And once again to woo thee mine—
 It seems in after-dinner talk
 Across the walnuts and the wine—

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

And oft I heard the tender dove
 In firry woodlands making moan ;
 But ere I saw your eyes, my love,
 I had no motion of my own.
 For scarce my life with fancy play'd
 Before I dream'd that pleasant
 dream—
 Still hither thither idly away'd
 Like those long mosses in the stream.

Or from the bridge I leaned to hear
 The milldam rushing down with
 noise,

And see the minnows everywhere
 In crystal eddies glance and poise,
 The tall flag-flowers when they sprung
 Below the range of stepping stones,
 Or those three chestnuts near, that
 hung

In masses thick with milky cones.

But, Alice, what an hour was that,
 When after roving in the woods
 ('Twas April then), I came and sat
 Below the chestnuts, when their buds
 Were glistening to the breezy blue ;
 And on the slope, an absent fool,
 I cast me down, nor thought of you,
 But angled in the higher pool.

A love-song I had somewhere read,
 An echo from a measured strain,
 Beat time to nothing in my head
 From some odd corner of the brain.
 It haunted me, the morning long,
 With weary sameness in the rhymes,
 The phantom of a silent song,
 That went and came a thousand
 times.

Then leapt a trout. In lazy mood
 I watch'd the little circles die ;
 They past into the level flood,
 And there a vision caught my eye ;
 The reflex of a beauteous form,
 A glowing arm, a gleaming neck,
 As when a sunbeam wavers warm
 Within the dark and dimpled beck.



For you remember, you had set,
That morning, on the casement-edge
A long green box of mignonette,
And you were leaning from the ledge:
And when I raised my eyes, above
They met with two so full and bright—
Such eyes! I swear to you, my love,
That these have never lost their light.

I loved, and love dispell'd the fear
That I should die an early death:
For love possess'd the atmosphere,
And fill'd the breast with purer breath.
My mother thought, What ails the boy?
For I was altered and began
To move about the house with joy,
And with the certain step of man.

I loved the brimming wave that swam
Thro' quiet meadows round the mill,
The sleepy pool above the dam,
The pool beneath it never still,
The meal-sacks on the whiten'd floor,
The dark round of the dripping wheel,
The very air about the door
Made misty with the floating meal.

And oft in ramblings on the world,
When April nights began to blow,
And April's crescent glimmer'd cold,
I saw the village lights below;
I knew your taper far away,
And full at heart of trembling hope,
From off the world I came, and lay
Upon the freshly-flower'd slope.

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

The white chalk-quarry from the hill
Gleam'd to the flying moon by fits.
"O that I were beside her now!
O, will she answer if I call?
O, would she give me vow for vow,
Sweet Alice, if I told her all?"

Sometimes I saw you sit and spin;
And, in the paaees of the wind,
Sometimes I heard you sing within;
Sometimes your shadow cross'd the
blind.

At last you rose and moved the light,
And the long shadow of the chair
Flitted across into the night,
And all the casement darken'd there.

But when at last I dared to speak,
The lanes, you know, were white
with May,
Your ripe lips moved not, but your
cheek

Flush'd like the coming of the day;
And so it was—half-sly, half-shy.
You would and would not, little one!
Although I pleaded tenderly,
And you and I were all alone.

And slowly was my mother brought
To yield consent to my desire:
She wish'd me happy, but she thought
I might have look'd a little higher;
And I was young—too young to wed:

"Yet must I love her for your sake;
Go fetch your Alice here," she said:
Her eyelid quiver'd as she spake.

And down I went to fetch my bride:
But, Alice, you were ill at ease;
This dress and that by turns you tried,
Too fearful that you should not
please.

I loved you better for your fears,
I knew you could not look but well;
And dew, that would have fall'n in
tears,
I kiss'd away before they fell.

I watch'd the little flutterings,
The doubt my mother would not see;
She spoke at large of many things,
And at the last she spoke of me;
And turning look'd upon your face,
As near this door you sat apart,
And rose, and, with a silent grace
Approaching, press'd you heart to
heart.

Ah, well—but sing the foolish song
I gave you, Alice, on the day
When, arm in arm, we went along,
A pensive path and you were gay
With bridal flowers—that I may seem,
As in the nights of old, to lie
Beside the mill-wheel in the stream,
While those full chestnuts whisper
by.

It is the miller's daughter,
And she is grown so dear, so dear,
That I would be the jewel
That trembles at her ear,
For hid in ringlets day and night,
I'd touch her neck so warm and
white.

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

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

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

And now those vivid hours are gone,
Like my own life to me thon art,
Where Past and Present, wound in one
Do make a garland for the heart:
So sing that other song I made,



Half-anger'd with my happy lot,
The day, when in the chesnut shade
I found the blue Forget-me-not.

Love that hath us in the net
Can he pass, and we forget?
Many suns arise and set.
Many a chance the years beget.
Love the gift is Love the debt.

Ever so.
Love is hurt with jar and fret,
Love is made a vague regret.
Eyes with idle tears are wet.
Idle habit links us yet.
What is love? for we forget:
Ah, no! no!

Look thro' mine eyes with thine. True
wife,
Round my true heart thine arms
entwine;
My other dearer life in life,
Look thro' my very soul with thine!
Untouch'd with any shade of years.
May those kind eyes forever dwell!
They have not shed a many tears,
Dear eyes, since first I knew them
well.

Yet tears they shed: they had their
part
Of sorrow: for when time was ripe,
The still affection of the heart
Became an outward breathing type,
That into stillness past again.
And left a want unknown before;
Although the loss that brought us pain,
That loss but made us love the more.

With farther lookings on. The kiss,
The woven arms, seem but to be
Weak symbols of the settled bliss,
The comfort, I have found in thee:
But that God bless thee, dear—who
wrought

Two spirits to one equal mind—
With blessings beyond hope or thought,
With blessings which no words can
find.

Arise, and let us wander forth,
To yon old mill across the wolds;
For look, the sunset, south and north,
Winds all the vale in rosy folds,
And fires your narrow casement glass,
Touching the sullen pool below:
On the chalk-hill the hearded grass
Is dry and dewless. Let us go.

F A T I M A .

O LOVE, Love, Love! O withering
might!
O sun, that from thy noonday height
Shuddereest when I strain my sight,
Throbbing thro' all thy heat and light,
Lo, falling from my constant mind,
Lo, parch'd and wither'd, deaf and
blind,
I whirl like leaves in roaring wind.

Last night I wasted hateful hours
Below the city's eastern towers:
I thirsted for the brooks, the showers:
I roll'd among the tender flowers:
I crush'd them on my breast, my
mouth:

I look'd athwart the burning drouth
Of that long desert to the south.

Last night when some one spoke his
name,
From my swift blood that went and
came

A thousand little shafts of flame
Were shiver'd in my narrow frame.
O Love, O fire! once he drew
With one long kiss my whole soul
thro'

My lips, as sunlight drinketh dew.

Before he mounts the hill, I know
He cometh quickly: from below
Sweet gales, as from deep gardens,
blow

Before him, striking on my brow.
In my dry brain my spirit soon,
Down-deepening from swoon to
swoon,

Faints like a dazzled morning moon.

The wind sounds like a silver wire,
And from beyond the noon a fire
Is pour'd upon the hills, and nigher
The skies stoop down in their desire,
And, isled in sudden seas of light,
My heart, pierced thro' with fierce
delight,

Bursts into blossom in his sight

My whole soul waiting silently,
All naked in a sultry sky,
Droops blinded with his shining eye:
I will possess him or will die.

I will grow round him in his place,
Grow, live, die clasp'd on his face,
Die, dying, clasp'd in his embrace.

C E N O N E .

THERE lies a vale in Ida, lovelier
Than all the valleys of Ionian hills.
The swimming vapor slopes athwart
the glen,

Puts forth an arm, and creeps from
pine to pine,
And loiters, slowly drawn. On either
hand

The lawns and meadow-ledges midway
down
Hang rich in flowers, and far below
them roars

The long brook falling thro' the cloy'n
ravine

In cataract after cataract to the sea.
Behind the valley topmost Gargarus
Stands up and takes the morning: hut
in front

The gorges, opening wide apart, reveal
Troas and Iliion's column'd citadel,
The crown of Troas.

Hither came at noon
Mournful CEnone, wandering forlorn





Of Paris, once her playmate on the hills.
Her cheek had lost the rose, and round her neck
Floated her hair or seem'd to float in rest.
She, leaning on a fragment twined with vine,
Sang to the stillness, till the mountain-shade
Sloped downward to her seat from the upper cliff.

"O mother Ida, many-fountain'd Ida,
Dear mother Ida, harken ere I die.
For now the noonday quiet holds the hill:
The grasshopper is silent in the grass:
The lizard, with his shadow on the stone,
Rests like a shadow, and the cicala sleeps.
The purple flowers droop: the golden bee
Is lily-cradled; I alone awake.
My eyes are full of tears, my heart of love,
My heart is breaking, and my eyes are dim,
And I am all aweary of my life.

"O mother Ida, many-fountain'd Ida,
Dear mother Ida, harken ere I die.
Hear me, O Earth, hear me, O Hills, O Caves
That house the cold crown'd snake! O mountain brooks,
I am the daughter of a River-God,
Hear me, for I will speak, and build up all
My sorrow with my song, as yonder walls
Rose slowly to a music slowly breathed,
A cloud that gather'd shape: for it may be
That, while I speak of it, a little while
My heart may wander from its deeper woe.

"O mother Ida, many-fountain'd Ida,
Dear mother Ida, harken ere I die.
I waited underneath the dawning hills,
Aloft the mountain lawn was dewy-dark,
And dewy-dark aloft the mountain pine:
Beautiful Paris, evil-hearted Paris,
Leading a jet-black goat white-horn'd,
white-hooved,
Came up from reedy Simois all alone.

"O mother Ida, harken ere I die.
Far-off the torrent call'd me from the cleft:
Far up the solitary morning smote
The streaks of virgin snow. With down-dropt eyes
I sat alone: white-breasted like a star
Fronting the dawn he moved: a leopard skin
Droop'd from his shoulder, but his sunny hair

Cluster'd about his temples like a God's;
And his cheek brighten'd as the foam-bow brightens
When the wind blows the foam, and all my heart
Went forth to embrace him coming ere he came.

"Dear mother Ida, harken ere I die.
He smiled, and opening out his milk-white palm
Disclosed a fruit of pure Hesperian gold.
That smelt ambrosially, and while I look'd
And listen'd, the full-flowing river of speech
Came down upon my heart.

"My own Cenone,
Beautiful-brow'd Cenone, my own soul,
Behold this fruit, whose gleaming rind ingravn
"For the most fair," would seem to award it thine,
As lovelier than whatever Oread haunt
The knolls of Ida, loveliest in all grace
Of movement, and the charm of married brows."

"Dear mother Ida, harken ere I die.
He prest the blossom of his lips to mine,
And added, 'This was cast upon the board,
When all the full-faced presence of the Gods
Ranged in the halls of Peleus; where-upon
Rose feud, with question unto whom 'twere due:
But light-foot Iris brought it yester-eve,
Delivering, that to me, by common voice
Elected umpire, Herè comes to-day,
Pallas and Aphrodite, claiming each
This need of fairest. Thou, within the cave
Behind yon whispering tuft of oldest pine,
Mayst well behold them, unbeheld, unheard
Hear all, and see thy Paris judge of Gods.'

"Dear mother Ida, hearken ere I die.
It was the deep midnight; one silvery cloud
Had lost his way between the piney sides
Of this long glen. Then to the bower they came,
Naked they came to that smooth-swarded bower,
And at their feet the crocus brake like fire,
Violet, amaracus, and asphodel,
Lotos and lilies: and a wind arose,
And overhead the wandering ivy and vine,



This way and that, in many a wild festoon
 Ran riot, garlanding the gnarled boughs
 With hunch and berry and flower thro' and thro'.

"O mother Ida, harken ere I die.
 On the tree-tops a crested peacock lit,
 And o'er him flow'd a golden cloud,
 and lean'd
 Upon him, slowly dropping fragrant dew,
 Then first I heard the voice of her, to whom
 Coming thro' Heaven, like a light that grows
 Larger and clearer, with one mind the Gods
 Rise up for reverence. She to Paris made
 Proffer of royal power, ample rule
 Unquestion'd, overflowing revenue
 Wherewith to embellish state, 'from many a vale
 And river-sunder'd champaign clothed with corn,
 Or labor'd mines undrainable of ore.
 Honor,' she said, 'and homage, tax and toll,
 From many an inland town and haven large,
 Mast-throng'd beneath her shadowing citadel.
 In glassy bays among her tallest towers.'

"O mother Ida, harken ere I die.
 Still she spake on and still she spake of power,
 'Which in all action is the end of all ;
 Power fitted to the season ; wisdom-hred
 And throned of wisdom—from all neighbor crowns
 Alliance and allegiance, till thy hand
 Fall from the sceptre-staff. Such boon from me,
 From me, Heaven's Queen, Paris, to thee king-born,
 A shepherd all thy life but yet king-born,
 Should come most welcome, seeing men, in power,
 Only, are likest gods, who have attain'd
 Rest in a happy place and quiet seats
 Above the thunder, with undying bliss
 In knowledge of their own supremacy.'

"Dear mother Ida, harken ere I die.
 She ceased, and Paris held the costly fruit
 Out at arm's-length, so much the thought of power
 Flatter'd his spirit ; but Pallas where she stood
 Somewhat apart, her clear and bared limbs
 O'erthwarted with the brazen-headed spear

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

"Self-reverence, self-knowledge, self-control,
 These three alone lead life to sovereign power.
 Yet not for power, (power of herself
 Would come uncall'd for) but to live by law,
 Acting the law we live by without fear ;
 And, because right is right, to follow right
 Were wisdom in the scorn of consequence.'

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

Yet, indeed,
 If gazing on divinity dierobed
 Thy mortal eyes are frail to judge of fair,
 Unbiass'd by self-profit, oh ! rest thee sure
 That I shall love thee well and cleave to thee,
 So that my vigor, wedded to thy blood,
 Shall strike within thy pulses, like a God's,
 To push thee forward thro' a life of shocks,
 Dangers, and deeds, until endurance grow
 Sinew'd with action, and the full-grown will,
 Circl'd thro' all experiences, pure law,
 Commensure perfect freedom.'

"Here she ceased
 And Paris ponder'd, and I cried, 'O Paris,
 Give it to Pallas,' but he heard me not,
 Or hearing would not hear me, woe is me !

"O mother Ida, many-fountain'd Ida,
 Dear mother Ida, harken ere I die.
 Idalian Aphrodite beautiful,
 Fresh as the foam, new-bathed in Paphian wells,
 With rosy slender fingers backward drew
 From her warm brows and bosom her deep hair
 Ambrosial, golden round her lucid throat
 And shouder : from the violets her light foot
 Shone rosy-white, and o'er her rounded form



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

"Dear mother Ida, harken ere I die.
She with a subtle smile in her mild
eyes,
The herald of her triumph, drawing
nigh
Half-whisper'd in his ear, 'I promise
thee
The fairest and most loving wife in
Greece.'
She spoke and laugh'd: I shnt my
sight for fear:
But when I look'd, Paris had raised
his arm
And I beheld great Herè's angry eyes,
As she withdrew into the golden cloud,
And I was left alone within the hower;
And from that time to this I am alone,
And I shall be alone until I die.

"Yet, mother Ida, harken ere I die.
Fairest — why fairest wife? am I not
fair?
My love hath told me so a thousand
times.
Methinks I must be fair, for yesterday,
When I past by, a wild and wanton
pard,
Eyed like the evening star, with play-
ful tail
Crouch'd fawning in the weed. Most
loving is she?
Ah me, my mountain shepherd, that
my arms
Were wound about thee, and my hot
lips prest
Close, close to thine in that quick-fall-
ing dew
Of fruitful kisses, thick as Autumn
rains
Flash in the pools of whirling Simois.

"O mother, hear me yet before I die.
They came, they cut away my tallest
pines,
My dark tall pines, that plumed the
craggy ledge.
High over the blue gorge, and all be-
tween
The snowy peak and snow-white cata-
ract
Foster'd the callow eaglet — from be-
neath
Whose thick mysterious boughs in the
dark morn
The panther's roar came muffled, while
I eat
Low in the valley. Never, never more
Shall lone Ænone see the morning
mist
Sweep thro' them; never see them
overlaid
With narrow moon-lit slips of silver
cloud,
Between the loud stream and the trem-
bling stars.

"O mother, hear me yet before I die.
I wish that somewhere in the ruin'd
folds,
Among the fragments tumbled from
the glens,
Or the dry thickets, I could meet with
her,
The Abominable, that nninvited came
Into the fair Pelefan banquet-hall,
And cast the golden fruit upon the
board,
And bred this change; that I might
speak my mind,
And tell her to her face how much I
hate
Her presence, hated both of Gods and
men.

"O mother, hear me yet before I die.
Hath he not sworn his love a thousand
times,
In this green valley, under this green
hill,
Ev'n on this hand, and sitting on this
stone?
Seal'd it with kisses? water'd it with
tears?
O happy tears, and how unlike to
these!
O happy Heaven, how canst thou see
my face?
O happy earth, how canst thou bear my
weight?
O death, death, death, thou ever float-
ing cloud,
There are enough unhappy on this
earth,
Pass by the happy souls, that love to
live:
I pray thee, pass before my light of
life,
And shadow all my soul, that I may
die.
Thou weighest heavy on the heart
within,
Weigh heavy on my eyelids: let me
die.

"O mother, hear me yet before I die.
I will not die alone, for fiery thoughts
Do shape themselves within me, more
and more,
Whereof I catch the issue, as I hear
Dead sounds at night come from the
inmost hills,
Like footsteps upon wool. I dimly see
My far-off doubtful purpose, as a
mother
Conjectures of the features of her
child
Ere it is born: her child! — a shudder
comes
Across me: never child be born of me,
Ublest, to vex me with his father's
eyes!

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



Uncomforted, leaving my ancient love
 With the Greek woman. I will rise
 and go
 Down into Troy, and ere the stars
 come forth
 Talk with the wild Cassandra, for she
 says
 A fire dances before her, and a sound
 Rings ever in her ears of armed men.
 What this may be I know not, but I
 know
 That, wheresoe'er I am by night and
 day,
 All earth and air seem only burning
 fire."

THE SISTERS.

We were two daughters of one race:
 She was the fairest in the face:
 The wind is blowing in turret and
 tree.
 They were together, and she fell:
 Therefore revenge became me well.
 O the Earl was fair to see!
 She died: she went to burning flame:
 She mix'd her ancient blood with
 shame.
 The wind is howling in turret and
 tree.
 Whole weeks and months, and early
 and late,
 To win his love I lay in wait:
 O the Earl was fair to see!
 I made a feast; I bade him come;
 I won his love, I brought him home.
 The wind is roaring in turret and
 tree.
 And after supper, on a bed,
 Upon my lap he laid his head:
 O the Earl was fair to see!
 I kiss'd his eyelids into rest:
 His ruddy cheek upon my breast.
 The wind is raging in turret and
 tree.
 I hated him with the hate of hell,
 But I loved his beauty passing well.
 O the Earl was fair to see!
 I rose up in the silent night:
 I made my dagger sharp and bright.
 The wind is raving in turret and
 tree.
 As half-asleep his breath he drew,
 Three times I stabb'd him thro' and
 thro'.
 O the Earl was fair to see!
 I curl'd and comb'd his comely head,
 He look'd so grand when he was dead.
 The wind is blowing in turret and
 tree.
 I wrapt his body in the sheet,
 And laid him at his mother's feet.
 O the Earl was fair to see!

TO

WITH THE FOLLOWING POEM.
 I SEND you here a sort of allegory,
 (For you will understand it) of a soul,

A sinful soul possess'd of many gifts,
 A spacious garden full of flowering
 weeds,
 A glorious Devil, large in heart and
 brain,
 That did love Beauty only, (Beauty
 seen
 In all varieties of mould and mind)
 And Knowledge for its beauty; or if
 Good,
 Good only for its beauty, seeing not
 That Beauty, Good, and Knowledge,
 are three sisters
 That doat upon each other, friends to
 man,
 Living together under the same roof,
 And never can be sunder'd without
 tears.
 And he that shuts Love out, in turn
 shall be
 Shut out from Love, and on her thresh-
 old lie
 Howling in outer darkness. Not for
 this
 Was common clay ta'en from the com-
 mon earth,
 Moulded by God, and temper'd with
 the tears
 Of angels to the perfect shape of man.

THE PALACE OF ART.

I BUILT my soul a lordly pleasure-
 house,
 Wherein at ease for aye to dwell.
 I said, "O Soul, make merry and ca-
 rouse,
 Dear soul, for all is well."
 A huge crag-platform, smooth as bur-
 nish'd brass,
 I chose. The ranged ramparts bright
 From level meadow-bates of deep grass
 Suddenly scaled the light.
 Thereon I built it firm. Of ledge or
 shelf
 The rock rose clear, or winding stair.
 My soul would live alone unto herself
 In her high palace there.
 And "while the world runs round and
 round," I said,
 "Reign thou apart, a quiet king,
 Still as, while Saturn whirls, his sted-
 fast shade
 Sleeps on his luminous ring."
 To which my soul made answer read-
 ily:
 "Trust me, in bliss I shall abide
 In this great mansion, that is built for
 me,
 So royal-rich and wide."
 * * * * *
 Four courts I made, East, West and
 South and North,
 In each a squared lawn, wherefrom
 The golden gorge of dragons spouted
 forth
 A flood of fountain foam.



And round the cool green courts there
 ran a row
 Of cloisters, branch'd like mighty
 woods,
 Echoing all night to that sonorous
 flow
 Of spouted fountain-floods.

And round the roofs a gilded gallery
 That lent broad verge to distant
 lands,
 Far as the wild swan wings, to where
 the sky
 Dipt down to sea and sands.

From those four jets four currents in
 one swell
 Across the mountain stream'd below
 In misty folds, that floating as they
 fell
 Lit up a torrent-bow.

And high on every peak a statue seem'd
 To hang on tiptoe, tossing up
 A cloud of incense of all odor steam'd
 From't out a golden cup.
 So that she thought, "And who shall
 gaze upon
 My palace with unblinded eyes,
 While this great bow will waver in the
 sun,
 And that sweet incense rise?"

For that sweet incense rose and never
 fail'd,
 And, while day sank or mounted
 higher,
 The light aerial gallery, golden-rail'd,
 Burnt like a fringe of fire.

Likewise the deep-set windows, stain'd
 and traced,
 Would seem slow-flaming crimson
 fires
 From shadow'd grots of arches inter-
 laced,
 And tipt with frost-like spires.

* * * *

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

Full of great rooms and small the pal-
 ace stood,
 All various, each a perfect whole
 From living Nature, fit for every mood
 And change of my still soul.

For some were hung with arras green
 and blue,
 Showing a gaudy summer-morn.
 Where with puff'd cheek the belted
 hunter blew
 His wretched bugle-horn.

One seem'd all dark and red—a tract of
 sand,
 And some one pacing there alone,
 Who paced for ever in a glimmering
 land,
 Lit with a low large moon.

One show'd an iron coast and angry
 waves.

You seem'd to hear them climb and
 fall
 And roar rock-thwarted under bellow-
 ing caves,
 Beneath the windy wall.

And one, a full-fed river winding slow
 By herds upon an endless plain,
 The ragged rims of thunder brooding
 low,
 With shadow-streaks of rain.

And one, the reapers at their sultry
 toil.

In front they bound the sheaves—
 Behind
 Were realms of upland, prodigal in oil,
 And hoary to the wind.

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

And one, an English home—gray twi-
 light pour'd
 On dewy pastures, dewy trees,
 Softer than sleep—all things in order
 stored,
 A haunt of ancient Peace.

Nor these alone, but every landscape
 fair

As fit for every mood of mind,
 Or gay, or grave, or sweet, or stern, was
 there
 Not less than truth design'd,

* * * *

Or the maid-mother by a crucifix,
 In tracts of pasture sunny warm,
 Beneath branch-work of costly sar-
 donyx
 Sat smiling, babe in arm.

Or in a clear-wall'd city on the sea,
 Near gilded organ-pipes, her hair
 Wound with white roses, slept St.
 Cecily:
 An angel look'd at her.

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

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

Or hollowing one hand against his ear,
 To list a foot-fall, ere he saw
 The wood-nymph, stay'd the Ansonian
 king to hear
 Of wisdom and of law.

Or over hills with peaky tops engrail'd,
 And many a tract of palm and rice,
 The throne of Indian Cama slowly
 sail'd
 A summer fann'd with spice.



Or sweet Europa's mantle blew un-
clasp'd,
From off her shoulder backward
borne ;
From one hand droop'd a crocus : one
hand grasp'd
The mild bull's golden horn.

Or else flushed Ganymede, his rosy
thigh
Half-buried in the Eagle's down,
Sole as a flying star shot thro' the sky
Above the pillar'd town.

Nor these alone : but every legend fair
Which the supreme Caucasian mind
Carved out of Nature for itself, was
there,
Not less than life, design'd.

* * * *

Then in the towers I placed great bells
that swung,
Moved of themselves, with silver
sound :
And with choice paintings of wise men
I hung
The royal dais round.

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

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

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

Below was all mosaic choicely plann'd
With cycles of the human tale
Of this wide world, the times of every
land
So wrought, they will not fail.

The people here, a beast of burden slow,
Toil'd onward, prick'd with goads
and stings ;
Here play'd, a tiger, rolling to and fro
The heads and crowns of kings ;
Here rose, an athlete, strong to break
or hind
All force in bonds that might endure,
And here once more like some sick
man declined,
And trusted any cure.

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

And thro' the topmost Oriels' colored
flame

Two godlike faces gazed below ;
Plato the wise, and large-brow'd Ver-
ulam,
The first of those who know.

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

Thro' which the lights, rose, amber,
emerald, blue,
Flush'd in her temples and her eyes,
And from her lips, as morn from Mem-
non, drew
Rivers of melodies.

No nightingale delighteth to prolong
Her low preamble all alone,
More than my soul to hear her echo'd
song
Throb thro' the ribbed stone ;
Singing and murmuring in her feastful
mirth,
Joying to feel herself alive,
Lord over Nature, Lord of the visible
earth,
Lord of the senses five ;

Communing with herself : " All these
are mine,
And let the world have peace or wars,
'T is one to me." She—when young
night divine
Crown'd dying day with stars,
Making sweet close of his delicious
toils—
Lit light in wreaths and anadems,
And pure quintessences of precious oils
In hollow'd moons of gems,

To mimic heaven ; and clapp'd hands
and cried,
" I marvel if my still delight
In this great house so royal-rich, and
wide,
Be flatter'd to the height.

" O all things fair to sate my various
eyes !
O shapes and hues that please me
well !
O silent faces of the Great and Wise,
My Gods, with whom I dwell !
" O God-like isolation which art mine,
I can but count thee perfect gain,
What time I watch the darkening
droves of swine
That range on yonder plain.

In filthy sloughs they roll a prurient
skin,
They graze and wallow, breed and
sleep ;
And oft some brainless devil enters in,
And drives them to the deep." ³

Then of the moral instinct would she
prate,
And of the rising from the dead,



As hers by right of full-accomplish'd
Fate ;
And at the last she said :

"I take possession of man's mind and
deed.

I care not what the sects may brawl.
I sit as God holding no form of creed,
But contemplating all."

* * * *

Full oft the riddle of the painful earth
Flash'd thro' her as she sat alone,
Yet not the less held she her solemn
mirth,
And intellectual throne.

And so she thrive and prosper'd : so
three years
She prosper'd : on the fourth she fell
Like Herod, when the shout was in his
ears,
Struck thro' with pangs of hell.

Lest she should fall and perish utterly,
God, before whom ever lie bare
The abysmal deeps of Personality,
Plagued her with sore despair.

When she would think, where'er she
turn'd her sight,
The airy hand confusion wrought,
Wrote "Mene, mene," and divided quite
The kingdom of her thought.

Deep dread and loathing of her soli-
tude
Fell on her, from which mood was
born
Scorn of herself ; again, from out that
mood
Laughter at her self-scorn.

"What! is not this my place of
strength?" she said.

"My spacious mansion built for me,
Whereof the strong foundation-stones
were laid
Since my first memory?"

But in dark corners of her palace stood
Uncertain shapes : and unawares
On white-eyed phantasms weeping
tears of blood,
And horrible nightmares.

And hollow shades enclosing hearts of
flame,
And, with dim fretted foreheads all,
On corpses three-months-old at noon
she came,
That stood against the wall.

A spot of dull stagnation, without
light
Or power of movement, seem'd my
sonl,

Mid onward-sloping motions infinite
Making for one sure goal.

A still salt pool, lock'd in with bars of
sand ;
Left on the shore ; that hears all
night

The plunging seas draw backward from
the land
Their moon-led waters white.

A star that with the choral starry dance
Join'd not, but stood, and standing
saw

The hollow orb of moving Circumstance
Roll'd round by one fix'd law.

Back on herself her serpent pride had
curl'd.

"No voice," she shriek'd in that lone
hall,

"No voice breaks thro' the stillness of
this world :

One deep, deep silence all !"

She, mouldering with the dull earth's
mouldering sod,

Inwrapt tenfold in slothful shame.
Lay there exiled from eternal God,
Lost to her place and name ;

And death and life she hated equally,
And nothing saw, for her despair,
But dreadful time, dreadful eternity,
No comfort anywhere.

Remaining utterly confused with fears,
And ever worse with growing time,
And ever unrelieved by dismal tears,
And all alone in crime :

Shut up as in a crumbling tomb, girt
round
With blackness as a solid wall,
Far off she seem'd to hear the dully
sound
Of human footsteps fall.

As in strange lands a traveller walking
slow,
In doubt and great perplexity,
A little before moon-rise hears the low
Moan of an unknown sea ;

And knows not if it be thunder or
a sound

Of rocks thrown down, or one deep
cry
Of great wild beasts ; then thinketh,
"I have found
A new land, but I die."

She howl'd aloud, "I am on fire within.
There comes no murmur of reply.
What is it that will take away my sin,
And save me lest I die?"

So when four years were wholly fin-
ished,

She threw her royal robes away.
"Make me a cottage in the vale," she
said,

"Where I may mourn and pray."

"Yet pull not down my palace towers,
that are
So lightly, beautifully built :

Perchance I may return with others
there
When I have purged my guilt."



LADY CLARA VERE DE VERE.

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

Lady Clara Vere de Vere,
I know you proud to bear your name,
Your pride is yet no mate for mine,
Too proud to care from whence I
came.

Nor would I break for your sweet sake
A heart that doats on truer charms.
A simple maiden in her flower
Is worth a hundred coats-of-arms.

Lady Clara Vere de Vere,
Some meeker pupil you must find,
For were you queen of all that is,
I could not stoop to such a mind.
You sought to prove how I could love,
And my disdain is my reply,
The lion on your old stone gates
Is not more cold to you than I.

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

Lady Clara Vere de Vere,
When thus he met his mother's view,
She had the passions of her kind,
She spake some certain truths of you.
Indeed I heard one bitter word
That scarce is fit for you to hear ;
Her manners had not that repose
Which stamps the caste of Vere de
Vere.

Lady Clara Vere de Vere,
There stands a spectre in your hall :
The guilt of blood is at your door :
You changed a wholesome heart to
gall.

You held your course without remorse.
To make him trust his modest worth,
And, last, you fix'd a vacant stare,
And slew him with your noble birth.

Trust me, Clara Vere de Vere,
From yon blue heavens above us bent,
The gardener Adam and his wife
Smile at the claims of long descent.
Howe'er it be, it seems to me,
'Tis only noble to be good.
Kind hearts are more than coronets,
And simple faith than Norman blood.
I know you, Clara Vere de Vere,
You pine among your halls and
towers :
The languid light of your proud eyes

Is wearied of the rolling hours.
In glowing health, with boundless
wealth,
But sickening of a vague disease,
You know so ill to deal with time,
You needs must play such pranks as
these.

Clara, Clara Vere de Vere,
If Time be heavy on your hands,
Are there no beggars at your gate,
Nor any poor about your lands ?
Oh ! teach the orphan-boy to read,
Or teach the orphan-girl to sew,
Pray Heaven for a human heart,
And let the foolish yeeman go.

THE MAY QUEEN.

You must wake and call me early, call
me early, mother dear,
To-morrow 'll be the happiest time of
all the glad New-year ;
Of all the glad New-year, mother, the
maddest, merriest day ;
For I'm to be Queen o' the May, mother,
I'm to be Queen o' the May.

There's many a black, black eye, they
say, but none so bright as mine ;
There's Margaret and Mary, there's
Kate and Caroline :
But none so fair as little Alice in all
the land they say,
So I'm to be Queen o' the May, mother,
I'm to be Queen o' the May.

I sleep so sound all night, mother, that
I shall never wake,
If you do not call me loud when the
day begins to break :
But I must gather knots of flowers, and
buds and garlands gay,
For I'm to be Queen o' the May,
mother, I'm to be Queen o' the May.

As I came up the valley whom think
ye should I see,
But Robin leaning on the bridge be-
neath the hazel-tree ?
He thought of that sharp look, mother,
I gave him yesterday,—
But I'm to be Queen o' the May,
mother, I'm to be Queen o' the May.

He thought I was a ghost, mother, for
I was all in white,
And I ran by him without speaking,
like a flash of light.
They call me cruel-hearted, but I care
not what they say,
For I'm to be Queen o' the May, mother,
I'm to be Queen o' the May.

They say he's dying all for love, but
that can never be :
They say his heart is breaking, mother,
—what is that to me ?
There's many a bolder lad 'ill woo me
any summer day,
And I'm to be Queen o' the May,
mother I'm to be Queen o' the May.



Little Effie shall go with me to-morrow
to the green,

And you'll be there, too, mother, to see
me made the Queen :

For the shepherd lads on every side 'ill
come from far away,

And I'm to be Queen o' the May, mother,
I'm to be Queen o' the May.

The honeysuckle round the porch has
wov'n its wavy bowels,

And by the meadow-trenches blow the
faint sweet cuckoo-flowers ;

And the wild marsh-marigold shines
like fire in swamps and hollows
gray,

And I'm to be Queen o' the May, mother,
I'm to be Queen o' the May.

The night-winds come and go, mother,
upon the meadow grass ;

And the happy stars above them seem
to brighten as they pass,

There will not be a drop of rain the
whola of the livelong day.

And I'm to be Queen o' the May, mother,
I'm to be Queen o' the May.

All the valley, mother, 'ill be fresh and
green and still,

And the cowslip and the crowfoot are
over all the hill,

And the rivulet in the flowery dale 'ill
merrily glance and play,

For I'm to be Queen o' the May, mother,
I'm to be Queen o' the May.

So you must wake and call me early,
call me early, mother dear,

To-morrow 'ill be the happiest time of
all the glad New-year :

To-morrow 'ill be of all the year the
maddest merriest day,

For I'm to be Queen o' the May, mother,
I'm to be Queen o' the May.

NEW-YEAR'S EVE.

If you're waking call me early, call me
early, mother dear.

For I would see the sun rise upon the
glad New-year.

It is the last New-year that I shall ever
see,

Then you may lay me low i' the mould
and think no more of me.

To-night I saw the sun set ; he set and
left behind

The good old year, the dear old time,
and all my peace of mind ;

And the New-year's coming up, mother,
but I shall never see

The blossom on the blackthorn, the
leaf upon the tree.

Last May we made a crown of flowers ;
we had a merry day ;

Beneath the hawthorn on the green
they made me Queen of May ;

And we danced about the may-pole
and in the hazel copse,

Till Charles's Wain came out above the
tall white chimney tops.

There's not a flower on all the hills :
the frost is on the pane :

I only wish to live till the snowdrops
come again :

I wish the snow would melt and the
sun come out on high :

I long to see a flower so before the day
I die.

The building rook 'ill caw from the
windy tall elm-tree,

And the tufted plover pipe along the
fallow lea.

And the swallow 'ill come back again
with summer o'er the wave,

But I shall be alone, mother, within
the mouldering grave.

Upon the chancel-casement, and upon
that grave of mine,

In the early early morning the summer
sun 'ill shine,

Before the red cock crows from the
farm upon the hill,

When you are warm-asleep, mother,
and all the world is still.

When the flowers come again, mother,
beneath the waning light,

You'll never see me more in the long
gray fields at night ;

When from the dry dark wold the
summer airs blow cool

On the oat-grass and the sword-grass,
and the bulrush in the pool.

You'll bury me, my mother, just
beneath the hawthorn shade,

And you'll come sometimes and see me
where I am lowly laid.

I shall not forget you, mother, I shall
hear you when you pass,

With your feet above my head in the
long and pleasant grass.

I have been wild and wayward, but
you'll forgive me now ;

You'll kiss me, my own mother, and
forgive me ere I go ;

Nay, nay, you must not weep, nor let
your grief be wild,

You should not fret for me, mother,
you have another child.

If I can I'll come again, mother, from
out my resting-place ;

Tho' you'll not see me, mother, I shall
look upon your face ;

Tho' I cannot speak a word, I shall
harken what you say,

And be often, often with you when
you think I'm far away.

Good-night, good-night, when I have
said good-night for ever more,

And you see me carried out from the
threshold of the door ;

Don't let Effie come to see me till my
grave be growing green :

She'll be a better child to you than
ever I have been.



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

Good-night, sweet mother : call me
before the day is born.
All night I lie awake, but I fall asleep
at morn ;
But I would see the sun rise upon the
glad New-year,
So, if you're waking, call me, call me
early, mother dear.

CONCLUSION.

I THOUGHT to pass away before, and
yet alive I am ;
And in the fields all round I hear the
bleating of the lamb.
How sadly, I remember, rose the morn-
ing of the year !
To die before the snowdrop came, and
now the violet's here.

O sweet is the new violet, that comes
beneath the skies,
And sweeter is the young lamb's voice
to me that cannot rise,
And sweet is all the land about, and
all the flowers that blow,
And sweeter far is death than life to
me that long to go.

It seem'd so hard at first, mother, to
leave the blessed sun,
And now it seems as hard to stay, and
yet His will be done !
But still I think it can't be long before
I find release,
And that good man, the clergyman,
has told me words of peace.

O blessings on his kindly voice and on
his silver hair !
And blessings on his whole life long,
until he meet me there !
O blessings on his kindly heart and on
his silver head !
A thousand times I blest him, as he
knelt beside my bed.

He taught me all the mercy, for he
show'd me all the sin.
Now, tho' my lamp was lighted late,
there's One will let me in :
Nor would I now be well, mother,
again, if that could be,
For my desire is but to pass to Him
that died for me.

I did not hear the dog howl, mother, or
the death-watch beat,
There came a sweeter token when the
night and morning met :
But sit beside my bed, mother, and put
your hand in mine,
And Effie on the other side, and I will
tell the sign.

All in the wild March-morning I heard
the angels call,
It was when the moon was setting, and
the dark was over all ;
The trees began to whisper, and the
wind began to roll,
And in the wild March-morning I
heard them call my soul.

For lying broad awake I thought of you
and Effie dear ;
I saw you sitting in the house, and I
no longer here ;
With all my strength I pray'd for both
and so I felt resign'd
And up the valley came a swell of
music on the wind.

I thought that it was fancy, and I lis-
ten'd in my bed,
And then did something speak to me
—I know not what was said ;
For great delight and shuddering took
hold of all my mind,
And up the valley came again the
music on the wind.

But you were sleeping and I said, " It's
not for them : it's mine."
And if it comes three times, I thought,
I take it for a sign.
And once again it came, and close
beside the window-bars,
Then seem'd to go right up to Heaven
and die among the stars.

So now I think my time is near. I trust
it is. I know
The blessed music went that way my
soul will have to go.
And for myself, indeed, I care not if I
go to-day.

But, Effie, you must comfort *her* when
I am past away.
And say to Robin a kind word, and tell
him not to fret ;
There's many a worthier than I, would
make him happy yet.
If I had lived—I cannot tell—I might
have been his wife ;
But all these things have ceased to be,
with my desire of life.

O look ! the sun begins to rise, the
heavens are in a glow ;
He shines upon a hundred fields, and
all of them I know.
And there I move no longer now, and
there his light may shine—
Wild flowers in the valley for other
hands than mine.

O sweet and strange it seems to me,
that eve this day is done.
The voice, that now is speaking, may
be beyond the sun—
For ever and for ever with those just
souls and true—
And what is life, that we should moan ?
why make we such ado ?
For ever and for ever, all in a blessed
home—



And there to wait a little while till you
and Effie come—
To lie within the light of God, as I lie
upon your breast—
And the wicked cease from troubling,
and the weary are at rest.

THE LOTOSEATERS.

"COURAGE! he said, and pointed to-
ward the land,
"This mounting wave will roll us
shoreward soon."
In the afternoon they came unto a land,
In which it seemed always afternoon.
All round the coast the languid air did
swoon,
Breathing like one that hath a weary
dream.
Full-faced above the valley stood the
moon;
And like a downward smoke, the slen-
der stream
Along the cliff to fall and pause and
fall did seem.

A land of streams! some like a down-
ward smoke.
Slow-dropping veils of thinnest lawn,
did go;
And some thro' wavering lights and
shadows broke,
Rolling a slumbrous sheet of foam
below.
They saw the gleaming river seaward
flow
From the inner land: far off, three
mountain-tops,
Three silent pinnacles of aged snow,
Stood sunset-flash'd: and, dew'd with
showery drops,
Up-clomb the shadowy pine above the
woven copse.
The charmed sunset linger'd low adown
In the red West: thro' mountain clefts
the dale
Was seen far inland, and the yellow
down
Border'd with palm, and many a wind-
ing vale
And meadow, set with slender galin-
gale;
A land where all things always seem'd
the same!
And round about the keel with faces
pale,
Dark faces pale against that rosy
flame,
The mild-eyed melancholy Lotos-eat-
ers came.

Branches they bore of that enchanted
stem,
Laden with flower and fruit, whereof
they gave
To each, but whoe did receive of them,
And taste, to him the gushing of the
wave
Far far away did seem to mourn and
rave,

On alien shores; and if his fellow
spake,
His voice was thin, as voices from the
grave;
And deep-asleep he seem'd yet all
awake,
And music in his ears his beating
heart did make.
They sat them down upon the yellow
sand
Between the sun and moon upon the
shore;
And sweet it was to dream of Father-
land,
Of child, and wife, and slave: but
evermore
Most weary seem'd the sea, weary the
oar,
Weary the wandering fields of barren
foam.
Then some one said, "We will return
no more;"
And all at once they sang, "Our island
home
Is far beyond the wave; we will no
longer roam."

CHORIC SONG.

I.

THERE is sweet music here that softer
falls
Than petals from blown roses on the
grass,
Or night-dews on still waters between
walls
Of shadowy granite, in a gleaming
pass;
Music that gentler on the spirit lies,
Than tir'd eyelids upon tir'd eyes;
Music that brings sweet sleep down
from the blissful skies.
Here are cool mosses deep,
And thro' the moss the ivies creep,
And in the stream the long-leaved
flowers weep,
And from the craggy ledge the poppy
hangs in sleep.

II.

Why are we weigh'd upon with heavi-
ness,
And utterly consumed with sharp dis-
tress.
While all things else have rest from
weariness?
All things have rest: why should we
toil alone,
We only toil, who are the first of
things,
And make perpetual moan,
Still from one sorrow to another
thrown;
Nor ever fold our wings,
And cease from wanderings,
Nor steep our brows in slumber's holy
balm;
Nor harken what the inner spirit sings,
"There is no joy but calm!"
Why should we only toil, the roof and
crown of things?



III.

Lo! in the middle of the wood,
The folded leaf is woo'd from out the
bud
With winds upon the branch, and there
Grows green and broad, and takes no
care,
Sun-steep'd at noon, and in the moon
Nightly dew-fed; and turning yellow
Falls, and floats adown the air.
Lo! sweeten'd with the summer light,
The full-juiced apple, waxing over-
mellow,
Drops in a silent autumn night.
All its allotted length of days,
The flower ripens in its place,
Ripens and fades, and falls, and hath
no toil,
Fast-rooted in the fruitful soil.

IV.

Hateful is the dark-blue sky,
Vaulted o'er the dark-blue sea.
Death is the end of life; ah, why
Should life all labor be?
Let us alone. Time driveth onward
fast,
And in a little while our lips are dumb,
Let us alone. What is it that will last?
All things are taken from us, and be-
come
Portions and parcels of the dreadful
Past.
Let us alone. What pleasure can we
have
To war with evil? Is there any peace
In ever climbing up the climbing
wave?
All things have rest, and ripen toward
the grave
In silence; ripen, fall and cease;
Give us long rest or death, dark death,
or dreamful ease.

V.

How sweet it were, hearing the down-
ward stream,
With half-shut eyes ever to seem
Falling asleep in a half dream!
To dream and dream, like yonder am-
ber light,
Which will not leave the myrrh-bush
on the height;
To hear each other's whisper'd speech;
Eating the Lotos day by day,
To watch the crisping ripples on the
beach,
And tender curving lines of creamy
spray;
To lend our hearts and spirits wholly
To the influence of mild-minded melan-
choly;
To muse and brood and live again in
memory,
With those old faces of our infancy
Heap'd over with a mound of grass,
Two handfuls of white dust, shut in
an urn of brass!

VI.

Dear is the memory of our wedded
lives,

And dear the last embraces of our
wives
And their warm tears: but all hath
suffer'd change,
For surely now our household hearths
are cold:
Our sons inherit us: our looks are
strange;
And we should come like ghosts to
trouble joy.
Or else the island princes over-bold
Have eat our substance, and the min-
strel sings
Before them of the ten years' war in
Troy,
And our great deeds, as half-forgotten
things,
Is there confusion in the little isle?
Let what is broken so remain.
The Gods are hard to reconcile:
'Tis hard to settle order once again.
There is confusion worse than death,
Trouble on trouble, pain on pain,
Long labor unto aged breath,
Sore task to hearts worn out with many
wars
And eyes grown dim with gazing on
the pilot-stars.

VII.

But, propt on beds of amaranth and
moly,
How sweet (while warm airs lull us,
blowing lowly)
With half-dropt eyelids still,
Beneath a heaven dark and holy,
To watch the long bright river draw-
ing slowly
His waters from the purple hill—
To hear the dewy echoes calling
From cave to cave thro' the thick-
twined vine—
To watch the emerald-color'd water
falling
Thro' many a wov'n acanthus-wreath
divine!
Only to hear and see the far-off spark-
ling brine,
Only to hear were sweet, stretch'd out
beneath the pine.

VIII.

The Lotos blooms below the barren
peak:
The Lotos blows by every winding
creek:
All day the wind breathes low with
mellow tone:
Thro' every hollow cave and alley lone
Round and round the spicy downs the
yellow Lotos-dust is blown.
We have had enough of action, and of
motion we,
Roll'd to starboard, roll'd to larboard,
when the surge was seething free,
Where the wallowing monster spouted
his foam-fountains in the sea.
Let us swear an oath, and keep it with
an equal mind,
In the hollow Lotos-land to live and
lie reclined



On the hills like Gods together, care-
less of mankind.
For they lie, beside their nectar, and
the bolts are hur'l'd
Far below them in the valleys, and the
clouds are lightly curl'd
Round their golden houses, girdled
with the gleaming world:
Where they smile in secret, looking
over wasted lands,
Blight and famine, plagues and earth-
quakes, roaring deeps and fiery
sands,
Clanging fights, and flaming towns, and
sinking ships, and praying hands.
But they smile, they find a music cen-
tered in a doleful song
Steaming up, a lamentation and an
ancient tale of wrong,
Like a tale of little meaning tho' the
words are strong,
Chanted from an ill-used race of men
that cleave the soil,
Sow the seed, and reap the harvest
with enduring toil,
Storing yearly little dues of wheat,
and wine and oil;
Till they perish and they suffer—some
'tis whisper'd—down in hell
Suffer endless anguish, others in Ely-
sian valleys dwell,
Resting weary limbs at last on beds of
asphodel.
Surely, surely, slumber is more sweet
than toil, the shore
Than labor in the deep mid-ocean,
wind and wave and oar;
O rest ye, brother mariners, we will
not wander more.

A DREAM OF FAIR WOMEN.

I READ, before my eyelids dropt their
shade,
"The Legend of Good Women," long
ago
Sung by the morning star of song, who
made
His music heard below;
Dan Chaucer, the first warbler, whose
sweet breath
Prelude those melodious bursts,
that fill
The spacious times of great Elizabeth
With sounds that echo still.
And, for a while, the knowledg of his
art
Held me above the subject, as strong
gales
Hold swollen clouds from raining, tho'
my heart,
Brimful of those wild tales,
Charged both mine eyes with tears. In
every land
I saw, wherever light illumineth,
Beauty and anguish walking hand in
hand
The downward slope to death.

Those far-renowned brides of ancient
song
Peopled the hollow dark, like burn-
ing stars,
And I heard sounds of insult, shame,
and wrong,
And trumpets blown for wars;
And clattering flints batter'd with
clanging hoofs:
And I saw crowds in column'd sanc-
tuaries;
And forms that pass'd at windows and
on roofs
Of marble palaces;
Corpses across the threshold; heroes
tall
Dislodging pinnacle and parapet
Upon the tortoise creeping to the wall;
Lances in ambush set;
And high shrine-doors burst thro' with
heated blasts
That run before the fluttering
tongues of fire;
White surf wind-scatter'd over sails
and masts,
And ever climbing higher;
Squadrons and squares of men in
brazen plates;
Scaffolds, still sheets of water, divers
woes,
Ranges of glimmering vaults with iron
grates,
And hush'd seraglios.
So shape chased shape as swift as,
when to land.
Bluster the winds and tides the self-
same way,
Crisp foam-flakes scud along the level
sand,
Torn from the fringe of spray.
I started once, or seem'd to start in
pain,
Resolved on noble things, and strove
to speak,
As when a great thought strikes along
the brain,
And flushes all the cheek.
And once my arm was lifted to hew
down
A cavalier from off his saddle-bow,
That bore a lady from a leaguer'd
town;
And then, I know not how,
All those sharp fancies, by down-laps-
ing thought
Stream'd onward, lost their edges,
and did creep
Roll'd on each other, rounded,
smooth'd, and brought
Into the gulfs of sleep.
At last methought that I had wander'd
far
In an old wood: fresh-wash'd in cool-
est dew,
The maiden splendors of the morning
star
Shook in the stedfast blue.



Enormous elm-tree-boles did stoop and lean
 Upon the dusky brushwood underneath
 Their broad curved branches, fledged
 with clearest green,
 New from its silken sheath.

The dim red morn had died, her journey done,
 And with dead lips smiled at the twilight plain,
 Half-fall'n across the threshold of the sun,
 Never to rise again.

There was no motion in the dumb dead air,
 Not any song of bird or sound of rill ;
 Gross darkness of the inner sepulchre
 Is not so deadly still.

As that wide forest. Growths of jasmine turn'd
 Their humid arms festooning tree to tree,
 And at the root thro' lush green grasses burn'd
 The red anemone.

I knew the flowers, I knew the leaves,
 I knew
 The tearful glimmer of the languid dawn
 On those long, rank, dark wood-walks drench'd in dew,
 Leading from lawn to lawn.

The smell of violets, hidden in the green,
 Pour'd back into my empty soul and frame
 The times when I remember to have been
 Joyful and free from blame.

And from within me a clear undertone
 Thrill'd thro' mine ears in that unblissful clime,
 "Pass freely thro' : the wood is all thine own.
 Until the end of time."

At length I saw a lady within call,
 Stillier than chisell'd marble, standing there ;
 A daughter of the gods, divinely tall,
 And most divinely fair.

Her loveliness with shame and with surprise
 Froze my swift speech : she turning on my face
 The star-like sorrows of immortal eyes,
 Spoke slowly in her place.

"I had great beauty : ask thou not my name :
 No one can be more wise than destiny.
 Many drew swords and died. Where'er I came
 I brought calamity."

"No marvel, sovereign lady : in fair field.
 Myself for such a face had boldly died,"
 I answer'd free ; and turning I appeal'd
 To one that stood beside.

But she, with sick and scornful looks averse,
 To her full height her stately stature draws ;
 "My youth," she said, "was blasted with a curse :
 This woman was the cause.

 I was cut off from hope in that sad place,
 Which yet to name my spirit loathes and fears :
 My father held his hand upon his face ;
 I, blinded with my tears,
 "Still strove to speak : my voice was thick with sighs
 As in a dream. Dimly I could descry
 The stern black-bearded kings with wolfish eyes,
 Waiting to see me die.
 "The high masts flicker'd as they lay afloat ;
 The crowds, the temples, waver'd,
 and the shore ;
 The bright death quiver'd at the victim's throat,
 Touched ; and I knew no more."

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

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

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

She, flashing forth a haughty smile, began :
 "I govern'd men by change, and so I sway'd
 All moods. 'Tis long since I have seen a man.
 Once, like the moon, I made
 "The ever-shifting currents of the blood
 According to my humor ebb and flow.
 I have no men to govern in this wood :
 That makes my only woe.





"Nay—yet it chafes me that I could
not bend

One will ; nor tame and tutor with
mine eye

That dull cold-blooded Cæsar. Pry-
thee, friend,

Where is Mark Antony ?

"The man, my lover, with whom I rode
sublime

On fortune's neck ; we sat as God by
God :

The Nilus would have risen before his
time

And flooded at our nod.

"We drank the Libyan Sun to sleep,
and lit

Lamps which outburn'd Canopus.
O my life

In Egypt ! O the dalliance and the wit,
The flattery and the strife,

And the wild kiss, when fresh from
war's alarms,

My Hercules, my Roman Antony,
My mailed Bacchus leapt into my arms,

Contented there to die !

And there he died : and when I heard
my name

Sigh'd forth with life I would not
brook my fear

Of the other : with a worm I balk'd
his fame.

What else was left ? look here !"

(With that she tore her robe apart, and
half

The polish'd argent of her breast to
sight

Laid bare. Thereto she pointed with
a laugh,

Showing the aspick'a bite.)

"I died a Queen. The Roman soldier
found

Me lying dead, my crown about my
brows,

A name for ever !—lying robed and
crown'd,

Worthy a Roman spouse."

Her warbling voice, a lyre of widest
range

Struck by all passion, did fall down
and glance

From tone to tone, and glided thro' all
change

Of liveliest utterance.

When she made pause I knew not for
delight ;

Because with sudden motion from
the ground

She raised her piercing orbs, and fill'd
with light

The interval of sound.

Still with their fires Love tipt his keen-
est darts :

As once they drew into two burning
rings

All beams of Love, melting the mighty
hearts
Of captains and of kings.

Slowly my sense undazzled. Then I
heard

A noise of some one coming thro' the
lawn,

And singing clearer than the crested
bird,

That claps his wings at dawn.

"The torrent brooks of hallow'd Israel
From craggy hollows pouring, late

and soon,
Sounded all night long, in falling thro'
the dell,

Far-heard beneath the moon.

"The bulmy moon of blessed Israel
Floods all the deep-blue gloom with
beams divine :

All night the splinter'd crags that wall
the dell

With spires of silver shine."

As one that museth where broad sun-
shine laves

The lawn by some cathedral, thro'
the door

Hearing the holy organ rolling waves
Of sound on roof and floor

Within, and anthem sung, is charm'd
and tied

To where he stands,—so stood I,
when that flow

Of music left the lips of her that died
To save her father's vow ;

The daughter of the warrior Gileadite,
A maiden pure ; as when she went

along
From Mizpeh's tower'd gate with
welcome light,

With timbrel and with song.

My words leapt forth : "Heaven heads
the count of crimes

With that wild oath." She render'd
answer high :

"Not so, nor once alone : a thousand
times

I would be born and die.

"Single I grew, like some green plant,
whose root

Creeps to the garden water-pipes be-
neath,

Feeding the flower ; but ere my flower
to fruit

Changed, I was ripe for death.

"My God, my land, my father—these
did move

Me from my bliss of life, that Nature
gave,

Lower'd softly with a threefold cord of
love

Down to a silent grave.

"And I went mourning, 'No fair
Hebrew boy



Shall smile away my maiden blame
 among
 The Hebrew mothers'—emptied of all
 joy,
 Leaving the dance and song.
 "Leaving the olive-gardens far below,
 Leaving the promise of my bridal
 bower.
 The valleys of grape-loaded vines that
 glow
 Beneath the battled tower.
 "The light white cloud swam over us.
 Aton
 We heard the lion roaring from his
 den ;
 We saw the large white stars rise one
 by one,
 Or, from the darken'd glen,
 "Saw God divide the night with flying
 flame,
 And thunder on the everlasting hills.
 I heard Him, for He spake, and grief
 became
 A solemn scorn of ills.
 "When the next moon was roll'd into
 the sky,
 Strength came to me that equall'd
 my desire.
 How beautiful a thing it was to die
 For God and for my sire !
 "It comforts me in this one thought
 to dwell,
 That I subdued me to my father's
 will ;
 Because the kiss he gave me, ere I fell
 Sweetens the spirit still.
 Moreover, it is written that my race,
 Hew'd Ammon, hip and thigh, from
 Aroer
 On Arnon unto Miuneth." Here her
 face
 Glow'd, as I look'd at her.
 She lock'd her lips : she left me where
 I stood :
 "Glory to God," she sang, and past
 afar,
 Thridding the sombre boskage of the
 wood,
 Toward the morning-star.
 Losing her carol I stood pensively,
 As one that from a casement leans
 his head,
 When midnight bells cease ringing
 suddenly,
 And the old year is dead.
 "Alas ! alas !" a low voice, full of care,
 Murmur'd beside me : "Turn and
 look on me :
 I am that Rosamond, whom men call
 fair,
 If what I was I be.
 "Would I had been some maiden
 coarse and poor !
 O me, that I should ever see the
 light !

Those dragon eyes of anger'd Eleanor
 Do hunt me, day and night."

She ceased in tears, fallen from hope
 and trust :
 To whom the Egyptian : "O, you
 tamely died !
 You should have clung to Fulvia's
 waist, and thrust
 The dagger thro' her side."

With that sharp sound the white
 dawn'a creeping beams,
 Stol'n to my brain, dissolved the
 mystery
 Of folded sleep. The captain of my
 dreams
 Ruled in the eastern sky.

Morn broaden'd on the borders of the
 dark,
 Ere I saw her, who clasp'd in her
 last trance
 Her murder'd father's head, or Joan of
 Arc.

A light of ancient France ;
 Or her, who knew that Love can van-
 quish Death,
 Who kneeling, with one arm about
 her king,
 Drew forth the poison with her balmy
 breath,
 Sweet as new buds in Spring.

No memory labors longer from the
 deep
 Gold-mine of thought to lift the
 hidden ore
 That glimpses, moving up, than I from
 sleep
 To gather and tell o'er

Each little sound and sight. With
 what dull pain

Compass'd, how eagerly I sought to
 strike
 Into that wondrous track of dreams
 again !
 But no two dreams are like.

As when a soul laments, which hath
 been blest,
 Desiring what is mingled with past
 years,
 In yearnings that can never be express'd
 By signs or groans or tears ;

Because all words, tho' cull'd with
 choicest art,
 Failing to give the bitter of the
 sweet,
 Wither beneath the palate, and the
 heart
 Faints, faded by its heat.

MARGARET.

I.

OSWEET pale Margaret,
 O rare pale Margaret,
 What lit your eyes with tearful power,
 Like moonlight on a falling shower ?
 Who lent you, love, your mortal dower
 Of pensive thought and aspect pale,



Your melancholy sweet and frail
As perfume of the cuckoo-flower?
From the westward-winding flood,
From the evening-lighted wood,
From all things outward, you have
won

A tearful grace, as tho' you stood
Between the rainbow and the sun.
The very smile before you speak,
That dimples your transparent cheek,
Encircles all the heart, and feedeth
The senses with a still delight
Of dainty sorrow without sound,
Like the tender amber round,
Which the moon about her spread-
eth,
Moving thro' a fleecy night.

II.

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

III.

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

IV.

A fairy shield your Genius made
And gave you on your natal day.
Your sorrow, only sorrow's shade,
Keeps real sorrow far away.
You move not in such solitudes,
You are not less divine,
But more human in your moods,
Than your twin-sister, Adeline.
Your hair is darker, and your eyes
Touch'd with a somewhat darker
hne,
And less aërially blue,
But ever trembling thro' the dew
Of dainty-woful sympathies.

V.

O sweet pale Margaret,
O rare pale Margaret,
Come down, come down, and hear me
speak :
Tie up the ringlets on your cheek :
The sun is just about to set,
The arching limes are tall and shady,
And faint, rainy lights are seen,
Moving in the leavy beech.
Rise from the feast of sorrow, lady,
Where all day long you sit between
Joy and woe, and whisper each.
Or only look across the lawn,
Look out below your bower-eaves,

Look down, and let your blue eyes
dawn
Upon me thro' the jasmine-leaves.

THE BLACKBIRD.

O BLACKBIRD! sing me something
well:
While all the neighbors shoot thee
round,
I keep smooth plats of fruitful
ground,
Where thou may'st warble, eat and
dwell.

The espaliers and the standards all
Are thine; the range of lawn and
park:

The unnetted black-hearts ripen
dark,
All thine, against the garden wall.

Yet, tho' I spared thee all the spring,
Thy sole delight is, sitting still,
With that cold dagger of thy bill,
To fret the summer jenneting.

A golden bill! the silver tongue,
Cold February loved, is dry:
Plenty corrupts the melody
That made thee famous once, when
young:

And in the sultry garden-squares,
Now thy flute-notes are changed to
coarse,

I hear thee not at all, or hoarse
As when a hawkker hawks his wares.

Take warning! he that will not sing
While you sun prospers in the blue,
Shall sing for want, ere leaves are
new,

Caught in the frozen palms of Spring.

THE DEATH OF THE OLD YEAR.

FULL knee-deep lies the winter snow,
And the winter winds are wearily
sighing:

Toll ye the church-bell sad and slow,
And tread softly and speak low
For the old year lies a-dying.
Old year, you must not die;
You came to us so readily,
You lived with us so steadily,
Old year, you shall not die.

He lieth still: he doth not move:

He will not see the dawn of day.

He hath no other life above.

He gave me a friend, and a true true-
love,

And the New-year will take 'em away.

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

He froth'd his humpers to the brim;

A jollier year we shall not see.

But tho' his eyes are waxing dim,

And tho' his foes speak ill of him,

He was a friend to me.

Old year, you shall not die;



We did so laugh and cry with you,
I've half a mind to die with you,
Old year, if you must die.

He was full of joke and jest,
But all his merry quips are o'er.
To see him die, across the waste
His son and heir doth ride post-haste,
But he'll be dead before.
Every one for his own.
The night is starry and cold, my
friend,
And the New-year blithe and bold,
my friend,
Comes up to take his own.

How hard he breathes! over the snow
I heard just now the crowing cock.
The shadows flicker to and fro:
The cricket chirps: the light burns
low:

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

His face is growing sharp and thin.
Alack! our friend is gone.
Close up his eyes: tie up his chin:
Step from the corpse, and let him in
That standeth there alone,
And waiteth at the door.
There's a new foot on the floor, my
friend,
And a new face at the door, my
friend,
A new face at the door.

TO J. S.

THE wind, that beats the mountain,
blows
More softly round the open wold,
And gently comes the world to those
That are cast in gentle mould,
And me this knowledge bolder made,
Or else I had not dared to flow
In these words toward you, and invade
Even with a verse your holy woe.

'Tis strange that those we lean on most,
Those in whose laps our limbs are
nursed,
Fall into shadow, soonest lost:
Those we love first are taken first.
God gives us love. Something to love
He lends us; but, when love is grown
To ripeness, that on which it throve
Falls off, and love is left alone.
This is the curse of time. Alas!
In grief I am not all unlearn'd;
Once thro' mine own doors Death did
pass;
One went, who never hath return'd.
He will not smile—not speak to me
Once more. Two years his chair is
seen
Empty before us. That was he
Without whose life I had not been.

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

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

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

And tho' mine own eyes fill with dew,
Drawn from the spirit thro' the brain,
I will not even preach to you,
"Weep, weeping dulls the inward
pain."

Let Grief be her own mistress still.
She loveth her own anguish deep
More than much pleasure. Let her will
Be done—to weep or not to weep.

I will not say, "God's ordinance
Of Death is blown in every wind;"
For that is not a common chance
That takes away a noble mind.

His memory long will live alone
In all our hearts, as mournful light.
That broods above the fallen sun,
And dwells in heaven half the night.

Vain solace! Memory standing near
Cast down her eyes, and in her throat
Her voice seem'd distant, and a tear
Dropt on the letters as I wrote.

I wrote I knew not what. In truth,
How *should* I soothe you anyway,
Who miss the brother of your youth?
Yet something I did wish to say:

For he too was a friend to me:
Both are my friends, and my true
breast
Bleedeth for both; yet it may be
That only silence suiteth best.

Words weaker than your grief would
make
Grief more. 'Twere better I should
cease
Although myself could almost take
The place of him that sleeps in peace.
Sleep sweetly, tender heart, in peace:
Sleep, holy spirit, blessed soul,
While the stars burn, the moons in-
crease.
And the great ages onward roll.
Sleep till the end, true soul and sweet.
Nothing comes to thee new or strange.
Sleep full of rest from head to feet;
Lie still, dry dust, secure of change.

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



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

A man may speak the thing he will ;

A land of settled government,
A land of just and old renown,
Where Freedom broadens slowly
down

From precedent to precedent :

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

Hath time and space to work and
Should hauded unions persecute
Opinion, and induce a time

When single thought is civil crime,
And individual freedom mute ;

Tho' Power should make from land to
land

The name of Britain trebly great—
Tho' every channel of the State
Should almost choke with golden sand—

Yet waft me from the harbor-mouth,
Wild wind ! I seek a warmer sky,
And I will see before I die
The palms and temples of the South.

Of old sat Freedom on the heights,
The thunders breaking at her feet :
Above her shook the starry lights :
She heard the torrents meet.

There in her place she did rejoice,
Self-gather'd in her prophet-mind,
But fragments of her mighty voice
Came rolling on the wind.

Then steep she down thro' town and
field

To mingle with the human race,
And part by part to men reveal'd
The fullness of her face—

Grave mother of majestic works,
From her isle-altar gazing down,
Who, God-like, grasps the triple forks,
And King-like, wears the crown :

Her open eyes desire the truth.
The wisdom of a thousand years
Is in them. May perpetual youth
Keep dry their light from tears ;

That her fair form may stand and
shine,
Make bright our days and light our
dreams,

Turning to scorn with lips divine
The falsehood of extremes !

Love thou thy land, with love far-
brought

From out the storied Past, and used
Within the Present, but transfused.
Thro' future time by power of thought.

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

But pamper not a hasty time,
Nor feed with crude imaginings
The herd, wild hearts and feeble
wings,
That every sophister can lime.

Deliver not the tasks of might
To weakness, neither hide the ray
From those, not blind, who wait for
day,

Tho' sitting girt with doubtful light.
Makes knowledge circle with the winds ;
But let her herald, Reverence, fly
Before her to whatever sky
Bears seed of men and growth of minds.

Watch what main-currents draw the
years :

Cut Prejudice against the grain :
But gentle words are always gain :
Regard the weakness of thy peers :

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

Not clinging to some ancient saw ;
Not master'd by some modern term ;
Not swift nor slow to change, but
firm :

And in its season bring the law ;

That from Discussion's lip may fall
With Life, that, working strongly,
binds—

Set in all lights by many minds,
To close the interests of all.

For Nature also, cold and warm,
And moist and dry, devising long,
Thro' many agents making strong,
Matures the individual form.

Meet is it changes should control
Our being, lest we rust in ease,
We all are changed by still degrees,
All but the basis of the soul.

So let the change which comes be free
To ingroove itself with that, which
fits,

And work, a joint of state, that plies
Its office, moved with sympathy.

A saying, hard to shape in act ;
For all the past of Time reveals
A bridal dawn of thunder-peals,
Wherever Thought hath wedded Fact

Ev'n now we hear with inward strife
A motion toiling in the gloom—
The Spirit of the years to come
Yearning to mix himself with Life

A slow-develop'd strength awaits
Completion in a painful school
Phantoms of other forms of rule,
New Majesties of mighty States—

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



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

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

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

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

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

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

Would love the gleams of good that
broke
From either side, nor veil his eyes ;
And if some dreadful need should
rise

Would strike, and firmly, and one
stroke :

To-morrow yet would reap to-day,
As we hear blossoms of the dead ;
Earn well the thrifty months, nor
wed

Raw Haste, half-sister to Delay.

THE GOOSE.

I KNEW an old wife lean and poor,
Her rags scarce held together ;
There strode a stranger to the door,
And it was windy weather.

He held a goose upon his arm,
He utter'd rhyme and reason,
"Here, take the goose, and keep you
warm,
It is a stormy season."

She caught the white goose by the leg,
A goose—'twas no great matter.
The goose let fall a golden egg
With cackle and with clatter.

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

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

So sitting, served by man and maid,
She felt her heart grow prouder :
But ah ! the more the white goose laid
It clack'd and cackled louder.

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

"A quinsy choke thy cursed note !"
Then wax'd her anger stronger.

"Go, take the goose, and wring her
throat,
I will not bear it longer."

Then yelp'd the cur, and yawl'd the
cat ;

Ran Gaffer, stumbled Gammer.
The goose flew this way and flew that,
And fill'd the house with clamor.

As head and heels upon the floor
They flonnder'd all together,
There strode a stranger to the door,
And it was windy weather :

He took the goose upon his arm,
He utter'd words of scorning ;

"So keep you cold, or keep you warm,
It is a stormy morning."

The wild wind rang from park and
plain,

And round the attics rumbled,
Till all the tables danced again,
And half the chimneys tumbled.

The glass blew in, the fire blew out,
The blast was hard and harder.

Her cap blew off, her gown blew up,
And a whirlwind clear'd the larder :

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

THE EPIC.

AT Francis Allen's on the Christmas-
eve,—

The game of forfeits done—the girls
all kiss'd

Beneath the sacred bush and past
away—

The parson Holmes, the poet Everard
Hall,

The host, and I sat round the wassail-
bowl,

Then half-way ebb'd : and there we
held a talk,

How all the old honor had from
Christmas gone,

Or gone, or dwindled down to some
odd games

In some old nooks like this ; till I,
tired out

With cutting eights that day upon the
pond,



Where, three times slipping from the
outer edge.
I bump'd the ice into three several
stars,
Fell in a doze; and half-awake I heard
The parson taking wide and wider
sweeps,
Now harping on the church-commis-
sioners,
Now hawking at Geology and schism;
Until I woke, and found him settled
down
Upon the general decay of faith
Right thro' the world, "at home was
little left,
And none abroad: there was no an-
chor, none,
To hold by." Francis, laughing, clapt
his hand
On Everard's shoulder, with, "I hold
by him."
"And I" quoth Everard, "by the was-
sail-bowl."
"Why yes," I said, "we knew your
gift that way
At college: but another which you
had,
I mean of verse (for so we held it
then.)
What came of that?" "You know,"
said Frank, "he burnt
His epic, his King Arthur, some twelve
books"—
And then to me demanding why? "Oh,
sir,
He thought that nothing new was said,
or else
Something so said 'twas nothing—
that a truth
Looks freshest in the fashion of the
day:
God knows: he has a mint of reasons:
ask.
It pleased me well enough." "Nay,
nay," said Hall,
"Why take the style of those heroic
times?
For nature brings not back the Masto-
don,
Nor we those times; and why should
any man
Remodel models? these twelve books
of mine
Were faint Homeric echoes, nothing-
worth,
Mere chaff and duff, much better
burnt." "But I,"
Said Francis, "pick'd the eleventh
from this hearth,
And have it: keep a thing, its use will
come.
I heard it as a sugar-plum for Holmes."
He laugh'd, and I, though sleepy, like
a horse
That hears the corn-bin open, prick'd
my ears;
For I remember'd Everard's college
fame
When we were Freshmen: then at my
request

He brought it; and the poet little
urged,
But with some prelude of disparage-
ment,
Read, mouching out his hollow oes and
aes,
Deep-chested music, and to this re-
sult.

MORTE D'ARTHUR.

So all day long the noise of battle
roll'd
Among the mountains by the winter
sea;
Until King Arthur's table, man by
man,
Had fall'n in Lyonness about their
Lord,
King Arthur: then, because his wound
was deep,
The bold Sir Bedivere nplifted him,
Sir Bedivere, the last of all his knights,
And bore him to a chapel nigh the field,
A broken chancel with a broken cross,
That stood on a dark strait of barren
land.
On one side lay the Ocean, and on one
Lay a great water, and the moon was
full.
Then spake King Arthur to Sir Bedi-
vere:
"The sequel of to-day unsolders all
The goodliest fellowship of famous
knights
Whereof this world holds record. Such
a sleep
They sleep—the men I loved. I think
that we
Shall never more, at any future time,
Delight our souls with talk of knightly
deeds,
Walking about the gardens and the
halls
Of Camelot, as in the days that were.
I perish by this people which I made,—
Tho' Merlin sware that I should come
again
To rule once more—but let what will
be, be,
I am so deeply smitten thro' the helm
That without help I cannot last till
morn.
Thou therefore take my brand Excali-
bur,
Which was my pride: for thou remem-
berest how
In those old days, one summer noon,
an arm
Rose up from out the bosom of the
lake,
Clothed in white samite, mystic, won-
derful,
Holding the sword—and how I row'd
across
And took it, and have worn it, like a
king:
And, wheresoever I am sung or told
In aftertime, this also shall be known:
But now delay not: take Excalibur,



And fling him far into the middle
 mere:
 Watch what thou seest, and lightly
 bring me word."
 To him replied the bold Sir Bedi-
 vere:
 "It is not meet, Sir King, to leave thee
 thus,
 Aidless, alone, and smitten thro' the
 helm.
 A little thing may harm a wounded
 man.
 Yet I thy hest will all perform at
 full,
 Watch what I see, and lightly bring
 thee word."
 So saying, from the ruin'd shrine he
 stept
 And in the moon athwart the place of
 tombs,
 Where lay the mighty bones of ancient
 men,
 Old knights, and over them the sea-
 wind sang
 Shrill, chill, with flakes of foam. He,
 stepping down
 By zig-zag paths, and juts of pointed
 rock,
 Came on the shining levels of the
 lake.
 There drew he forth the brand
 Excalibur,
 And o'er him, drawing it, the winter
 moon,
 Brightening the skirts of a long cloud,
 ran forth
 And sparkled keen with frost against
 the hilt:
 For all the haft twinkled with dia-
 mond sparks,
 Myriads of topaz-lights, and jacinth-
 work
 Of subtlest jewellery. He gazed so
 long
 That both his eyes were dazzled, as he
 stood,
 This way and that dividing the swift
 mind,
 In act to throw but at the last it
 seem'd
 Better to leave Excalibur conceal'd
 There in the many-knotted waterflags,
 That whistled stiff and dry about the
 marge.
 So strode he back slow to the wounded
 King.
 Then spake King Arthur to Sir
 Bedivere:
 "Hast thou perform'd my mission
 which I gave?
 What is it thou hast seen? or what
 hast heard?"
 And answer made the bold Sir
 Bedivere:
 "I heard the ripple washing in the
 reeds,
 And the wild water lapping on the
 crag."
 To whom replied King Arthur, faint
 and pale:

"Thou hast betray'd thy nature and
 thy name,
 Not rendering true answer, as beseem'd
 Thy fealty, nor like a noble knight:
 For surer sign had follow'd, either
 hand,
 Or voice, or else a motion of the mere.
 This is a shameful thing for men to lie.
 Yet now, I charge thee, quickly go
 again
 As thou art lief and dear, and do the
 thing
 I bade thee, watch, and lightly bring
 me word."
 Then went Sir Bedivere the second
 time
 Across the ridge, and paced beside the
 mere;
 Counting the dewy pebbles, fix'd in
 thought;
 But when he saw the wonder of the
 hilt.
 How curiously and strangely chased,
 he smote
 His palms together, and he cried
 aloud.
 "And if indeed I cast the brand
 away,
 Surely a precious thing, one worthy
 note,
 Should thus be lost forever from the
 earth,
 Which might have pleased the eyes of
 many men.
 What good should follow this, if this
 were done?
 What harm, undone? deep harm to
 disobey,
 Seeing obedience is the bond of rule.
 Were it well to obey then, if a king
 demand
 An act unprofitable, against himself?
 The King is sick; and knows not what
 he does.
 What record, or what relic of my lord
 Should he to aftertime, but empty
 breath
 And rumors of a doubt? but were
 this kept,
 Stored in some treasure-house of
 mighty kings,
 Some one might show it at a joust of
 arms,
 Saying, 'King Arthur's sword, Excali-
 bur,
 Wrought by the lonely maiden of the
 Lake.
 Nine years she wrought it, sitting in
 the deeps
 Upon the hidden bases of the hills.'
 So might some old man speak in the
 aftertime
 To all the people, winning reverence.
 But now much honor and much fame
 were lost."
 So spake he, clouded with his own
 conceit,
 And hid Excalibur the second time,
 And so strode back slow to the wound-
 ed King.



Then spoke King Arthur, breathing heavily :

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

And answer made the bold Sir Bedivere :

"I heard the water lapping on the crag, And the long ripple washing in the reeds."

To whom replied King Arthur, much in wrath

"Ah, miserable and unkind, untrue, Unknightly, traitor-hearted ! Woe is me !

Authority forgets a dying king, Laid widow'd of the power in his eye That bow'd the will. I see thee what thou art,

For thou, the latest-left of all my knights,

In whom should meet the offices of all, Thou wouldst betray me for the precious hilt ;

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

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

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

Then quickly rose Sir Bedivere, and ran,

And, leaping down the ridges lightly, plunged

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

And strongly wheel'd and threw it.

The great brand

Made lightnings in the splendor of the moon,

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

Shot like a streamer of the northern morn,

Seen where the moving isles of winter shock

By night, with noises of the northern sea.

So flash'd and fell the brand Excalibur : But ere he dipt the surface, rose an arm

Clothed in white samite, mystic, wonderful,

And caught him by the hilt, and brandish'd him

Three times, and drew him under in the mere,

And lightly went the other to the King.

Then spoke King Arthur, drawing thicker breath :

"Now see I by thine eyes that this is done.

Speak out : what is it thou hast heard or seen ?"

And answer made the bold Sir Bedivere :

"Sir King, I closed mine eyelids, lest the gems

Should blind my purpose, for I never saw,

Nor shall see, here or elsewhere, till I die,

Not tho' I live three lives of mortal men,

So great a miracle as yonder hilt.

Then with both hands I flung him, wheeling him ;

But when I look'd again, behold an arm,

Clothed in white samite, mystic, wonderful,

That caught him by the hilt, and brandish'd him ;

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

And answer made King Arthur, breathing hard :

"My end draws nigh ; 'tis time that I were gone.

Make broad thy shoulders to receive my weight,

And bear me to the margin ; yet I fear

My wound hath taken cold, and I shall die."

So saying, from the pavement he half rose,

Slowly, with pain, reclining on his arm,

And looking wistfully with wide blue eyes

As in a picture. Him Sir Bedivere

Remorsefully regarded thro' his tears, And would have spoken, but he found not words,

Then took with care, and kneeling on one knee,

O'er both his shoulders drew the languid hands,

And rising bore him thro' the place of tombs.

But, as he walk'd, King Arthur panted hard,

Like one that feels a nightmare on his bed

When all the house is mute. So sigh'd the King,

Muttering and murmuring at his ear,

"Quick, quick !

I fear it is too late, and I shall die."

But the other swiftly strode from ridge to ridge,

Clothed with his breath, and looking, as he walk'd,

Larger than human on the frozen hills. He heard the deep behind him, and a cry

Before. His own thought drove him like a goad.

Dry clash'd his harness in the icy caves

And barren chasms, and all to left and right

The bare black cliff clang'd round him, as he based

His feet on juts of slippery crag that rang

Sharp-smitten with the dint of armed heels—



And on a sudden, lo ! the level lake,
And the long glories of the winter
moon.

Then saw they how there hove a
dusky barge,
Dark as a funeral scarf from stem to
stern,

Beneath them ; and descending they
were ware

That all the decks were dense with
stately forms

Black-stoled, black-hooded, like a
dream—by these

Three Queens with crowns of gold—
and from them rose

A cry that shiver'd to the tingling stars,
And, as it were one voice, an agony
Of lamentation, like a wind, that
shrills

All night in a waste land, where no
one comes,

Or hath come, since the making of the
world.

Then murmur'd Arthur, " Place me
in the barge,"

And to the barge they came. There
those three Queens

Put forth their hands, and took the
King, and wept.

But she, that rose the tallest of them
all

And fairest, laid his head upon her
lap,

And loosed the shatter'd casque, and
chafed his hands,

And call'd him by his name, complain-
ing loud,

And dropping bitter tears against his
brow

Striped with dark blood: for all his
face was white

And colorless, and like the wither'd
moon

Smote by the fresh beam of the
springing east

And all his greaves and cuisses dash'd
with drops

Of onset ; and the light and lustrous
curls—

That made his forehead like a rising
sun

High from the daïs-throne— were
parch'd with dust ;

Or, clotted into points and hanging
loose,

Mix'd with the knightly growth that
fringed his lips.

So like a shatter'd column lay the
King ;

Not like that Arthur who, with lance
in rest,

From spur to plume a star of tourna-
ment,

Shot thro' the lists at Camelot, and
charged

Before the eyes of ladies and of kings.
Then loudly cried the bold Sir Bed-
ivere,

" Ah ! my Lord Arthur, whither shall I
go ?

Where shall I hide my forehead and
my eyes ?

For now I see the true old times are
dead,

When every morning brought a noble
chance,

And every chance brought out a noble
knight.

Such times have been not since the
light that led

The holy Elders with the gift of myrrh.
But now the whole ROUND TABLE is
dissolved

Which was an image of the mighty
world ;

And I, the last, go forth companionless,
And the days darken round me, and
the years,

Among new men, strange faces, other
minds."

And slowly answered Arthur from
barge :

" The older order changeth, yielding
place to new,

And God fulfils himself in many ways,
Lest one good custom should corrupt
the world.

Comfort thyself : what comfort is in
me ?

I have lived my life, and that which I
have done

May He within himself make pure !
but thou,

If thou shouldst never see my face
again,

Pray for my soul. More things are
wrought by prayer

Than this world dreams of. Wherefore,
let thy voice

Rise like a fountain for me night and
day.

For what are men better than sheep or
goats

That nourish a blind life within the
brain,

If, knowing God, they lift not hands
of prayer

Both for themselves and those who
call them friend ?

For so the whole round earth is every
way

Bound by gold chains about the feet of
God.

But now farewell. I am going a long
way

With these thou seest—if indeed I
go—

(For all my mind is clouded with a
doubt)

To the island-valley of Avilion ;
Where falls not hail, or rain, or any
snow,

Nor ever wind blows loudly ; but it
lies

Deep-meadow'd, happy, fair with or-
chard-lawns

And bowery hollows crown'd with
summer sea,

Where I will heal me of my grievous
wound."





So said he, and the barge with oar
and sail
Moved from the brink, like some full-
breasted swan
That, fluting a wild carol ere her death,
Ruffles her pure cold plume, and takes
the flood
With swarthy webs. Long stood Sir
Bedivere
Revolving many memories, till the hull
Look'd one black dot against the verge
of dawn,
And on the mere the wailing died away
Here ended Hall, and our last light,
that long
Had wink'd and threaten'd darkness,
flared and fell :
At which the Parson, sent to sleep
with sound,
And waked with silence, grunted
"Good!" but we
Sat rapt: it was the tone with which
he read—
Perhaps some modern touches here
and there
Redeem'd it from the charge of noth-
ingness—
Or else we loved the man, and prized
his work ;
I know not: but we sitting, as I said,
The cook crew loud; as at that time
of year
The lusty bird takes every hour for
dawn :
Then Francis, muttering, like a man
ill-used,
"There now—that's nothing!" drew a
little back,
And drove his heel into the smoulder'd
log,
That sent a blast of sparkles up the
flue :
And so to bed; where yet in sleep I
seem'd
To sail with Arthur under looming
shores,
Point after point; till on to dawn,
when dreams
Begin to feel the truth and stir of day,
To me, methought, who waited with a
crowd,
There came a bark that, blowing for-
ward, bore
King Arthur, like a modern gentleman
Of stateliest port; and all the people
cried,
"Arthur is come again: he cannot
die."
Then those that stood upon the hills
behind
Repeated—"Come again, and thrice as
fair;"
And, further inland, voices echoed—
"Come
With all good things, and war shall be
no more."
At this a hundred bells began to peal,
That with the sound I woke, and heard
indeed

The clear church-bells ring in the
Christmas morn.

THE GARDENER'S DAUGHTER;
OR, THE PICTURES.

THIS morning is the morning of the
day,
When I and Eustace from the city went
To see the Gardener's Daughter; I and
he,
Brothers in Art: a friendship so com-
plete
Portion'd in halves between us, that
we grew
The fable of the city where we dwelt.
My Eustace might have sat for Her-
cules;
So muscled he spread, so broad of
breast.
He, by some law that holds in love,
and draws
The greater to the lesser, long desired
A certain miracle of symmetry,
A miniature of loveliness, all grace
Summ'd up and closed in little;—Jul-
iet, she
So light of foot, so light of spirit,—O,
she
To me myself, for some three careless
moons,
The summer pilot of an empty heart
Unto the shores of nothing! Know you
not
Such touches are but embassies of love,
To tamper with the feelings, ere he
found
Empire for life? but Eustace painted
her,
And said to me, she sitting with us
then,
"When will you paint like this?" and
I replied,
(My words were half in earnest, half
in jest,)
"Tis not your work, but Love's. Love,
unperceived,
A more ideal Artist he than all,
Came, drew your pencil from you,
made those eyes
Darker than darkest pansies, and that
hair
More black than ashbuds in the front
of March."
And Juliet answer'd laughing, "Go
and see
The Gardener's daughter: trust me,
after that,
You scarce can fail to match his mas-
terpiece."
And up we rose, and on the spur we
went.
Not wholly in the busy world, nor
quite
Beyond it, blooms the garden that I
love.
News from the humming city comes
to it



In sound of funeral or of marriage
bells ;
And, sitting muffled in dark leaves,
you hear
The windy clanging of the minster
clock ;
Although between it and the garden
lies
A league of grass, wash'd by a slow
broad stream,
That, stirr'd with languid pulses of the
oar,
Waves all its lazy lilies, and creeps on,
Barge-laden, to three arches of a bridge
Crown'd with the minster-towers.

The fields between
Are dewy-fresh, browsed by deep-ud-
der'd kine,
And all about the large lime feathers
low,
The lime a summer home of murmur-
ous wings.

In that still place she, hoarded in
herself,
Grew, seldom seen : not less among us
lived
Her fame from lip to lip. Who had
not heard
Of Rose, the Gardener's daughter ?
Where was he,
So blunt in memory, so old at heart,
At such a distance from his youth in
grief,
That, having seen, forgot ? The com-
mon mouth,
So gross to express delight, in praise of
her
Grew oratory. Such a lord is Love,
And Beauty such a mistress of the
world.

And if I said that Fancy, led by Love,
Would play with flying forms and im-
ages,
Yet this is also true, that, long before
I look'd upon her, when I heard her
name
My heart was like a prophet to my
heart,
And told me I should love. A crowd
of hopes,
That sought to sow themselves like
winged seeds,
Born out of everything I heard and
saw,
Flutter'd about my senses and my
soul ;
And vague desires, like fitful blasts of
balm
To one that travels quickly, made the
air
Of life delicious, and all kinds of
thought,
That verged upon them, sweeter than
the dream
Dream'd by a happy man, when the
dark East,
Unseen, is brightening to his bridal
morn.

And sure this orbit of the memory
folds

For ever in itself the day we went
To see her. All the land in flowery
squares,
Beneath a broad and equal-blowing
wind,
Smelt of the coming summer, as one
large cloud
Drew downward : but all else of
Heaven was pure
Up to the Sun, and May from verge to
verge.
And May with me from head to heel.
And now,
As tho' 'twere yesterday, as tho' it
were
The hour just flown, that morn with all
its sound,
(For those old Mays had thrice the life
of these,)
Rings in mine ears. The steer forgot
to graze,
And, where the hedge-row cuts the
pathway, stood,
Leaning his horns into the neighbor
field,
And lowing to his fellows. From the
woods
Came voices of the well-contented
doves.
The lark could scarce get out his notes
for joy,
But shook his song together as he
near'd
His happy home, the ground. To left
and right,
The cuckoo told his name to all the
hills ;
The mellow ouzel fluted in the elm ;
The redcap whistled ; and the nightin-
gale
Sang loud, as tho' he were the bird of
day.

And Eustace turn'd, and smiling said
to me,
"Hear how the bushes echo! by my life,
These birds have joyful thoughts.
Think you they sing
Like poets, from the vanity of song?
Or have they any sense of why they
sing?
And would they praise the heavens for
what they have?"

And I made answer. "Were there noth-
ing else
For which to praise the heavens but
only love,
That only love were cause enough for
praise."

Lightly he laugh'd, as one that read
my thought,
And on we went ; but ere an hour had
pass'd,
We reach'd a meadow slanting to the
North ;
Down which a well-worn pathway
courted us
To one green wicket in a privet hedge ;
This, yielding, gave into a grassy walk
Thro' crowded lilac-ambush trimly
pruned ;



And one warm gust, full-fed with perfume, blew
 Beyond us, as we enter'd in the cool.
 The garden stretches southward. In the midst
 A cedar spread his dark-green layers of shade.
 The garden-glasses shone, and momentarily
 The twinkling laurel scatter'd silver lights.
 "Eustace," I said, "this wonder keeps the house."
 He nodded, but a moment afterwards
 He cried, "Look ! look !" Before he ceased I turn'd,
 And, ere a star can wink, beheld her there.
 For up the porch there grew an Eastern rose,
 That, flowering high, the last night's gale had caught,
 And blown across the walk. One arm aloft—
 Gown'd in pure white, that fitted to the shape—
 Holding the bush, to fix it back, she stood.
 A single stream of all her soft brown hair
 Pour'd on one side : the shadow of the flowers
 Stole all the golden gloss, and, wavering
 Lovingly lower, trembled on her waist—
 Ah, happy shade—and still went wavering down,
 But, ere it touch'd a foot, that might have danced
 The greensward into greener circles, dipt,
 And mix'd with shadows of the common ground !
 But the full day dwelt on her brows, and sunn'd
 Her violet eyes, and all her Hebe bloom,
 And doubled his own warmth against her lips,
 And on the bounteous wave of such a breast
 As never pencil drew. Half light, half shade,
 She stood, a sight to make an old man young.
 So rapt, we near'd the house ; but she, a Rose
 In roses, mingled with her fragrant toil,
 Nor heard us come, nor from her tendance turn'd
 Into the world without ; till close at hand,
 And almost ere I knew mine own intent,
 This murmur broke the stillness of that air
 Which brooded round about her :
 " Ah, one rose,
 One rose, but one, by those fair fingers cull'd,

Were worth a hundred kisses press'd on lips
 Less exquisite than thine."
 She look'd : but all suffused with blushes—neither self-possess'd
 Nor startled, but betwixt this mood and that,
 Divided in a graceful quiet—paused,
 And dropt the branch she held, and turning, wound
 Her looser hair in braid, and stirr'd her lips
 For some sweet answer, tho' no answer came,
 Not yet refused the rose, but granted it,
 And moved away, and left me, statue-like,
 In act to render thanks.
 I, that whole day,
 Saw her no more, altho' I linger'd there
 Till every daisy slept, and Love's white star
 Beam'd thro' the thicken'd cedar in the dusk.
 So home we went, and all the live-long way
 With solemn gibe did Eustace banter me.
 " Now," said he, " will you climb the top of Art.
 You cannot fail but work in hues to dim
 The Titianic Flora. Will you match My Juliet ? you, not you,—the Master, Love,
 A more ideal Artist he than all."
 So home I went, but could not sleep for joy,
 Reading her perfect features in the gloom,
 Kissing the rose she gave me o'er and o'er,
 And shaping faithful record of the glance
 That graced the giving—such a noise of life
 Swarm'd in the golden present, such a voice
 Call'd to me from the years to come, and such
 A length of bright horizon rimm'd the dark.
 And all that night I heard the watchman peal
 The sliding season : all that night I heard
 The heavy clocks knolling the drowsy hours.
 The drowsy hours, dispensers of all good,
 O'er the mute city stole with folded wings,
 Distilling odors on me as they went
 To greet their fairer sisters of the East.
 Love at first sight, first-born, and heir to all,



Made this night thus. Henceforward
 squall nor storm
 Could keep me from that Eden where
 she dwelt.
 Light pretexes drew me : sometimes a
 Dutch love
 For tulips ; then for roses, moss or
 musk,
 To grace my city-rooms ; or fruits and
 cream
 Served in the weeping elm ; and more
 and more
 A word could bring the color to my
 cheek ;
 A thought would fill my eyes with hap-
 py dew ;
 Love trebled life within me, and with
 each
 The year increased.
 The daughters of the year,
 One after one, thro' that still garden
 pass'd ;
 Each garlanded with her peculiar
 flower
 Danced into light, and died into the
 shade ;
 And each in passing touch'd with some
 new grace
 Or seem'd to touch her, so that day by
 day,
 Like one that never can be wholly
 known,
 Her beauty grew ; till Autumn brought
 an hour
 For Eustace, when I heard his deep
 " I will,"
 Breathed, like the covenant of a God,
 to hold
 From thence thro' all the worlds : but
 I rose up
 Full of his bliss, and following her
 dark eyes
 Felt earth as air beneath me, till I
 reach'd
 The wicket-gate, and found her stand-
 ing there.
 There sat we down upon a garden
 mound,
 Two mutually enfolded ; Love, the
 third,
 Between us, in the circle of his arms
 Enwound us both ; and over many a
 range
 Of waning Ilme the gray cathedral
 towers,
 Across a hazy glimmer of the west,
 Reveal'd their shining windows : from
 them clash'd
 The bells ; we listen'd ; with the time
 we play'd ;
 We spoke of other things ; we coursed
 about
 The subject most at heart, more near
 and near,
 Like doves about a dovecote, wheeling
 round
 The central wish, until we settled
 there.
 Then, in that time and place, I spoke
 to her,

Requiring, tho' I knew it was mine own
 Yet for the pleasure that I took to hear,
 Requiring at her hand the greatest gift,
 A woman's heart, the heart of her I
 loved ;
 And in that time and place she an-
 swer'd me,
 And in the compass of three little
 words,
 More musical than ever came in one,
 The silver fragments of a broken voice,
 Made me most happy, faltering, " I am
 thine."
 Shall I cease here ? Is this enough
 to say
 That my desire, like all strongest
 hopes,
 By its own energy-fulfill'd itself,
 Merged in completion ? Would you
 learn at full
 How passion rose thro' circumstantial
 grades
 Beyond all grades develop'd ? and in-
 deed
 I had not stayed so long to tell you all,
 But while I mused came Memory with
 sad eyes,
 Holding the folded annals of my youth ;
 And while I mused, Love with knit
 brows went by,
 And with a flying finger swept my lips,
 And spake, " Be wise : not easily for-
 given
 Are those, who, setting wide the doors
 that bar
 The secret bridal chambers of the
 heart,
 Let in the day." Here, then, my words
 have end.
 Yet might I tell of meetings, of fare-
 wells—
 Of that which came between, more
 sweet than each,
 In whispers, like the whispers of the
 leaves
 That tremble round a nightingale—in
 sighs
 Which perfect Joy, perplex'd for utter-
 ance,
 Stole from her sister Sorrow. Might I
 not tell
 Of difference, reconciliation, pledges
 given,
 And vows, where there was never need
 of vows,
 And kisses, where the heart on one
 wild leap
 Hung tranced from all pulsation, as
 above
 The heavens between their fairy fleeces
 pale
 Sow'd all their mystic gulfs with fleet-
 ing stars ;
 Or while the balmy glooming, cres-
 cent-lit,
 Spread the light haze along the river-
 shores,
 And in the hollows ; or as once we met
 Unheeded, tho' beneath a whispering
 rain



Night slid down one long stream of
sighing wind,
And in her bosom bore the baby, Sleep.
But this whole hour your eyes have
been intent
On that veil'd picture—veil'd, for what
it holds
May not be dwelt on by the common
day.
This prelude has prepared thee. Raise
thy soul;
Make thine heart ready with thine
eyes : the time
Is come to raise the veil.
Behold her there,
As I beheld her ere she knew my
heart,
My first, last love ; the idol of my
youth,
The darling of my manhood, and, alas!
Now the most blessed memory of mine
age.

D O R A .

WITH farmer Allan at the farm abode
William and Dora. William was his
son,
And she his niece. He often look'd
at them,
And often thought, "I'll make them
man and wife."
Now Dora felt her uncle's will in all,
And yearn'd towards William ; but
the youth, because
He had been always with her in the
house,
Thought not of Dora.

Then there came a day
When Allan call'd his son, and said,
"My son :
I married late, but I would wish to see
My grandchild on my knees before I
die :
And I have set my heart upon a match.
Now therefore look to Dora : she is
well
To look to : thrifty too beyond her
age.
She is my brother's daughter : he and I
Had once hard words, and parted, and
he died
In foreign lands ; but for his sake I
bred
His daughter Dora : take her for your
wife ;
For I have wish'd this marriage, night
and day,
For many years." But William an-
swer'd short :
"I cannot marry Dora ; by my life,
I will not marry Dora." Then the old
man
Was wroth, and doubled up his hands,
and said :
"You will not, boy ! you dare to an-
swer thus !
But in my time a father's word was
law,

And so it shall be now for me. Look
to it ;
Consider, William : take a month to
think,
And let me have an answer to my
wish
Or, by the Lord that made me, you
shall pack,
And never more darken my doors
again."
But William answer'd madly ; bit his
lips,
And broke away. The more he look'd
at her
The less he liked her ; and his ways
were harsh ;
But Dora bore them meekly. Then
before
The month was out he left his father's
house,
And hired himself to work within the
fields ;
And half in love, half spite, he woo'd
and wed
A laborer's daughter, Mary Morrison.
Then, when the bells were ringing,
Allan call'd
His niece and said : "My girl, I love
you well ;
But if you speak with him that was
my son,
Or change a word with her he calls
his wife,
My home is none of yours. My will is
law."
And Dora promised, being meek. She
thought,
"It cannot be : my uncle's mind will
change !"
And days went on, and there was
born a boy
To William ; then distresses came on
him—
And day by day he pass'd his father's
gate,
Heart-broken, and his father help'd
him not.
But Dora stored what little she could
save,
And sent it them by stealth, nor did
they know
Who sent it ; till at last a fever seized
On William, and in harvest time he
died.
Then Dora went to Mary. Mary eat
And look'd with tears upon her boy,
and thought
Hard things of Dora. Dora came and
said :
"I have obey'd my uncle until now,
And I have sinn'd, for it was all thro'
me
This evil came on William at the
first.
But, Mary, for the sake of him that's
gone,
And for your sake, the woman that he
chose,
And for this orphan, I am come to
you :



You know there has not been for these
 five years
 So full a harvest: let me take the
 boy,
 And I will set him in my uncle's eye
 Among the wheat; that when his
 heart is glad
 Of the full harvest, he may see the boy,
 And bless him for the sake of him
 that's gone."
 And Dora took the child, and went
 her way
 Across the wheat, and sat upon a
 mound
 That was unsown, where many pop-
 pies grew.
 Far off the farmer came into the field
 And spied her not; for none of all his
 men
 Dare tell him Dora waited with the
 child;
 And Dora would have risen and gone
 to him,
 But her heart fail'd her; and the reap-
 ers reap'd,
 And the sun fell, and all the land was
 dark.
 But when the morrow came she rose
 and took
 The child once more, and sat upon
 the mound;
 And made a little wreath of all the
 flower;
 That grew about, and tied it round his
 hat
 To make him pleasing in her uncle's
 eye.
 Then when the farmer pass'd into the
 field
 He spied her, and he left his men at
 work,
 And came and said: "Where were
 you yesterday?
 Whose child is that? What are you
 doing here?"
 So Dora cast her eyes upon the ground,
 And answer'd softly, "This is Wil-
 liam's child!"
 "And did I not," said Allan, "did I
 not
 Forbid you, Dora?" Dora said again:
 "Do with me as you will, but take the
 child
 And bless him for the sake of him
 that's gone!"
 And Allan said, "I see it is a trick
 Got up betwixt you and the woman
 there.
 I must be taught my duty, and by
 you!
 You knew my word was law, and yet
 you dared
 To slight it. Well—for I will take the
 boy;
 But go you hence, and never see me
 more."
 So saying, he took the boy, that cried
 aloud
 And struggled hard. The wreath of
 flowers fell

At Dora's feet. She bow'd upon her
 hands,
 And the boy's cry came to her from
 the field,
 More and more distant. She bow'd
 down her head,
 Remembering the day when first she
 came,
 And all the things that had been. She
 bow'd down
 And wept in secret; and the reapers
 reap'd,
 And the sun fell, and all the land was
 dark.
 Then Dora went to Mary's house,
 and stood
 Upon the threshold. Mary saw the boy
 Was not with Dora. She broke out in
 praise
 To God, that help'd her in her widow-
 hood.
 And Dora said, "My uncle took the
 boy;
 But, Mary, let me live and work with
 you:
 He says that he will never see me
 more."
 Then answer'd Mary, "This shall
 never be,
 That thou shouldst take my trouble on
 thyself;
 And, now I think, he shall not have
 the boy,
 For he will teach him hardness, and to
 slight
 His mother; therefore thou and I will
 go,
 And I will have my boy, and bring him
 home;
 And I will beg of him to take thee
 back:
 But if he will not take thee back again,
 Then thou and I will live within one
 house,
 And work for William's child, until he
 grows
 Of age to help us."
 So the women kiss'd
 Each other, and set out, and reach'd
 the farm.
 The door was off the latch: they peep'd,
 and saw
 The boy set up betwixt his grandsire's
 knees,
 Who thrust him in the hollows of his
 arm,
 And clapt him on the hands and on
 the cheeks,
 Like one that loved him: and the lad
 stretch'd out
 And babbled for the golden seal, that
 hung
 From Allan's watch, and sparkled by
 the fire.
 Then they came in: but when the boy
 beheld
 His mother, he cried out to come to
 her:
 And Allan set him down, and Mary
 said:



"O Father!—if you let me call
 you so—
 I never came a-begging for myself,
 Or William, or this child; but now I
 come
 For Dora: take her back; she loves
 you well.
 O Sir, when William died, he died at
 peace
 With all men; for I ask'd him, and he
 said,
 He could not ever rue his marrying
 me—
 I had been a patient wife: but, Sir, he
 said
 That he was wrong to cross his father
 thus:
 'God bless him!' he said, 'and may
 he never know
 The troubles I have gone thro'!' Then
 he turn'd
 His face and pass'd—unhappy that I
 am!
 But now, Sir, let me have my boy, for
 you
 Will make him hard, and he will learn
 to slight
 His father's memory; and take Dora
 back,
 And let all this be as it was before."
 So Mary said, and Dora hid her
 face
 By Mary. There was silence in the
 room;
 And all at once the old man burst in
 sobs:—
 "I have been to blame—to blame. I
 have kill'd my son.
 I have kill'd him—but I loved him—
 my dear son.
 May God forgive me!—I have been to
 blame.
 Kiss me, my children."
 Then they clung about
 The old man's neck, and kiss'd him
 many times.
 And all the man was broken with re-
 morse;
 And all his love came back a hundred
 fold;
 And for three hours he sobb'd o'er
 William's child,
 Thinking of William.
 So those four abode
 Within one house together; and as
 years
 Went forward, Mary took another
 mate;
 But Dora lived unmarried till her
 death.

AUDLEY COURT.

"THE Bull, the Fleecs are cramm'd,
 and not a room
 For love or money Let us picnic
 thers
 At Audley Court."
 I spoke, while Audley feast

Humm'd like a hive all round the nar-
 row quay,
 To Francis, with a basket on his arm,
 To Francis just alighted from the boat,
 And breathing of the sea. "With all
 my heart,"
 Said Francis. Then we shoulder'd
 thro' the swarm,
 And rounded by the stillness of the
 beach
 To where the bay runs up its latest
 horn.
 We left the dying ebb that faintly
 lipp'd
 The flat red granite; so by many a
 sweep
 Of meadow smooth from aftermath we
 reach'd
 The griffin-guarded gates, and pass'd
 thro' all
 The pillar'd dusk of sounding sycam-
 ores,
 And cross'd the garden to the garden-
 er's lodge,
 With all its casements bedded, and its
 walls
 And chimneys muffled in the leafy
 vine.
 There, on a slope of orchard, Fran-
 cis laid
 A damask napkin wrought with horse
 and hound,
 Brought out a dusky loaf that smelt of
 home,
 And, half-cut-down, a pasty costily
 made,
 Where quail and pigeon, lark and lev-
 eret lay,
 Like fossils of the rock, with golden
 yolks
 Imbedded and injellied; last, with
 these,
 A flask of cider from his father's vats,
 Prime, which I knew; and so we sat
 and eat
 And talk'd old matters over; who was
 dead,
 Who married, who was like to be, and
 how
 The races went, and who would rent
 the hall:
 Then touch'd upon the game, how
 scarce it was
 This season: glancing thence, dis-
 cuss'd the farm,
 The fourfield system, and the price of
 grain;
 And struck upon the corn-laws, where
 we split,
 And came again together on the king
 With heated faces; till he laugh'd
 aloud;
 And, while the blackbird on the pip-
 pin hung
 To hear him, clapt his hand in mine
 and sang—
 "Oh! who would fight and march
 and countermarch,
 Be shot for sixpence in a battle-field,
 And shovell'd up into a bloody trench



Where no one knows? but let me live
my life.

"Oh! who would cast and balance at
a desk,
Perch'd like a crow upon a three-legg'd
stool,

Till all his juice is dried, and all his
joints
Are full of chalk? but let me live my
life.

"Who'd serve the state? for if I
carved my name
Upon the cliffs that guard my native
land,

I might as well have traced it in the
sands;
The sea wastes all: but let me live my
life.

"Oh! who would love? I woo'd a
woman once,
But she was sharper than an eastern
wind,

And all my heart turn'd from her, as a
thorn
Turns from the sea; but let me live my
life."

He sang his song, and I replied with
mine:

I found it in a volume, all of songs,
Knock'd down to me, when old Sir
Robert's pride,
His books — the more the pity, so I
said —

Came to the hammer here in March —
and this —

I set the words, and added names I
knew.

"Sleep, Ellen Aubrey, sleep, and
dream of me:

Sleep, Ellen, folded in thy sister's
arm,
And sleeping, haply dream her arm is
mine.

"Sleep, Ellen, folded in Emilia's
arm;
Emilia, fairer than all else but thou,
For thou art fairer than all else that
is.

"Sleep, breathing health and peace
upon her breast:

Sleep, breathing love and trust against
her lip:

I go to-night: I come to-morrow morn.
"I go, but I return: I would I
were

The pilot of the darkness and the
dream.

Sleep, Ellen Aubrey, love, and dream
of me."

So sang we each to either, Francis
Hale,

The farmer's son, who lived across the
bay,

My friend; and I, that having where-
withal,

And in the fallow leisure of my life
A rolling stone of here and every-
where,

Did what I would; but ere the night
we rose

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

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

quay,
The town was hush'd beneath us:
lower down

The bay was oily calm; the harbor-
buoy,

Sole star of phosphorescence in the
calm,

With one green sparkle ever and
anon

Dipt by itself, and we were glad at
heart.

WALKING TO THE MAIL.

John. I'm glad I walk'd. How
fresh the meadows look

Above the river, and, but a month ago,
The whole hill-side was redder than a
fox.

Is yon plantation where this byway
joins

The turnpike?

James. Yes.

John. And when does this come
by?

James. The mail? At one o'clock.
John. What is it now?

James. A quarter to.
John. Whose house is that I see?

No, not the County Member's with the
vane:

Up higher with the yewtree by it, and
half

A score of gables.
James. That? Sir Edward Head's:

But he's abroad: the place is to be
sold.

John. O, his. He was not broken.
James. No, sir, he,
Vex'd with a morbid devil in his

blood
That veil'd the world with jaundice,
hid his face

From all men, and commercing with
himself,

He lost the sense that handles daily
life —

That keeps us all in order more or
less —

And sick of home went overseas for
change.

John. And whither?
James. Nay, who knows? he's here
and there.

But let him go; his devil goes with
him,

As well as with his tenant, Jocky
Dawes.

John. What's that?
James. You saw the man — on
Monday, was it? —

There by the humpback'd willow; half
stands up



And bristles ; half has fall'n and made
a bridge ;
And there he caught the younker tick-
ling trout —
Caught in *flagrantie* — what's the Latin
word ?
Delicto : but his house, for so they say,
Was haunted with a jolly ghost, that
shook
The curtains, whined in lobbies, tapt
at doors,
And rummaged like a rat : no servant
stay'd :
The farmer vext packs up his beds and
chairs,
And all his household stuff ; and with
his boy
Betwixt his knees, his wife upon the
tilt,
Sets out, and meets a friend who hails
him. "What !
You're fitting!" "Yes, we're fit-
ting," says the ghost,
(For they had pack'd the thing among
the beds.)
"O well," says he, "you fitting with
us too—
Jack, turn the horses' heads and home
again."
John. He left his wife behind ; for so
I heard.
James. He left her, yes. I met my
lady once :
A woman like a butt, and harsh as
crabs.
John. O yet but I remember, ten
years back—
'Tis now at least ten years — and then
she was —
You could not light upon a sweeter
thing :
A body slight and round, and like a
pear
In growing, modest eyes, a hand, a
foot
Lessening in perfect cadence, and a
skin
As clean and white as privet when it
flowers.
James. Ay, ay, the blossom fades,
and they that loved
At first like dove and dove were cat
and dog.
She was the daughter of a cottager,
Out of her sphere. What betwixt
shame and pride,
New things and old, himself and her,
she sour'd
To what she is : a nature never kind !
Like men, like manners : like breeds
like, they say,
Kind nature is the best : those man-
ners next
That fit us like a nature second-hand ;
Which are indeed the manners of the
great.
John. But I had heard it was this
bill that past,
And fear of change at home, that
drove him hence.

James. That was the last drop in the
cup of gall.
I once was near him, when his bailiff
brought
A Chartist pike. You should have
seen him wince
As from a venomous thing : he thought
himself
A mark for all, and shudder'd, lest a cry
Should break his sleep by night, and
his nice eyes
Should see the raw mechanic's bloody
thumbs
Sweat on his blazon'd chairs ; but, sir,
you know
That these two parties still divide the
world —
Of those that want, and those that
have : and still
The same old sore breaks out from age
to age
With much the same result. Now I
myself,
A Tory to the quick, was as a boy
Destructive, when I had not what I
would.
I was at school — a college in the
South :
There lived a flayfint near ; we stole
his fruit,
His hens, his eggs ; but there was law
for us :
We paid in person. He had a sow, sir.
She,
With meditative grunts of much con-
tent,
Lay great with pig, wallowing in sun
and mud.
By night we dragg'd her to the college
tower
From her warm bed, and up the cork-
screw stair
With hand and rope we haled the
groaning sow,
And on the leads we kept her till she
pigg'd.
Large range of prospect had the mother
sow,
And but for daily loss of one she
loved,
As one by one we took them — but for
this —
As never sow was higher in this
world —
Might have been happy : but what lot
is pure ?
We took them all, till she was left
alone
Upon her tower, the Niobe of swine,
And so return'd unfarrow'd to her sty.
John. They found you out ?
James. Not they.
John. Well — after all —
What know we of the secret of a man ?
His nerves were wrong. What ails us,
who are sound,
That we should mimic this raw fool
the world,
Which charts us all in its coarse blacks
or whites,



As ruthless as a baby with a worm,
As cruel as a schoolboy ere he grows
To Pity—more from ignorance than
will.

But put your best foot forward, or I
fear
That we shall miss the mail: and here
it comes
With five at top: as quaint a four-in-
hand
As you shall see— three pyebalds and
a roan.

EDWIN MORRIS; OR, THE LAKE.

O ME, my pleasant rambles by the
lake,
My sweet, wild, fresh three quarters of
a year,
My one Oasis in the dust and drouth
Of city life! I was a sketcher then:
See here, my doing: curves of moun-
tain, bridge,
Boat, island, ruins of a castle, built
When men knew how to build, upon a
rock,
With turrets lichen-gilded like a rock:
And here, new-comers in an ancient
hold,
New-comers from the Mersey, million-
aires,
Here lived the Hills—a Tudor-chim-
ned bulk
Of mellow brickwork on an isle of
bowers.

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

But Edwin Morris, he that knew the
names,
Long learned names of agaric, moss
and fern,
Who forged a thousand theories of the
rocks,
Who taught me how to skate, to row,
to swim,
Who read me rhymes elaborately
good,
His own—I call'd him Crichton, for he
seem'd
All-perfect, finish'd to the finger nail.

And once I ask'd him of his early
life,
And his first passion; and he answer'd
me;
And well his words became him: was
he not
A full-cell'd honeycomb of eloquence
Stored from all flowers? Poet-like he
spoke.

“My love for Nature is as old as I;
But thirty moons, one honeymoon to
that,
And three rich sennights more, my
love for her.

My love for Nature and my love for her,
Of different ages, like twin-sisters
grew,
Twin-sisters differently beautiful.
To some full music rose and sank the
sun,
And some full music seem'd to move
and change
With all the varied changes of the
dark,
And either twilight and the day be-
tween
For daily hope fulfill'd, to rise again
Revolving toward fulfilment, made it
sweet
To walk, to sit, to sleep, to wake, to
breathe.”

Or this or something like to this he
spoke.
Then said the fat-faced curate, Ed-
ward Bull,
“I take it, God made the woman
for the man,
And for the good and increase of the
world.
A pretty face is well, and this is well,
To have a dame indoors, that trims us
up,
And keeps us tight; but these unreal
ways
Seem but the theme of writers, and in-
deed
Worn threadbare. Man is made of
solid stuff.
I say, God made the woman for the
man,
And for the good and increase of the
world.”

“Parson,” said I, “you pitch the
pipe too low:
But I have sudden touches, and can
run
My faith beyond my practice into his:
Tho' if, in dancing after Letty Hill,
I do not hear the bells upon my cap,
I scarce have other music: yet say on,
What should one give to light on such
a dream?”

I ask'd him half-sardonically.
“Give?
Give all thou art,” he answer'd, and a
light
Of laughter dimpled in his swarthy
cheek;
“I would have hid her needle in my
heart,
To save her little finger from a scratch
No deeper than the skin: my ears
could hear
Her lightest breaths: her least remark
was worth
The experience of the wise. I went
and came;
Her voice fled always thro' the sum-
mer land;
I spoke her name alone. Thrice-happy
days!
The flower of each, those moments
when we met,



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

Were not his words delicious, I a beast
To take them as I did? but something jarr'd;
Whether he spoke too largely; that there seem'd
A touch of something false, some self-conceit,
Or over-smoothness: howsoe'er it was,
He scarcely hit my humor, and I said:

"Friend Edwin, do not think yourself alone
Of all men happy. Shall not Love to me,
As in the Latin song I learnt at school,
Sneeze out a full God-bless-you right and left?
But you can talk: yours is a kindly vein:
I have, I think, — Heaven knows — as much within;
Have, or should have, but for a thought or two,
That like a purple beech among the greens
Looks out of place: 'tis from no want in her:
It is my shyness, or my self
Or something of a wayward modern mind
Dissecting passion. Time will set me right."

So spoke I knowing not the things that were.
Then said the fat-faced curate, Edward Bull:
"God made the woman for the use of man,
And for the good and increase of the world."
And I and Edwin laugh'd; and now we paused
About the windings of the marge to hear
The soft wind blowing over meadowy holms
And alders, garden-isles; and now we left
The clerk behind us, I and he, and ran
By ripply shallows of the lipping lake,
Delighted with the freshness and the sound,

But, when the bracken rusted on their crags,
My suit had wither'd, nipt to death by him
That was a God, and is a lawyer's clerk,
The rentroll Cupid of our rainy isles.
'Tis true, we met; one hour I had, no more:
She sent a note, the seal an *Elle vous suit*,
The close "Your Letty, only yours;" and this
Thrice underscored. The friendly mist of morn

Clung to the lake. I boated over, ran
My craft aground, and heard with beating heart
The Sweet-Gale rustle round the shelving keel;
And out I stept, and up I crept: she moved,
Like Proserpine in Enna, gathering flowers:
Then low and sweet I whistled thrice; and she,
She turn'd, we closed, we kiss'd, swore faith, I breathed
In some new planet: a silent cousin stole
Upon us and departed: "Leave," she cried,
"O leave me!" "Never, dearest, never: here
I brave the worst:" and while we stood like fools
Embracing, all at once a score of pugs
And poodles yell'd within, and out they came
Trustees and Aunts and Uncles.
"What, with him!
Go" (shrill'd the cotton-spinning chorus); "him!"
I choked. Again they shriek'd the burden—"Him!"
Again with hands of wild rejection
"Go!"
Girl, get you in!" She went—and in one mouth
They wedded her to sixty thousand pounds,
To lands in Kent and messuages in York,
And slight Sir Robert with his watery smile
And educated whisker. But for me,
They set an ancient creditor to work:
It seems I broke a close with force and arms:
There came a mystic token from the king
To greet the sheriff, needless courtesy!
I read, and fled by night, and flying turn'd:
Her taper glimmer'd in the lake below:
I turn'd once more, close-button'd to the storm;
So left the place, left Edwin, nor have seen
Him since, nor heard of her, nor cared to hear.

Nor cared to hear? perhaps: yet long ago
I have pardon'd little Letty; not indeed, [this,
It may be, for her own dear sake but
She seems a part of those fresh days to me;
For in the dust and drouth of London life
She moves among my visions of the lake,
While the prime swallow dips his wing,
or then



While the gold-lily blows, and over-
head
The light cloud smoulders on the sum-
mer crag.

ST. SIMEON STYLITES.

ALTHO' I be the basest of mankind,
From scalp to sole one slough and
crust of sin,
Unfit for earth, unfit for heaven, scarce
meet
For troops of devils, mad with blas-
phemy,
I will not cease to grasp the hope I
hold
Of saintdom, and to clamor, mourn
and sob,
Battering the gates of heaven with
storms of prayer,
Have mercy, Lord, and take away my
sin.

Let this avail, just, dreadful, mighty
God,
This not be all in vain, that thrice ten
years,
Thrice multiplied by superhuman
pangs,
In hungers and in thirsts, fevers and
cold,
In coughs, aches, stitches, ulcerous
throes and cramps,
A sign betwixt the meadow and the
cloud,
Patient on this tall pillar I have borne
Rain, wind, frost, heat, hail, damp, and
sleet, and snow ;
And I had hoped that ere this period
closed
Thou wouldst have caught me up into
thy rest,
Denying not these weather-beaten
limbs
The meed of saints, the white robe and
the palm.

O take the meaning, Lord : I do not
breathe,
Not whisper, any murmur of complaint.
Pain heap'd ten-hundred-fold, to this,
were still
Less burden, by ten-hundred-fold, to
bear,
Than were those lead-like tons of sin,
that crush'd
My spirit flat before thee.

O Lord, Lord,
Thou knowest I bore this better at the
first,
For I was strong and hale of body then ;
And tho' my teeth, which now are
dropt away,
Would chatter with the cold, and all
my heard
Was tagg'd with icy fringes in the
moon,
I drown'd the whoopings of the owl
with sound
Of pious hymns and psalms, and some-
times saw
An angel stand and watch me, as I sang.

Now am I feeble grown ; my end
draws nigh ;
I hope my end draws nigh : half deaf I
am,
So that I scarce can hear the people
hum
About the column's base, and almost
blind,
And scarce can recognize the fields I
know ;
And both my thighs are rotted with
the dew ;
Yet cease I not to clamor and to cry,
While my stiff spine can hold my
weary head,
Till all my limbs drop piecemeal from
the stone,
Have mercy, mercy : take away my
sin.

O Jesus, if thou wilt not save my
soul,
Who may be saved ? who is it may be
saved ?
Who may be made a saint, if I fail
here ?
Show me the man hath suffer'd more
than I.
For did not all thy martyrs die one
death ?
For either they were stoned, or cruci-
fied,
Or burn'd in fire, or boil'd in oil, or
sawn
In twain beneath the ribs ; but I die
here
To-day, and whole years long, a life of
death.
Bear witness, if I could have found a
way
(And heedfully I sifted all my thought)
More slowly-painful to subdue this
home
Of sin, my flesh, which I despise and
hate,
I had not stinted practice, O my God.

For not alone this pillar-punishment,
Not this alone I bore : but while I lived
In the white convent down the valley
there,
For many weeks about my loins I wore
The rope that haled the buckets from
the well,
Twisted as tight as I could knot the
noose ;
And spake not of it to a single soul,
Until the ulcer, eating thro' my skin,
Betray'd my secret penance, so that
all
My brethren marvell'd greatly. More
than this
I bore, whereof, O God, thou knowest
all.

Three winters, that my soul might
grow to thee,
I lived up there on yonder mountain
side.
My right leg chain'd into the crag, I
lay
Pent in a roofless close of ragged
stones ;



Inswathed sometimes in wandering
mist, and twice
Black'd with thy branding thunder,
and sometimes
Sucking the damps for drink, and eat-
ing not,
Except the spare chance-gift of those
that came
To touch my body and be heal'd, and
live ;
And they say then that I work'd
miracles,
Whereof my fame is loud amongst
mankind,
Cured lameness, palsies, cancers.
Thou, O God,
Knowest alone whether this was or
no.
Have mercy, mercy ; cover all my sin.
Then, that I might be more alone
with thee,
Three years I lived upon a pillar, high
Six cubits, and three years on one of
twelve ;
And twice three years I crouch'd on
one that rose
Twenty by measure ; last of all, I grew
Twice ten long weary years to this,
That numbers forty cubits from the
soil.
I think that I have borne as much as
this—
Or else I dream—and for so long a time,
If I may measure time by yon slow
light,
And this high dial, which my sorrow
crowns—
So much—even so.
And yet I know not well,
For that the evil ones come here, and
say,
“ Fall down, O Simeon : thou hast
suffer'd long
For ages and for ages ! ” then they
prate
Of penances I cannot have gone thro',
Perplexing me with lies ; and oft I
fall,
Maybe for months, in such blind,
lethargies,
That Heaven, and Earth, and Time
are choked.
But yet
Bethink thee, Lord, while thou and all
the saints
Enjoy themselves in heaven, and men
on earth
House in the shade of comfortable
roofs,
Sit with their wives by fires, eat whole-
some food,
And wear warm clothes, and even
beasts have stalls,
I, 'tween the spring and downfall of
the light,
Bow down one thousand and two
hundred times,
To Christ, the Virgin Mother, and the
Saints ;
Or in the night, after a little sleep,

I wake : the chill stars sparkle ; I am
wet
With drenching dews, or stiff with
crackling frost.
I wear an undress'd goatskin on my
back ;
A grazing iron collar grinds my neck ;
And in my weak, lean arms I make me
crosse,
And strive and wrestle with thee till I
die :
O mercy, mercy ! wash away my sin.
O Lord, thou knowest what a man I
am ;
A sinful man, conceived and born in
sin :
'Tis their own doing ; this is none of
mine ;
Lay it not to me. Am I to blame for
this,
That here come those that worship
me ? Ha ! ha !
They think that I am somewhat. What
am I ?
The silly people take me for a saint,
And bring me offerings of fruit and
flowers :
And I, in truth (thou wilt bear witness
here)
Have all in all endured as much, and
more
Than many just and holy men, whose
names
Are register'd and calendar'd for
saints.
Good people, you do ill to kneel to
me.
What is it I can have done to merit
this ?
I am a sinner viler than you all.
It may be I have wrought some mira-
cles,
And cured some halt and maim'd ; but
what of that ?
It may be, no one, even among the
saints,
May match his pains with mine ; but
what of that ?
Yet do not rise ; for you may look on
me,
And in your looking you may kneel to
God.
Speak ! is there any of you halt or
maim'd ?
I think you know I have some power
with Heaven
From my long penance : let him speak
his wish.
Yes, I can heal him. Power goes
forth from me.
They say that they are heal'd. Ah,
hark ! they shout
“ St. Simeon Stylites.” Why, if so,
God reaps a harvest in me. O my soul,
God reaps a harvest in thee. If this be,
Can I work miracles and not be saved ?
This is not told of any. They were
saints.
It cannot be but that I shall be saved ;
Yea, crown'd a saint. They shout,



"Behold a saint!"
 And lower voices saint me from above.
 Courage, St. Simeon! This dull chrysalis
 Cracks into shining wings, and hope
 ere death
 Spreads more and more and more, that
 God hath now
 Sponged and made blank of crimeful
 record all
 My mortal archives.

O my sons, my sons,
 I, Simeon of the pillar, by surname
 Stylites, among men; I, Simeon,
 The watcher on the column till the end;
 I, Simeon, whose brain the sunshine
 bakes;
 I, whose bald brows in silent hours be-
 come
 Unnaturally hoar with rime, do now
 From my high nest of penance here
 proclaim
 That Pontius and Iscariot by my side
 Show'd like fair seraphs. On the coals
 I lay,
 A vessel full of sin: all hell beneath
 Made me boil over. Devils pluck'd my
 sleeve;
 Abaddon and Asmodeus caught at me.
 I smote them with the cross; they
 swarm'd again.
 In bed like monstrous apes they
 crush'd my chest:
 They flapp'd my light out as I read: I
 saw
 Their faces grow between me and my
 book;
 With colt-like whinny and with hog-
 gish whine
 They burst my prayer. Yet this way
 was left,
 And by this way I 'scaped them. Mor-
 tify
 Your flesh, like me, with scourges and
 with thorns;
 Smite, shrink not, spare not. If it
 may be, fast
 Whole Lents, and pray. I hardly,
 with slow steps,
 With slow, faint steps, and much ex-
 ceeding pain,
 Have scrambled past those pits of fire,
 that still
 Sing in mine ears. But yield not me
 the praise:
 God only thro' his bounty hath thought
 fit,
 Among the powers and princes of this
 world,
 To make me an example to mankind,
 Which few can reach to. Yet I do not
 say
 But that a time may come—yea, even
 now,
 Now, now, his footsteps smite the
 threshold staire
 Of life—I say, that time is at the doors
 when you may worship me without
 reproach;
 For I will leave my relics in your land,

And you may carve a shrine about my
 dust,
 And burn a fragrant lamp before my
 bones,
 When I am gather'd to the glorions
 saints.
 While I spake then, a sting of
 shrewdest pain
 Ran shrivelling thro' me, and a cloud-
 like change,
 In passing, with a grosser film made
 thick
 These heavy, horny eyes. The end!
 the end!
 Surely the end! What's here? a shape,
 a shade,
 A flash of light. Is that the angel
 there
 That holds a crown? Come, blessed
 brother, come.
 I know thy glittering face. I waited
 long;
 My brows are ready. What! deny it
 now?
 Nay, draw, draw, draw nigh. So I
 clutch it. Christ!
 'Tis gone: 'tis here again; the crown!
 the crown!
 So now 'tis fitted on and grows to me,
 And from it melt the dews of Paradise,
 Sweet! sweet! spikenard, and balm,
 and frankincense.
 Ah! let me not be fool'd, sweet saints:
 I trust
 That I am whole, and clean, and meet
 for Heaven.
 Speak, if there be a priest, a man of
 God,
 Among you there, and let him pres-
 ently
 Approach, and lean a ladder on the
 shaft,
 And climbing up into my airy home,
 Deliver me the blessed sacrament;
 For by the warning of the Holy Ghost,
 I prophesy that I shall die to night,
 A quarter before twelve.
 But thou, O Lord,
 Aid all this foolish people; let them
 take
 Example, pattern: lead them to thy
 light.

THE TALKING OAK.

ONCE more the gate behind me falls;
 Once more before my face
 I see the moulder'd Abbey-walls,
 That stand within the chace.
 Beyond the lodge the city lies,
 Beneath its drift of smoke;
 And ah! with what delighted eyes
 I turn to yonder oak.
 For when my passion first began,
 Ere that, which in me burn'd
 The love, that makes me thrice a man,
 Could hope itself return'd;
 To yonder oak within the field
 I spoke without restraint,



And with a larger faith appeal'd
Than Papist unto Saint.
For oft I talk'd with him apart,
And told him of my choice,
Until he plagiariz'd a heart,
And answer'd with a voice.
Tho' what he whisper'd, under Heaven
None else could understand ;
I found him garrulously given,
A babbler in the land.
But since I heard him make reply
Is many a weary hour ;
'Twere well to question him, and try
If yet he keeps the power.
Hail, hidden to the knees in fern,
Broad Oak of Summer-chace,
Whose topmost branches can discern
The roofs of Summer-place !
Say thou, whereon I carved her name,
If ever maid or spouse,
As fair as my Olivia, came
To rest beneath thy boughs.—
"O Walter, I have shelter'd here
Whatever maiden grace
The good old Summers, year by year
Made ripe in Summer-chace :
"Old Summers, when the monk was
fat,
And, issuing shorn and sleek,
Would twist his girdle tight, and pat
The girls upon the cheek,
"Ere yet, in scorn of Peter's-pence,
And number'd bead, and shrift,
Bluff Harry broke into the spence,
And turn'd the cowls adrift :
"And I have seen some ecote of those
Fresh faces, that would thrive
When his man-minded offset rose
To chase the deer at five ;
"And all that from the town would
siroll,
Till that wild wind made work
In which the gloomy brewer's soul
Went by me, like a stork :
"The slight she-slips of loyal blood,
And others, passing praise,
Strait-laced, but all-too-full in bud
For puritanic stays :
"And I have shadow'd many a group
Of beauties, that were born
In teacup-times of hood and hoop,
Or while the patch was worn ;
"And, leg and arm with love-knots
gay,
About me leap'd and laugh'd
The modest Cupid of the day,
And shrill'd his tinsel shaft.
"I swear (and else may insects prick
Each leaf into a gall)
This girl, for whom your heart is sick,
Is three times worth them all ;
"For those and theirs, by Nature's law,
Have faded long ago ;
But in these latter springs I saw
Your own Olivia blow,

"From when she gamboll'd on the
greens,
A baby-germ, to when
The maiden blossoms of her teens
Could number five from ten.
"I swear, by leaf, and wind, and rain,
(And hear me with thine ears,)
That, tho' I circle in the grain
Five hundred rings of years—
"Yet, since I first could cast a shade
Did never creature pass
So slightly, musically made,
So light upon the grass :
"For as to fairies, that will flit
To make the greensward fresh,
I hold them exquisitely knit,
But far too spare of flesh."
O, hide thy knotted knees in fern,
And overlook the chace ;
And from thy topmost branch discern
The roofs of Summer-place.
But thou, whereon I carved her name,
That oft hast heard my vows,
Declare when last Olivia came
To sport beneath thy boughs.
"O yesterday, you know, the fair
Was holden at the town ;
His father left his good arm-chair,
And rode his hunter down.
"And with him Albert came on his,
I look'd at him with joy :
As cowlip unto oxlip is,
So seems she to the boy.
"An hour had past—and, sitting
straight
Within the low-wheel'd chaise,
Her mother trundled to the gate
Behind the dappled grays.
"But, as for her, she stay'd at home,
And on the roof she went,
And down the way you used to come,
She look'd with discontent.
"She left the novel half-uncut
Upon the rosewood shelf ;
She left the new piano shut :
She could not please herself.
"Then ran she, gamesome as the colt,
And livelier than a lark
She sent her voice thro' all the holt
Before her, and the park.
"A light wind chased her on the wing,
And in the chase grew wild,
As close as might be would he cling
About the darling child :
"But light as any wind that blows
So fleetly did she stir,
The flower, she touch'd on, dipt and
rose,
And turn'd to look at her.
"And here she came, and round me
play'd,
And sang to me the whole
Of those three stanzas that you made
About my 'giant hole ;'



- "And in a fit of frolic mirth
She strove to span my waist :
Alas, I was so broad of girth,
I could not be embraced.
- "I wish'd myself the fair young beech
That here beside me stands,
That round me, clasping each in each,
She might have lock'd her hands.
- "Yet seem'd the pressure thrice as
sweet
As woodbine's fragile hold,
Or when I feel about my feet
The berried briony fold."
- O muffle round thy knees with fern,
And shadow Summer-chace !
Long may thy topmost branch discern
The roofs of Summer-place !
But tell me, did she read the name
I carved with many vows
When last with throbbing heart I came
To rest beneath thy boughs ?
- "O yes, she wander'd round and round
These knotted knees of mine,
And found, and kiss'd the name she
found,
And sweetly murmur'd thine.
- "A teardrop trembled from its source
And down my surface crept.
My sense of touch is something coarser,
But I believe she wept.
- "Then flush'd her cheek with rosy light,
She glanced across the plain ;
But not a creature was in sight :
She kiss'd me once again.
- "Her kisses were so close and kind,
That, trust me on my word,
Hard wood I am, and wrinkled rind,
But yet my sap was stirr'd :
- "And even into my inmost ring
A pleasure I discern'd,
Like those blind motions of the Spring,
That show the year is turn'd.
- "Thrice-happy he that may caress
The ringlet's waving balm—
The cushions of whose touch may press
The maiden's tender palm.
- "I, rooted here among the groves,
But languidly adjust
My vapid vegetable loves
With anthers and with dust :
- "For ah ! my friend, the days were
brief
Whereof the poets talk,
When that, which breathes within the
leaf,
Could slip its bark and walk.
- "But could I, as in times foregone,
From spray, and branch, and stem,
Have suck'd and gather'd into one
The life that spreads in them,
"She had not found me so remiss ;
But lightly issuing thro',
I would have paid her kiss for kiss,
With usury thereto."
- O flourish high, with leafy towers,
And overlook the lea,
Pursue thy loves among the bowers,
But leave thou mine to me.
- O flourish, hidden deep in fern,
Old oak, I love thee well ;
A thousand thanks for what I learn
And what remains to tell.
- "'Tis little more : the day was warm ;
At last, tired out with play,
She sank her head upon her arm
And at my feet she lay.
- "Her eyelids dropp'd their silken
eaves.
I breathed upon her eyes
Thro' all the summer of my leaves
A welcome mix'd with sighs.
- "I took the swarming sound of life—
The music from the town—
The murmurs of the drum and fife
And lull'd them in my own.
- "Sometimes I let a sunbeam slip,
To light her shaded eye ;
A second flutter'd round her lip
Like a golden butterfly ;
- "A third would glimmer on her neck
To make the necklace shine ;
Another slid, a sunny fleck,
From head to ankle fine.
- "Then close and dark my arms I
spread,
And shadow'd all her rest—
Dropt dew upon her golden head,
An acorn in her breast.
- "But in a pet she started up,
And pluck'd it out, and drew
My little oakling from the cup,
And flung him in the dew.
- "And yet it was a graceful gift—
I felt a pang within
As when I see the woodman lift
His axe to slay my kin.
- "I shook him down because he was
The finest on the tree.
He lies beside thee on the grass,
O kiss him once for me.
- "O kiss him twice and thrice for me,
That have no lips to kiss,
For never yet was oak on lea
Shall grow so fair as this."
- Step deeper yet in herb and fern,
Look further thro' the chace,
Spread upward till thy boughs discern
The front of Summer-place.
- This fruit of thine by Love is blest,
That but a moment lay
Where fairer fruit of Love may rest
Some happy future day.
- I kiss it twice, I kiss it thrice,
The warmth it thence shall win
To riper life may magnetize
The baby-oak within.
- But thou, while kingdoms overset
Or lapse from hand to hand,





Thy leaf shall never fail, nor yet
Thine acorn in the laud,
May never saw dismember thee,
Nor wielded axe disjoint,
That art the fairest-spoken tree
From here to Lizard-point.
O rock upon thy towery top
All throats that gurgle sweet !
All starry culmination drop
Balm-dews to bathe thy feet !
All grass of silky feather grow—
And while he sinks or swells
The full south breeze around thee blow
The sound of minster bells.
The fat earth feed thy branchy root,
That under deeply strikes !
The northern morning o'er thee shoot,
High up, in silver spikes !
Nor ever lightning char thy grain,
But, rolling as in sleep,
Low thunders bring the mellow rain,
That makes thee broad and deep !
And hear me swear a solemn oath,
That only by thy side
Will I to Olive plight my troth,
And gain her for my bride.
And when my marriage morn may fall,
She, Dryad-like, shall wear
Alternate leaf and acorn-ball
In wreath about her hair.
And I will work in prose and rhyme,
And praise thee more in both
Than bard has honor'd beech or lime,
Or that Thessalian growth,
In which the swardy ringdove sat,
And mystic sentence spoke ;
And more than England honors that,
Thy famous brother-oak,
Wherein the younger Charles abode
Till all the paths were dim,
And far below the Roundhead rode,
And humm'd a surly hymn.

LOVE AND DUTY.

Of love that never found his earthly
close,
What sequel? Streaming eyes and
breaking hearts?
Or all the same as if he had not been?
Not so. Shall Error in the round of
time
Still father Truth? O shall the brag-
gart shout
For some blind glimpse of freedom
work itself
Thro' madness, hated by the wise, to
law
System and empire? Sin itself be
found
The cloudy porch oft opening on the
Sun?
And only he, this wonder, dead, be-
come
Mere highway dust? or year by year
alone

Sit brooding in the ruins of a life,
Nightmare of youth, the spectre of
himself?
If this were thus, if this, indeed,
were all,
Better the narrow brain, the stony
heart,
The staring eye glazed o'er with sap-
less days,
The long mechanic paces to and fro,
The set gray life, and apathetic end.
But am I not the nobler thro' thy love?
O three times less unworthy! likewise
thou
Art more thro' Love, and greater than
thy years.
The Sun will run his orbit, and the
Moon
Her circle. Wait, and Love himself
will bring
The drooping flower of knowledge
changed to fruit
Of wisdom. Wait: my faith is large
in Time,
And that which shapes it to some per-
fect end.
Will some one say, Then why not ill
for good?
Why took ye not your pastime? To
that man
My work shall answer, since I knew
the right
And did it; for a man is not as God,
But then most Godlike being most a
man.
— So let me think 'tis well for thee
and me—
Ill-fated that I am, what lot is mine
Whose foresight preaches peace, my
heart so slow
To feel it! For how hard it seem'd to
me,
When eyes, love-languid thro' half-
tears, would dwell
One earnest, earnest moment upon
mine,
Then not to dare to see! when thy low
voice,
Faltering, would break its syllables, to
keep
My own full-tuned,— hold passion in a
leash,
And not leap forth and fall about thy
neck,
And on thy bosom, (deep-desired re-
lief!)
Rain out the heavy mist of tears, that
weigh'd
Upon my brain, my senses and my
soul!
For love himself took part against
himself
To warn us off, and Duty loved of
Love—
O this world's curse,— beloved but
hated— came
Like Death betwixt thy dear embrace
and mine,
And crying, "Who is this? behold thy
bride,"



She push'd me from thee.

If the sense is hard
To alien ears, I did not speak to these—
No, not to thee, but to thyself in me :
Hard is my doom and thine : thou
knowest it all.

Could Love part thus? was it not
well to speak,
To have spoken once? It could not
but he well.

The slow sweet hours that bring us all
things good,

The slow sad hours that bring us all
things ill,

And all good things from evil, brought
the night

In which we sat together and alone,
And to the wait, that hollow'd all the
heart,

Gave utterance by the yearning of an
eye,

That burn'd upon its object thro' such
tears

As flow but once a life.

The trance gave way
To those caresses, when a hundred
times

In that last kiss, which never was the
last,

Farewell, like endless welcome, lived
and died.

Then follow'd counsel, comfort, and
the words

That make a man feel strong in speak-
ing truth ;

Till now the dark was worn, and over-
head

The lights of sunset and of sunrise
mix'd

In that brief night ; the summer night,
that paused

Among her stars to hear us ; stars that
hung

Love-charm'd to listen : all the wheels
of Time

Spun round in station, but the end
had come.

O then like those, who clench their
nerves to rush

Upon their dissolution, we two rose,
There—closing like an individual

life—

In one wild cry of passion and of pain,
Like bitter accusation ev'n to death,

Caught up the whole of love and
utter'd it,

And bade adieu for ever.

Live — yet live —
Shall sharpest pathos blight us, know-
ing all

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

My blessing ! Should my Shadow cross
thy thoughts

Too sadly for their peace, remand it
thou

For calmer hours to Memory's darkest
hold,

If not to be forgotten — not at once —

Not all forgotten. Should it cross thy
dreams,

O might it come like one that looks
content,

With quiet eyes unfaithful to the
truth,

And point thee forward to a distant
light,

Or seem to lift a burden from thy
heart

And leave thee freer, till thou wake re-
fresh'd,

Then when the first low matin-chirp
hath grown

Full quire, and morning driv'n her
plough of pearl

Far furrowing into light the mounded
rack,

Beyond the fair green field and eastern
sea.

THE GOLDEN YEAR.

WELL, you shall have that song which
Leonard wrote :

It was last summer on a tour in Wales:
Old James was with me : we that day

had been

Up Snowdon ; and I wish'd for Leon-
ard there,

And found him in Llanheris : then we
cross

Between the lakes, and clamber'd half
way up

The counter side ; and that same song
of his

He told me ; for I banter'd him, and
swore

They said he lived shut up within him-
self,

A tongue-tied Poet in his feverous
days,

That, setting the *how much* before the
how,

Cry, like the daughters of the horse-
leech. "Give,

Cram us with all," but count not me
the herd !

To which "They call me what they
will," he said :

"But I was born too late : the fair
new forms,

That float about the threshold of an
age,

Like truths of Science waiting to be
caught—

Catch me who can, and make the catch-
er crown'd—

Are taken by the forelock. Let it
be.

But if you care indeed to listen, hear
These measured words, my work of
yestermorn.

"We sleep and wake and sleep, but
all things move ;

The Sun flies forward to his brother
Sun ;

The dark Earth follows wheel'd in her
ellipse ;



And human things returning on themselves
Move onward, leading up the golden year.

" Ah, tho' the times, when some new thought can bud,
Are but as poets' seasons when they flower,
Yet seas, that daily gait upon the shore,
Have ebb and flow conditioning their march,
And slow and sure comes up the golden year.

" When wealth no more shall rest in mounded heaps,
But smit with freer light shall slowly melt
In many streams to fatten lower lands,
And light shall spread, and man be liker man

Thro' all the season of the golden year.
" Shall eagles not be eagles? wrens be wrens?
If all the world were falcons, what of that?

The wonder of the eagle were the less,
But he not less the eagle. Happy days
Roll onward, leading up the golden year.

" Fly, happy happy sails and bear the Press;
Fly happy with the mission of the Cross;

Knit land to land, and blowing hawward
With silks, and fruits, and spices, clear of toll,
Enrich the markets of the golden year.

" But we grow old. Ah! when shall all men's good
Be each man's rule, and universal Peace

Lie like a shaft of light across the land,
And like a lane of beams athwart the sea,
Thro' all the circle of the golden year?"

Thus far he flow'd, and ended; whereupon

" Ah, folly!" in mimic cadence answer'd James—

" Ah, folly! for it lies so far away,
Not in our time, nor in our children's time,

" Tie like the second world to us that live;

" Twere all as one to fix our hopes on Heaven

As on this vision of the golden year."
With that he struck his staff against the rocks

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

Of force and cholera, and firm upon his feet,

And like an oaken stock in winter woods,

O'erflourish'd with the hoary clematis :

Then added, all in heat :

Old writers push'd the happy season back,—

The more fools they,—we forward: dreamers both :

Yon most, that in an age, when every hour

Must sweat her sixty minutes to the death,

Live on, God love us, as if the seedsman, rapt

Upon the teeming harvest, should not plunge

His hand into the bag : but well I know
That unto him who works, and feels

he works,
This same grand year is ever at the doors."

He spoke: and, high above, I heard them blast

The steep slate-quarry, and the great echo flap

And buffet round the hills from bluff to bluff.

ULYSSES.

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

Match'd with an aged wife, I mete and dole

Unequal laws unto a savage race,
That hoard, and sleep, and feed, and know not me

I cannot rest from travel : I will drink
Life to the lees : all times I have enjoy'd

Greatly, have suffer'd greatly, both with those

That loved me, and alone ; on shore, and when

Thro' scudding drifts the rainy Hyades
Vext the dim sea : I am become a name ;

For always roaming with a hungry heart

Much have I seen and known ; cities of men

And manners, climates, councils, governments,
Myself not least, but honor'd of them all ;

And drunk delight of battle with my peers,
Far on the ringing plains of windy Troy.

I am a part of all that I have met ;
Yet all experience is an arch where-thro'

Gleams that untravell'd world, whose margin fades

For ever and for ever when I move.
How dull it is to pause, to make an end,
To rust unburnish'd, not to shine in use !

As tho' to breathe were life. Life piled on life



Were all too little, and of one to me
 Little remains: but every hour is
 saved
 From that eternal silence, something
 more,
 A bringer of new things; and vile it
 were
 For some three suns to store and hoard
 myself,
 And this gray spirit yearning in de-
 sire
 To follow knowledge like a sinking
 star,
 Beyond the utmost bound of human
 thought.
 This is my son, mine own Tele-
 machus,
 To whom I leave the sceptre and the
 isle—
 Well-loved of me, discerning to fulfil
 This labor, by slow prudence to make
 mild
 A rugged people, and thro' soft degrees
 Subdue them to the useful and the
 good.
 Most blameless is he, centred in the
 sphere
 Of common duties, decent not to fail
 In offices of tenderness, and pay
 Meet adoration to my household gods,
 When I am gone. He works his work,
 I mine.
 There lies the port: the vessel puffs
 her sail:
 There gloom the dark broad seas. My
 mariners,
 Souls that have toil'd, and wrought,
 and thought with me—
 That ever with a frolic welcome took
 The thunder and the sunshine, and
 opposed

Free hearts, free foreheads--you and I
 are old;
 Old age hath yet his honor and his
 toil;
 Death closes all: but something ere
 the end,
 Some work of noble note, may yet be
 done,
 Not unbecoming men that strove with
 Gods.
 The lights begin to twinkle from the
 rocks:
 The long day wanes: the slow moon
 climbs: the deep
 Moans round with many voices. Come,
 my friends,
 'Tis not too late to seek a newer world.
 Push off, and sitting well in order
 smite
 The sounding furrows; for my pur-
 pose holds
 To sail beyond the sunset, and the
 baths
 Of all the western stars, until I die.
 It may be that the gulfs will wash us
 down:
 It may be we shall touch the Happy
 Isles,
 And see the great Achilles, whom we
 knew.
 Tho' much is taken, much abides: and
 tho'
 We are not now that strength which in
 old days
 Moved earth and heaven; that which
 we are, we are;
 One equal temper of heroic hearts,
 Made weak by time and fate, but
 strong in will
 To strive, to seek, to find, and not to
 yield.

LOCKSLEY HALL.

COMRADES, leave me here a little, while as yet 'tis esrly morn:
 Leave me here, and when you want me, sound upon the bugle horn
 'Tis the place, and all around it, as of old, the curlews call,
 Dreary gleams about the moorland flying over Locksley Hall;
 Locksley Hall, that in the distance overlooks the sandy tracts,
 And the hollow ocean-ridges roaring into caaracts.
 Many a night from yonder ivied casement, ere I went to rest,
 Did I look on great Orion sloping slowly to the West.
 Many a night I saw the Pleiads, rising thro' the mellow shade,
 Glitter like a swarm of fire-flies tangled in a silver braid.
 Here about the heach I wander'd, nourishing a youth sublime
 With the fairy tales of science, and the long result of Time;
 When the centuries behind me like a fruitful land reposed;
 When I clung to all the present for the promise that it closed:
 When I dipt into the future far as human eye could see;
 Saw the Vision of the world, and all the wonder that would be.—
 In the Spring a fuller crimson comes upon the robin's breast;
 In the Spring the wanton lapwing gets himself another crest;



In the Spring a livelier iris changes on the burnish'd dove ;
 In the Spring a young man's fancy lightly turns to thoughts of love.
 Then her cheek was pale and thinner than should be for one as young,
 And her eyes on all my motions with a mute observance hung.
 And I said, " My cousin Amy, speak, and speak the truth to me,
 Trust me, cousin, all the current of my being sets to thee."
 On her pallid cheek and forehead came a color and a light,
 As I have seen the rosy red flushing in the northern light.
 And she turn'd—her bosom shaken with a sudden storm of sighs—
 All the spirit deeply dawning in the dark of hazel eyes—
 Saying, " I have hid my feelings, fearing they should do me wrong ;"
 Saying, " Dost thou love me, cousin ? " weeping, " I have loved thee long."
 Love took up the glass of Time, and turn'd it in his glowing hands ;
 Every moment, lightly shaken, ran itself in golden sands.
 Love took up the harp of Life, and smote on all the chords with might ;
 Smote the chord of Self, that, trembling, pass'd in music out of sight.
 Many a morning on the moorland did we hear the coppers ring,
 And her whisper throng'd my pulses with the fullness of the Spring.
 Many an evening by the waters did we watch the stately ships,
 And our spirits rush'd together at the touching of the lips.
 O my cousin, shallow-hearted ! O my Amy, mine no more !
 O the dreary, dreary moorland ! O the barren, barren shore !
 Falser than all fancy fathoms, falser than all songs have sung,
 Puppet to a father's threat, and servile to a shrewish tongue !
 Is it well to wish thee happy ? —having known me —to decline
 On a range of lower feelings and a narrower heart than mine !
 Yet it shall be : thou shalt lower to his level day by day,
 What is fine within thee growing coarse to sympathize with clay.
 As the husband is, the wife is : thou art mated with a clown,
 And the grossness of his nature will have weight to drag thee down.
 He will hold thee, when his passion shall have spent its novel force,
 Something better than his dog, a little dearer than his horse.
 What is this ? his eyes are heavy : think not they are glazed with wine.
 Go to him : it is thy duty : kiss him : take his hand in thine.
 It may be my lord is weary, that his brain is overwrought :
 Soothe him with thy finer fancies, touch him with thy lighter thought.
 He will answer to the purpose, easy things to understand —
 Better thou wert dead before me, tho' I slew thee with my hand !
 Better thou and I were lying, hidden from the heart's disgrace,
 Roll'd in one another's arms, and silent in a last embrace.
 Cursed be the social wants that sin against the strength of youth !
 Cursed be the social lies that warp us from the living truth !
 Cursed be the sickly forms that err from honest Nature's rule !
 Cursed be the gold that gilds the straiten'd forehead of the fool !
 Well — 'tis well that I should bluster ! — Hadst thou less unworthy proved —
 Would to God — for I had loved thee more than ever wife was loved.
 Am I mad, that I should cherish that which bears but bitter fruit ?
 I will pluck it from my bosom, tho' my heart be at the root.
 Never, tho' my mortal summers to such length of years should come
 As the many-winter'd crow that leads the clanging rookery home.
 Where is comfort ? in division of the records of the mind ?
 Can I part her from herself, and love her, as I knew her, kind ?
 I remember one that perish'd : sweetly did she speak and move :
 Such a one do I remember, whom to look at was to love.
 Can I think of her as dead, and love her for the love she bore ?
 No — she never loved me truly : love is love for evermore.
 Comfort ? comfort scorn'd of devils ! this is truth the poet sings,
 That a sorrow's crown of sorrow is remembering happier things.
 Drug thy memories, lest thou learn it, lest thy heart be put to proof,
 In the dead unhappy night, and when the rain is on the roof.



Like a dog, he hunts in dreams, and thou art staring at the wall,
Where the dying night-lamp flickers, and the shadows rise and fall.

Then a hand shall pass before thee, pointing to his drunken sleep,
To thy widow'd marriage-pillows, to the tears that thou wilt weep.

Thou shalt hear the "Never, never," whisper'd by the phantom years
And a song from out the distance in the ringing of thine ears;

And an eye shall vex thee, looking ancient kindness on thy pain.
Turn thee, turn thee on thy pillow: get thee to thy rest again.

Nay, but Nature brings thee solace; for a tender voice will cry.
'Tis a purer life than thine; a lip to drain thy trouble dry.

Baby lips will laugh me down: my latest rival brings thee rest.
Baby fingers, waxen touches, press from the mother's breast.

O, the child too clothes the father with a dearness not his due.
Half is thine and half is his: it will be worthy of the two.

O, I see thee old and formal, fitted to thy petty part,
With a little hoard of maxims preaching down a daughter's heart.

"They were dangerous guides the feelings — she herself was not exempt —
Truly, she herself had suffer'd" — Perish in thy self-contempt!

Overlive it — lower yet — be happy! wherefore should I care?
I myself must mix with action, lest I wither by despair.

What is that which I should turn to, lighting upon days like these?
Every door is barr'd with gold, and opens but to golden keys.

Every gate is throng'd with suitors, all the markets overflow.
I have but an angry fancy: what is that which I should do?

I had been content to perish, falling on the foeman's ground,
When the ranks are roll'd in vapor, and the winds are laid with sound.

But the jingling of the guinea helps the hurt that Honor feels,
And the nations do but murmur, snarling at each other's heels.

Can I but relive in sadness, I will turn that earlier page.
Hide me from my deep emotion. O thou wondrous Mother-Age!

Make me feel the wild pulsation that I felt before the strife,
When I heard my days before me, and the tumult of my life;

Yearning for the large excitement that the coming years would yield,
Eager-hearted as a boy when first he leaves his father's field,

And at night along the dusky highway near and nearer drawn,
Sees in heaven the light of London flaring like a dreary dawn;

And his spirit leaps within him to be gone before him then,
Underneath the light he looks at, in among the throngs of men;

Men, my brothers, men the workers, ever reaping something new:
That which they have done but earnest of the things that they shall do:

For I dipt into the future, far as human eye could see,
Saw the Vision of the world, and all the wonder that would be;

Saw the heavens fill with commerce, argosies of magic sails;
Pilots of the purple twilight, dropping down with costly bales;

Heard the heavens fill with shouting, and there rain'd a ghastly dew
From the nations' airy navies grappling in the central blue;

Far along the world-wide whisper of the south-wind rushing warm,
With the standards of the peoples plunging thro' the thunder-storm;

Till the war-drum throbb'd no longer, and the battle-flags were furl'd
In the Parliament of man, the Federation of the world.

There the common sense of most shall hold a fretful realm in awe,
And the kindly earth shall slumber, lapt in universal law.

So I triumph'd ere my passion sweeping thro' me left me dry,
Left me with the palsied heart, and left me with the jaundiced eye;

Eye, to which all order festers, all things here are out of joint:
Science moves, but slowly slowly, creeping on from point to point:

Slowly comes a hungry people, as a lion, creeping nigher,
Glare at one that nods and winks behind a slowly-dying fire.



Yet I doubt not thro' the ages one increasing purpose runs,
 And the thoughts of men are widen'd with the process of the suns.
 What is that to him that reaps not harvest of his youthful joys,
 Tho' the deep heart of existence beat for ever like a boy's?

Knowledge comes, but wisdom lingers, and I linger on the shore,
 And the individual withers, and the world is more and more.

Knowledge comes, but wisdom lingers, and he bears a laden breast,
 Full of sad experience, moving towards the stillness of his rest.

Hark, my merry comrades call me, sounding on the bugle-horn,
 They to whom my foolish passion were a target for their scorn:

Shall it not be scorn to me to harp on such a moulder'd string?
 I am shamed thro' all my nature to have loved so slight a thing.

Weakness to be wroth with weakness! woman's pleasure, woman's pain—
 Nature made them blinder motions bounded in a shallower brain:

Woman is the lesser man, and all thy passions, match'd with mine,
 Are as moonlight unto sunlight, and as water unto wine—

Here at least, where nature sickens, nothing. Ah, for some retreat
 Deep in yonder shining Orient, where my life began to beat;

Where in wild Mahratta-battle fell my father evil-starr'd;—
 I was left a trampled orphan, and a selfish uncle's ward.

Or to burst all links of habit—there to wander far away,
 On from island unto island at the gateways of the day.

Larger constellations burning, mellow moons and happy skies,
 Breadths of tropic shade and palms in cluster, knots of Paradise.

Never comes the trader, never floats an European flag,
 Slides the bird o'er lustrous woodland, swings the trailer from the crag;
 Droops the heavy-blossom'd bower, hangs the heavy-fruited tree—
 Summer isles of Eden lying in dark-purple spheres of sea.

There methinks would be enjoyment more than in this march of mind,
 In the steamship, in the railway, in the thoughts that shake mankind.

There the passions cramp'd no longer shall have scope and breathing-space;
 I will take some savage woman, she shall rear my dusky race.

Iron-jointed, supple-sinew'd, they shall dive, and they shall run,
 Catch the wild goat by the hair, and hurl their lances in the sun;

Whistle back the parrot's call, and leap the rainbows of the brooks,
 Not with blinded eyesight poring over miserable books—

Fool, again the dream, the fancy! but I *know* my words are wild,
 But I count the gray barbarian lower than the Christian child.

I, to herd with narrow foreheads, vacant of our glorious gains,
 Like a beast with lower pleasures, like a beast with lower pains!

Mated with a squalid savage—what to me were sun or clime?
 I the heir of all the ages, in the foremost files of time—

I that rather held it better men should perish one by one,
 Than that earth should stand at gaze like Joshua's moon in Ajalon!

Not in vain the distance beacons. Forward, forward let us range.
 Let the great world spin for ever down the ringing grooves of change.

Thro' the shadow of the globe we sweep into the younger day:
 Better fifty years of Europe than a cycle of Cathay.

Mother-Age (for mine I knew not) help me as when life begun:
 Rift the hills, and roll the waters, flash the lightnings, weigh the Sun—

O, I see the crescent promise of my spirit hath not set.
 Ancient founts of inspiration well thro' all my fancy yet.

Howsoever these things be, a long farewell to Locksley Hall!
 Now for me the woods may wither, now for me the roof-tree fall.

Comes a vapor from the margin, blackening over heath andholt,
 Cramming all the blast before it, in its breast a thunderbolt.

Let it fall on Locksley Hall, with rain or hail, or fire or snow;
 For the mighty wind arises, roaring seaward, and I go.



GODIVA.

*I waited for the train at Coventry ,
I hung with grooms and porters on the
bridge,
To watch the three tall spires ; and there
I shaped
The city's ancient legend into this,—*
Not only we, the latest seed of 'time,
New men, that in the flying of a wheel
Cry down the past, not only we, that
prate
Of rights and wrongs, have loved the
people well,
And loathed to see them overtax'd ;
but she
Did more, and underwent, and over-
came,
The woman of a thousand summers
back,
Godiva, wife to that grim Earl, who
ruled
In Coventry : for when he laid a tax
Upon his town, and all the mothers
brought
Their children, clamoring, " If we
pay, we starve !"
She sought her lord, and found him,
where he strode
About the hall, among his dogs, alone,
His beard a foot before him, and his
hair
A yard behind. She told him of their
tears,
And pray'd him, " If they pay this
tax, they starve."
Whereat he stared, replying, half-
amazed,
" You would not let your little finger
ache
For such as these?"—" But I would
die," said she.
He laugh'd, and swore by Peter and by
Paul :
Then fillip'd at the diamond in her
ear ;
" O ay, ay, ay, you talk!"—" Alas!"
she said,
" But prove me what it is I would not
do."
And from a heart as rough as Esau's
hand,
He answer'd, " Ride you naked thro'
the town,
And I repeal it;" and nodding, as in
scorn,
He parted, with great strides among
his dogs.
So left alone, the passions of her
mind,
As winds from all the compass shift
and blow,
Made war upon each other for an
hour,
Till pity won. She sent a herald forth,
And bade him cry, with sound of trum-
pet, all
The hard condition ; but that she
would loose
The people : therefore, as they loved
her well,

From then till noon no foot should
pace the street,
No eye look down, she passing ; but
that all
Should keep within, door shut, and
window barr'd.
Then fled she to her inmost bower,
and there
Unclasp'd the wedded eagles of her
belt,
The grim Earl's gift ; but ever at a
breath
She linger'd, looking like a summer
moon
Half-dipt in cloud ; anon she shook
her head,
And shower'd the rippled ringlets to
her knee ;
Unclad herself in haste ; adown the
stair
Stole on ; and like a creeping sunbeam,
slid
From pillar unto pillar, until she
reach'd
The gateway ; there she found her
palfrey trapt
In purple blazon'd with armorial gold.
Then she rode forth, clothed on with
chastity :
The deep air listen'd round her as she
rode,
And all the low wind hardly breathed
for fear.
The little wide-mouth'd heads upon
the spout
Had cunning eyes to see : the barking
cur
Made her cheek flame : her palfrey's
footfall shot
Light horrors thro' her pulses : the
blind walls
Were full of chinks and holes ; and
overhead
Fantastic gables, crowding, stared :
but she
Not less thro' all bore up, till, last, she
saw
The white-flower'd elder-thicket from
the field
Gleam thro' the Gothic archways in
the wall.
Then she rode back, clothed on with
chastity :
And one low churl, compact of thank-
less earth,
The fatal byword of all years to
come,
Boring a little augur-hole in fear,
Peep'd—but his eyes, before they had
their will,
Were shrivell'd into darkness in his
head,
And dropt before him. So the Powers,
who wait
On noble deeds, cancell'd a sense mis-
used ;
And she, that knew not, pass'd : and
all at once,
With twelve great shocks of sound, the
shameless noon



Was clash'd and hammer'd from a hundred towers.
 One after one : but even then she gain'd
 Her bower ; whence reissuing, robed and crown'd,
 To meet her lord, she took the tax away
 And built herself an everlasting name.

THE TWO VOICES.

A STILL small voice spake unto me,
 "Thou art so full of misery,
 Were it not better not to be?"

Then to the still small voice I said :
 "Let me not cast in endless shade
 What is so wonderfully made."

To which the voice did urge reply :
 "To day I saw the dragon-fly
 Come from the wells where he did lie.

"An inner impulse rent the veil
 Of his old husk : from head to tail
 Came out clear plates of sapphire mail.

"He dried his wings : like gauze they grew :

Thro' crofts and pastures wet with dew
 A living flash of light he flew."

I said, "When first the world began,
 Young Nature thro' five cycles ran,
 And in the sixth she moulded man.

"She gave him mind, the lordliest
 Proportion, and, above the rest,
 Dominion in the head and breast."

Thereto the silent voice replied ;
 "Self-blinded are you by your pride :
 Look up thro' night : the world is wide.

"This truth within thy mind rehearse,
 That in a boundless universe
 Is boundless better, boundless worse.

"Think you this mould of hopes and fears

Could find no statelier than his peers
 In yonder hundred million spheres?"

It spake, moreover, in my mind :
 "Tho' thou were scatter'd to the wind,
 Yet is there plenty of the kind."

Then did my response clearer fall :
 "No compound of this earthly ball
 Is like another, all in all."

To which he answer'd scoffingly :
 "Good soul ! suppose I grant it thee,
 Who'll weep for thy deficiency ?

"Or will one beam be less intense,
 When thy peculiar difference
 Is cancell'd in the world of sense ?"

I would have said, "Thou canst not know."

But my full heart, that work'd below,
 Rain'd thro' my sight its overflow.

Again the voice spake unto me :

"Thou art so steep'd in misery,
 Surely 'twere better not to be.

"Thine anguish will not let thee sleep,
 Nor any train of reason keep :

Thou canst not think, but thou wilt weep."

I said, "The years with change advance :

If I make dark my countenance,
 I shut my life from happier chance.

"Some turn this sickness yet might take,

Ev'n yet." But he : "What drug can make

A wither'd palsy cease to shake ?"

I wept, "Tho' I should die, I know
 That all about the thorn will blow
 In tufts of rosy-tinted snow ;

"And men, thro' novel spheres of thought

Still moving after truth long sought,
 Will learn new things when I am not."

"Yet," said the secret voice, "some time,

Sooner or later, will gray prime
 Make thy grass hoar with early rime.

"Not less swift souls that yearn for light,

Rapt after heaven's starry flight,
 Would sweep the tracts of day and night.

"Not less the bee would range her cells,

The furzy prickle fire the dells,
 The foxglove cluster dappled bells."

I said that "all the years invent ;
 Each month is various to present
 The world with some development.

"Were this not well, to bide mine hour,

Tho' watching from a ruin'd tower
 How grows the day of human power?"

"The highest-mounted mind," he said,
 "Still sees the sacred morning spread
 The silent summit overhead.

"Will thirty seasons render plain
 Those lonely lights that still remain,
 Just breaking over land and main ?

"Or make that morn, from his cold crown

And crystal silence creeping down,
 Flood with full daylight glebe and town ?

"Fore-run thy peers, thy time, and let
 Thy feet, millenniums hence, be set
 In midst of knowledge, dream'd not yet.

"Thou hast not gain'd a real height,
 Nor art thou nearer to the light,
 Because the scale is infinite.

"'Twere better not to breathe or speak,
 Than cry for strength, remaining weak,
 And seem to find, but still to seek.

"Moreover, but to seem to find
 Asks what thou lackest, thought resign'd,
 A healthy frame, a quiet mind."



I said, "When I am gone away,
 'He dared not tarry,' men will say,
 Doing dishonour to my clay."
 "This is more vile," he made reply,
 "To breathe and loathe, to live and
 sigh,
 Than once from dread of pain to die.
 "Sick art thou—a divided will
 Still heaping on the fear of ill
 The fear of men, a coward still.
 "Do men love thee? Art thou so bound
 To men, that how thy name may sound
 Will vex thee lying underground?
 "The memory of the wither'd leaf
 In endless time is scarce more brief
 Than of the garner'd Autumn-sheaf.
 "Go, vexed Spirit, sleep in trust;
 The right ear, that is filled with dust,
 Hears little of the false or just."
 "Hark task, to pluck resolve," I cried,
 "From emptiness and the waste wide
 Of that abyss, or scornful pride!
 "Nay—rather yet that I could raise
 One hope that warm'd me in the days
 While still I yearn'd for human praise.
 "When, wide in soul and bold of
 tongue,
 Among the tents I paused and sung,
 The distant battle flash'd and rung.
 "I sung the joyful Pæan clear,
 And, sitting, burnish'd without fear
 The brand, the buckler, and the spear—
 "Waiting to strive a happy strife,
 To war with falsehood to the knife,
 And not to lose the good of life—
 "Some hidden principle to move,
 To put together, part and prove,
 And mete the bounds of hate and love—
 "As far as might be, to carve out
 Free space for every human doubt,
 That the whole mind might orb about—
 "To search thro' all I felt or saw,
 The springs of life, the depths of awe,
 And reach the law within the law:
 "At least, not rotting like a weed,
 But, having sown some generous seed,
 Fruitful of further thought and deed,
 "To pass, when Life her light with-
 draws,
 Not void of righteous self-applause,
 Nor in a merely selfish cause—
 "In some good cause, not in mine own,
 To perish, wept for, honor'd, known,
 And like a warrior overthrown;
 "Whose eyes are dim with glorious
 tears,
 When, soil'd with noble dust, he hears
 His country's war-song thrill his ears:
 "Then dying of a mortal stroke,
 What time the foeman's line is broke,
 And all the war is roll'd in smoke."
 "Yea!" said the voice, "thy dream
 was good,
 While thou abodest in the bud.

It was the stirring of the blood.

"If nature put not forth her power
 About the opening of the flower,
 Who is it that could live an hour?"

"Then comes the check, the change,
 the fall,
 Pain rises up, old pleasures pall.
 There is one remedy for all.

"Yet hadst thou, thro' enduring pain,
 Link'd month to month with such a
 chain

Of knitted purport, all were vain.

"Thou hadst not between death and
 birth

Dissolved the riddle of the earth.
 So were thy labour little worth.

"That men with knowledge merely
 play'd,

I told thee—hardly nigher made,
 Tho' scaling slow from grade to grade;

"Much less this dreamer, deaf and
 blind,

Named man, may hope some truth to
 find,

That hears relation to the mind.

"For every worm beneath the moon
 Draws different threads, and late and
 soon

Spins, toiling out his own cocoon.

"Cry, faint not: either Truth is born
 Beyond the polar gleam forlorn,
 Or in the gateways of the morn

"Cry, faint not, climb: the summits
 slope

Beyond the furthest flights of hope,
 Wrapt in dense cloud from base to cope.

"Sometimes a little corner shines,
 As over rainy mist inclines
 A gleaming crag with belts of pines

"I will go forward, sayest thou,
 I shall not fail to find her now.
 Look up, the fold is on her brow.

"If straight thy track, or if oblique,
 Thou know'st not. Shadows thou dost
 strike,
 Embracing cloud, Ixion-like;

"And owning but a little more
 Than beasts, abidest lame and poor,
 Calling thyself a little lower

"Than angels. Cease to wail and
 brawl!

Why inch by inch to darkness crawl?
 There is one remedy for all."

"O dull, one-sided voice," said I,
 "Wilt thou make everything a lie,
 To flatter me that I may die?"

"I know that age to age succeeds,
 Blowing a noise of tongues and deeds,
 A dust of systems and of creeds.

"I cannot hide that some have striven,
 Achieving calm, to whom was given
 The joy that mixes man with Heaven:



"Who, rowing hard against the stream,
Saw distant gates of Eden gleam,
And did not dream it was a dream ;

"But heard, by secret transport led,
Ev'n in the charnels of the dead,
The murmur of the fountain-head—

"Which did accomplish their desire,
Bore and forebore, and did not tire,
Like Stephen, an unquenched fire.

"He heeded not reviling tones,
Nor sold his heart to idle moans,
Tho' curs'd and scorn'd, and bruised
with stones :

"But looking upward, full of grace,
He pray'd, and from a happy place
God's glory smote him on the face."

The sullen answer slid betwixt :

"Not that the grounds of hope were
fix'd,

The elements were kindlier mix'd."

I said, "I toil beneath the curse,
But, knowing not the universe,
I fear to slide from bad to worse.

"And that, in seeking to undo
One riddle, and to find the true,
I knit a hundred others new :

"Or that this anguish fleeting hence,
Unmanacled from bonds of sense,
Be fix'd and froz'n to permanence :

"For I go, weak from suffering here ;
Naked I go, and void of cheer :
What is it that I may not fear ?"

"Consider well," the voice replied :

"His face, that two hours since hath
died ;

Wilt thou find passion, pain or pride ?

"Will he obey when one commands ?
Or answer should one press his hands ?
He answers not, nor understands.

"His palms are folded on his breast :
There is no other thing express'd
But long disquiet merged in rest.

"His lips are very mild and meek :
Tho' one should smite him on the
cheek,

And on the month, he will not speak.

"His little daughter, whose sweet face
He kles'd, taking his last embrace,
Becomes dishonor to her race—

"His sons grow up that bear his name,
Some grow to honor, some to shame,—
But he is chill to praise or blame.

"He will not hear the north-wind rave,
Nor, moaning, household shelter crave
From winter rains that beat his grave.

"High up the vapors fold and swim :
About him broods the twilight dim :
The place he knew forgeteth him."

"If all be dark, vague voice," I said,
"These things are wrapt in doubt and
dread,

Nor canst thou show the dead are dead.

"The sap dries up : the plant declines.
A deeper tale my heart divines.
Know I not Death ? the outward
signs ?

"I found him when my years were
few ;

A shadow on the graves I knew,
And darkness in the village yew.

"From grave to grave the shadow
crept :

In her still place the morning wept :
Touch'd by his feet the daisy slept.

"The simple senses crown'd his head :
'Omega ! thou art Lord,' they said,
'We find no motion in the dead.'

"Why, if man rot in dreamless ease,
Should that plain fact, as taught by
these,

Not make him sure that he shall cease ?

"Who forged that other influence,
That heat of inward evidence,
By which he doubts against the sense ?

"He owns the fatal gift of eyes,
That read his spirit blindly wise,
Not simple as a thing that dies.

"Here sits he shaping wings to fly :
His heart forebodes a mystery :
He names the name Eternity.

"That type of Perfect in his mind
In Nature can he nowhere find.
He sows himself on every wind.

"He seems to hear a Heavenly Friend,
And thro' thick veils to apprehend
A labor working to an end.

"The end and the beginning vex
His reason : many things perplex
With motions, checks, and counter-
checks.

"He knows a baseness in his blood
At such strange war with something
good,

He may not do the thing he would.

"Heaven opens inward, chasms yawn,
Vast images in glimmering dawn,
Half shown, are broken and withdrawn.

"Ah ! sure within him and without,
Could his dark wisdom find it out,
There must be answer to his doubt.

"But thou canst answer not again.
With thine own weapon art thou slain,
Or thou wilt answer but in vain.

"The doubt would rest, I dare not
solve.

In the same circle we revolve.
Assurance only breeds resolve."

As when a hillow, blown against,
Falls back, the voice with which I
fenced

A little ceased, but recommenced.

"Where wert thou when thy father
play'd

In his free field, and pastime made,
A merry boy in sun and shade ?



"A merry boy they called him then,
He sat upon the knees of men
In days that never come again.

"Before the little ducts began
To feed thy bones with lime, and ran
Their course, till thou wert also man :

"Who took a wife, who rear'd his race,
Whose wrinkles gather'd on his face,
Whose troubles number with his
days :

"A life of nothings, nothing worth,
From that first nothing ere his birth
To that last nothing under earth ! "

"These words," I said, "are like the
rest,
No certain clearness, but at best
A vague suspicion of the breast :

"But if I grant, thou might'st defend
The thesis which thy words intend—
That to begin implies to end ;

"Yet how should I for certain hold,
Because my memory is so cold,
That I first was in human mould ?

"I cannot make this matter plain,
But I would shoot, howe'er in vain,
A random arrow from the brain.

'It may be that no life is found,
Which only to one engine bound
Falls off, but cycles always round.

'As old mythologies relate,
Some draught of Lethe might await
The slipping thro' from state to state.

"As here we find in trances, men
Forget the dream that happens then,
Until they fall in trance again.

"So might we, if our state were such
As one before, remember much,
For those two likes might meet and
touch.

"But, if I lapsed from nobler place,
Some legend of a fallen race
Alone might hint of my disgrace ;

"Some vague emotion of delight
In gazing up an Alpine height,
Some yearning toward the lamps of
night.

"Or if thro' lower lives I came—
Tho' all experience past became
Consolidate in mind and frame—

"I might forget my weaker lot ;
For is not our first year forgot ?
The haunts of memory echo not.

"And men, whose reason long was
blind,
From cells of madness unconfined,
Oft lose whole years of darker mind.

"Much more, if first I floated free,
As naked essence, must I be
Incompetent of memory :

"For memory dealing but with time,
And he with matter, should she climb
Beyond her own material prime ?

"Moreover, something is or seems,
That touches me with mystic gleams,
Like glimpses of forgotten dreams—

"Of something felt, like something
here ;
Of something done, I know not where ;
Such as no language may declare."

The still voice laugh'd. "I talk," said
he,
"Not with thy dreams. Suffice it thee
Thy pain is a reality."

"But thou," said I, "hast miss'd thy
mark,
Who sought'st to wreck my mortal ark,
By making all the horizon dark.

"Why not set forth, if I should do
This rashness, that which might ensue
With this old soul in organs new ?

"Whatever crazy sorrow saith,
No life that breathes with human
breath
Has ever truly long'd for death.

"'Tis life, whereof our nerves are
scant,
O life, not death, for which we pant ;
More life, and fuller, that I want."

I ceased, and sat as one forlorn.
Then said the voice, in quiet scorn,
"Behold it is the Sabbath morn."

And I arose, and I released
The casement, and the light increased
With freshness in the dawning east.

Like soften'd airs that blowing steal,
When mercs begin to uncongeal,
The sweet church bells began to peal.

On to God's house the people prest :
Passing the place where each must
rest,
Each enter'd like a welcome guest.

One walk'd between his wife and child,
With measured footfall firm and mild,
And now and then he gravely smiled.

The prudent partner of his blood
Lean'd on him, faithful, gentle, good,
Wearing the rose of womanhood.

And in their double love secure,
The little maiden walk'd demure,
Pacing with downward eyelids pure.

These three made unity so sweet,
My frozen heart began to heat,
Remembering its ancient heat.

I blest them, and they wander'd on :
I spoke, but answer came there none :
The dull and bitter voice was gone.

A second voice was at mine ear,
A little whisper silver-clear,
A murmur, "Be of better cheer."

As from some blissful neighborhood,
A notice faintly understood,
"I see the end, and know the good."



A little hint to solace woe,
 A hint, a whisper breathing low,
 "I may not speak of what I know."
 Like an Æolian harp that wakes
 No certain air, but overtakes
 Far thought with music that it makes:
 Such seem'd the whisper at my side :
 "What is it thou knowest, sweet
 voice?" I cried.
 "A hidden hope," the voice replied :
 So heavenly-toned, that in that hour
 From out my sullen heart a power
 Broke, like the rainbow from the
 shower,

To feel, altho' no tongue can prove,
 That every cloud, that spreads above
 And veileth love, itself is love.

And forth into the fields I went,
 And Nature's living motion lent
 The pulse of hope to discontent.

I wonder'd at the bounteous hours,
 The slow result of winter showers :
 You scarce could see the grass for
 flowers.

I wonder'd, while I paced along :
 The woods were fill'd so full with song,
 There seem'd no room for sense of
 wrong.

So variously seem'd all things wrought,
 I marvel'd how the mind was brought
 To anchor by one gloomy thought ;
 And wherefore rather I made choice
 To commune with that barren voice,
 Than him that said, "Rejoice ! re-
 joice !"

THE DAY DREAM.

PROLOGUE.

O LADY FLORA, let me speak :
 A pleasant hour has past away
 While, dreaming on your damask
 cheek,

The dewy sister-eyelids lay.
 As by the lattice you reclined,
 I went thro' many wayward moods
 To see you dreaming—and, behind,
 A summer crisp with shining woods.
 And I too dream'd, until at last

Across my fancy, brooding warm,
 The reflex of a legend past,
 And loosely settled into form.
 And would you have the thought I
 had,

And see the vision that I saw,
 Then take the broodery-frame, and add
 A crimson to the quaint Macaw,
 And I will tell it. Turn your face,
 Nor look with that too-earnest eye—
 The rhymes are dazzled from their
 place,
 And order'd words asunder fly.

THE SLEEPING PALACE.

I.

THE varying year with blade and sheaf
 Clothes and reclathes the happy
 plains ;

Here rests the sap within the leaf,
 Here stays the blood along the veins'
 Faint shadows, vapors lightly curi'd,
 Faint murmurs from the meadows
 come,
 Like hints and echoes of the world
 To spirits folded in the womb.

II.

Soft lustre bathes the range of urns
 On every slanting terrace-lawn.
 The fountain to his place returns
 Deep in the garden lake withdrawn.
 Here droops the banner on the tower,
 On the hall-hearths the festal fires,
 The peacock in his laurel bower,
 The parrot in his gilded wires.

III.

Roof-haunting martins warm their
 eggs :

In these, in those the life is stay'd.
 The mantles from the golden pegs
 Droop sleepily ; no sound is made,
 Not even of a gnat that sings.
 More like a picture seemeth all
 Than those old portraits of old kings,
 That watch the sleepers from the
 wall.

IV.

Here sits the Butler with a flask
 Between his knees, half-drain'd ; and
 there—
 The wrinkled steward at his task,
 The maid-of-honor blooming fair ;
 The page has caught her hand in his :
 Her lips are sever'd as to speak :
 His own are pouted to a kiss :
 The blush is fix'd upon her cheek.

V.

Till all the hundred summers pass,
 The beams, that thro' the Oriel
 shine,
 Make prisms in every carven glass,
 And beaker brimm'd with noble
 wine.
 Each baron at the banquet sleeps,
 Grave faces gather'd in a ring.
 His state the king reposing keeps.
 He must have been a jovial king.

VI.

All round a hedge upshoots, and shows
 At distance like a little wood ;
 Thorns, ivies, woodbine, mistletoes,
 And grapes with bunches red as
 blood ;
 All creeping plants, a wall of green
 Close-matted, burr and brake and
 brier,
 And glimpsing over these, just seen,
 High up, the topmost palace-spire.

VII.

When will the hundred summers die,
 And thought and time be born again,
 And never knowledge, drawing nigh,
 Bring truth that sways the soul of
 men ?



Here all things in their place remain,
As all were order'd, ages since.
Come, Care and Pleasure, Hope and
Pain,
And bring the fated fairy Prince.

THE SLEEPING BEAUTY.

I.

YEAR after year unto her feet,
She lying on her couch alone,
Across the purpled coverlet,
The maiden's jet-black hair has
grown,
On either side her tranced form
Forth streaming from a braid of
pearl:
The slumbrous light is rich and warm,
And moves not on the rounded curl.

II.

The silk star-broider'd coverlid
Unto her limbs itself doth mould
Languidly ever; and, amid
Her full black ringlets downward
roll'd,
Glow forth each softly-shadow'd arm
With bracelets of the diamond bright:
Her constant beauty doth inform
Stillness with love, and day with
light.

III.

She sleeps: her breathings are not
heard
In palace chambers far apart.
The fragrant tresses are not stirr'd
That lie upon her charmed heart.
She sleeps: on either hand upswells
The gold-fringed pillow lightly
prest:
She sleeps, nor dreams, but ever dwells
A perfect form in perfect rest.

THE ARRIVAL.

I.

ALL precious things, discover'd late,
To those that seek them issue forth;
For love in sequel works with fate,
And draws the veil from hidden
worth.
He travels far from other skies—
His mantle glitters on the rocks—
A fairy Prince, with joyful eyes,
And lighter-footed than the fox.

II.

The hodies and the bones of those
That strove in other days to pass,
Are wither'd in the thorny close,
Or scatter'd blanching on the grass.
He gazes on the silent dead:
"They perish'd in their daring
deeds."

This proverb flashes thro' his head,
"The many fail: the one succeeds."

III.

He comes, scarce knowing what he
seeks:
He breaks the hedge: he enters
there:

The color flies into his cheeks:
He trusts to light on something fair;
For all his life the charm did talk
About his path, and hover near
With words of promise in his walk,
And whisper'd voices at his ear.

IV.

More close and close his footsteps
wind:
The Magic Music in his heart
Beats quick and quicker, till he find
The quiet chamber far apart,
His spirit flutters like a lark,
He stoops—to kiss her—on his knee.
"Love, if thy tresses he so dark,
How dark those hidden eyes must
be!"

THE REVIVAL.

I.

A TOUCH, a kiss! the charm was snapt.
There rose a noise of striking clocks,
And feet that ran, and doors that clapt,
And harking dogs, and crowing
cocks;
A fuller light illumined all,
A breeze thro' all the garden swept,
A sudden hubbub shook the hall,
And sixty feet the fountain leapt.

II.

The hedge broke in, the banner blew,
The butler drank, the steward
scrawl'd,
The fire shot up, the martin flew,
The parrot scream'd, the peacock
squall'd,
The maid and page renew'd their strife,
The palace bang'd, and buzz'd and
clackt,
And all the long-pent stream of life
Dash'd downward in a cataract.

III.

And last with these the king awoke,
And in his chair himself uprear'd,
And yawn'd, and rubb'd his face, and
spoke,
"By holy rood, a royal heard!
How say you? we have slept, my lords.
My beard has grown into my lap."
The baron swore, with many words,
"Twas but an after-dinner's nap.

IV.

"Pardy," returned the king, "but
still
My joints are somewhat stiff or so.
My lord, and shall we pass the hill
I mention'd half an hour ago?"
The chancellor, sedate and vain,
In courteous words return'd reply:
But dallied with his golden chain,
And, smiling, put the question by.

THE DEPARTURE.

I.

AND on her lover's arm she leant,
And round her waist she felt it fold,



And far across the hills they went
 In that new world which is the old :
 Across the hills, and far away
 Beyond their utmost purple rim,
 And deep into the dying day
 The happy princess follow'd him.

II.

"I'd sleep another hundred years,
 O love, for such another kiss ;"
 "O wake for ever, love," she hears,
 "O love, 'twas such as this and this."
 And o'er them many a sliding star,
 And many a merry wind was borne,
 And, stream'd thro' many a golden bar,
 The twilight melted into morn.

III.

"O eyes long laid in happy sleep !"
 "O happy sleep, that lightly fled !"
 "O happy kiss, that woke thy sleep !"
 "O love, thy kiss would wake the
 dead !"
 And o'er them many a flowing range
 Of vapour buoy'd the crescent-bark,
 And, rapt thro' many a rosy change,
 The twilight died into the dark.

IV.

"A hundred summers ! can it be ?
 And whither goest thou, tell me
 where ?"
 "O seek my father's court with me,
 For there are greater wonders there."
 And o'er the hills, and far away
 Beyond their utmost purple rim,
 Beyond the night, across the day,
 Thro' all the world she follow'd him.

MORAL.

I.

So, Lady Flora, take my lay,
 And if you find no moral there,
 Go, look in any glass and say,
 What moral is in being fair.
 O, to what uses shall we put
 The wildweed-flower that simply
 blows ?
 And is there any moral shut
 Within the bosom of the rose ?

II.

But any man that walks the mead,
 In bud or blade, or bloom, may find,
 According as his humors lead,
 A meaning suited to his mind.
 And liberal applications lie
 In Art like Nature, dearest friend ;
 So 'twere to cramp its use, if I
 Should hook it to some useful end.

L'ENVOI.

I.

You shake your head. A' random
 string
 Your finer female sense offends.
 Well—were it not a pleasant thing
 To fall asleep with all one's friends ;
 To pass with all our social ties
 To silence from the paths of men ;
 And every hundred years to rise

And learn the world, and sleep again,
 To sleep thro' terms of mighty wars,
 And wake on science grown to more,
 On secrets of the brain, the stars,
 As wild as aught of fairy lore ;
 And all that else the years will show,
 The Poet-forms of stronger hours,
 The vast Republics that may grow,
 The Federations and the Powers ;
 Titanic forces taking birth
 In divers seasons, divers climes ;
 For we are Ancients of the earth,
 And in the morning of the times.

II.

So sleeping, so aroused from sleep
 Thro' sunny decades new and strange,
 Or gay quinqueniads would we reap
 The flower and quintessence of
 change.

III.

Ah, yet would I—and would I might !
 So much your eyes my fancy take—
 Be still the first to leap to light
 That I might kiss those eyes awake !
 For, am I right, or am I wrong,
 To choose your own you did not care ;
 You'd have *my* moral from the song,
 And I will take my pleasure there :
 And, am I right or am I wrong,
 My fancy, ranging thro' and thro',
 To search a meaning for the song,
 Perforce will still revert to you ;
 Nor finds a closer truth than this
 All-graceful head, so richly curl'd,
 And evermore a costly kiss
 The prelude to some brighter world.

IV.

For since the time when Adam first
 Embraced his Eve in happy hour,
 And every bird of Eden burst
 In carol, every bud to flower,
 What eyes, like thine, have waken'd
 hopes ?
 What lips, like thine, so sweetly
 join'd ?
 Where on the double rosebud droops
 The fulness of the pensive mind :
 Which all too dearly self-involved,
 Yet sleeps a dreamless sleep to me ;
 A sleep by kisses undissolved,
 That lets thee neither hear nor see :
 But break it. In the name of wife,
 And in the rights that name may
 give,
 Are clasp'd the moral of thy life,
 And that for which I care to live.

EPILOGUE.

So, Lady Flora, take my lay,
 And, if you find a meaning there,
 O whisper to your glass, and say,
 "What wonder, if he thinks me
 fair ?"
 What wonder I was all unwise,
 To shape the song for your delight
 Like long-tail'd birds of Paradise,
 That float thro' Heaven, and cannot
 light ?



Or old-world trains, upheld at court
By Cupid-boys of blooming hue —
But take it — earnest wed with sport,
And either sacred unto you.

AMPHION.

My father left a park to me,
But it is wild and barren,
A garden too with scarce a tree,
And waster than a warren ;
Yet say the neighbors when they call,
It is not bad but good land,
And in it is the germ of all
That grows within the woodland.
O had I lived when song was great
In days of old Amphion,
And ta'en my fiddle to the gate,
Nor cared for seed or scion !
And had I lived when song was great,
And legs of trees were limber,
And ta'en my fiddle to the gate,
And fiddled in the timber !
'Tis said he had a tuneful tongue,
Such happy intonation,
Wherever he sat down and sung
He left a small plantation ;
Wherever in a lonely grove
He set up his forlorn pipes,
The gouty oaks began to move,
And flounder into hornpipes
The mountain stirr'd its bushy crown,
And, as tradition teaches,
Young ashes pirouetted down
Coquetting with young beeches ;
And briony-vine and ivy-wreath
Ran forward to his rhyming,
And from the valleys underneath
Came little copses climbing.
The linden broke her ranks and rent
The woodbine wreaths that bind her,
And down the middle buzz ! she went
With all her bees behind her ;
The poplars, in long order due,
With cypress promenaded,
The shock-head willows two and two
By rivers galloped.
Came wet-shot alder from the wave,
Came yaws, a dismal coterie ;
Each pluck'd his one foot from the
grave,
Poussetting with a sice-tree:
Old elms came breaking from the vine,
The vine stream'd out to follow,
And, sweating resin, plump'd the pine
From many a cloudy hollow.
And wasn't it a sight to see,
When, ere his song was ended,
Like some great landslip, tree by tree,
The country-side descended ;
And shepherds from the mountain-
caves
Look'd down, half-pleas'd, half-
frighten'd,
As dash'd about the drunken leaves
The random sunshine lighten'd !
Oh ! nature first was fresh to men,
And wanton without measure ;

So youthful and so flexible then,
You moved her at your pleasure.
Twang out, my fiddle ! shake the
twigs !

And make her dance attendance,
Blow, flute, and stir the stiff-set
sprigs,
And scirrhous roots and tendons.

'Tis vain ! in such a brassy age
I could not move a thistle ;
The very sparrows in the hedge
Scarce answer to my whistle ;
Or at the most, when three-parts-sick
With strumming and with scraping,
A jackase heehaws from the rick,
The passive oxen gaping.

But what is that I hear ? a sound
Like sleepy counsel pleading ;
O Lord ! — 'tis in my neighbour's
ground,

The modern Muses reading.
They read Botanic Treatises,
And Works on Gardening thro'
there,

And Methods of transplanting trees,
To look as if they grew there.
The wither'd Misses ! how they prose
O'er books of travell'd seamen,
And show you slips of all that grows
From England to Van Diemen.
They read in arbors clipt and cut,
And alleys, faded summer,
By squares of tropic places shut
And warm'd in crystal cases.

But these, tho' fed with careful dirt,
Are neither green nor sappy ;
Half-conscious of the garden-squirt,
The spindlings look unhappy.
Better to me the meanest weed
That blows upon its mountain,
The vilest herb that runs to seed
Beside its native fountain.

And I must work thro' months of toil,
And years of cultivation,
Upon my proper patch of soil
To grow my own plantation.
I'll take the showers as they fall,
I will not vex my bosom :
Enough if at the end of all
A little garden blossom.

ST. AGNES' EVE.

DEEP on the convent-roof the snows
Are sparkling to the moon:
My breath to heaven like vapor goes:
May my soul follow soon !
The shadows of the convent-towers
Slant down the snowy sward,
Still creeping with the creeping hours
That lead me to my Lord :
Make Thou my spirit pure and clear
As are the frosty skies,
Or this first snowdrop of the year
That in my bosom lies.

As these white robes are soil'd and
dark,



To yonder shining ground ;
 As this pale taper's earthly spark,
 To yonder argent round ;
 So shows my soul before the Lamb,
 My spirit before Thee ;
 So in mine earthly house I am,
 To that I hope to be.
 Break up the heavens, O Lord ! and
 far,
 Thro' all yon starlight keen,
 Draw me, thy bride, a glittering star,
 In raiment white and clean.
 He lifts me to the golden doors ;
 The flashes come and go ;
 All heaven bursts her starry floors,
 And strews her lights below,
 And deepens on and up ! the gates
 Roll back, and far within
 For me the Heavenly Bridegroom
 waits,
 To make me pure of sin.
 The sabbaths of Eternity,
 One sabbath deep and wide
 A light upon the shining sea —
 The Bridegroom with his bride !

SIR GALAHAD. †

My good blade carves the casques of
 men,
 My tough lance thrusteth sure,
 My strength is as the strength of ten,
 Because my heart is pure.
 The shattering trumpet shrilleth high,
 The hard brands shiver on the steel,
 The splinter'd spear-shafts crack and
 fly,
 The horse and rider reel :
 They reel, they roll in clanging lists,
 And when the tide of combat stands,
 Perfume and flowers fall in showers,
 That lightly rain from ladies' hands.
 How sweet are looks that ladies bend
 On whom their favors fall !
 For them I hattle till the end,
 To save from shame and thrall :
 But all my heart is drawn above,
 My knees are bow'd in crypt and
 shrine :
 I never felt the kiss of love,
 Nor maiden's hand in mine.
 More bounteous aspects on me beam,
 Me mightier transports move and
 thrill ;
 So keep I fair thro' faith and prayer
 A virgin heart in work and will.
 When down the stormy crescent goes,
 A light before me swims.
 Between dark stems the forest glows,
 I hear a noise of hymns :
 Then by some secret shrine I ride ;
 I hear a voice, but none are there ;
 The stalls are void, the doors are wide,
 The tapers burning fair.
 Fair gleams the snowy altar cloth,
 The silver vessels sparkle clean,
 The shrill bell rings, the censers wings,
 And solemn chants resound be-
 tween.

Sometimes on lonely mountain-meres
 I find a magic bark ;
 I leap on board : no helmsman steers :
 I float till all is dark.
 A gentle sound, and awful light !
 Three angels bear the holy Grail :
 With folded feet, in stoles of white,
 On sleeping wings they sail.
 Ah, blessed vision ! blood of God !
 My spirit beats her mortal bare,
 As down dark tides the glory slides,
 And star-like mingles with the stars

When on my goodly charger borne
 Thro' dreaming towns I go,
 The cock crows ere the Christmas
 morn,
 The streets are dumb with snow.
 The tempest crackles on the leads,
 And, ringing, springs from brand and
 mail ;
 But o'er the dark a glory spreads,
 And gilds the driving hail.
 I leave the plain, I climb the height ;
 No brachy thicket shelter yields ;
 But blessed forms in whistling storms
 Fly o'er waste fens and windy fields

A maiden knight—to me is given
 Such hope, I know not fear ;
 I yearn to breathe the airs of heaven
 That often meet me here.
 I muse on you that will not cease,
 Pure spaces clothed in living beams.
 Pure lilies of eternal peace,
 Whose odors haunt my dreams ;
 And, stricken by an angel's hand,
 This mortal armor that I wear,
 This weight and size, this heart and
 eyes,
 Are touch'd, are turn'd to finest air.
 The clouds are broken in the sky,
 And thro' the mountain-walls
 A rolling organ-harmony
 Swells up, and shakes and falls.
 Then move the trees, the copses nod,
 Wings flutter, voices hover clear :
 " O just and faithful knight of God !
 Ride on ! the prize is near."
 So pass I hostel, hall, and grange ;
 By bridge and ford, by park and pale,
 All-arm'd I ride, whate'er betide,
 Until I find the holy Grail.

EDWARD GRAY.

SWEET Emma Moreland of yonder
 town
 Met me walking on yonder way,
 " And have you lost your heart ?" she
 said,
 " And are you married yet, Edward
 Gray ?"
 Sweet Emma Moreland spoke to me :
 Bitterly weeping I turn'd away :
 " Sweet Emma Moreland, love no more
 Can touch the heart of Edward Gray.



"Ellen Adair she loved me well,
Against her father's and mother's
will :

To-day I sat for an hour and wept,
By Ellen's grave, on the windy hill.

"Shy she was, and I thought her cold;
Thought her proud, and tied over the
sea;

Fill'd I was with folly and spite,
When Ellen Adair was dying for me.

"Cruel, cruel the words I said !
Cruelly came they back to-day :
'You're too slight and fickle,' I said,
'To trouble the heart of Edward
Gray.'

"There I put my face in the grass—
Whisper'd, 'Listen to my despair :
I repent me of all I did :
Speak a little, Ellen Adair !'

"Then I took a pencil, and wrote
On the mossy stone, as I lay,
'Here lies the body of Ellen Adair ;
And here the heart of Edward Gray !'

"Love may come, and love may go,
And fly, like a bird, from tree to tree;
But I will love no more, no more,
Till Ellen Adair come back to me.

"Bitterly wept I over the stone :
Bitterly weeping I turn'd away :
There lies the body of Ellen Adair !
And there the heart of Edward
Gray !"

WILL WATERPROOF'S LYRICAL MONOLOGUE.

MADE AT THE COCK.

O PLUMP head waiter at The Cock,
To which I most resort,
How goes the time? 'Tis five o'clock.
Go fetch a pint of port :
But let it not be such as that
You set before chance-comers,
But such whose father-grape grew fat
On Lusitanian summers.

No vain libation to the Muse,
But may she still be kind,
And whisper lovely words, and use
Her influence on the mind,
To make me write my random rhymes,
Ere they be half-forgotten ;
Nor add and alter, many times,
Till all be ripe and rotten.

I pledge her, and she comes and dips
Her laurel in the wine,
And lays it thrice upon my lips,
'These favor'd lips of mine ;
Until the charm have power to make
New lifeblood warm the bosom,
And barren commonplaces break
In full and kindly blossom.

I pledge her silent at the board ;
Her gradual fingers steal
And touch upon the master-chord
Of all I felt and feel.

Old wishes, ghosts of broken plans,
And phantom hopes assemble ;
And that child's heart within the man's
Begins to move and tremble.

Thro' many an hour of summer suns,
By many pleasant ways,
Against its fountain upward runs
The current of my days :
I kiss the lips I once have kiss'd ;
The gas-light wavers dimmer.
And softly, thro' a vinous mist,
My college friendships glimmer.

I grow in worth, and wit, and sense,
Unboding critic-pen,
Or that eternal wend of pence,
Which vexes public men,
Who hold their hands to all, and cry
For that which all deny them—
Who sweep the crossing, wet or dry,
And all the world go by them.

Ah yet, tho' all the world forsake,
Tho' fortune clip my wings,
I will not cramp my heart, nor take
Half-views of men and things.
Let Whig and Tory stir their blood ;
There must be stormy weather ;
But for some true result of good
All parties work together.

Let there be thistles, there are grapes ;
If old things, there are new :
Ten thousand broken lights and shapes,
Yet glimpses of the true.
Let riffs be rife in prose and rhymes,
We lack not rhymes and reasons,
As on this whirligig of Time
We circle with the seasons.

This earth is rich in man and maid ;
With fair horizons bound :
This whole wide earth of light and
shade

Comes out, a perfect round.
High over roaring Temple-bar,
And, set in Heaven's third story,
I look at all things as they are,
But thro' a kind of glory.

Head-waiter, honor'd by the guest
Half-mused, or reeling ripe,
The pint, you brought me, was the best
That ever came from pipe.
But tho' the port surpasses praise,
My nerves have dealt with stiffer.
Is there some magic in the place ?
Or do my peptics differ ?

For since I came to live and learn,
No pint of white or red
Had ever half the power to turn
This wheel within my head,
Which bears a season'd brain about,
Unsubject to confusion,
Tho' scak'd and saturate, out and out,
Thro' every convulsion.

For I am of a numerous house,
With many kinsmen gay,
Where long and largely we carouse
As who shall say me nay :



Each month, a birth-day coming on,
 We drink delaying trouble,
 Or sometimes two would meet in one,
 And then we drank it double ;
 Whether the vintage, yet unkept,
 Had relish fiery-new,
 Or, elbow-deep in sawdust, slept,
 As old as Waterloo ;
 Or stow'd (when classic Canning died)
 In musty bins and chambers,
 Had cast upon its crusty side
 The gloom of ten Decembers.

The Muse, the jolly Muse, it is !
 She answer'd to my call,
 She changes with that mood or this,
 Is all-in-all to all :
 She lit the spark within my throat,
 To make my blood run quicker,
 Used all her fiery will, and smote
 Her life into the liquor.

And hence this halo lives about
 The waiter's hands, that reach
 To each his perfect pint of stout,
 His proper chop to each.
 He looks not like the common breed
 That with the napkin dally ;
 I think he came like Ganymede,
 From some delightful valley.

The Cock was of a larger egg
 Than modern poultry drop,
 Stept forward on a firmer leg,
 And cramm'd a plumper crop :
 Upon an ampler dunghill trod,
 Crow'd lustier late and early,
 Sipt wine from silver, praising God,
 And raked in golden barley.

A private life was all his joy,
 Till in a court he saw
 A something-pottle-boddy boy
 That knuckled at the taw :
 He stoop'd and clutch'd him, fair and
 good,
 Flew over roof and casement :
 His brothers of the weather stood
 Stock-still for sheer amazement.
 But he, by farmstead, thorpe and
 spire,
 And follow'd with acclaims,
 A sign to many a staring shire
 Came crowing over Thames,
 Right down by smoky Paul's they bore,
 Till, where the street grows straiter,
 One fix'd for ever at the door,
 And one became head-waiter.

But whither would my fancy go ?
 How out of place she makes
 The violet of a legend blow
 Among the chops and steaks !
 'Tis but a steward of the can,
 One shade more plump than com-
 mon ;
 As just and mere a serving-man
 As any, born of woman.

I ranged too high: what draws me down
 Into the common day ?
 Is it the weight of that half-crown,

Which I shall have to pay ?
 For something duller than at first,
 Nor wholly comfortable,
 I sit (my empty glass reversed),
 And thrumming on the table :

Half fearful that, with self at strife
 I take myself to task ;
 Lest of the fulness of my life
 I leave an empty flask :
 For I had hope, by something rare,
 To prove myself a poet :
 But while I plan and plan, my hair
 Is gray before I know it.

So fares it since the years began,
 Till they be gather'd up ;
 The truth, that flies the flowing-can,
 Will haunt the vacant cup :
 And others' follies teach us not,
 Nor much their wisdom teaches ;
 And most, of sterling worth, is what
 Our own experience preaches.

Ah, let the rusty theme alone !
 We know not what we know.
 But for my pleasant hour, 'tis gone,
 'Tis gone, and let it go.
 'Tis gone : a thousand such have slipt
 Away from my embraces,
 And fall'n into the dusty crypt
 Of darken'd forms and faces.

Go, therefore, thou! thy betters went
 Long since, and came no more ;
 With peals of genial clamor sent
 From many a tavern-door ;
 With twisted quirks and happy hits,
 From misty men of letters ;
 The tavern-hours of mighty wits—
 Thine elders and thy betters.

Hours, when the Poet's words and
 looks
 Had yet their native glow :
 Nor yet the fear of little books
 Had made him talk for show ;
 But, all his vast heart sherris-warm'd,
 He flash'd his random speeches ;
 Ere days, that deal in ana, swarm'd
 His literary leeches.

So mix for ever with the past,
 Like all good things on earth !
 For should I prize thee, couldst thou
 last,
 At half thy real worth ?
 I hold it good, good things should pass:
 With time I will not quarrel :
 It is but yonder empty glass
 That makes me maudlin-moral.

Head-waiter of the chop-house here,
 To which I most resort,
 I too must part: I hold thee dear
 For this good pint of port.
 For this, thou shalt from all things
 suck
 Marrow of mirth and laughter ;
 And, whereso'er thou move, good luck
 Shall ring her old shoe after.
 But thou wilt never move from hence,



The sphere thy fate allots :
 Thy latter days increased with pence
 Go down among the pots :
 Thou hatetest by the greasy gleam
 In haunts of bungry sinners,
 Old hoxes, larded with the steam
 Of thirty thousand dinners.

*We fret, we fume, would shift our
 skins,
 Would quarrel with our lot ;
 Thy care is, under polish'd tins,
 To serve the hot-and-hot ;
 To come and go, and come again,
 Returning like the pewit,
 And watch'd by silent gentlemen,
 That trifle with the cruet.*

Live long, ere from thy topmost head
 The thick-set hazel dies ;
 Long, ere the hateful crow shall tread
 The corners of thine eyes :
 Live long, nor feel in head or chest
 Our changeful equinoxes,
 Till mellow Death, like some late guest
 Shall call thee from the hoxes.

But when he calls, and thou shalt cease
 To pace the gritted floor,
 And, laying down an unctuous lease
 Of life, shalt earn no more ;
 No carved cross-bones, the types of
 Death,
 Shall show thee past to Heaven :
 But carved cross-pipes, and, under-
 neath,
 A pint-pot neatly graven.

TO ——— .

AFTER READING A LIFE AND LETTERS.

"Cursed be he that moves my bones."
Shakespeare's Epitaph.

You might have won the Poet's name,
 If such be worth the winning now,
 And gain'd a laurel for your brow
 Of sounder leaf than I can claim ;
 But you have made the wiser choice,
 A life that moves to gracious ends
 Thro' troops of unrecording friends,
 A deedful life, a silent voice :
 And you have miss'd the irreverent
 doom

Of those that wear the Poet's crown :
 Hereafter, neither knave nor clown
 Shall hold their orgies at your tomb.
 For now the Poet cannot die
 Nor leave his music as of old,
 But round him ere he scarce be cold
 Begins the scandal and the cry :

Proclaim the faults he would not
 show :
 Break lock and seal : betray the trust :
 Keep nothing sacred : 'tis but just
 The many-headed beast should know."
 Ah shameless ! for he did but sing
 A song that pleased us from its
 worth ;
 No public life was his on earth,

No blazon'd statesman he, nor king.
 He gave the people of his best :
 His worst he kept, his best he gave.
 My Shakespeare's curse on clown
 and knave

Who will not let his ashes rest !
 Who make it seem more sweet to be
 The little life of bank and briar,
 The bird that pipes his lone desires
 And dies unheard within his tree,
 Than he that warbles long and loud
 And drops at Glory's temple-gates,
 For whom the carrion vulture waits
 To tear his heart before the crowd !

TO E. L., ON HIS TRAVELS IN
 GREECE.

ILLYRIAN woodlands, echoing falls
 Of water, sheets of summer glass,
 The long divine Peneian pass,
 The vast Akrokeraunian walls.

Tomohrit, Athos, all things fair,
 With such a pencil, such a pen,
 You shadow forth to distant men,
 I read and felt that I was there :
 And trust me while I turn'd the page
 And track'd you still on classic
 ground,
 I grew in gladness till I found
 My spirits in the golden age.

For me the torrent ever pour'd
 And glisten'd—here and there alone
 The broad-limb'd Gods at random
 thrown
 By fountain-urns :—and Naiads oar'd.

A glimmering shoulder under gloom
 Of cavern pillars ; on the swell
 The silver lily heaved and fell ;
 And many a slope was rich in bloom.
 From him that on the mountain lea
 By dancing rivulets fed his flocks,
 To him who sat upon the rocks,
 And fluted to the morning sea.

LADY CLARE.

It was the time when lites blow,
 And clouds are highest up in air,
 Lord Ronald brought a lily-white doe
 To give his cousin, Lady Clare.

I trow they did not part in scorn :
 Lovers long-betroth'd were they :
 They too will wed the morrow morn :
 God's blessing on the day !

"He does not love me for my birth,
 Nor for my lands so broad and fair,
 He loves me for my own true worth,
 And that is well," said Lady Clare.

In there came old Alice the nurse,
 Said, "Who was this that went from
 thee ?"

"It was my cousin," said Lady Clare,
 "To-morrow he weds with me."



"O God be thank'd!" said Alice the nurse,

"That all comes round so just and fair;

Lord Ronald is heir of all your lands,
And you are not the Lady Clare."

"Are ye out of your mind, my nurse,
my nurse?"

Said Lady Clare, "that ye speak so wild?"

"As God's above," said Alice the nurse,

"I speak the truth: you are my child."

"The old Earl's daughter died at my breast;

I speak the truth, as I live by bread!

I buried her like my own sweet child,
And put my child in her stead."

"Falsely, falsely have ye done,
O mother," she said, "if this be true,

To keep the best man under the sun
So many years from his due."

"Nay now, my child," said Alice the nurse,

"But keep the secret for your life,
And all you have will be Lord Ronald's,

When you are man and wife."

"If I'm a beggar horn," she said,
"I will speak out, for I dare not lie.

Pull off, pull off, the brooch of gold,
And fling the diamond necklace by."

"Nay now, my child," said Alice the nurse,

"But keep the secret all ye can."
She said, "Not so: but I will know

If there be any faith in man"

"Nay now, what faith?" said Alice the nurse,

"The man will cleave unto his right."

"And he shall have it," the lady replied,

"Tho' I should die to-night."

"Yet give one kiss to your mother - dear!

Alas, my child, I sinn'd for thee."

"O mother, mother, mother," she said,

"So strange it seems to me.

"Yet here's a kiss for my mother dear,
My mother dear, if this be so,

And lay your hand upon my head,
And bless me, mother, e'er I go."

She clad herself in a russet gown,
She was no longer Lady Clare:

She went by dale, and she went by
down,

With a single rose in her hair.

The lily-white doe Lord Ronald had brought

Leapt up from where she lay,
Dropt her head in the maiden's hand,
And follow'd her all the way.

Down stept Lord Ronald from his tower;

"O Lady Clare, you shame your worth!

Why come you drest like a village maid,

That are the flower of the earth?"

"If I come drest like a village maid,
I am but as my fortunes are:

I am a beggar horn," she said,

"And not the Lady Clare."

"Play me no tricks," said Lord Ronald,

"For I am yours in word and in deed.

Play me no tricks," said Lord Ronald,

"Your riddle is hard to read."

O and proudly stood she up!

Her heart within her did not fail:

She look'd into Lord Ronald's eyes,

And told him all her nurse's tale.

He laugh'd a laugh of merry scorn;

He turned and kiss'd her where she stood:

"If you you are not the heires born,
And I," said he, "the next in blood—

"If you are not the heires born,
And I," said he, "the lawful heir,

We two will wed to-morrow morn,
And you shall still be Lady Clare."

THE LORD OF BURLEIGH.

In her ear he whispers gayly,

"If my heart by signs can tell,

Maiden, I have watch'd thee daily,

And I think thou lov'st me well."

She replies, in accents fainter,

"There is none I love like thee."

He is but a landscape painter,

And a village maiden she.

He to lips, that fondly falter,

Presses his without reproof:

Leads her to the village altar,

And they leave her father's roof.

"I can make no marriage present:

Little can I give my wife.

Love will make our cottage pleasant,

And I love thee more than life."

They by parks and lodges going

See the lordly castles stand:

Summer woods, about them blowing,

Made a murmur in the land.

From deep thought himself he rousea,

Says to her that loves him well,

"Let us see these handsome houses

Where the wealthy nobles dwell."

So she goes by him attended,

Hears him lovingly converse,

Sees whatever fair and splendid

Lay betwixt his home and hers;

Parks with oak and chestnut shady,

Parks and order'd gardens great,

Ancient homes of lord and lady,

Built for pleasure and for state,



All he shows her makes him dearer :
 Evermore she seems to gaze
 On that cottage growing nearer,
 Where they twain will spend their
 days.
 O but she will love him truly !
 He shall have a cheercful home ;
 She will order all things duly,
 When beneath his roof they come.
 Thus her heart rejoices greatly,
 Till a gateway she discerns
 With armorial bearings stately,
 And beneath the gate she turns ;
 Sees a mansion more majestic
 Than all those she saw before ;
 Many a gallant gay domestic,
 Bows before him at the door.
 And they speak in gentle murmur,
 When they answer to his call,
 While he treads with footstep firmer,
 Leading on from hall to hall.
 And, while now she wonders blindly,
 Nor the meaning can divine,
 Proudly turns he round and kindly,
 " All of this is mine and thine."
 Here he lives in state and bounty,
 Lord of Burleigh, fair and free,
 Not a lord in all the county
 Is so great a lord as he.
 All at once the color flushes
 Her sweet face from brow to chin :
 As it were with shame she blushes,
 And her spirit changed within.
 Then her countenance all over
 Pale again as death did prove :
 But he clasp'd her like a lover,
 And he cheer'd her soul with love.
 So she strove against her weakness,
 Tho' at times her spirit sank :
 Shaped her heart with woman's meek-
 ness
 To all duties of her rank :
 And a gentle consort made he,
 And her gentle mind was such
 That she grew a noble lady,
 And the people loved her much.
 But a trouble weigh'd upon her,
 And perplex'd her, night and morn,
 With the burden of an honor
 Unto which she was not born.
 Faint she grew and ever fainter,
 And she murmur'd, " O, that he
 Were once more that landscape-paint-
 er,
 Which did win my heart from me !"
 So she droop'd and droop'd before
 him,
 Fading slowly from his side :
 Three fair children first she bore him,
 Then before her time she died.
 Weeping, weeping late and early,
 Walking up and pacing down,
 Deeply mourn'd the Lord of Burleigh,
 Burleigh-house by Stamford-town.
 And he came to look upon her,
 And he look'd at her and said,
 " Bring the dress and put it on her,
 That she wore when she was wed."
 Then her people, softly treading,
 Bore to earth her body, drest

In the dress that she was wed in,
 That her spirit might have rest.

SIR LAUNCELOT AND QUEEN
 GUINEVERE.

A FRAGMENT.

LIKE souls that balance joy and pain,
 With tears and smiles from heaven
 again

The maiden Spring upon the plain
 Came in a sun-lit fall of rain.

In crystal vapor everywhere,
 Blue isles of heaven laugh'd between,
 And far, in forest-deeps unseen,
 The topmost elm-tree gather'd green
 From draughts of balmy air.

Sometimes the linnet piped his song ;
 Sometimes the throistle whistled
 strong :

Sometimes the sparrowhawk, wheel'd
 along,

Hush'd all the groves from fear of
 wrong :

By grassy capes with fuller sound
 In curves the yellowing river ran,
 And drooping chestnut-buds began
 To spread into the perfect fan,
 Above the teeming ground.

Then, in the boyhood of the year,
 Sir Launcelot and Queen Guinevere
 Rode thro' the covert of the deer,
 With blissful treble ringing clear.

She seem'd a part of joyous
 Spring ;

A gown of grass-green silk she wore,
 Buckled with golden clasps before,
 A light-green tuft of plumes she bore
 Closed in a golden ring.

Now on some twisted ivy-net,

Now by some tinkling rivulet,

In mosses mixt with violet

Her cream-white mule his pastern set:
 And fleetly now she skim'd the
 plains

Than she whose elfin prancer springs
 By night to eery warblings,
 When all the glimmering moorland
 rings

With jingling bride-reins.
 As she fled fast thro' sun and shade,

The happy winds upon her play'd,

Blowing the ringlet from the braid:

She look'd so lovely, as she sway'd

The rein with dainty finger-tips,

A man had given all other bliss,

And all his worldly worth for this,

To waste his whole heart in one kiss

Upon her perfect lips.

A FAREWELL.

FLOW down, cold rivulet, to the sea ;
 Thy tribute wave deliver :

No more by thee my steps shall be,

For ever and for ever.

Flow, softly flow, by lawn and lea,

A rivulet then a river :





No where by thee my steps shall be,
For ever and for ever.

But here will sigh thine alder tree,
And here thine aspen shiver;
And here by thee will hum the bee,
For ever and for ever.

A thousand suns will stream on thee,
A thousand moons will quiver:
But not by thee my steps shall be,
For ever and for ever.

THE BEGGAR MAID.

HER arms across her breast she laid;
She was more fair than words can
say:

Bare-footed came the beggar maid
Before the king Cophetua.
In robe and crown the king stepped
down,

To meet and greet her on her way;
"It is no wonder," said the lords,
"She is more beautiful than day."

As shines the moon in clouded skies,
She in her poor attire was seen:
One praised her ankles, one her eyes,
One her dark hair and lovesome
mien.

So sweet a face, such angel grace,
In all that land had never been:
Cophetua sware a royal oath:
"This beggar maid shall be my
queen!"

THE VISION OF SIN.

I.

I HAD a vision when the night was
late;
A youth came riding toward a palace-
gate.
He rode a horse with wings, that would
have flown,
But that his heavy rider kept him
down.
And from the palace came a child of
sin,
And took him by the curls and let him
in,
Where sat a company with heated
eyes,
Expecting when a fountain should
arise:
A sleepy light upon their brows and
lips—
As when the sun, a crescent of eclipse,
Dreams over lake and lawn, and isles
and capes—
Suffused them, sitting, lying, languid
shapes,
By heaps of gourds, and skins of wine,
and piles of grapes.

II.

Then methought I heard a mellow
sound,
Gathering up from all the lower
ground;
Narrowing in to where they sat as-
sembled

Low voluptuous music winding trem-
bled,

Wov'n in circles: they that heard it
sigh'd,
Panted hand in hand with faces pale,
Swung themselves, and in low tones
replied;

Till the fountain spouted, showering
wide
Sleet of diamond-drift and pearly hail;
Then the music touch'd the gates and
died;

Rose again from where it seem'd to
fall,
Storm'd in orbs of song, a growing
gale;

Till thronging in and in, to where they
waited,
As 'twere a hundred-throated nightin-
gale,

The strong tempestuous treble
throbb'd and palpitated;
Ran into its giddiest whirl of sound,
Caught the sparkles, and in circles,
Purple gauzes, golden hazes, liquid
mazes,

Flung the torrent rainbow round:
Then they started from their places,
Moved with violence, changed in hue,
Caught each other with wild grim-
aces,

Half-invisible to the view,
Wheeling with precipitate paces
To the melody, till they flew,
Hair, and eyes, and limbs, and faces,
Twisted hard in fierce embraces,
Like to Furies, like to Graces,
Dash'd, together in blinding dew:
Till, kill'd with some luxurious agony,
The nerve-dissolving melody
Flutter'd headlong from the sky.

III.

And then I look'd up toward a moun-
tain-tract,
That girt the region with high cliff and
lawn:
I saw that every morning, far with-
drawn
Beyond the darkness and the cataract,
God made himself an awful rose of
dawn,
Unheeded: and detaching, fold by
fold,
From those still heights, and, slowly
drawing near,
A vapor heavy, hueless, formless,
cold,
Came floating on for many a month
and year,
Unheeded: and I thought I would
have spoken,
And warn'd that madman ere it grew
too late:
But, as in dreams, I could not. Mine
was broken.
When that cold vapor touch'd the
palace gate,
And link'd again. I saw within my
head



A gray and gap-tooth'd man as lean as death,
Who slowly rode across a wither'd heath,
And lighted at a ruin'd inn, and said:

IV.

"Wrinkled ostler, grim and thin!
Here is custom come your way;
Take my brute, and lead him in,
Stuff his ribs with mouldy hay.

"Bitter barmaid, waning fast!
See that sheets are on my bed;
What! the flower of life is past:
It is long before you wed.

"Slipshod waiter, lank and sour,
At the Dragon on the heath!
Let us have a quiet hour,
Let us hob-and-nob with Death.

"I am old, but let me drink;
Bring me spices, bring me wine
I remember, when I think,
That my youth was half divine.

"Wine is good for shrivell'd lips,
When a blanket wraps the day,
When the rotten woodland drips,
And the leaf is stamp'd in clay.

"Sit thee down, and have no shame,
Cheek by jowl, and knee by knee;
What care I for any name?
What for order or degree?

"Let me screw thee up a peg:
Let me loose thy tongue with wine:
Callest thou that thing a leg?
Which is thinnest? thine or mine?

"Thou shalt not be saved by works:
Thou hast been a sinner too:
Ruin'd trunks on wither'd forks,
Empty scarecrows, I and you!

"Fill the cup, and fill the can;
Have a rouse before the morn;
Every moment dies a man,
Every moment one is born.

"We are men of ruin'd blood;
Therefore comes it we are wise.
Fish are we that love the mud,
Rising to no fancy-flies.

"Name and fame! to fly sublime
Thro' the courts, the camps, the
schools,

Is to be the ball of Time,
Banded by the hands of fools.

"Friendship! — to be two in one —
Let the canting liar pack!
Well I know, when I am gone,
How she mouths behind my back.

"Virtue! — to be good and just —
Every heart, when sifted well,
Is a clot of warmer dust,
Mix'd with cunning sparks of hell.

"Oh! we two as well can look
Whited thought and cleanly life
As the priest, above his book
Leering at his neighbor's wife.

"Fill the cup, and fill the can;
Have a rouse before the morn;
Every moment dies a man,
Every moment one is born.

"Drink, and let the parties rave;
They are fill'd with idle spleen;
Rising, falling, like a wave,
For they know not what they mean.

"He that roars for liberty
Faster binds a tyrant's power;
And the tyrant's cruel glee
Forces on the freer hour.

"Fill the can, and fill the cup;
All the windy ways of men
Are but dust that rises up,
And is lightly laid again.

"Greet her with applause breath,
Freedom, gaily doth she tread;
In her right a civic wreath,
In her left a human head.

"No, I love not what is new;
She is of an ancient house:
And I think we know the hue
Of that cap upon her brows.

"Let her go! her thirst she slakes
Where the bloody conduit runs:
Then her sweetest meal she makes
On the first-born of her sons.

"Drink to lofty hopes that cool—
Visions of a perfect State:
Drink we, last, the public fool,
Frantic love and frantic hate.

"Chant me now some wicked stave,
Till thy drooping courage rise,
And the glow-worm of the grave
Glimmer in thy rheumy eyes.

"Fear not thou to loose thy tongue;
Set thy hoary fancies free;
What is loathsome to the young
Savors well to thee and me.

"Change, reverting to the years,
When thy nerves could understand
What there is in loving tears,
And the warmth of hand in hand.

"Tell me tales of thy first love—
April hopes, the fools of chance;
Till the graves begin to move,
And the dead begin to dance.

"Fill the can, and fill the cup:
All the windy ways of men
Are but dust that rises up,
And is lightly laid again.

"Trooping from their mouldy dens
The chap-fallen circle spreads:
Welcome, fellow-citizens,
Hollow hearts and empty heads!

"You are bones, and what of that?
Every face, however full,
Padded round with flesh and fat,
Is but modell'd on a skull.

"Death is king, and Vivat Rex!
Tread a measure on the stones,



Madam—if I know your sex,
From the fashion of your bones,
"No, I cannot praise the fire
In your eye—nor yet your lip:
All the more do I admire
Joints of cunning workmanship.
"Lo! God's likeness—the ground-
plan—
Neither modell'd, glazed, or framed:
Buss me, thou rough sketch of man,
Far too naked to be shamed!
"Drink to Fortune, drink to Chance,
While we keep a little breath!
Drink to heavy Ignorance!
Hob-and-nob with brother Death!
"Thou art mazed, the night is long,
And the longer night is near:
What! I am not all as wrong
As a bitter jest is dear.
"Youthful hopes, by scores, to all,
When the locks are crisp and curl'd;
Unto me my maudlin gall
And my mockeries of the world.
"Fill the cup, and fill the can!
Mingle madness, mingle scorn!
Dregs of life, and lees of man:
Yet we will not die forlorn!"

V.

The voice grew faint: there came a
further change:
Once more uprose the mystic mountain-
range:
Below were men and horses pierced
with worms,
And slowly quickening into lower
forms;
By shards and scurf of salt, and scum
of dross,
Old splash of rains, and refuse patch'd
with moss.
Then some one spake: "Behold! it
was a crime
Of sense avenged by sense that wore
with time."
Another said: "The crime of sense be-
came
The crime of malice, and is equal
blame."
And one: "He had not wholly quench'd
his power;
A little grain of conscience made him
sour."
At last I heard a voice upon the slope
Cry to the summit, "Is there any
hope?"
To which an answer peal'd from that
high land,
But in a tongue no man could under-
stand;
And on the glimmering limit far with-
drawn
God made Himself an awful rose of
dawn.
COME not, when I am dead,
To drop thy foolish tears upon my
grave,

To trample round my fallen head,
And vex the unhappy dust thou
wouldst not save.
There let the wind sweep and the
plover cry;
But thou, go by.
Child, if it were thine error or thy
crime
I care no longer, being all unblest:
Wed whom thou wilt, but I am sick of
Time,
And I desire to rest.
Pass on, weak heart, and leave me
where I lie:
Go by, go by.

THE EAGLE

FRAGMENT.

HE clasps the crag with hooked hands;
Close to the sun in lonely lands,
Ring'd with the azure world, he stands.
The wrinkled sea beneath him crawls;
He watches from his mountain walls;
And like a thunderbolt he falls.

Move eastward, happy earth, and leave
Yon orange sunset waning slow:
From fringes of the faded eve,
O, happy planet, eastward go;
Till over thy dark shoulder glow
Thy silver sister-world, and rise
To glass herself in dewy eyes
That watch me from the glen below.
Ah, bear me with thee, smoothly borne,
Dip forward under starry light,
And move me to my marriage-morn,
And round again to happy night.

INTERNATIONAL EXHIBITION.

UPLIFT a thousand voices full and sweet,
In this wide hall with earth's invention
stored,
And praise th' invisible universal Lord,
Who lets once more in peace the nations
meet,
Where Science, Art, and Labor have
outpour'd
Their myriad horns of plenty at our feet.
O silent father of our Kings to be
Mourn'd in this golden hour of jubilee,
For this, for all, we weep our thanks to
thee!
The world-compelling plan was thine,
And lo! the long laborious miles,
Of Palace; lo! the giant aisles,
Rich in model and design;
Harvest-tool and husbandry,
Loom and wheel and engin'ry,
Secrets of the sullen mine,
Steel and gold, and corn and wine,
Fabric rough, or Fairy fine,
Sunny tokens of the Line,



Polar marvels, and a feast
Of wonder out of West and East,
And shapes and hues of Art divine !
All of beauty, all of use,
That one fair planet can produce.
Brought from under every star,
Blown from over every main,
And mixt, as life is mixt with pain,
The works of peace with works of war.

Oye, thewise who think, thewise who reign.
From growing commerce loose her latest
chain,

And let the fair white-winged peacemaker
fly
To happy havens under all the sky,
And mix the seasons and the golden hours,
Till each man finds his own in all men's
good,
And all men work in noble brotherhood,
Breaking their mailed fleets and armed
towers,
And ruling by obeying Nature's powers,
And gathering all the fruits of peace and
crown'd with all her flowers.

MAUD.

I.

I HATE the dreadful hollow behind the little wood,
Its lips in the field above are dabbled with blood-red heath,
The red-ribb'd ledges drip with a silent horror of blood,
And Echo there, whatever is ask'd her, answers "Death."

II.

For there in the ghastly pit long since a body was found,
His who had given me life—O father ! O God ! was it well ?—
Mangled, and flatten'd, and crush'd, and dinted into the ground :
There yet lies the rock that fell with him when he fell.

III.

Did he fling himself down ? who knows ? for a vast speculation had fail'd,
And ever he munter'd and madden'd, and ever wann'd with despair,
And out he walk'd when the wind like a broken worldling wail'd,
And the flying gold of the ruin'd woodlands drove thro' the air.

IV.

I remember the time, for the roots of my hair were stirr'd
By a shuffled step, by a dead weight trail'd, by a whisper'd fright,
And my pulses closed their gates with a shock on my heart as I heard
The shrill-edged shriek of a mother divide the shuddering night.

V.

Villany somewhere ! whose ? One says, we are villains all.
Not he : his honest fame should at least by me be maintained ;
But that old man, now lord of the broad estate and the Hall,
Dropt off gorged from a scheme that had left us flaccid and drain'd.

VI.

Why do they prate of the blessings of Peace ? we have made them a curse,
Pickpockets, each hand lusting for all that is not its own ;
And lust of gain, in the spirit of Cain, is it better or worse
Than the heart of the citizen hissing in war on his own hearthstone ?

VII.

But these are the days of advance, the works of the men of mind,
When who but a fool would have faith in a tradesman's ware or his word ?
Is it peace or war ? Civil war, as I think, and that of a kind
The viler, as underhand, not openly bearing the sword.

VIII.

Sooner or later I too may passively take the print
Of the golden age—why not ? I have neither hope nor trust ;
May make my heart as a millstone, set my face as a flint,
Cheat and be cheated, and die ; who knows ? we are ashes and dust.

IX.

Peace sitting under her olive, and slurring the days gone by,
When the poor are hovell'd and hustled together, each sex, like swine,
When only the ledger lives, and when only not all men lie ;
Peace in her vineyard—yes !—but a company forges the wine.

X.

And the vitriol madness flushes up in the ruffian's head,
Till the filthy by-lane rings to the yell of the trampled wife,
And chalk and alum and plaster are sold to the poor for bread,
And the spirit of murder works in the very means of life.



XI.

And Sleep must lie down arm'd, for the villanous centre-bits
Grind on the wakeful ear in the hush of the moonless nights,
While another is cheating the sick of a few last gasps, as he sits
To pebble a poison'd poison behind his crimson lights.

XII.

When a Mammonite mother kills her babe for a burial fee,
And Timour-Mammon grins on a pile of children's bones,
Is it peace or war? better, war! loud war by land and by sea,
War with a thousand battles, and shaking a hundred thrones.

XIII.

For I trust if an enemy's fleet came yonder round by the hill,
And the rushing battle-bolt sang from the three-decker out of the foam,
That the smooth-faced snubnosed rogue would leap from his counter and till,
And strike, if he could, were it but with his cheating yardwand, home,—

XIV.

What! am I raging alone as my father raged in his mood?
Must I too creep to the hollow and dash myself down and die
Rather than hold by the law that I made, nevermore to brood
On a horror of shatter'd limbs and a wretched swindler's lie?

XV.

Would there be sorrow for *me*? there was *love* in the passionate shriek,
Love for the silent thing that had made false haste to the grave—
Wrapt in a cloak, as I saw him, and thought he would rise and speak
And rave at the lie and the liar, ah God, as he used to rave.

XVI.

I am sick of the Hall and the hill, I am sick of the moor and the main.
Why should I stay? can a sweeter chance ever come to me here?
O, having the nerves of motion as well as the nerves of pain,
Were it not wise if I fled from the place and the pit and the fear?

XVII.

Workmen up at the Hall!—they are coming back from abroad;
The dark old place will be gilt by the touch of a millionaire:
I have heard, I know not whence, of the singular beauty of Maud;
I play'd with the girl when a child; she promised then to be fair.

XVIII.

Maud with her venturous climbings and tumbles and childish escapes,
Maud the delight of the village, the ringing joy of the Hall,
Maud with her sweet purse-mouth when my father dangled the grapes,
Maud the beloved of my mother, the moon-faced darling of all,—

XIX.

What is she now? My dreams are bad. She may bring me a curse.
No, there is fatter game on the moor; she will let me alone.
Thanks, for the fiend best knows whether woman or man be the worse.
I will bury myself in myself, and the Devil may pipe to his own.

II.

LONG have I sigh'd for a calm: God grant I may find it at last!
It will never be broken by Maud, she has neither savor nor salt,
But a cold and clear-cut face, as I found when her carriage past,
Perfectly beautiful: let it be granted her: where is the fault?
All that I saw (for her eyes were downcast, not to be seen)
Faultily faultless, icily regular, splendidly null,
Dead perfection, no more; nothing more, if it had not been
For a chance of travel, a paleness, an hour's defect of the rose,
Or an underlip, you may call it a little too ripe, too full,
Or the least little delicate aquiline curve in a sensitive nose,
From what I escaped heart free, with the least little touch of spleen.

III.

COLD and clear-cut face, why come you so cruelly meek,
Breaking a slumber in which all spleenful folly was drown'd,
Pale with the golden beam of an eyelash dead on the cheek,
Passionless, pale, cold face, star-sweet on a gloom profound;
Womanlike, taking revenge too deep for a transient wrong
Done but in thought to your beauty, and ever as pale as before
Growing and fading and growing upon me without a sound,
Luminous, gemlike, ghostlike, deathlike, half the night long
Growing and fading and growing, till I could bear it no more,



But arose, and all by myself in my own dark garden ground,
 Listening now to the tide in its broad-fung shipwrecking roar.
 Now to the scream of a madden'd beach dragg'd down by the wave,
 Walk'd in a wintry wind by a ghastly glimmer, and found
 The shining daffodil dead, and Orion low in his grave.

IV.

I.

A MILLION emeralds break from the ruby-budded lime
 In the little grove where I sit—ah, wherefore cannot I be
 Like things of the season gay, like the bountiful season bland.
 When the far-off sail is blown by the breeze of a softer clime,
 Half-lost in the liquid azure bloom of a crescent of sea,
 The silent sapphire-spangled marriage ring of the land?

II.

Below me, there, is the village, and looks how quiet and small!
 And yet bubbles o'er like a city, with gossip, scandal, and spite;
 And Jack on his ale-house bench has as many lies as a Czar;
 And here on the landward side, by a red rock, glimmers the Hall;
 And up in the high Hall-garden I see her pass like a light;
 But sorrow seize me if ever that light be my leading star!

III.

When have I bow'd to her father, the wrinkled head of the race?
 I met her to-day with her brother, but not to her brother I bow'd:
 I bow'd to his lady-sister as she rode by on the moor;
 But the fire of a foolish pride flash'd over her beautiful face.
 O child, you wrong your beauty, believe it, in being so proud;
 Your father has wealth well-gotten, and I am nameless and poor.

IV.

I keep but a man and a maid, ever ready to slander and steal;
 I know it, and smile a hard-set smile, like a stoic, or like
 A wiser epicurean, and let the world have its way:
 For nature is one with rapine, a harm no preacher can heal;
 The Mayfly is torn by the swallow, the sparrow spear'd by the shrike,
 And the whole little wood where I sit is a world of plunder and prey.

V.

We are puppets, Man in his pride, and Beauty fair in her flower;
 Do we move ourselves, or are moved by an unseen hand at a game
 That pushes us off from the board, and others ever succeed?
 Ah yet, we cannot be kind to each other here for an hour;
 We whisper, and hint, and chuckle, and grin at a brother's shame
 However we brave it out, we men are a little breed.

VI.

A monstrous eft was of old the Lord and Master of Earth,
 For him did his high sun flame, and his river billowing ran,
 And he felt himself in his force to be Nature's crowning race.
 As nine months go to the shaping an infant ripe for his birth,
 So many a million of ages have gone to the making of man:
 He now is first, but is he the last? is he not too base?

VII.

The man of science himself is fonder of glory, and vain,
 An eye well-practised in nature, a spirit bounded and poor;
 The passionate heart of the poet is whirl'd into folly and vice.
 I would not marvel at either, but keep a temperate brain;
 For not to desire or admire, if a man could learn it, were more
 Than to walk all day like the sultan of old in a garden of spice.

VIII.

For the drift of the Maker is dark, an Isis hid by the veil.
 Who knows the ways of the world, how God will bring them about?
 Our planet is one, the suns are many, the world is wide.
 Shall I weep if a Poland fall? shall I shriek if a Hungary fail?
 Or an infant civilization be ruled with rod or with knout?
 I have not made the world, and He that made it will guide.



IX.

Be mine a philosopher's life in the quiet woodland ways,
 Where if I cannot be gay let a passionless peace be my lot,
 Far-off from the clamor of liars belied in the hubbub of lies;
 From the long-neck'd geese of the world that are ever hissing dispraise
 Because their naturea are little, and, whether he heed it or not,
 Where each man walks with his head in a cloud of poisonous flies.

X.

And most of all would I flee from the cruel madness of love,
 The honey of poison-flowers and all the measureless ill.
 Ah Maud, you milk-white fawn, you are all unmeet for a wife.
 Your mother is mute in her grave as her image in marble above;
 Your father is ever in London, you wander about at your will;
 You have but fed on the roses, and lain in the lilies of life.

V.

I.

A VOICE by the cedar tree,
 In the meadow under the Hall!
 She is singing an air that is known to
 me,
 A passionate ballad gallant and gay,
 A martial song like a trumpet's call!
 Singing alone in the morning of life,
 In the happy morning of life and of
 May,
 Singing of men that in battle array,
 Ready in heart and ready in hand,
 March with banner and bugle and fife
 To the death, for their native land.

II.

Maud with her exquisite face,
 And wild voice pealing up to the sun-
 ny sky,
 And feet like sunny gems on an Eng-
 lish green,
 Maud in the light of her youth and her
 grace,
 Singing of Death, and of Honor that
 cannot die,
 Till I well could weep for a time so
 sordid and mean,
 And myself so languid and base.

III.

Silence, beautiful voice
 Be still, for you only trouble the mind
 With a joy in which I cannot rejoice,
 A glory I shall not find.
 Still! I will hear you no more,
 For your sweetness hardly leaves me a
 choice
 But to move to the meadow and fall
 before
 Her feet on the meadow grass, and
 adore,
 Not her, who is neither courtly nor
 kind,
 Not her, not her, but a voice.

VI.

I.

MORNING arises stormy and pale,
 No sun, but a wannish glare
 In fold upon fold of hueless cloud,

And the budded peaks of the wood are
 bow'd
 Caught and cuff'd by the gale:
 I had fancied it would be fair.

II.

Whom but Maud should I meet
 Last night, when the sunset burn'd
 On the blossom'd gable-enda
 At the head of the village street,
 Whom but Maud should I meet?
 And she touch'd my hand with a smile
 so sweet
 She made me divine amends
 For a courtesy not return'd.

III.

And thus a delicate spark
 Of glowing and growing light
 Thro' the livelong hours of the dark
 Kept itself warm in the heart of my
 dreams,
 Ready to burst in a color'd flame;
 Till at last when the morning came
 In a cloud, it faded, and seems
 But an ashen-gray delight.

IV.

What if with her sunny hair,
 And smile as sunny as cold,
 She meant to weave me a snare
 Of some coquettish deceit,
 Cleopatra-like as of old
 To entangle me when we met,
 To have her lion roll in a silken net
 And fawn at a victor's feet.

V.

Ah, what shall I be at fifty
 Should Nature keep me alive,
 If I find the world so bitter
 When I am but twenty-five?
 Yet, if she were not a cheat,
 If Maud were all that she seem'd,
 And her smile were all that I dream'd,
 Then the world were not so bitter
 But a smile could make it sweet.

VI.

What if tho' her eye seem'd full
 Of a kind intent to me,
 What if that dandy-despot, he,
 That jewel'd mass of millinery,
 That oil'd and curl'd Assyrian Bull
 Smelling of musk and of insolence,



Her brother, from whom I keep aloof,
Who wants the finer politic sense
To mask, tho' but in his own behoof,
With a glassy smile his brutal scorn—
What if he had told her yesternorn
How prettily for his own sweet sake
A face of tenderness might be feign'd,
And a moist mirage in desert eyes,
That so, when the rotten hustings
shake,
In another month to his brazen lies,
A wretched vote may be gain'd.

VII.

For a raven ever croaks, at my side,
Keep watch and ward, keep watch and
ward,
Or thou wilt prove their tool.
Yea too, myself from myself I guard,
For often a man's own angry pride
Is cap and bells for a fool.

VIII.

Perhaps the smile and tender tone
Came out of her pitying womanhood,
For am I not, am I not, here alone
So many a summer since she died,
My mother, who was so gentle and
good?
Living alone in an empty house,
Here half-hid in the gleaming wood,
Where I hear the dead at midday moan,
And the shrieking rush of the wainscot
mouse,
And my own sad name in corners cried,
When the shiver of dancing leaves is
thrown
About its echoing chambers wide,
Till a morbid hate and horror have
grown
Of a world in which I have hardly
mixt,
And a morbid eating lichen fixt,
On a heart half-turn'd to stone.

IX.

O heart of stone, are you flesh, and
caught
By that you swore to withstand?
For what was it else within me wrought
But, I fear, the new strong wine of
love,
That made my tongue so stammer and
trip
When I saw the treasured splendor,
her hand,
Come sliding out of her sacred glove,
And the sunlight broke from her lip?

X.

I have play'd with her when a child,
She remembers it now we meet.
Ah well, well, well, I may be beguiled
By some coquettish deceit.
Yet, if she were not a cheat,
If Maud were all that she seem'd,
And her smile had all that I dream'd,
Then the world were not so bitter
But a smile could make it sweet.

VII.

I.

DID I hear it half in a doze,
Long since, I know not where?
Did I dream it an hour ago,
When asleep in this arm-chair?

II.

Men were drinking together,
Drinking and talking of me;
"Well, if it prove a girl, the boy
Will have plenty: so let it be."

III.

Is it an echo of something
Read with a boy's delight,
Viziers nodding together
In some Arabian night?

IV.

Strange, that I hear two men,
Somewhere, talking of me;
"Well, if it prove a girl, my boy
Will have plenty: so let it be."

VIII.

I.

SHE came to the village church,
And sat by a pillar alone;
An angel watching an urn
Wept over her, carved in stone;
And once, but once, she lifted her eyes,
And suddenly, sweetly, strangely
blush'd
To find they were met by my own;
And suddenly, sweetly, my heart beat
stronger
And thicker, until I heard no longer
The snowy-banded, dilettante,
Delicate-handed priest intone;
And thought, is it pride, and mused
and sigh'd
"No surely, now it cannot be pride."

IX.

I WAS walking a mile,
More than a mile from the shore,
The sun look'd out with a smile
Betwixt the cloud and the moon,
And riding at set of day
Over the dark moor land,
Rapidly riding far away,
She waved to me with her hand.
There were two at her side,
Something flash'd in the sun,
Down by the hill I saw them ride,
In a moment they were gone:
Like a sudden spark
Struck vainly in the night,
Then returns the dark
With no more hope of light.

X.

I.

SICK, am I sick of a jealous dread?
Was not one of the two at her side
This new-made lord, whose splendor
plucks
The slavish hat from the villager's
head?



Whose old grandfather has lately
died,
Gone to a blacker pit, for whom
Grimy nakedness dragging his trucks
And laying his trams in a poison'd
gloom
Wrought, till he crept from a gutted
mine
Master of half a servile shire,
And left his coal all turn'd into gold
To a grandson, first of his noble line,
Rich in the grace all women desire,
Strong in the power that all men adore,
And simper and set their voices lower,
And soften as if to a girl, and hold
Awe-stricken breaths at a work divine,
Seeing his gewgaw castle shine,
New as his title, built last year,
There audid perky larches and pine,
And over the sullen-purple moor
(Look at it) pricking a cockney ear.

II.

What, has he found my jewel out?
For one of the two that rode at her side
Bound for the Hall, I am sure was he:
Bound for the Hall, and I think for a
bride.
Blithe would her brother's acceptance
be.

Maud could be gracious too, no doubt,
To a lord, a captain, a padded shape,
A bought commission, a waxen face,
A rabbit mouth that is ever agape—
Bought? what is it he cannot buy?
And therefore splenetic, personal, base,
A wounded thing with a rancorous cry,
At war with myself and a wretched
race,
Sick, sick to the heart of life, am I.

III.

Last week came one to the county town,
To preach our poor little army down,
And play the game of the despot kings,
Tho' the state has done it and thrice as
well:
This broad-brimm'd hawker of holy
things,
Whose ear is cramm'd with his cotton,
and rings
Even in dreams to the chink of his
pence,
This huckster put down war! can he
tell
Whether war be a cause or a conse-
quence?
Put down the passions that make earth
Hell!
Down with ambition, avarice, pride,
Jealousy, down! cut off from the mind
The bitter springs of anger and fear;
Down too, down at your own fireside,
With the evil tongue and the evil ear,
For each is at war with mankind.

IV.

I wish I could hear again
The chivalrous battle-song
That she warbled alone in her joy!

I might persuade myself then
She would not do herself this great
wrong,
To take a wanton dissolute boy
For a man and leader of men.

V.

Ah God, for a man with heart, head,
hand,
Like some of the simple great ones
gone
For ever and ever by.
One still strong man in a blatant land,
Whatever they call him, what care I,
Aristocrat, democrat, autocrat,—one
Who can rule and dare not lie.

VI.

And ah for a man to arise in me,
That the man I am may cease to be!

XI.

I.

O LET the solid ground
Not fall beneath my feet
Before my life has found
What some have found so sweet;
Then let come what come may,
What matter if I go mad,
I shall have had my day.

II.

Let the sweet heavens endure,
Not close and darken about me
Before I am quite quite sure
That there is one to love me;
Then let come what come may
To a life that has been so sad,
I shall have had my day.

XII.

I.

BIRDS in the high Hall-garden
When twilight was falling,
Maud, Maud, Maud, Maud,
They were crying and calling.

II.

Where was Maud? in our wood;
And I, who else, was with her,
Gathering woodland lilies,
Myriads blow together.

III.

Birds in our wood sang
Ringing thro' the valleys,
Maud is here, here, here
In among the lilies.

IV.

I kiss'd her slender hand,
She took the kiss sedately;
Maud is not seventeen,
But she is tall and stately.

V.

I to cry out on pride
Who have won her favor!
O Maud were sure of Heaven
If lowliness could save her.

VI.

I know the way she went
Home with her maiden posy,



For her feet have touch'd the meadows
And left the daisies rosy.

VII.

Birds in the high Hall-garden
Were crying and calling to her,
Where is Maud, Mand, Mand,
One is come to woo her.

VIII.

Look, a horse at the door,
And little King Charley snarling.
Go back, my lord, across the moor,
You are not her darling.

XIII.

I.

SCORN'D, to be scorn'd by one that I
scorn,
Is that a matter to make me fret?
That a calamity hard to be borne?
Well, he may live to hate me yet.
Fool that I am to be vex't with his
pride!

I past him, I was crossing his lands;
He stood on the path a little aside;
His face, as I grant, in spite of spite,
Has a broad-blown comeliness, red
and white,
And six feet two, as I think, he stands;
But his essences turn'd the live air sick,
And barbarous opulence jewel-thick
Sunn'd itself on his breast and his
hands.

II.

Who shall call me ungentle, unfair,
I long'd so heartily then and there
To give him the grasp of fellowship;
But while I past he was humming an
air,
Stopt, and then with a riding whip
Leisurely tapping a glossy boot,
And curving a contumelious lip,
Gorgonzol'd me from head to foot
With a stony British stare.

III.

Why sits he here in his father's chair?
That old man never comes to his place;
Shall I believe him ashamed to be seen?
For only once, in the village street,
Last year, I caught a glimpse of his
face,

A gray old wolf and a lean.
Scarcely, now, would I call him a
cheat;

For then, perhaps, as a child of deceit,
She might by a true descent be un-
true;

And Maud is as true as Maud is sweet;
Tho' I fancy her sweetness only due
To the sweeter blood by the other side;
Her mother has been a thing complete,
However she came to be so allied,
And fair without, faithful within,
Maud to him is nothing akin:
Some peculiar mystic grace
Made her only the child of her mother,
And heap'd the whole inherited sin
On that huge scapegoat of the race,
All, all upon the brother.

IV.

Peace, angry spirit, and let him be!
Has not his sister smiled on me?

XIV.

I.

MAUD has a garden of roses
And lilies fair on a lawn;
There she walks in her state
And tends upon bed and bower,
And thither I climb'd at dawn
And stood by her garden-gate;
A lion ramps at the top,
He is claspt by a passion-flower.

II.

Maud's own little oak-room
(Which Maud, like a precious stone
Set in the heart of the carved gloom,
Lights with herself, when alone
She sits by her music and books,
And her brother lingers late
With a roystering company) looks
Upon Maud's own garden-gate:
And I thought as I stood, if a hand, as
white
As ocean-foam in the moon, were laid
On the hasp of the window, and my
Delight
Had a sudden desire, like a glorious
ghost, to glide,
Like a beam of the seventh Heaven,
down to my side,
There were but a step to be made.

III.

The fancy flatter'd my mind,
And again seem'd overbold;
Now I thought that she cared for me,
Now I thought she was kind
Only because she was cold.

IV.

I heard no sound where I stood
But the rivulet on from the lawn
Running down to my own dark wood;
Or the voice of the long sea-wave as it
swell'd
Now and then in the dim-gray dawn;
But I look'd, and round, all round the
house I beheld
The death-white curtain drawn;
Felt a horror over me creep,
Prickle my skin and catch my breath,
Knew that the death-white curtain
meant but sleep,
Yet I shudder'd and thought like a
fool of the sleep of death.

XV.

So dark a mind within me dwells,
And I make myself such evil cheer,
That if I be dear to some one else,
Then some one else may have much
to fear;
But if I be dear to some one else,
Then I should be to myself more
dear.
Shall I not take care of all that I
think,



Yea ev'n of wretched meat and drink,
If I be dear,
If I be dear to some one else ?

XVI.

I.

THIS lump of earth has left his estate
The lighter by the loss of his weight ;
And so that he find what he went to
seek,
And fulsome Pleasure clog him, and
drown
His heart in the gross mud-honey of
town,
He may stay for a year who has gone
for a week :

But this is the day when I must speak,
And I see my Oread coming down,
O this is the day !

O beautiful creature, what am I
That I dare to look her way ;
Think I may hold dominion sweet,
Lord of the pulse that is lord of her
breast,
And dream of her beauty with tender
dread,
From the delicate Arab arch of her
feet

To the grace that, bright and light as
the crest
Of a peacock, sits on her shining head,
And she knows it not : O, if she knew
it,

To know her beauty might half undo it.
I know it the one bright thing to save
My yet young life in the wilds of Time,
Perhaps from madness, perhaps from
crime,
Perhaps from a selfish grave.

II.

What, if she be fasten'd to this fool
lord,
Dare I bid her abide by her word ?
Should I love her so well if she
Had given her word to a thing so low ?
Shall I love her as well if she
Can break her word were it even for
me ?

I trust that it is not so.

III.

Catch not my breath, O clamorous
heart,
Let not my tongue be a thrall to my
eye,
For I must tell her before we part,
I must tell her, or die.

XVII.

Go not, happy day,
From the shining fields,
Go not, happy day,
Till the maiden yields.
Rosy is the West,
Rosy is the South,
Roses are her cheeks,
And a rose her mouth.
When the happy Yes
Falters from her lips,
Pass and blush the news

O'er the blowing ships.
Over blowing seas,
Over seas at rest,
Pass the happy news,
Blush it thro' the West ;
Till the red man dance
By his red cedar tree,
And the red man's babe
Leap, beyond the sea.
Blush from West to East,
Blush from East to West,
Till the West is East,
Blush it thro' the West.
Rosy is the West,
Rosy is the South,
Roses are her cheeks,
And a rose her mouth.

XVIII.

I.

I have led her home, my love, my only
friend.
There is none like her, none.
And never yet so warmly ran my blood
And sweetly, on and on
Calming itself to the long-wish'd-for
end,
Full to the banks, close on the prom-
ised good.

II.

None like her, none.
Just now the dry-tongued laurels' pat-
tering talk
Seem'd her light foot along the garden
walk,
And shook my heart to think she
comes once more ;
But even then I heard her close the
door,
The gates of Heaven are closed, and
she is gone.

III.

There is none like her, none.
Nor will be when our summers have
deceased.
O, art thou sighing for Lebanon
In the long breezes that streams to thy
delicious East,
Sighing for Lebanon,
Dark cedar, tho' thy limbs have here
increased,
Upon a pastoral slope as fair,
And looking to the South, and fed
With honey'd rain and delicate air,
And haunted by the starry head
Of her whose gentle will has changed
my fate,
And made my life a perfumed altar-
flame ;
And over whom thy darkness must
have spread
With such daylight as theirs of old,
thy great
Forefathers of the thornless garden,
thine
Shadowing the snow-limb'd Eve from
whom she came.



IV.

Here will I lie, while these long
branches away,
And you fair stars that crown a happy
day
Go in and out as if at merry play,
Who am no more so all forlorn,
As when it seem'd far better to be born
To labor and the mattock-harden'd
hand,
Than nursed at ease and brought to
understand
A sad astrology, the boundless plau
That makes you tyrants in your iron
skies,
Innumerable, pitiless, passionless eyes,
Cold fires, yet with power to burn and
brand
His nothingness into man.

V.

But now shine on, and what care I,
Who in this stormy gulf have found a
pearl
The countercharm of space and hollow
sky,
And do accept my madness, and would
die
To save from some slight shame one
simple girl.

VI.

Would die ; for sullen-seeming Death
may give
More life to Love than is or ever was
In our low world, where yet 't is sweet
to live.
Let no one ask me how it came to pass ;
It seems that I am happy, that to me
A livelier emerald twinkles in the
grass,
A purer sapphire melts into the sea.

VII.

Not die ; but live a life of truest breath,
And teach true life to fight with mortal
wrongs.
O, why should Love, like men in drink-
ing songs.
Spice his fair banquet with the dust of
death ?
Make answer, Maud my bliss,
Maud made my Maud by that long
lover's kiss,
Life of my life, wilt thou not answer
this ?
"The dusky strand of Death inwoven
here
With dear Love's tie, makes Love him-
self more dear."

VIII.

Is that enchanted moan only the swell
Of the long waves that roll in yonder
bay ?
And hark the clock within, the silver
knell
Of twelve sweet hours that past in
bridal white,
And died to live, long as my pulses
play ;

But now by this my love has closed
her sight
And given false death her hand, and
stol'n away
To dreamful wastes where footless
fancies dwell
Among the fragments of the golden
day.
May nothing there her maiden grace
affright !
Dear heart, I feel with thee the drowsy
spell.
My bride to be, my evermore delight,
My own heart's heart and ownest own
farewell ;
It is but for a little space I go :
And ye meanwhile far over moor and
fell
Beat to the noiseless music of the
night !
Has our whole earth gone nearer to the
glow
Of your soft splendors that you look so
bright ?
I have climb'd nearer out of lonely
Hell.
Beat, happy stars, timing with things
below,
Beat with my heart more blest than
heart can tell,
Blest, but for some dark undercurrent
woe
That seems to draw—but it shall not
be so :
Let all be well, be well.

XIX.

I.

HER brother is coming back to-night,
Breaking up my dream of delight.

II.

My dream ? do I dream of bliss ?
I have walk'd awake with Truth.
O when did a morning shine
So rich in atonement as this
For my dark-dawning youth,
Darken'd watching a mother decline
And that dead man at her heart and
mine :
For who was left to watch her but I ?
Yet so did I let my freshness die.

III.

I trust that I did not talk
To gentle Maud in our walk
(For often in lonely wanderings
I have cursed him even to lifeless
things)
But I trust that I did not talk,
Not touch on her father's sin :
I am sure I did but speak
Of my mother's faded cheek
When it slowly grew so thin,
That I felt she was slowly dying
Vext with lawyers and harass'd with
debt :
For how often I caught her with eyes
all wet,



Shaking her head at her son and sigh-
ing
A world of trouble within !

IV.

And Maud too, Maud was moved
To speak of the mother she loved
As one scarce less forlorn,
Dying abroad and it seems apart
From him who had ceased to share her
heart,
And ever mourning over the feud,
The household Fury sprinkled with
blood
By which our houses are torn :
How strange was what she said,
When only Maud and the brother
Hung over her dying bed—
That Maud's dark father and mine
Had bound us one to the other,
Betrothed us over their wine,
On the day when Maud was born ;
Seal'd her mine from her first sweet
breath.
Mine, mine by a right, from birth till
death,
Mine, mine—our fathers have sworn.

V.

But the true blood spilt had in it a
heat
To dissolve the precious seal on a bond,
That, if left uncancell'd, had been so
sweet :
And none of us thought of a something
beyond,
A desire that awoke in the heart of the
child,
As it were a duty done to the tomb,
To be friends for her sake, to be recon-
ciled ;
And I was cursing them and my doom,
And letting a dangerous thought run
wild
While often abroad in the fragrant
gloom
Of foreign churches—I see her there,
Bright English lily, breathing a prayer
To be friends, to be reconciled !

VI.

But then what a flint is he !
Abroad, at Florence, at Rome,
I find whenever she touch'd on me
This brother had laugh'd her down,
And at last, when each came home,
He had darken'd into a frown,
Chid her, and forbid her to speak
To me, her friend of the years before ;
And this was what had redden'd her
cheek
When I bow'd to her on the moor.

VII.

Yet Maud, altho' not blind
To the faults of his heart and mind
I see she cannot but love him,
And says he is rough but kind,
And wishes me to approve him,
And tells me, when she lay
Sick once, with a fear of worse,

That he left his wine and horses and
play,
Sat with her, read to her, night and day,
And teuded her like a nurse.

VIII.

Kind ? but the deathbed desire
Spurn'd by this heir of the liar—
Rough but kind ? yet I know
He has plotted against me in this,
That he plots against me still.
Kind to Maud ? that were not amiss.
Well, rough but kind ; why let it be so :
For shall not Maud have her will ?

IX.

For, Maud, so tender and true,
As long as my life endures
I feel I shall owe you a debt,
That I never can hope to pay ;
And if ever I should forget
That I owe this debt to you
And for your sweet sake to yours ;
O then, what then shall I say ?—
If ever I should forget,
May God make me more wretched
Than ever I have been yet !

X.

So now I have sworn to bury
All this dead body of hate,
I feel so free and so clear
By the loss of that dead weight,
That I should grow light-headed, I fear
Fantastically merry ;
But that her brother comes, like a
blight
On my fresh hope, to the Hall to-night.

XX.

I.

STRANGE, that I felt so gay,
Strange, that I tried to-day
To beguile her melancholy ;
The Sultan, as we name him,—
She did not wish to blame him—
But he vexed her and perplexed her
With his worldly talk and folly :
Was it gentle to reprove her
For stealing out of view
From a little lazy lover
Who but claims her as his due ?
Or for chilling his caresses
By the coldness of her manners,
Nay, the plainness of her dresses ?
Now I know her but in two,
Nor can pronounce upon it
If one should ask me whether
The habit, hat, and feather,
Or the frock and gypsy bonnet
Be the neater and completer ;
For nothing can be sweeter
Than maiden Maud in either.

II.

But to-morrow, if we live,
Our ponderous squire will give
A grand political dinner
To half the squirrels near ;
And Maud will wear her jewels,



And the bird of prey will hover,
And the titmouse hope to win her
With his chirrup at her ear.

III.

A grand political dinner
To the men of many acres,
A gathering of the Tory,
A dinner and then a dance
For the maids and marriage-makers,
And every eye but mine will glance
At Maud in all her glory.

IV.

For I am not invited,
But, with the Sultan's pardon,
I am all as well delighted,
For I know her own rose garden,
And mean to linger in it
Till the dancing will be over ;
And then, O then, come out to me
For a minute, but for a minute,
Come out to your own true lover
That your true lover may see
Your glory also, and render
All homage to his own darling,
Queen Maud in all her splendor.

XXI.

RIVULET crossing my ground,
And bringing me down from the Hall
This garden-rose that I found,
Forgetful of Maud and me,
And lost in trouble and moving round
Here at the head of a tinkling fall,
And trying to pass to the sea ;
O Rivulet, born at the Hall,
My Maud has sent it by thee
(If I read her sweet will right)
On a blushing mission to me,
Saying in odor and color, " Ah, be
Among the roses to-night."

XXII.

I.

COME into the garden, Maud,
For the black bat, night, has flown,
Come into the garden, Maud,
I am here at the gate alone ;
And the woodbine spices are wafted
abroad,
And the musk of the roses blown

II.

For a breeze of morning moves,
And the planet of Love is on high,
Beginning to faint in the light that she
loves
On a bed of daffodil sky,
To faint in the light of the sun she
loves,
To faint in this light, and to die.

III.

All night have the roses heard
The flute, violin, bassoon ;
All night has the casement jessamine
stirr'd
To the dancers dancing in tune ;
Till a silence fell with the waking
bird,
And a hush with the setting moon.

IV.

I said to the lily, " There is but one
With whom she has heart to be gay.
When will the dancers leave her alone ?
She is weary of dance and play."
Now half to the setting moon are gone,
And half to the rising day ;
Low on the sand and loud on the stone
The last wheel echoes away.

V.

I said to the rose, " The brief night
goes
In babble and revel and wine.
O young lord-lover, what sighs are
those,
For one that will never be thine ?
But mine, but mine," so I swear to the
rose,
" For ever and ever, mine."

VI.

And the soul of the rose went into my
blood,
As the music clash'd in the hall ;
And long by the garden lake I stood,
For I heard your rivulet fall
From the lake to the meadow and on to
the wood,
Our wood, that is dearer than all ;

VII.

From the meadow your walks have left
so sweet
That whenever a March-wind sighs
He sets the jewel-print of your feet
In violets blue as your eyes,
To the woody hollows in which we
meet
And the valleys of Paradise.

VIII.

The slender acacia would not shake
One long milk-bloom on the tree ;
The white lake-blossom fell into the
lake
As the pimpernel dozed on the lea ;
But the rose was awake all night for
your sake,
Knowing your promise to me ;
The lilies and roses were all awake,
They sigh'd for the dawn and thee.

IX.

Queen rose of the rosebud garden of
girls,
Come hither, the dances are done,
In gloss of satin and glimmer of pearls,
Queen lily and rose in one ;
Shine out, little head, sunning over
with curls,
To the flowers, and be their sun.

X.

There has fallen a splendid tear
From the passion-flower at the gate.
She is coming, my dove, my dear ;
She is coming, my life, my fate ;
The red rose cries, " She is near, she is
near ;"
And the white rose weeps, " She is
late ;"



The larkspur listens, "I hear, I hear;"
And the lily whispers, "I wait."

XI.

She is coming, my own, my sweet;
Were it ever so airy a tread,
My heart would hear her and beat,
Were it earth in an earthy bed;
My dust would hear her and beat,
Had I lain for a century dead;
Would start and tremble under her
feet,
And blossom in purple and red.

XXIII.

I.

"The fault was mine, the fault was
mine"—
Why am I sitting here so stunn'd and
still,
Plucking the harmless wild-flower on
the hill?—
It is this guilty hand!—
And there rises ever a passionate cry
From underneath in the darkening
land—
What is it, that has been done?
O dawn of Eden bright over earth and
sky,
The fires of Hell brake out of thy ris-
ing sun,
The fires of Hell and of Hate;
For she, sweet soul, had hardly spoken
a word,
When her brother ran in his rage to
the gate,
He came with the babe-faced lord;
Heap'd on her terms of disgrace,
And while she wept, and I strove to be
cool,
He fiercely gave me the lie,
Till I with as fierce an anger spoke,
And he struck me, madman, over the
face,
Struck me before the languid fool,
Who was gaping an grinning by:
Struck for himself an evil stroke;
Wrought for his house an irredeemable
woe;
For front to front in an hour we stood,
And a million horrible bellowing
echoes broke
From the red-ribb'd hollow behind the
wood,
And thunder'd up into Heaven the
Christless code,
That must have life for a hlow.
Ever and ever afresh they seem'd to
grow.
Was it he lay there with a fading eye?
"The fault was mine," he whisper'd,
"fly!"
Then glided out of the joyous wood
The ghastly Wraith of one that I
know;
And there rang on a sudden a passion-
ate cry,
A cry for a brother's blood:
It will ring in my heart and my ears,
till I die, till I die.

II.

Is it gone? my pulses beat—
What was it? a lying trick of the
brain?
Yet I thought I saw her stand,
A shadow there at my feet,
High over the shadowy land.
It is gone; and the heavens fall in a
gentle rain,
When they should burst and drown
with deluging storms
The feeble vassals of wine and anger
and lust,
The little hearts that know not how to
forgive:
Arise, my God, and strike, for we hold
Thee just,
Strike dead the whole weak race of
venomous worms,
That sting each other here in the dust;
We are not worthy to live.

XXIV.

I.

SEE what a lovely shell,
Small and pure as a pearl,
Lying close to my foot,
Frail, but a work divine,
Made so fairly well
With delicate spire and whorl,
How exquisitely minute,
A miracle of design!

II.

What is it? a learned man
Could give it a clumsy name.
Let him name it who can,
The heauty would be the same.

III.

The tiny cell is forlorn,
Void of the little living will
That made it stir on the shore.
Did he stand at the diamond door
Of his house in a rainhow frill?
Did he push, when he was uncurl'd,
A golden foot or a fairy horn
Thro' his dim water-world?

IV.

Slight, to be crush'd with a tap
Of my finger-nail on the sand,
Small, but a work divine,
Frail, but of force to withstand,
Year upon year, the shock
Of cataract seas that snap
The three decker's oaken spine
Athwart the ledges of rock,
Here on the Breton strand!

V.

Breton, not Briton; here
Like a shipwreck'd man on a coast
Of ancient fable and fear—
Plagued with a flitting and fro,
A disease, a hard mechanic ghost
That never came from on high
Nor ever arose from below,
But only moves with the moving eye,



Flying along the land and the main—
Why should it look like Maud?
Am I to be overawed
By what I cannot but know
Is a juggle born of the brain?

VI.

Back from the Breton coast,
Sick of a nameless fear,
Back to the dark sea-line
Looking, thinking of all I have lost;
An old song vexes my ear;
But that of Lamech is mine.

VII.

For years, a measureless ill,
For years, for ever, to part—
But she, she would love me still;
And as long, O God, as she
Have a grain of love for me,
So long, no doubt, no doubt,
Shall I nurse in my dark heart,
However weary, a spark of will
Not to be trampled out.

VIII.

Strange, that the mind, when fraught
With a passion so intense
One would think that it well
Might drown all life in the eye,—
That it should, by being so over-
wrought,
Suddenly strike on a sharper sense
For a shell, or a flower, little things
Which else would have been past by!
And now I remember, I,
When he lay dying there,
I noticed one of his many rings
(For he had many, poor worm) and
thought
It is his mother's hair.

ix.

Who knows if he be dead?
Whether I need have fled?
Am I guilty of blood?
However this may be,
Comfort her, comfort her, all things
good,
While I am over the sea!
Let me and my passionate love go by,
But speak to her all things holy and
high,
Whatever happen to me!
Me and my harmful love go by;
But come to her waking, find her
asleep,
Powers of the height, Powers of the
deep,
And comfort her tho' I die.

XXV.

COURAGE, poor heart of stone!
I will not ask thee why
Thou canst not understand
That thou art left for ever alone:
Courage, poor stupid heart of stone.—
Or if I ask thee why,
Care not thou to reply:

She is but dead, and the time is at hand
When thou shalt more than die.

XXVI.

I.

O THAT 'twere possible
After long grief and pain
To find the arms of my true love
Round me once again!

II.

When I was wont to meet her
In the silent woody places
By the home that gave me birth,
We stood tranced in long embraces
Mixt with kisses sweeter, sweeter
Than anything on earth.

III.

A shadow flits before me,
Not thou, but like to thee;
Ah Christ, that it were possible
For one short hour to see
The souls we loved, that they might
tell us
What and where they be.

IV.

It leads me forth at evening,
It lightly winds and steals
In a cold white robe before me,
When all my spirit reels
At the shouts, the leagues of lights,
And the roaring of the wheels.

v.

Half the night I waste in sighs,
Half in dreams I sorrow after
The delight of early skies;
In a wakeful doze I sorrow
For the hand, the lips, the eyes,
For the meeting of the morrow,
The delight of happy laughter,
The delight of low replies.

VI.

'Tis a morning pure and sweet,
And a dewy splendor falls
On the little flower that clings
To the turrets and the walls;
'Tis a morning pure and sweet,
And the light and shadow fleet;
She is walking in the meadow,
And the woodland echo rings;
In a moment we shall meet;
She is singing in the meadow,
And the rivulet at her feet
Ripples on in light and shadow
To the ballad that she sings.

VII.

Do I hear her sing as of old,
My bird with the shining head,
My own dove with the tender eyes?
But there rings on a sudden a passion-
ate cry,
There is some one dying or dead,
And a sullen thunder is roll'd;
For a tumult shakes the city,



And I wake, my dream is fled ;
In the shuddering dawn, behold,
Without knowledge, without pity,
By the curtains of my bed
That abiding phantom cold.

VIII.

Get thee hence, nor come again,
Mix not memory with doubt,
Pass, thou deathlike type of pain,
Pass and cease to move about !
'Tis the blot upon the brain
That will show itself without.

IX.

Then I rise, the eavedrops fall,
And the yellow vapors choke
The great city sounding wide ;
The day comes, a dull red ball
Wrapt in drifts of lurid smoke
On the misty river-tide.

X.

Thro' the hubbuh of the market
I steal, a wasted frame,
It crosses here, it crosses there,
Thro' all that crowd confused and loud,
The shadow still the same ;
And on my heavy eyelids
My anguish hangs like shame.

XI.

Alas for her that met me,
That heard me softly call,
Came glimmering thro' the laurels
At the quiet eventfall,
In the garden by the turrets
Of the old manorial hall.

XII.

Would the happy spirit descend,
From the realms of light and song,
In the chamber or the street,
As she looks among the blest,
Should I fear to greet my friend ?
Or to say " forgive the wrong,"
Or to ask her, " take me, sweet,
To the regions of thy rest ? "

XIII.

But the broad light glares and beats,
And the shadow flits and fleets
And will not let me be ;
And I loathe the squares and streets,
And the faces that one meets,
Hearts with no love for me :
Always I long to creep
Into some still cavern deep,
There to weep, and weep, and weep
My whole soul out to thee.

XXVII.

I.

DEAD, long dead,
Long dead !
And my heart is a handful of dust,
And the wheels go over my head,
And my bones are shaken with pain,
For into a shallow grave they are
thrust,

Only a yard beneath the street,
And the hoofs of the horses beat, beat,
The hoofs of the horses beat,
Beat into my scalp and my brain,
With never an end to the stream of
passing feet,
Driving, hurrying ; marrying, burying,
Clamor and rumble, and ringing and
clatter.
And here beneath it is all as had,
For I thought the dead had peace, but
it is not so ;
To have no peace in the grave, is that
not sad ?
But up and down and to and fro,
Ever about me the dead men go ;
And then to hear a dead man chatter
Is enough to drive one mad.

II.

Wretchedest age, since Time began,
They cannot even bury a man ;
And tho' we paid our tithes in the days
that are gone,
Not a bell was rung, not a prayer was
read ;
It is that which makes us loud in the
world of the dead ;
There is none that does his work, not
one ;
A touch of their office might have suf-
ficed,
But the churchmen fain would kill
their church,
As the churches have kill'd their
Christ.

III.

See, there is one of us sobbing,
No limit to his distress ;
And another, a lord of all things, pray-
ing
To his own great self, as I guess ;
And another, a statesman there, be-
traying
His party-secret, fool, to the press ;
And yonder a vile physician, blabbing
The case of his patient—all for what ?
To tickle the maggot horn in an empty
head,
And wheedle a world that loves him
not,
For it is but a world of the dead.

IV.

Nothing but idiot gabble !
For the prophecy given of o'd
And then not understood,
Has come to pass as foretold ;
Not let any man think for the public
good,
But babble, merely for babble.
For I never whisper'd a private affair
Within the hearing of cat or mouse,
No, not to myself in the closet alone,
But I heard it shouted at once from
the top of the house ;
Everything came to be known :
Who told *him* we were there ?



v.

Not that gray old wolf, for he came not
back
From the wilderness, full of wolves,
where he used to lie ;
He has gather'd the bones for his o'er-
grown whelp to crack ;
Crack them now for yourself, and howl,
and die.

VI.

Prophet, curse me the blabbing lip,
And curse me the British vermin, the
rat ;
I know not whether he came in the
Hanover ship,
But I know that he lies and listens
mute
In an ancient mansion's crannies and
holes :
Arsenic, arsenic, sure, would do it,
Except that now we poison our babes,
poor souls !
It is all used up for that.

VII.

Tell him now : she is standing here at
my head ;
Not beautiful now, not even kind ;
He may take her now ; for she never
speaks her mind,
But is ever the one thing silent here.
She is not of us, as I divine ;
She comes from another stiller world
of the dead,
Stiller, not fairer than mine.

VIII.

But I know where a garden grows,
Fairer than sought in the world beside,
All made up of the lily and rose
That blow by night, when the season is
good,
To the sound of dancing music and
flutee :
It is only flowers, they had no fruits,
And I almost fear they are not roses,
but blood ;
For the keeper was one, so full of pride,
He linkt a dead man there to a spectral
bride ;
For he, if he had not been a Sultan of
brutes,
Would he have that hole in his side ?

IX.

But what will the old man say ?
He laid a cruel snare in a pit
To catch a friend of mine one stormy
day ;
Yet now I could even weep to think of
it ;
For what will the old man say
When he comes to the second corpse
in the pit ?

X.

Friend, to be struck by the public foe,
Then to strike him and lay him low,
That were a public merit, far,
Whatever the Quaker holds, from sin ;

But the red life spilt for a private
blow—
I swear to you, lawful and lawless war
Are scarcely even akin.

XI.

O me, why have they not buried me
deep enough ?
Is it kind to have made me a grave so
rough,
Me, that was never a quiet sleeper ?
Maybe still I am but half-dead ;
Then I cannot be wholly dumb ;
I will cry to the steps above my head
And somebody, surely, some kind heart
will come
To bury me, hurry me
Deeper, ever so little deeper.

XXVIII.

I.

MY life has crept so long on a broken
wing
Thro' cells of madness, haunts of hor-
ror and fear,
That I come to be grateful at last for a
little thing :
My mood is changed, for it fell at a
time of year
When the face of night is fair on the
dewy dawns,
And the shining daffodil dies, and the
Charioteer
And starry Gemini hang like gloriouse
crowns
Over Orion's grave low down in the
west,
That like a silent lightning under the
stars
She seem'd to divide in a dream from a
band of the blest,
And spoke of a hope for the world in
the coming wars—
" And in that hope, dear soul, let
trouble have rest,
Knowing I tarry for thee," and pointed
to Mars
As he glow'd like a ruddy shield on the
Lion's breast.

II.

And it was but a dream, yet it yielded
a dear delight
To have look'd, tho' but in a dream,
upon eyes so fair,
That had been in a weary world my one
thing bright ;
And it was but a dream, yet it lighten'd
my despair
When I thought that a war would arise
in defence of the right,
That an iron tyranny now should bend
or cease,
The glory of manhood stand on his
ancient height,
Nor Britain's one sole God be the mil-
lionnaire :
No more shall commerce be all in all,
and Peace



Pipe on her pastoral hillock a languid
note,
And watch her harvest ripen, her herd
increase,
Nor the cannon-bullet rust on a sloth-
ful shore,
And the cobweb woven across the can-
non's throat
Shall shake its threaded tears in the
wind no more.

III.

And as months ran on and rumor of
battle grew,
"It is time, it is time, O passionate
heart," said I
(For I cleave to a cause that I felt to be
pure and true),
"It is time, O passionate heart and
morbid eye,
That old hysterical mock-disease
should die."
And I stood on a giant deck and mix'd
my breath
With a loyal people shouting a battle
cry,
Till I saw the dreary phantom arise
and fly
Far into the North, and battle, and
ceas of death.

IV.

Let it go or stay, so I wake to the
higher aims
Of a land that has lost for a little her
lust of gold,
And love of a peace that was full of
wrongs and shames,
Horrible, hateful, monstrous, not to
be told;
And hail once more to the banner of
battle unroll'd!
Tho' many a light shall darken, and
many shall weep
For those that are crush'd in the clash
of jarring claims,
Yet God's just wrath shall be wreak'd
on a giant liar;
And many a darkness into the light
shall leap,
And shine in the sudden making of
splendid names,
And noble thought be freer under the
sun,
And the heart of a people beat with
one desire;
For the peace, that I deem'd no peace,
is over and done,
And now by the side of the Black and
the Baltic deep,
And deathful-grinning mouths of the
fortress, flames
The blood-red blossom of war with a
heart of fire.

V.

Let it flame or fade, and the war roll
down like a wind,
We have proved we have hearts in a
cause, we are noble still,

And myself have awaked, as it seems,
to the better mind;
It is better to fight for the good, than
to rail at the ill;
I have felt with my native land, I am
one with my kind,
I embrace the purpose of God, and the
doom assign'd.

THE BROOK;

AN IDYL.

"HERE, by this brook, we parted; I to
the East
And he for Italy—too late—too late;
One whom the stroug sons of the world
despise;
For lucky rhymes to him were scrip
and shars,
And mellow metres more than cent for
cent;
Nor could he understand how money
breeds,
Thought it a dead thing; yet himself
could make
The thing that is not as the thing that
is.
O had he liv'd! In our schoolbooks
we say,
Of those that held their heads above
the crowd,
They flourish'd then or then; but life
in him
Could scarce be said to flourish, only
touch'd
On such a time as goes before the leaf,
When all the wood stands in a mist of
green,
And nothing perfect: yet the brook he
loved,
For which, in branding summers of
Bengal,
Or ev'n the sweet half-English Neil-
gherry air
I panted, seems, as I re-listen to it,
Prattling the primrose fancies of the
boy,
To me that loved him; for 'O Brook,'
he says,
'O babbling brook,' says Edmund in
his rhyme,
'Whence come you?' and the brook,
why not? replies:

I come from haunts of coot and hern,
I make a sudden sally,
And sparkle out among the fern,
To bicker down a valley.
By thirty hills I hurry down,
Or slip between the ridges,
By twenty thorns, a little town,
And half a hundred bridges.
Till last by Philip's farm I flow
To join the brimming river,
For men may come and men may go
But I go on for ever.
"Poor lad, he died at Florence,
quite worn out,



Travelling to Naples. There is Darnley bridge,
It has more ivy; there the river; and there
Stands Philip's farm where brook and river meet.

I chatter over stony ways,
In little sharps and trebles,
I hubble into eddying bays,
I babble on the pebbles.

With many a curve my hanka I fret,
By many a field and fallow,
And many a fairy foreland set
With willow-weed and mallow.

I chatter, chatter, as I flow
To join the brimming river,
For men may come and men may go,
But I go on for ever.

"But Philip chattered more than
brook or bird,
Old Philip; all about the fields you
caught
His weary daylong chirping, like the
dry
High-elbow'd grigs that leap in summer
grass.

I wind about, and in and out,
With here a blossom sailing,
And here and there a lusty trout,
And here and there a grayling.

And here and there a foamy flake
Upon me, as I travel
With many a silvery waterbreak
Above the golden gravel.

And draw them all along, and flow
To join the brimming river,
For men may come and men may go,
But I go on for ever.

"O darling Katie Willows, his one
child!

A maiden of our century, yet most
meek;
A daughter of our meadow, yet not
coarse,

Straight, but as lissome as a hazel
wand;
Her eyes a hashful azure, and her hair
In gloss and hue the chestnut, when
the shell
Divides threefold to show the fruit
within.

"Sweet Katie, once I did her a good
turn,
Her and her far-off cousin and be-
trothed,
James Willows, of one name and heart
with her.

For here I came, twenty years back—
the week
Before I parted with poor Edmund;
cross

By that old bridge which, half in ruins
then,
Still makes a hoary eyebrow for the
gleam

Beyond it, where the waters marry—
cross,

Whistling a random bar of Bonny
Doon,
And push'd at Philip's garden-gate.

The gate,
Half-parted from a weak and scolding
hinge,
Stuck; and he clamor'd from a case-
ment 'run'

To Katie somewhere in the walks he-
low,
'Run, Katie!' Katie never ran: she
moved

To meet me, winding under woodbine
howers,
A little flutter'd, with her eyelids down,
Fresh apple-blossom, blushing for a
noon.

"What was it? less of sentiment than
sense

Had Katie; not illiterate; nor of those
Who dabbling in the fount of fictive
tears,
And nursed by mealy-mouthed philan-
thropies,

Divorce the Feeling from her mate the
Deed.

"She told me. She and James had
quarrell'd. Why?

What cause of quarrel? None, she
said, no cause;

James had no cause: but when I prest
the cause,
I learnt that James had flickering
jealousies

Which anger'd her. Who anger'd
James? I said.

But Katie snatch'd her eyes at once
from mine,
And sketching with her slender-pointed
foot

Some figure like a wizard's pentagram
On garden gravel, let my query pass
Unclaim'd, in flushing silence, till I
ask'd

If James were coming. 'Coming
every day,'
She answer'd, 'ever longing to ex-
plain,

But evermore her father came across
With some long-winded tale, and broke
him short;
And James departed vexed with him
and her.'

How could I help her? 'Would I—was
it wrong?'

(Claspt hands and that petitionary
grace
Of sweet seventeen subdued me ere
she spoke)

'O would I take her father for one
hour,

For one half-hour, and let him talk to
me!

And even while she spoke, I saw where
James

Made toward us, like a wader in the
surf,

Beyond the brook, waist-deep in
meadow-sweet.

O Katie, what I suffer'd for your sake!





For in I went, and call'd old Philip
 out
 To show the farm: full willingly he
 rose:
 He led me thro' the short sweet-smell-
 ing lanes
 Of his wheat-suburb, babbling as he
 went.
 He praised his land, his horses, his
 machines;
 He praised his ploughs, his cows, his
 hogs, his dogs;
 He praised his hens, his geese, his
 guinea-hens;
 His pigeons, who in session on their
 roofs
 Approved him, bowing at their own
 deserts:
 Then from his plaintive mother's teat
 he took
 Her blind and shuddering puppies,
 naming each,
 And naming those, his friends, for
 whom they were:
 Then crost the common into Darnley
 chase
 To show Sir Arthur's deer. In copse
 and fern
 Twinkled the innumerable ear and tail.
 Then, seated on a serpent-rooted
 beech,
 He pointed out a pasturing colt, and
 said:
 'That was the four year-old I sold the
 Squire.'
 And there he told a long long-winded
 tale
 Of how the Squire had seen the colt at
 grass,
 And how it was the thing his daughter
 wish'd,
 And how he sent the bailiff to the farm
 To learn the price, and what the price
 he ask'd,
 And how the bailiff swore that he was
 mad,
 But he stood firm and so the matter
 hung;
 He gave them line: and five days after
 that
 He met the bailiff at the Golden Fleece,
 Who then and there had offer'd some-
 thing more,
 But he stood firm, and so the matter
 hung;
 He knew the man; the colt would fetch
 its price;
 He gave them line: and how by chance
 at last
 (It might be May or April, he forgot,
 The last of April or the first of May)
 He found the bailiff riding by the farm,
 And, talking from the point he drew
 him in,
 And there he mellow'd all his heart
 with ale,
 Until they closed a bargain, hand in
 hand.
 'Then, while I breathed in sight of
 haven, he,

Poor fellow, could he help it? recom-
 menced,
 And ran thro' all the coltish chronicle,
 Wild Will, Black Bess, Tantivy, Tal-
 lyho,
 Reform, White Rose, Bellerophon, the
 Jilt,
 Arbaces, and Phenomenon, and the
 rest,
 Till, not to die a listener, I arose,
 And with me Philip, talking still; and
 so
 We turn'd our foreheads from the fall-
 ing sun,
 And following our own shadows thrice
 as long
 As when they follow'd us from Philip's
 door,
 Arrived, and found the sun of sweet
 content
 Re-risen in Katie's eyes, and all things
 well.
 I steal by lawns and grassy plots,
 I slide by hazel covers;
 I move the sweet forget-me-nots
 That grow for happy lovers.
 I slip, I slide, I gloom, I glance,
 Among my skimming swallows;
 I make the netted sunbeam dance
 Against my sandy shallows.
 I murmur under moon and stars
 In brambly wildernesses;
 I linger by my shingly bars;
 I loiter round my cresses;
 And out again I curve and flow
 To join the brimming river,
 For men may come and men may go,
 But I go on for ever.
 Yes, men may come and go; and these
 are gone,
 All gone. My dearest brother, Edmund
 sleeps,
 Not by the well-known stream and
 rustic spire,
 But unfamiliar Arno, and the dome
 Of Brnnelleschi, sleeps in peace: and
 he,
 Poor Philip, of all his lavish waste of
 words
 Remains the lean P. W. on his tomb:
 I scraped the lichen from it: Katie
 walks
 By the long wash of Australasian seas
 Far off, and holds her head to other
 stars,
 And breathes in converse seasons. All
 are gone."
 So Lawrence Aylmer, seated on a
 style
 In the long hedge, and rolling in his
 mind
 Old waifs of rhyme, and bowing o'er
 the brook
 A tonsured head in middle age forlorn,
 Mused, and was mute. On a sudden a
 low breath
 Of tender air made tremble in the
 hedge



The fragile bindweed-bells and briony
 rings;
 And he look'd up. There stood a
 maiden near,
 Waiting to pass. In much amaze he
 stared.
 On eyes a bashful azure, and on hair
 In gloss and hue the chestnut, when
 the shell
 Divides threefold to show the fruit
 within:
 Then, wondering, ask'd her "Are you
 from the farm?"
 "Yes" answer'd she. Pray stay a lit-
 tle: pardon me;
 What do they call you?" "Katie."
 "That were strange.
 What surname?" "Willows." "No!"
 "That is my name."
 "Indeed!" and here he look'd so self-
 perplexed,
 That Katie laugh'd, and laughing
 blush'd, till he
 Laugh'd also, but as one before he
 wakes,
 Who feels a glimmering strangeness in
 his dream.
 Then looking at her; "Too happy,
 fresh and fair,
 Too fresh and fair in our sad world's
 best bloom,
 To be the ghost of one who bore your
 name
 About these meadows, twenty years
 ago."
 "Have you not heard?" said Katie,
 "we came back.
 We bought the farm we tenanted be-
 fore.
 Am I so like her? so they said on
 board.
 Sir, if you knew her in her English
 days,
 My mother, as it seems you did, the
 days
 That most she loves to talk of, come
 with me.
 My brother James is in the harvest
 field:
 But she—you will be welcome—O,
 come in!"

THE LETTERS.

I.

STILL on the tower stood the vane,
 A black yew gloom'd the stagnant air,
 I peer'd athwart the chancel pane
 And saw the altar cold and bare.
 A clog of lead was round my feet,
 A band of pain across my brow;
 "Cold altar, Heaven and earth shall
 meet
 Before you hear my marriage vow."

II.

I turn'd and humm'd a bitter song
 That mock'd the wholesome human
 heart,

And then we met in wrath and wrong,
 We met, but only meant to part.
 Full cold my greeting was and dry;
 She faintly smiled, she hardly moved;
 I saw with half-unconscious eye
 She wore the colors I approved.

III.

She took the little ivory chest,
 With half a sign she turn'd the key,
 Then raised her head with lips com-
 prest,
 And gave my letters back to me.
 And gave the trinkets and the rings,
 My gifts, when gifts of mine could
 please,
 As looks a father on the things
 Of his dead son, I look'd on these.

IV.

She told me all her friends had said;
 I raged against the public liar;
 She talk'd as if her love were dead,
 But in my words were seeds of fire.
 "No more of love; your sex is known:
 I never will be twice deceived.
 Henceforth I trust the man alone,
 The woman cannot be believed.

V.

"Thro' slander, meanest spawn of Hell
 (And women's slander is the worst),
 And you, whom once I loved so well,
 Thro' you, my life will be accurst."
 I spoke with heart, and heat and force,
 I shook her breast with vague
 alarms—
 Like torrents from a mountain source
 We rush'd into each other's arms.

VI.

We parted: sweetly gleam'd the stars,
 And sweet the vapor-braided blue,
 Low breezes fann'd the belfry bars,
 As homeward by the church I drew.
 The very graves appear'd to smile,
 So fresh they rose in shadow'd swells;
 "Dark porch," I said, "and silent aisle,
 There comes a sound of marriage
 bells."

ODE ON THE DEATH OF THE
DUKE OF WELLINGTON.

I.

BURY the Great Duke
 With an empire's lamentation,
 Let us bury the Great Duke
 To the noise of the mourning of a
 mighty nation,
 Mourning when their leaders fall,
 Warriors carry the warrior's pall,
 And sorrow darkens hamlet and hall.

II.

Where shall we lay the man whom we
 deplore?
 Here, in streaming London's central
 roar.





Let the sound of those he wrought for,
And the feet of those he fought for,
Echo round his bones for evermore.

III.

Lead out the pageant : sad and slow,
As fits an universal woe,
Let the longlong procession go,
And let the sorrowing crowd about it
grow.
And let the mournful martial music
blow ;
The last great Englishman is low.

IV.

Mourn, for to us he seems the last,
Remembering all his greatness in the
Past.
No more in soldier fashion will he
greet
With lifted hand the gazer in the
street.
O friends, our chief state-oracle is
mute ;
Mourn for the man of long enduring
blood,
The statesman-warrior, moderate, res-
olute,
Whole in himself, a common good.
Mourn for the man of amplest in-
fluence,
Yet clearest of ambitious crime,
Our greatest yet with least pretence,
Great in council and great in war,
Foremost captain of his time,
Rich in saving common-sense,
And, as the greatest only are,
In his simplicity sublime.
O good gray head which all men knew,
O voice from which their omens all
men draw,
O iron nerve to true occasion true,
O fallen at length that tower of strength
Which stood four-square to all the
winds that blew !
Such was he whom we deplore.
The long self-sacrifice of life is o'er.
The great World-victor's victor will be
seen no more.

V.

All is over and done ;
Render thanks to the Giver,
England, for thy son.
Let the bell be toll'd.
Render thanks to the Giver,
And render him to the mould.
Under the cross of gold
That shines o'er city and river,
There he shall rest for ever
Among the wise and the bold.
Let the bell be toll'd ;
And a reverent people behold
The towering car, the sable steeds :
Bright let it be with its blazon'd deeds,
Dark in its funeral fold.
Let the bell be toll'd ;
And a deeper knell in the heart be
knell'd ;
And the sound of the sorrowing an-
them roll'd

Thro' the dome of the golden cross ;
And the vellying cannon thunder his
loss ;

He knew their voices of old.
For many a time in many a clime
His captain's-ear has heard them boom
Bellowing victory, bellowing doom ;
When he with those deep voices
wrought,
Guarding realms and kings from
shame ;
With those deep voices our dead cap-
tain taught
The tyrant, and asserts his claim
In that dread sound to the great name,
Which he has worn so pure of blame,
In praise and in dispraise the same,
A man of well-attemper'd frame.
A civic muse, to such a name,
To such a name for ages long,
To such a name,
Preserve a broad approach of fame,
And ever-echoing avenues of song.

VI.

Who is he that cometh, like an hon-
or'd gneat,
With banner and with music, with
soldier and with priest,
With a nation weeping, and breaking
on my rest ?
Mighty Seaman, this is he
Was great by land as thou by sea.
Thine island loves thee well, thou fa-
mous man,
The greatest sailor since our world be-
gan.
Now, to the roll of muffled drums,
To thee the greatest soldier comes ;
For this is he
Was great by land as thou by sea ;
His foes were thine ; he kept us free ;
O give him welcome, this is he
Worthy of our gorgeous rites,
And worthy to be laid by thee ;
For this is England's greatest son
He that gain'd a hundred fights.
Nor ever lost an English gun ;
This is he that far away
Against the myriads of Assaye
Clash'd with his fiery few and won ;
And underneath another sun,
Warring on a later day,
Round affrighted Lisbon drew
The treble works ; the vast designs
Of his labor'd rampart-lines,
Where he greatly stood at bay,
Whence he issued forth anew,
And ever great and greater grew,
Beating from the wasted vines
Back to France her banded swarms,
Back to France with countless blows,
Till o'er the hills her eagles flew
Beyond the Pyrenean pines.
Follow'd up in valley and glen
With blare of bugle, clamor of men,
Roll of cannon and clash of arms,
And England pouring on her foes.
Such a war had such a close.
Again their ravening eagle rose



In anger, wheel'd on Europe-shadowing wings ;
 And barking for the thrones of kings ;
 Till one that sought but Duty's iron crown
 On that loud sabbath shook the spoiler down ;
 A day of onsets of despair !
 Dash'd on every rocky square.
 Their surging charges foam'd themselves away ;
 Last, the Prussian trumpet blew ;
 Thro' the long-tormented air
 Heaven flash'd a sudden jubilant ray,
 And down we swept and charged and overthrew.
 So great a soldier taught us there,
 What long-enduring hearts could do
 In that world's-earthquake, Waterloo !
 Mighty Seaman, tender and true,
 And pure as he from taint of craven guile,
 O saviour of the silver-coasted isle,
 O shaker of the Baltic and the Nile,
 If aught of things that here befall
 Touch a spirit among things divine,
 If love of country move thee there at all,
 Be glad, because his bones are laid by thine !
 And thro' the centuries let a people's voice
 In full acclaim,
 A people's voice,
 The proof and echo of all human fame,
 A people's voice, when they rejoice
 At civic revel and pomp and game,
 Attest their great commander's claim
 With honor, honor, honor, honor to him,
 Eternal honor to his name.

VII.

A people's voice ! we are a people yet.
 Tho' all men else their nobler dreams forget,
 Confused by brainless mobs and lawless Powers ;
 Thank Him who isled us here, and roughly set
 His Brifon in blown seas and storming showers,
 We have a voice, with which to pay the debt
 Of boundless love and reverence and regret
 To those great men who fought, and kept it ours,
 And keep it ours, O God, from brute control ;
 O Statesmen, guard us, guard the eye, the soul
 Of Europe, keep our noble England whole,
 And save the ons true seed of freedom sown ;
 Betwixt a people and their ancient throne,
 That sober freedom out of which there springs

Our loyal passion for our temperate kings ;
 For, saving that, ye help to save mankind
 Till public wrong be crumbled into dust,
 And drill the raw world for the march of mind,
 Till crowds at length be sane and crowns be just.
 But wink no more in slothful over-trust.
 Remember him who led your hosts ;
 He bade you guard the sacred coasts.
 Your cannons moulder on the seaward wall ;
 His voice is silent in your council-hall
 For ever ; and whatever tempests lower
 For ever silent ; even if they broke
 In thunder, silent ; yet remember all
 He spoke among you, and the Man who spoke ;
 Who never sold the truth to serve the hour,
 Nor palter'd with Eternal God for power ;
 Who let the turbid streams of rumor flow
 Thro' either babbling world of high and low ;
 Whose life was work, whose language rife
 With rugged maxims hewn from life ;
 Who never spoke against a foe ;
 Whose eighty winters freeze with one rebuke
 All great self-seekers trampling on the right ;
 Truth-teller was our England's Alfred named ;
 Truth-lover was our English Duke ;
 Whatever record leap to light
 He never shall be shamed.

VIII.

Lo, the leader in these glorious wars
 Now to glorious burial slowly borne,
 Follow'd by the brave of other lands,
 He, on whom from both her open hands
 Lavish Honor shower'd all her stars,
 And affluent Fortunes emptied all her horn.
 Yea, let all good things await
 Him who cares not to be great,
 But as he saves or serves the state.
 Not once or twice in our rough island-story,
 The path of duty was the way to glory ;
 He that walks it, only thirsting
 For the right, and learns to deaden
 Love of self, before his journey closes,
 He shall find the stubborn thistle bursting
 Into glossy purples, which outredded
 All voluptuous garden-roses.
 Not once or twice in our fair island-story,
 The path of duty was the way to glory ;



He, that ever following her commands,
On with toil of heart and knees and hands.

Thro' the long gorge to the far light
has won

His path upward, and prevail'd,
Shall find the toppling crags of Duty
scaled

Are close upon the shining table-lands
To which our God Himself is moon
and sun.

Such was he : his work is done,
But while the races of mankind en-
dure,

Let his great example stand
Colossal, seen of every laud,
And keep the soldier firm, the states-
man pure :

Till in all lands and thro' all human
story

The path of duty be the way to glory ;
And let the land whose hearths he
saved from shame

For many and many an age proclaim
At civic revel and pomp and game
And when the long-illumined cities
flame,

Their ever-loyal iron leader's fame,
With honor, honor, honor, honor to
him,

Eternal honor to his name.

IX.

Peace, his triumph will be sung
By some yet unmoulded tongue
Far on in summers that we shall not
see :

Peace, it is a day of pain
For one about whose patriarchal knee
Late the little children clung :
O peace, it is a day of pain
For one, upon whose hand and heart
and brain

Once the weight and fate of Europe
hung.

Ours the pain, be his the gain !
More than is of man's degree
Must be with us, watching here
At this, our great solemnity.

Whom we see not we revere,
We revere, and we refrain
From talk of battles loud and vain,
And brawling memories all too free
For such a wise humility
As befits a solemn fane :

We revere, and while we hear
The tides of Music's golden sea
Setting toward eternity,
Uplifted high in heart and hope are
we,

Until we doubt not that for one so true
There must be other nobler work to do
Than when he fought at Waterloo,
And Victor he must ever be.

For tho' the Giant Ages heave the hill
And break the shore, and evermore
Make and break, and work their will ;
Tho' world on world in myriad myriads
roll

Round us, each with different powers,

And other forms of life than ours,
What know we greater than the soul ?
On God and Godlike men we build our
trust.

Hush, the Dead March wails in the
people's ears :
The dark crowd moves, and there are
sobs and tears :
The black earth yawns : the mortal
disappears ;

Ashes to ashes, dust to dust ;
He is gone who seem'd so great.—
Gone ; but nothing can bereave him
Of the force he made his own
Being here, and we believe him
Something far advanced in State,
And that he wears a truer crown
Than any wreath that man can weave
him.

Speak no more of his renown,
Lay your earthly fancies down,
And in the vast cathedral leave him.
God accept him, Christ receive him.
1852.

THE DAISY.

WRITTEN AT EDINBURGH.

O LOVE, what hours were thine and
mine

In lands of palm and southern pine
In lands of palm, of orange blossom,
Of olive, aloe, and maize and vine.

What Roman strength Turbia show'd
In ruin, by the mountain road ;
How like a gem, beneath, the city
Of little Monaco, basking, glow'd.

How richly down the rocky dell
The torrent vineyard streaming fell
To meet the sun and sunny waters.
That only heaved with a summer swell.

What slender campanili grew
By bays, the peacock's neck in hue ;
Where, here and there, on sandy
beaches

A milky-bell'd amaryllis blew.
How young Columbus seem'd to rove,
Yet present in his natal grove,
Now watching high on mountain
cornice,

And steering, now, from a purple cove,
Now pacing mute by ocean's rim
Till, in a narrow street and dim,

I stay'd the wheels at Cogoletto,
And drank, and loyally drank to him.
Nor knew we well what pleased us
most,

Nor the clipt palm of which they
boast ;

But distant color, happy hamlet,
A moulder'd citadel on the coast,
Or tower, or high hill-convent, seen
A light amid its olives green ;

Or olive-hoary cape in ocean ;
Or rosy blossom in hot ravine,
Where oleanders flush'd the bed
Of silent torrents, gravel-spread :



And, crossing, oft we saw the glisten
Of ice, far up on a mountain head.

We loved that hall, tho' white and
cold,

Those niched shapes of noble mould,
A princely people's awful princes,
The grave, severe Genovese of old.

At Florence too, what golden hours,
In those long galleries, were ours ;

What drives about the fresh Cascinè,
Or walks in Boboli's ducal bowers.

In bright vignettes, and each complete,
Of tower or duomo, sunny-sweet,

Or palace, how the city glitter'd,
Thro' cypress avenues, at our feet.

But when we crost the Lombard plain
Remember what a plague of rain.

Of rain at Reggio, rain at Parma ;
At Lodi, rain, Piacenza, rain.

And stern and sad (so rare the smiles
Of sunlight) look'd the Lombard piles ;

Porch-pillars on the lion resting,
And sombre, old, colonnaded aisles.

O Milan, O the chanting quires,
The giant window's blazon'd fires,
The height, the space, the gloom, the
glory !

A mount of marble a hundred spires !
I climb'd the roofs at break of day ;
Sun-smitten Alps before me lay.

I stood among the silent statues,
And statur'd pinnacles, mute as they.

How faintly-flush'd, how phantom-fair,
Was Monte Rosa, hanging there
A thousand shadowy-pencil'd valleys
And snowy dells in a golden air.

Remember how we came at last
To Como ; shower and storm and blast

Had blow'd the lake beyond his limit
And all was flooded ; and how we past

From Como, when the light was gray,
And in my herd, for half the day,

The rich Virgilian rustic measure
Of Lari Maxume, all the way,

Like ballad-burden music, kept,
As on The Lariano crept

To that fair port below the castle
Of Queen Theodolind, where we slept ;

Or hardly slept, but watch'd awake
A cypress in the moonlight shake,

The moonlight touching o'er a ter-
race

One tall Agavè above the lake.

What more ? we took our last adieu,
And up the snowy Splügen drew,

But ere we reach'd the highest sum-
mit

I pluck'd a daisy, I gave it you.

It told of England then to me,
And now it tells of Italy.

O love, we two shall go no longer
To lands of summer across the sea ;

So dear a life your arms enfold
Whose crying is a cry for gold :

Yet here to-night in this dark city,
When ill and weary, alone and cold,

I found, tho' crush'd to hard and dry,
This nursling of another sky

Still in the little book you lent me,
And where you tenderly laid it by :

And I forgot the clouded Forth,
The gloom that saddens Heaven and
Earth,

The bitter east, the misty summer
And gray metropolis of the North.

Perchance, to lull the throbs of pain,
Perchance, to charm a vacant brain,

Perchance, to dream you still beside
me,

My fancy fled to the South again.

TO THE REV. F. D. MAURICE.

COME, when no graver cares employ,
God-father, come and see your boy :

Your presence will be sun in winter,
Making the little one leap for joy ;

For, being of that honest few,
Who give the Fiend himself his due,
Should eighty-thousand college coun-
cils

Thunder "Anathema," friend, at you:
Should all our churchmen foam in
spite

At you, so careful of the right,
Yet one lay-hearth would give you
welcome

(Take it and come) to the Isle of Wight ;
Where, far from noise and smoke of
town,

I watch the twilight falling brown
All round a careless-order'd garden

Close to the ridge of a noble down.
You'll have no scandal while you dine,
But honest talk and wholesome wine,

And only hear the magpie gossip
Garrulous under a roof of pine :

For groves of pine on either hand,
To break the blast of winter, staur'd ;

And further on, the hoary Channel
Tumbles a breaker on chalk and sand ;

Where, if below the milky steep
Some ship of battle slowly creep,

And on thro' zones of light and
shadow

Glimmer away to the lonely deep,
We might discuss the Northern sin

Which made a selfish war begin ;
Dispute the claims, arrange the
chances ;

Emperor, Ottoman, which shall win :

Or whether war's avenging rod
Shall lash all Europe into blood ;

Till you should turn to dearer mat-
ters,

Dear to the man that is dear to God ;
How best to help the slender store,

How mend the dwellings, of the poor ;



How gain in life, as life advances;
 Valor and charity more and more.
 Come, Maurice, come: the lawn as yet
 Is hoar with rime, or spongy-wet;
 But when the wreath of March has
 blossom'd,
 Crocus, anemone, violet,
 Or later, pay one visit here,
 For those are few we hold as dear;
 Nor pay but one, but come for many,
 Many and many a happy year.
January, 1854.

WILL.

I.

O WELL for him whose will is strong!
 He suffers, but he will not suffer long;
 He suffers, but he cannot suffer wrong:
 For him nor moves the loud world's
 random mock,
 Nor all Calamity's hugest waves con-
 found,
 Who sends a promontory rock,
 That, compass'd round with turbulent
 sound,
 In middle ocean meets the surging
 shock,
 Tempest-buffeted, citadel-crown'd.

II.

But ill for him who, bettering not with
 time,
 Corrupts the strength of heaven-de-
 scended Will,
 And ever weaker grows thro' acted
 crime,
 Or seeming-genial venial fault,
 Recurring and suggesting still!
 He seems as one whose footsteps halt,
 Toiling in immeasurable sand.
 And o'er a weary, sultry land,
 Far beneath a blazing vault,
 Sown in a wrinkle of the monstrous
 hill,
 The city sparkles like a grain of salt.

THE CHARGE OF THE LIGHT
BRIGADE.

I.

HALF a league, half a league,
 Half a league onward,
 All in the valley of Death .
 Rode the six hundred.
 "Forward, the Light Brigade!
 Charge for the guns!" he said:
 Into the valley of Death
 Rode the six hundred.

II.

"Forward, the Light Brigade!"
 Was there a man dismay'd?
 No thro' the soldier knew
 Some one had blunder'd:
 Theirs not to make reply,
 Theirs not to reason why,

Theirs hut to do and die
 Into the valley of Death
 Rode the six hundred.

III.

Cannon to right of them,
 Cannon to left of them,
 Cannon in front of them
 Volley'd and thunder'd;
 Storm'd at with shot and shell,
 Boldly they rode and well,
 Into the jaws of Death,
 Into the mouth of Hell
 Rode the six hundred.

IV.

Flash'd all their sabres bare,
 Flash'd as they turn'd in air .
 Sabring the gunners there,
 Charging an army, while
 All the world wonder'd:
 Plunged in the battery-smoke,
 Right thro' the line they broke;
 Cossack and Russian
 Reel'd from the sabre-stroke
 Shatter'd and Sunder'd.
 Then they rode back, but not
 Not the six hundred.

V.

Cannon to right of them,
 Cannon to left of them,
 Cannon behind them
 Volley'd and thunder'd;
 Storm'd at with shot and shell,
 While horse and hero fell,
 They that had fought so well
 Came thro' the jaws of Death
 Back from the mouth of Hell,
 All that was left of them,
 Left of six hundred.

VI.

When can their glory fade?
 O the wild charge they made!
 All the world wonder'd.
 Honor the charge they made!
 Honor the Light Brigade,
 Noble six hundred!

IN MEMORIAM.

STRONG Son of God, immortal Love,
 Whom we, that have not seen thy
 face,
 By faith, and faith alone, embrace,
 Believing where we cannot prove;
 Thine are these orbs of light and shade;
 Thou madest Life in man and brute;
 Thou madest Death; and lo, thy
 foot
 Is on the skull which thou hast made.
 Thou wilt not leave us in the dust:
 Thou madest man, he knows not
 why;
 He thinks he was not made to die;
 And thou hast made him: thou art
 just.
 Thou seemest human and divine,
 The highest, holiest manhood, thou:



Our wills are ours, we know not
how;
Our wills are ours, to make them
thine.
Our little systems have their day;
They have their day and cease to be:
They are but broken lights of thee,
And thou, O Lord, art more than they.
We have but faith: we cannot know:
For knowledge is of things we see;
And yet we trust it comes from thee,
A beam in darkness: let it grow.
Let knowledge grow from more to
more,
But more of reverence in us dwell;
That mind and soul, according well,
May make one music as before,
But vaster. We are fools and slight;
We mock thee when we do not fear:
But help thy foolish ones to bear;
Help thy vain worlds to bear thy light.
Forgive what seem'd my sin in me;
What seem'd my worth since I be-
gan;
For merit lives from man to man,
And not from man, O Lord, to thee.
Forgive my grief for one removed,
Thy creature, whom I found so fair.
I trust he lives in thee, and there
I find him worthier to be loved.
Forgive these wild and wandering
cries,
Confusions of a wasted youth;
Forgive them where they fail in
truth,
And in thy wisdom make me wise.

1849.

IN MEMORIAM.

A. H. H.

OBITU MDCCCXXXIII.

I.

I HELD it truth, with him who sings
To one clear harp in divers tones,
That men may rise on stepping-
stones
Of their dead selves to higher things.
But who shall so forecast the years
And find in loss a gain to match?
Or reach a hand thro' time to catch
The far-off interest of tears?
Let Love clasp Grief lest both be
drown'd,
Let darkness keep her raven gloss:
Ah, sweeter to be drunk with loss,
To dance with death, to beat the
ground,
Than that the victor Hours should
scorn
The long result of love, and boast,
'Behold the man that loved and
lost,
But all he was is overworn.'

II.

OLD Yew, which graspest at the stones
That name the under-lying dead,
Thy fibres net the dreamless head,
Thy roots are wrapt about the bones.
The seasons bring the flower again,
And bring the firstling to the flock;
And in the dusk of thee, the clock
Beats out the little lives of men.
O not for thee the glow, the bloom,
Who changest not in any gale,
Nor branding summer suns avail
To touch thy thousand years of gloom:
And gazing on thee, sullen tree,
Sick for thy stuhorn hardihood,
I seem to fall from out my blood
And grow incorporate into thee.

III.

O SORROW, cruel fellowship,
O Priestess in the vaults of Death,
O sweet and bitter in a breath,
What whispers from thy lying lip?
"The stars," she whispers, "blindly
run;
A web is wov'n across the sky;
From out waste places comes a cry,
And murmurs from the dying sun:
"And all the phantom, Nature
stands—
With all the music in her tone,
A hollow echo of my own,—
A hollow form with empty hands."
And shall I take a thing so blind,
Embrace her as my natural good;
Or crush her, like a vice of blood,
Upon the threshold of the mind?

IV.

To Sleep I give my powers away;
My will is bondsman to the dark;
I sit within a helmless bark,
And with my heart I muse and say:
O heart, how fares it with thee now,
That thou shouldst fall from thy de-
sire,
Who scarcely darest to inquire,
"What is it makes me heat so low?"
Something it is which thou hast lost,
Some pleasure from thine early
years.
Break, thou deep vase of chilling
tears,
That grief hath shaken into frost!
Such clouds of nameless trouble cross
All night below the darken'd eyes:
With morning wakes the will, and
cries,
"Thou shalt not be the fool of loss."
V.
I SOMETIMES hold it half a sin
To put in words the grief I feel;
For words, like Nature, half reveal
And half conceal the Soul within.



But, for the unquiet heart and brain,
A use in measured language lies;
The sad mechanic exercise,
Like dull narcotics, numbing pain.

In words, like weeds, I'll wrap me
o'er,
Like coarsest clothes against the
cold;
But that large grief which these en-
fold
Is given in outline and no more.

VI.

ONE writes, that "Other friends re-
main,"
That "Loss is common to the race,"—
And common is the commonplace,
And vacant chaff well meant for grain.

That loss is common would not make
My own less bitter, rather more:
Too common! Never morning wore
To evening, but some heart did break.

O father, wheresoe'er thou be,
Who pledgedst now thy gallant son;
A shot, ere half thy draught be done,
Hath still'd the life that beat from
thee.

O mother, praying God will save
Thy sailor, — while thy head is
bow'd,
His heavy-shotted hammock-shroud,
Drops in his vast and wandering
grave.

Ye know no more than I who wrought
At that last hour to please him well;
Who mused on all I had to tell,
And something written, something
thought;

Expecting still his advent home;
And ever met him on his way
With wishes, thinking, here to-day,
Or here to-morrow will he come.

O somewhere, meek unconscious dove,
That sittest ranging golden hair;
And glad to find thyself so fair,
Poor child, that waitest for thy love!

For now her father's chimney glows
In expectation of a guest;
And thinking "this will please him
best,"

She takes a riband or a rose;
For he will see them on to-night;
And with the thought her color
burns;
And, having left the glass, she turns
Once more to set a ringlet right;

And, even when she turn'd, the curse
Had fallen, and her future Lord
Was drown'd in passing thro' the
ford,
Or kill'd in falling from his horse.

O what to her shall be the end?
And what to me remains of good?
To her, perpetual maidenhood,
And unto me no second friend.

VII.

DARK house, by which once more I
stand
Here in the long unlovely street,
Doors, where my heart was used to
beat

So quickly, waiting for a hand,
A hand that can be clasp'd no more,—
Behold me, for I cannot sleep,
And like a guilty thing I creep
At earliest morning to the door.

He is not here; but far away
The noise of life begins again,
And ghastly thro' the drizzling rain
On the bald street breaks the blank
day.

VIII.

A HAPPY lover who has come
To look on her that loves him well,
Who 'lights and rings the gateway
bell,
And learns her gone and far from
home;

He saddens, all the magic light
Dies off at once from bower and hall,
And all the place is dark, and all
The chambers emptied of delight:

So find I every pleasant spot
In which we two were wont to meet,
The field, the chamber, and the
street,
For all is dark where thou art not.

Yet as that other, wandering there
In those deserted walks, may find
A flower beat with rain and wind,
Which once she foster'd up with care;

So seems it in my deep regret,
O my forsaken heart, with thee
And this poor flower of poesy
Which little cared for fades not yet.

But since it pleased a vanish'd eye,
I go to plant it on his tomb,
That if it can it there may bloom,
Or dying, there at least may die.

IX.

FAIR ship, that from the Italian shore
Sallest the placid ocean-plains
With my lost Arthur's loved remains,
Spread thy full wings, and waft him
o'er.

So draw him home to those that mourn
In vain; a favorable speed
Ruffle thy mirror'd mast, and lead
Thro' prosperous floods his holy urn.

All night no ruder air perplex
Thy sliding keel, till Phosphor,
bright

As our pure love, thro' early light
Shall glimmer on the dewy decks.

Sphere all your lights around, above;
Sleep, gentle heavens, before the
prow;
Sleep, gentle winds, as he sleeps
now,

My friend, the brother of my love;



My Arthur, whom I shall not see
Till all my widow'd race be run ;
Dear as the mother to the son,
More than my brothers are to me.

X.

I HEAR the noise about thy keel ;
I hear the bell struck in the night ;
I see the cabin-window bright ;
I see the sailor at the wheel.

Thou bringest the sailor to his wife,
And travell'd men from foreign
lands ;
And letters unto trembling hands ;
And, thy dark freight, a vanish'd life.

So bring him : we have idle dreams :
This look of quiet flatters thus
Our home-bred fancies : O to us,
The fools of habit, sweeter seems
To rest beneath the clover sod,
That takes the suushine and the
rains,
Or where the kneeling hamlet drains
The chalice of the grapes of God ;
Than if with thee the roaring wells
Should gulf him fathom-deep in
brine ;
And hands so often clasp'd in mine,
Should 'toss with tangle and with
shells.

XI.

CALM is the morn without a sound,
Calm as to suit a calmer grief,
And only thro' the faded leaf
The chestnut pattering to the ground :
Calm and deep peace on this high
wold,
And on these dews that drench the
furze,
And all the silvery gossamers
That twinkle into green and gold :

Calm and still light on yon great plain
That sweeps with all its autumn
bowers,
And crowded farms and lessening
towers,

To miugle with the bounding main :
Calm and deep peace in this wide air,
These leaves that redden to the fall ;
And in my heart, if calm at all,
If any calm, a calm despair :

Calm on the seas, and silver sleep,
And waves that sway themselves in
rest,
And dead calm in that noble breast
Which heaves but with the heaving
deep.

XII.

Lo, as a dove when up she springs
To bear thro' Heaven a tale of woe,
Some dolorous message kuit below
The wild pulsation of her wings ;

Like her I go ; I cannot stay ;
I leave this mortal ark behind,
A weight of nerves without a mind,
And leave the cliffs, and haste away

O'er ocean-mirrors rounded large,
And reach the glow of southern skies,
And see the sails at distance rise,
And linger weeping on the marge,
And say : " Comes he thus, my
friend ?

Is this the end of all my care ? "
And circle moaning in the air :
' Is this the end ? Is this the end ? "

And forward dart again, and play
About the prow, and back return
To where the body sits, and learn,
That I have been an hour away.

XIII.

TEARS of the widower, when he sees
A late-lost form that sleep reveals,
And moves his doubtful arms, and
feels

Her place is empty, fall like these ;
Which weep a loss for ever new,
A void where heart on heart reposed ;
And, where warm hauds have preat
and closed,
Silence, till I be silent too.

Which weep the comrade of my choice,
An awful thought, a life removed,
The human-hearted man I loved,
A Spirit, not a breathing voice.

Come Time, and teach me, many years,
I do not suffer in a dream ;
For now so strangs do these things
seem,

Mine eyes have leisure for their tears ;
My fancies time to rise on wing,
And glances about the approaching
sails,
As tho' they brought but merchant's
bales,
And not the burden that they bring.

XIV.

If one should bring me this report,
That thou hadst touch'd the land to-
day,
And I went down unto the quay,
And found thee lying in the port ;
And standing, muffled round with woe,
Should see thy passengers in rank
Come stepping lightly down the
plank,

And beckoning unto those they know ;
And if along with these should come
The man I held as half-divine ;
Should strike a sudden hand in mine,
And ask a thousaud things of home ;
And I should tell him all my pain,
And how my life had droop'd of late,
And he should sorrow o'er my state
Aud marvel what possess'd my brain ;
And I perceived no touch of change,
No hint of death in all his fame,
But found him all in all the same,
I should not feel it to be strange.

XV.

TO-NIGHT the winds begin to rise
And roar from yonder dropping day :



The last red leaf is whir'd away,
The rooks are blown about the skies ;
The forest crack'd, the waters curl'd,
The cattle huddled on the lea ;
And wildly dash'd on tower and tree
The sunbeam strikes along the world :
And but for fancies, which aver
That all thy motions gently pass
Althwart a plane of molten glass,
I scarce could brook the strain and
stir
That makes the barren branches loud ;
And but for fear it is not so,
The wild unrest that lives in woe
Would dote and pore on yonder cloud
That rises upward always higher,
And onward drags a laboring breast,
And topples round the dreary west,
A looming bastion fringed with fire.

XVI.

WHAT words are these have fall'n
from me ?
Can calm despair and wild unrest
Be tenants of a single breast,
Or sorrow such a changeling be ?
Or doth she only seem to take
The touch of change in calm or
storm ;
But knows no more of transient form
In her deep self, than some dead lake
That holds the shadow of a lark
Hung in the shadow of a heaven ?
Or has the shock, so harshly given,
Confused me like the unhappy bark
That strikes by night a craggy shelf,
And staggers blindly ere she sink ?
And stunn'd me from my power to
think
And all my knowledge of myself ;
And made me that delirious man
Whose fancy fuses old and new,
And flashes into false and true,
And mingles all without a plan ?

XVII.

THOU comest, much wept for : such a
breeze
Compell'd thy canvas, and my
prayer
Was as the whisper of an air
To breathe thee over lonely seas.
For I in spirit saw thee move
Thro' circles of the bounding sky,
Week after week : the days go by :
Come quick, thou bringest all I love.
Henceforth, wherever thou may'st
roam,
My blessing, like a line of light,
Is on the waters day and night,
And like a beacon guards thee home.
So may whatever tempest mars
Mid-ocean, spare thee, sacred bark ;
And balmy drops in summer dark
Slide from the bosom of the stars.
So kind an office hath been done,
Such precious relics brought by thee ;

The dust of him I shall not see
Till all my widow'd race be run.

XVIII.

'Tis well ; 'tis something ; we may
stand
Where he in English earth is laid,
And from his ashes may be made
The violet of his native land.
'Tis little ; but it looks in truth
As if the quiet bones were blest
Among familiar names to rest
And in the places of his youth.

Come then, pure hands, and bear the
head
That sleeps or wears the mask of
sleep,
And come, whatever loves to weep,
And hear the ritual of the dead.
Ah yet, ev'n yet, if this might be,
I, falling on his faithful heart,
Would breathing thro' his lips im-
part
The life that almost dies in me ;
That dies not, but endures with pain,
And slowly forms the firmer mind,
Treasuring the look it cannot find,
The words that are not heard again.

XIX.

THE Danube to the Severn gave
The darken'd heart that beat no
more ;
They laid him by the pleasant shore,
And in the hearing of the wave.
There twice a day the Severn fills ;
The salt sea-water passes by,
And hushes half the babbling Wye,
And makes a silence in the hills.
The Wye is hush'd nor moved along
And hush'd my deepest grief of all,
When fill'd with tears that cannot
fall,
I brim with sorrow drowning song.
The tide flows down, the wave again
Is vocal in its wooded walls ;
My deeper anguish also falls,
And I can speak a little then.

XX.

THE lesser griefs that may be said,
That breathe a thousand tender
vows,
And but as servants in a house
Where lies the master newly dead ;
Who speak their feeling as it is,
And weep the fulness from the mind :
" It will be hard," they say, " to find
Another service such as this."
My lighter moods are like to these,
That out of words a comfort win ;
But there are other griefs within,
And tears that at their fountain freeze ;
For by the hearth the children sit
Cold in that atmosphere of Death,



And scarce endure to draw the
breath,
Or like to noiseless phantoms fit:

But open converse is there none,
So much the vital spirits sink
To see the vacant chair, and think,
"How good! how kind! and he is
gone."

XXI.

I SING to him that rests below,
And, since the grasses round me
wave,

I take the grasses of the grave,
And make them pipes whereon to blow.
The traveller hears me now and then,
And sometimes harshly will he
speak;

"This fellow would make weakness
weak,
And melt the waxen hearts of men."

Another answers, "Let him be,
He loves to make parade of pain,
That with his piping he may gain
The praise that comes to constancy."

A third is wroth, "Is this an hour
For private sorrow's barren song,
When more and more the people
throng
The chairs and thrones of civil power?"

"A time to sicken and to swoon,
When Science reaches forth her arms
To feel from world to world, and
charms

Her secret from the latest moon?"

Behold, ye speak an idle thing:
Ye never knew the sacred dust:
I do but sing because I must,
And pipe but as the linnets sing:

And one is glad; her note is gay,
For now her little ones have ranged;
And one is sad; her notes changed,
Because her brood is stol'n away.

XXII.

THE path by which we twain did go,
Which led by tracts that pleased us
well,

Thro' four sweet years arose and fell,
From flower to flower, from snow to
snow:

And we with singing cheer'd the way,
And, crown'd with all the season lent,
From April on to April went,
And glad at heart from May to May:

But where the path we walk'd began
To slant the fifth autumnal slope,
As we descended following Hope,
There sat the Shadow fear'd of man;

Who broke our fair companionship,
And spread his mantle dark and cold,
And wrapt thee formless in the fold,
And dull'd the murmur on thy lip,
And bore thee where I could not see
Nor follow, tho' I walk in haste,

And think, that somewhere in the
waste
The Shadow sits and waits for me.

XXIII.

Now, sometimes in my sorrow shut,
Or breaking into song by fits,
Alone, alone, to where he sits,
The Shadow cleak'd from head to foot,
Who keeps the keys of all the creeds,
I wander, often falling lame,
And looking back to whence I came,
Or on to where the pathway leads;

And crying. How changed from where
it ran

Thro' lands where not a leaf was
dumb:

But all the lavish hills would hum
The murmur of a happy Pan:

When each by turns was guide to each,
And Fancy light from Fancy caught,
And Thought leapt out to wed with
Thought

Ere Thought could wed itself with
Speech;

And all we met was fair and good,
And all was good that Time could
bring,

And all the secret of the Spring
Moved in the chambers of the blood;

And many an old philosophy
On Argive heights divinely sang,
And round us all the thicket rang
To many a flute of Arcady.

XXIV.

AND was the day of my delight
As pure and perfect as I say?
The very source and fount of Day
Is dash'd with wandering isles of night.

If all was good and fair we met,
This earth had been the Paradise
It never look'd to human eyes
Since Adam left his garden yet.

And is it that the haze of grief
Makes former gladness loom so
great?

To lowness of the present state,
That sets the past in this relief?

Or that the past will always win
A glory from its being far;
And orb into the perfect star
We saw not, when we moved therein?

XXV.

I KNOW that this was Life, the track
Whereon with equal feet we fared;
And then, as now, the day prepared
The daily burden for the back.

But this it was that made me move
As light as carrier-birds in air;
I loved the weight I had to bear,
Because it needed help of Love:

Nor could I weary, heart or limb,
When mighty Love would cleave in
twain



The lading of a single pain,
And part it, giving half to him.

XXVI.

STILL onwards winds the dreary way;
I with it; for I long to prove
No lapse of moons can canker Love,
Whatever fickle tongues may say.

And if that eye which watches guilt
And goodness, and had power to see
Within the green the moulder'd tree,
And towers fall'n as soon as built—
Of, if indeed that eye foresee
Or see (in Him is no before)
In more of life true life no more
And Love the indifference to be,

Then might I find, ere yet the morn
Breaks hither over Indian seas,
That Shadow waiting with the keys,
To shroud me from my proper scorn.

XXVII.

I ENVY not in any moods
The captive void of noble rage,
The linnet born within the cage,
That never knew the summer woods:

I envy not the beast that takes
His license in the field of time,
Unfetter'd by the sense of crime,
To whom a conscience never wakes;
Nor, what may count itself as blest,
The heart that never plighted troth,
But stagnates in the weeds of sloth;
Nor any want-begotten rest.

I hold it true, whate'er befall;
I feel it, when I sorrow most;
'Tis better to have loved and lost
Than never to have loved at all.

XXVIII.

THE time draws near the birth of
Christ:

The moon is hid; the night is still;
The Christmas bells from hill to hill
Answer each other in the mist.

Four voices of four hamlets round,
From far and near, on mead and
moor,

Swell out and fail, as if a door
Were shut between me and the sound:
Each voice four changes on the wind,
That now dilate, and now decrease,
Peace and goodwill, goodwill and
peace,

Peace and goodwill, to all mankind.

This year I slept and woke with pain,
I almost wish'd no more to wake,
And that my hold on life would break
Before I heard those bells again:

But they my troubled spirit rule,
For they controul'd me when a boy;
They bring me sorrow touch'd with
joy,

The merry merry bells of Yule.

XXIX.

WITH such compelling cause to grieve
As daily vexes household peace,

And chains regret to his decease,
How dare we keep our Christmas-eve;
Which brings no more a welcome guest
To enrich the threshold of the night
With shower'd largess of delight,
In dance and song and game and jest.
Yet go, and while the holly boughs
Entwine the cold baptismal font,
Make one-wreath more for Use and
Wont,
That guard the portals of the house;
Old sisters of a day gone by,
Gray nurses, loving nothing new;
Why should they miss their early due
Before their time? They too will die.

XXX.

WITH trembling fingers did we weave
The holly round the Christmas
hearth;

A rainy cloud possess'd the earth,
And sadly fell our Christmas-eve.

At our old pastimes in the hall
We gambol'd, making vain pretence
Of gladness, with an awful sense
Of que mute shadow watching all.

We paused, the winds were in the
beech:
We heard them sweep the winter
land;

And in a circle hand-in-hand
Sat silent, looking each at each.

Then echo-like our voices rang;
We sung, tho' every eye was dim,
A merry song we sang with him
Last year: impetuously we sang:

We ceased; a gentler feeling crept
Upon us: surely rest is meet:
"They rest," we said, "their sleep is
sweet,"

And silence follow'd, and we wept.

Our voices took a higher range;
Once more we sang: "They do not
die

Nor lose their mortal sympathy,
Nor change to us, although they
change;

Rapt from the fickle and the frail
With gather'd power, yet the same,
Pierces the keen seraphic flame
From orb to orb, from veil to veil."

Rise, happy morn, rise, holy morn,
Draw forth the cheerful day from
night:

O Father, touch the east, and light
The light that shone when Hope was
born.

XXXI.

WHEN Lazaurus left his charnel-cave,
And home to Mary's house return'd,
Was this demanded—if he yearn'd
To hear her weeping by his grave?

"Where wert thou, brother, those four
days?"
There lives no record of reply.



Which telling what it is to die
Had surely added praise to praise.
From every house the neighbors met,
The streets were fill'd with joyful
 sound,
A solemn gladness even crown'd
The purple brows of Olivet.
Behold a man raised up by Christ !
The rest remaineth unreveal'd ;
He told it not ; or something seal'd
The lips of that Evangelist.

XXXII.

HER eyes are homes of silent prayer,
Nor other thought her mind admits
But, he was dead, and there he sits,
And he that brought him back is there.
Then one deep love doth supersede
All other, when her ardent gaze
Roves from the living brother's face,
And rests upon the Life indeed.
All subtle thought, all curious fears,
Borne down by gladness so complete,
She bows, she bathes the Saviour's
 feet
With costly spikenard and with tears.
Thrice blest whose lives are faithful
 prayers,
Whose loves in higher love endure ;
What souls possess themselves so
 pure,
Or is there blessedness like theirs ?

XXXIII.

O THOU that after toil and storm
Mayst seem to have reach'd a purer
 air,
Whose faith has centre everywhere,
Nor cares to fix itself to form,
Leave thou thy sister when she prays,
Her early Heaven, her happy views ;
Nor thou with shadow'd hint con-
 fess
A life that leads melodious days.
Her faith thro' form is pure as thine,
Her hands are quicker unto good :
Oh, sacred be the flesh and blood
To which she links a truth divine !
See thou, that countest reason ripe
In holding by the law within,
Thou fail not in a world of sin,
And ev'n for want of such a type.

XXXIV.

My own dim life should teach me this,
That life shall live for evermore,
Else earth is darkness at the core,
And dust and ashes all that is ;
This round of green, this orb of flame,
Fantastic beauty ; such as lures
In some wild Poet, when he works
Without a conscience or an aim.
What then were God to such as I ?
'Twere hardly worth my while to
 choose
Of things all mortal, or to use
A little patience ere I die ;

'Twere best at once to sink to peace,
Like birds the charming serpent
 draws,
To drop head-foremost in the jaws
Of vacant darkness and to cease.

XXXV.

YET if some voice that man could
 trust
Should murmur from the narrow
 house,
"The cheeks drop in ; the body
 bows ;
Man dies ; nor is there hope in dust ;"
Might I not say ? " yet even here,
But for one hour, O Love, I strive
To keep so sweet a thing alive :"
But I should turn mine ears and hear
The moanings of the homeless sea,
The sound of streams that swift or
 slow
Draw down Æonian hills, and sow
The dust of continents to be ;
And Love would answer with a sigh,
"The sound of that forgetful shore
Will change my sweetness more and
 more,
Half-dead to know that I shall die."
O me, what profits it to put
An idle case ? If Death were seen
At first as Death, Love had not been,
Or been in narrowest working shut,
Mere fellowship of sluggish moods,
Or in his coarsest Satyr-shape
Had bruised the herb and crush'd
 the grape,
And bask'd and batten'd in the woods.

XXXVI.

THO' truths in manhood darkly join,
Deep-seated in our mystic frame,
We yield all blessing to the name
Of Him that made them current coin ;
For Wisdom dealt with mortal powers
Where truth in closest words shall
 fall,
Where truth embodied in a tale
Shall enter in at lowly doors.
And so the Word had breath, and
 wrought
With human hands the creed of
 creeds
In loveliness of perfect deeds,
More strong than all poetic thought ;
Which he may read that hinds the
 sheaf,
Or builds the house, or digs the
 grave,
And those wild eyes that watch the
 wave
In roarings round the coral reef.

XXXVII.

URANIA speaks with darken'd brow :
"Thou pratest here where thou art
 least ;
This faith has many a purer priest,
And many an abler voice than thou.



Go down beside thy native rill,
 On thy Parnassus set thy feet,
 And hear thy laurel whisper sweet
 About the ledges of the hill."
 And my Melpomene replies,
 A touch of shame upon her cheek ;
 " I am not worthy ev'n to speak
 Of thy prevailing mysteries ;
 For I am but an earthly Muse,
 And owning but a little art
 To lull with song an aching heart,
 And render human love his dues ;
 But brooding on the dear one dead,
 And all he said of things divine,
 (And dear to me as sacred wine,
 To dying lips is all he said),
 I murmur'd, as I came along,
 Of comfort clasp'd in truth reveal'd ;
 And loiter'd in the master's field,
 And darken'd sanctities with song."

XXXVIII.

With weary steps I loiter on,
 Tho' always under alter'd skies
 The purple from the distance dies,
 My prospect and horizon gone.

No joy the blowing season gives,
 The herald melodies of spring,
 But in the songs I love to sing
 A doubtful gleam of eolace lives.
 If any care for what is here
 Survive in spirits render'd free,
 Then are these songs I sing of thee
 Not all ungrateful to thine ear.

XXXIX.

Old warder of these buried bones,
 And answering now my random
 strokes
 With fruitful cloud and living
 smoke,
 Dark yew, that graspest at the stones
 And dippest toward the dreamless
 head,
 To thee too comes the golden hour
 When flower is feeling after flower ;
 But Sorrow fixt upon the dead,
 And darkening the dark graves of
 men,
 What whisper'd from her lying lips ?
 Thy gloom is kindled at the tips,
 And passes into gloom again.

XL.

Could we forget the widow'd hour
 And look on Spirits breathed away,
 As on a maiden in the day
 When first she wears her orange-
 flower !
 When crown'd with blessing she doth
 rise
 To take her latest leave of home,
 And hopes and light regrets that
 come
 Make April of her tender eyes ;
 And doubtful joys the father move,
 And tears are on the mother's face,

As parting with a long embrace
 She enters other realms of love ;
 Her office there to rear, to teach,
 Becoming as is meet and fit
 A link among the days, to knit
 The generations each with each ;
 And doubtless, unto thee is given
 A life that bears immortal fruit
 In such great offices as suit
 The full-grown energies of heaven.
 Ay me, the difference I discern !
 How often shall her old fireside
 Be cheer'd with tidings of the bride,
 How often she herself return,
 And tell them all they would have
 told,
 And bring her babe, and make her
 boast,
 Till even those that miss'd her most,
 Shall count new things as dear as old :
 But thou and I have shaken hands,
 Till growing winters lay me low ;
 My paths are in the fields I know,
 And thine in undiscover'd lands.

XLI.

Thy spirit ere our fatal loss
 Did ever rise from high to higher ;
 As mounts the heavenward altar
 fire,
 As flies the lighter thro' the gross.
 But thou art turn'd to something
 strange,
 And I have lost the links that bound
 Thy changes, here upon the ground,
 No more partaker of thy change.
 Deep folly ! yet that this could be —
 That I could wing my will with
 might
 To leap the grades of life and light,
 And flash at once, my friend, to thee :
 For tho' my nature rarely yields
 To that vague fear implied in death ;
 Nor shudders at the gulfs beneath,
 The howlings from forgotten fields ;
 Yet oft when sundown skirts the moor
 An inner trouble I behold,
 A spectral doubt which makes me
 cold,
 That I shall be thy mate no more,
 Tho' following with an upward mind
 The wonders that have come to thee,
 Thro' all the secular to-be,
 But evermore a life behind.

XLII

I vex my heart with fancies dim :
 He still outstrip me in the race ;
 It was hut unity of place
 That made me dream I rank'd with
 him.
 And so may Place retain us still,
 And he the much-beloved again,
 A lord of large experience, train
 To riper growth the mind and will ;



And what delights can equal those
That stir the spirit's inner deeps,
When one that loves but knows not,
reaps
A truth from one that loves and
knows?

XLIII.

If Sleep and Death be truly one,
And every spirit's folded bloom
Thro' all its intervital gloom
In some lone trance should slumber on;
Unconscious of the sliding hour,
Bare of the body, might it last,
And silent traces of the past
Be all the color of the flower :
So then were nothing lost to man,
So that still garden of the souls
In many a figured leaf enrolls
The total world since life began ;
And love will last as pure and whole
As when he loved me here in Time,
And at the spiritual prime
Rewaken with the dawning soul.

XLIV.

How fares it with the happy dead ?
For here the man is more and more ;
But he forgets the days before
God shut the doorways of his head.
The days have vanish'd, tone and tint,
And yet perhaps the boarding sense
Gives out at times (he knows not
whence)
A little flash, a mystic hint ;
And in the long harmonious years
(If Death so taste Lethæan springs)
May some dim touch of earthly things
Surprise the ranging with thy peers.
If such a dreamy touch should fall,
O turn thee round, resolve the doubt ;
My guardian angel will speak out
In that high place, and tell thee all.

XLV.

THE baby new to earth and sky,
What time his tender palm is prest
Against the circle of the breast,
Has never thought that "this is I :"
But as he grows he gathers much,
And learns the muse of "I" and "me,"
And finds "I am not what I see,
And other than the things I touch."
So rounds he to a separate mind
From whence clear memory may be-
gin,
As thro' the frame that binds him in
His isolation grows defined.
This use may lie in blood and breath,
Which else were fruitless of their due,
Had man to learn himself a new
Beyond the second birth of Death

XLVI.

WE ranging down this lower track,
The path we came by, thorn and
flower,

Is shadow'd by the growing hour,
Lest life should fail in looking back.
So be it : there no shade can last
In that deep dawn behind the tomb,
But clear from marge to marge shall
bloom
The eternal landscape of the past ;
A lifelong tract of time reveal'd ;
The fruitful hours of still increase ;
Days order'd in a wealthy peace,
And those five years its richest field.
O love, thy province were not large,
A bounded field, nor stretching far ;
Look also, Love, a brooding star,
A rosy warmth from marge to marge.

XLVII.

THAT each, who seems a separate
whole,
Should move his rounds, and fusing
all
The skirts of self again, should fall
Remerging in the general Soul,
Is faith as vague as all unsweet :
Eternal form shall still divide
The eternal soul from all beside ;
And I shall know him when we meet :]

And we shall sit at endless feast,
Enjoying each the other's good :
What vaster dream can hit the mood
Of Love on earth ? He seeks at least
Upon the last and sharpest height,
Before the spirits fade away,
Some landing place, to clasp and say,
"Farewell ! We lose ourselves in light."

XLVIII.

If these' brief lays, of Sorrow born,
Were taken to be such as closed
Grave doubts and answers here pro-
posed,
Then these were such as men might
scorn :
Her care is not to part and prove ;
She takes, when harsher moods remit,
What slender shade of doubt may fit,
And makes it vassal unto love :
And hence, indeed, she sports with
words,
But better serves a wholesome law,
And holds it sin and shame to draw
The deepest measure from the chords :
Nor dare she trust a larger lay,
But rather loosens from the lip
Short swallow-flights of song, that
dip
Their wings in tears, and skim away.

XLIX.

FROM art, from nature, from the
schools,
Let random influences glance,
Like light in many a shiver'd lance
That breaks about the dappled pool :
The lightest wave of thought shall lisp,
The fancy's tenderest eddy wreath,



The slightest air of song shall breathe
To make the sullen surface crisp.

And look thy look, and go thy way,
But blame not thou the winds that
make

The seeming-wanton ripple break,
The tender-pencil'd shadow play.

Beneath all fancied hopes and fears
Ay me, the sorrow deepens down,
Whose muffled motions blindly drown
The bases of my life in tears.

L.

BE near me when my light is low,
When the blood creeps, and the
nerves prick
And tingle; and the heart is sick,
And all the wheels of Being slow.

Be near me when the sensuous frame
Is rack'd with pangs that conquer
trust;

And Time, a maniac scattering dust,
And Life, a Fury slinging flame.

Be near me when my faith is dry,
And men the flies of latter spring,
That lay their eggs, and sting and
sing,

And weave their petty cells and die.

Be near me when I fade away,
To point the term of human strife,
And on the low dark verge of life
The twilight of eternal day.

LI.

Do we indeed desire the dead
Should still be near us at our side?
Is there no baseness we would hide?
No inner vileness that we dread?

Shall he for whose applause I strove,
I had such reverence for his blame,
See with clear eye some hidden shame
And I be lessen'd in his love?

I wrong the grave with fears untrue:
Shall love be blamed for want of
faith?

There must be wisdom with great
Death:
The dead shall look me thro' and thro'.

Be near us when we climb or fall:
Ye watch, like God, the rolling hours
With larger other eyes than ours,
To make allowance for us all.

LII.

I CANNOT love thee as I ought,
For love reflects the things beloved;
My words are only words, and moved
Upon the topmost froth of thought.

"Yet blame not thou thy plaintive
song,"

The spirit of true love replied;
"Thou canst not move me from thy
side,

Nor human frailty do me wrong.

"What keeps a spirit wholly true
To that ideal which he bears?"

What record? not the sinless years
That breathes beneath the Syrian blue:
"So fret not, like an idle girl,
That life is dash'd with flecks of sin.
Abide: thy wealth is gather'd in,
When Time hath sunder'd shell from
pearl."

LIII.

How many a father have I seen,
A sober man, among his boys,
Whose youth was full of foolish noise,
Who wears his manhood hale and green;
And dare we to this fancy give,
That had the wild oat not been sown,
The soil, left barren, scarce had
grown

The grain by which a man may live?

Oh, if we held the doctrine sound
For life outliving heats of youth,
Yet who would preach it as a truth
To those that eddy round and round?

Hold thou thy good: define it well:
For fear divine Philosophy
Should push beyond her mark, and
be
Procuress to the Lords of Hell.

LIV.

OH yet we trust that somehow good
Will be the final goal of ill,
To pangs of nature, sins of will,
Defects of doubt, and taints of blood;

That nothing walks with aimless feet;
That no one life shall be destroy'd,
Or cast as rubbish to the void,
When God hath made the pile com-
plete;

That not a worm is cloven in vain;
That not a moth with vain desire
Is shrivel'd in a fruitless fire,
Or but subserves another's gain.

Behold, we know not anything;
I can but trust that good shall fall
At last—far off—at last, to all,
And every winter change to spring.
So runs my dream: but what am I?
An infant crying in the night:
An infant crying for the light:
And with no language but a cry.

LV.

THE wish, that of the living whole
No life may fail beyond the grave,
Derives it not from what we have
The likest God within the soul?

Are God and Nature then at strife,
That Nature lends such evil dreams?
So careful of the type she seems,
So careless of the single life;

That I, considering everywhere
Her secret meaning in her deeds,
And finding that of fifty seeds
She often brings but one to bear,
I falter where I firmly trod,
And falling with my weight of cares



Upon the great world's altar-stairs
That slope thro' darkness up to God,
I stretch lame hands of faith, and
grope,
And gather dust and chaff, and call
To what I feel is Lord of all,
And faintly trust the larger hope.

LVI.

"So careful of the type?" but no.
From scarp'd cliff and quarried
stone
She cries "a thousand types are
gone :

I care for nothing, all shall go.

"Thou makest thine appeal to me :
I bring to life, I bring to death :
The spirit does but mean the breath :
I know no more." And he, shall he,
Man, her last work, who seem'd so
fair,

Such splendid purpose in his eyes,
Who roll'd the psalm to wintry skies,
Who built him fanes of fruitless
prayer,

Who trusted God was love indeed
And love Creation's final law—
Tho' Nature, red in tooth and claw
With ravine, shriek'd against his
creed—

Who loved, who suffer'd countless
ills,

Who battled for the True, the Just,
Be blown about the desert dust,
Or seal'd within the iron hills ?

No more? A monster then, a dream,
A discord. Dragons of the prime,
That tear each other in their slime,
Were mellow music match'd with him.

O life as futile, then, as frail !

O for thy voice to soothe and bless !
What hope of answer, or redress ?
Behind the veil, behind the veil.

LVII.

PEACE ; come away : the song of woe
Is after all an earthly song :

Peace ; come away : we do him
wrong

To sing so wildly : let us go.

Come let us go : your cheeks are pale ;
But half my life I leave behind :

Methinks my friend is richly shrin-
ed ;

But I shall pass, my work will fail.

Yet in these ears, till hearing dies,

One set slow bell will seem to toll

The passing of the sweetest soul
That ever look'd with human eyes.

I hear it now, and o'er and o'er,
Eternal greetings to the dead,
And "Ave, Ave, Ave," said,
"Adieu, adieu," for evermore.

LVIII.

IN those sad words I took farewell :
Like echoes in sepulchral halls,

As drop by drop the water falls
In vaults and catacombs, they fell ;
And, falling, idly broke the peace
Of hearts that heat from day to day,
Half-conscious of their dying clay,
And those cold crypts where they shall
cease.

The high Muse answer'd : "Where-
fore grieve
Thy brethren with a fruitless tear ?
Abide a little longer here,
And thou shalt take a nobler leave."

LIX.

O SORROW, wilt thou live with me,
No casual mistress, but a wife,
My bosom-friend and half of life ;
As I confess it needs must be ;

O Sorrow, wilt thou rule my blood,
Be sometimes lovely like a bride,
And put thy harsher moods aside,
If thou wilt have me wise and good.

My centred passion cannot move,
Nor will it lessen from to-day ;
But I'll have leave at times to play
As with the creature of my love ;

And set thee forth, for thou art mine,
With so much hope for years to
come,

That, howsoe'er I know thee, some
Could hardly tell what name were
thine.

LX.

HE past : a soul of nobler tone :
My spirit loved and loves him yet,
Like some poor girl whose heart is
set

On one whose rank exceeds her own.

He mixing with his proper sphere,
She finds the baseness of her lot,
Half jealous of she knows not what,
And envying all that meet him there

The little village looks forlorn ;
She sighs amid her narrow days,
Moving about the household ways,
In that dark house where she was
born.

The foolish neighbors come and go,
And tease her till the day draws by :
At night she weeps, "How vain am
I !

How should he love a thing so low ?"

LXI.

IF, in thy second state sublime,
Thy ransom'd reason change replies
With all the circle of the wise,
The perfect flower of human time ;
And if thou cast thine eyes below,
How dimly character'd and slight,
How dwarf'd a growth of cold and
night,
How blank'd with darkness must I
grow !

Yet turn to the doubtful shore,
Where thy first form was made a
man ;



I loved thee, Spirit and love, nor
 can
 The soul of Shakespeare love thee
 more.

LXII.

THO' if an eye that's downward cast
 Could make thee somewhat blench
 or fail,
 Then be my love an idle tale,
 And fading legend of the past ;
 And thou, as one that once declined,
 When he was little more than boy,
 On some unworthy heart with joy,
 But lives to wed an equal mind ;
 And breathes a novel world, the while
 His other passion wholly dies,
 Or in the light of deeper eyes
 Is matter for a flying smile.

LXIII.

YET pity for a horse o'er-driven,
 And love in which my hound has
 part,
 Can hang no weight upon my heart
 In its assumptions up to heaven ;
 And I am so much more than these,
 As thou, perchance art more than I,
 And yet I spare them sympathy
 And I would set their pains at ease.
 So may'st thou watch me where I
 weep,
 As, unto vaster motions bound,
 The circuits of thine orbit round
 A higher height, a deeper deep.

LXIV.

DOST thou look back on what hath
 been,
 As some divinely gifted man,
 Whose life in low estate began
 And on a simple village green ;
 Who breaks his birth's invidious bar,
 And grasps the skirts of happy
 chance,
 And breaths the blows of circum-
 stance,
 And grapples with his evil star ;
 Who makes by force his merit known
 And lives to clutch the golden keys,
 To mould a mighty state's decrees,
 And shape the whisper of the throne ;
 And moving up from high to higher,
 Becomes on Fortune's crowning
 slope
 The pillar of a people's hope,
 The centre of a world's desire ;
 Yet feels, as in a pensive dream,
 When all his active powers are still,
 A distant dearthness in the hill,
 A secret sweetness in the stream,
 The limit of his narrower fate,
 While yet beside its vocal springs
 He play'd at counsellors and kings,
 With one that was his earliest mate ;
 Who ploughs with pain his native lea
 And reaps the labor of his hands,

Or in the furrow musing stands :
 " Does my old friend remember me ? "

LXV.

SWEET soul, do with me as thou wilt ;
 I lull a fancy trouble-tost
 With " Love's too precious to be
 lost,
 A little grain shall not be spilt."
 And in that solace can I sing,
 Till out of painful phases wrought
 There flutters up a happy thought,
 Self-balanced on a lightsome wing :
 Since we deserved the name of friends,
 And thine effect so lives in me,
 A part of mine may live in thee
 And move thee on to noble ends.

LXVI.

YOU thought my heart too far dis-
 eased :
 You wonder when my fancies play
 To find me gay among the gay,
 Like one with any trifle pleased.
 The shade by which my life was crost
 Which makes a desert in the mind,
 Has made me kindly with my kind,
 And like to him whose sight is lost ;
 Whose feet are guided thro' the land,
 Whose jest among his friends is free
 Who takes the children on his knee,
 And winds their curls about his hand :
 He plays with threads, he beats his
 chair
 For pastime, dreaming of the sky ;
 His inner day can never die,
 His night of loss is always there.

LXVII.

WHEN on my bed the moonlight falls,
 I know that in thy place of rest,
 By that broad water of the west,
 There comes a glory on the walls :
 Thy marble bright in dark appears,
 As slowly steals a silver flame
 Along the letters of thy name,
 And o'er the number of thy years.
 The mystic glory swims away ;
 From off my bed the moonlight dies ;
 And closing eaves of wearied eyes
 I sleep till dusk is dipt in gray :
 And then I know the mist is drawn
 A lucid veil from coast to coast,
 And in the dark church like a ghost
 Thy tablet glimmers to the dawn.

LXVIII.

WHEN in the down I sink my head,
 Sleep, Death's twin-brother, times
 my breath ;
 Sleep, Death's twin-brother, knows
 not Death,
 Nor can I dream of thee as dead :
 I walk as ere I walk'd forlorn,
 When all our path was fresh with
 dew,



And all the bugle breezes blew
Reveillée to the breaking morn.

But what is this ? I turn about,
I find a trouble in thine eye,
Which makes me sad I know not
why,
Nor can my dream resolve the doubt :
But ere the lark hath left the lea
I wake, and I discern the truth ;
It is the trouble of my youth
That foolish sleep transfers to thee.

LXIX.

I DREAM'D there would be Spring no
more,
That Nature's ancient power was
lost :

The streets were black with smoke
and frost,
They chatter'd trifles at the door

I wander'd from the noisy town,
I found a wood with thorny boughs :
I took the thorns to bind my brows,
I wore them like a civic crown :

I met with scoffs, I met with scorn
From youth and babe and hoary
hairs :

They call'd me in the public squares
The fool that wears a crown of thorns:
They call'd me fool, they call'd me
child :

I found an angel of the night ;
The voice was low, the look was
bright ;

He look'd upon my crown and smiled:
He reach'd the glory of a hand,
That seem'd to touch it into leaf :
The voice was not the voice of grief,
The words were hard to understand.

LXX.

I CANNOT see the features right,
When on the gloom I strive to paint
The face I know ; the hues are faint
And mix with hollow masks of night ;
Cloud-towers by ghostly masons
wrought,

A gulf that ever shuts and gapes,
A hand that points, and palled shapes
In shadowy thoroughfares of thought ;
And crowds that stream from yawning-
doors,

And shoals of pucker'd faces drive ;
Dark bulks that tumble half alive,
And lazy lengths on boundless shores ;
Till all at once beyond the will

I hear a wizard music roll,
And thro' a lattice on the soul
Looks thy fair face and makes it still.

LXXI.

SLEEP, kinsman thou to death and
trance
And madness, thou hast forged at
last
A night-long Present of the Past

In which we went thro' summer
France.

Hadst thou such credit with the soul ?
Then bring an opiate trebly strong,
Drug down the blindfold souse of
wrong

That so my pleasure may be whole ;
While now we talk as once we talk'd
Of men and minds, the dust of
change,
The days that grow to something
strange,

In walking as of old we walk'd
Beside the river's wooded reach,
The fortress, and the mountain ridge,
The cataract flashing from the bridge,
The breaker breaking on the beach.

LXII.

RISEST thou thus, dim dawn, again,
And howlest, issuing out of night,
With blasts that blow the poplar
white,
And lash with storm the streaming
pane ?

Day when my crown'd estate begun
To pine in that reverse of doom,
Which sicken'd every living bloom,
And blurr'd the splendor of the sun ;

Who usherest in the dolorous hour
With thy quick tears that make the
rose

Pull sideways, and the daisy close
Her crimson fringes to the shower ;
Who might'st have heaved a windless
flame

Up the deep East, or, whispering,
play'd

A chequer-work of beam and shade
Along the hills, yet look'd the same,
As wan, as chill, as wild as now ;
Day mark'd as with some hideous
crime,

When the dark hand struck down
thro' time,
And cancell'd nature's best ; but thou,
Lift as thou may'st thy burthen'd
brows

Thro' clouds that drench the morning
star,
And whirl the ungarner'd sheaf afar,
And sow the sky with flying boughs,

And up thy vault with roaring sound
Climb thy thick noon, disastrous day ;
Touch thy dull goal of joyless gray,
And hide thy shame beneath the
ground.

LXXIII.

So many worlds, so much to do,
So little done, such things to be,
How know I what had need of thee,
For thou wert strong as thou wert
true ?

The fame is quench'd that I foresaw,
The head hath miss'd an earthly
wreath :



I curse not nature, no, nor death ;
For nothing is that errs from law.

We pass : the path that each man trod
Is dim, or will be dim, with weeds :
What fame is left for human deeds
In endless age ? It rests with God.

O hollow wraith of dying fame,
Fade wholly, while the soul exults,
And self-infolds the large results
Of force that would have forged a name.

LXXXIV.

As sometimes in a dead man's face,
To those that watch it more and more,
A likeness, hardly seen before,
Comes out—to some one of his race :

So dearest, now thy brows are cold,
I see thee what thou art, and know
Thy likeness to the wise below,
Thy kindred with the great of old.

But there is more than I can see,
And what I see I leave unsaid,
Nor speak it, knowing Death has
made
His darkness beautiful with thee.

LXXXV.

I LEAVE thy praises unexpress'd
In verse that brings myself relief,
And by the measure of my grief
I leave thy greatness to be guess'd ;

What practice howsoe'er expert
In fitting aptest words to things,
Or voice the richest-toned that sings,
Hath power to give thee as thou wert ?

I care not in these fading days
To raise a cry that lasts not long,
And round thee with the breeze of
song
To stir a little dust of praise.

Thy leaf has perish'd in the green,
And, while we breathe beneath the
sun,
The world which credits what is done
Is cold to all that might have been.

So here shall silence guard thy fame ;
But somewhere, out of human view,
Whate'er thy hands are set to do
Is wrought with tumult of acclaim.

LXXXVI.

TAKE wings of fancy, and ascend,
And in a moment set thy face
Where all the starry heavens of
space

Are sharpen'd to a needle's end ;
Take wings of foresight ; lighten thro'
The secular abyss to come,
And lo, thy deepest lays are dumb
Before the mouldering of a yew ;
And if the matin songs, that woke
The darkness of our planet, last,
Thine own shall wither in the vast,
Ere half the lifetime of an oak.

Ere these have clothed their branchy
bowers
With fifty Mays, thy songs are vain;
And what are they when these
remain
The ruin'd shells of hollow towers ?

LXXXVII.

WHAT hope is here for modern rhyme
To him, who turns a musing eye
On songs, and deeds, and lives, that
lie
Foeshorten'd in the tract of time ?
These mortal lullabies of pain
May bind a book, may line a box,
May serve to curl a maiden's locks ;
Or when a thousand moons shall wane
A man upon a stall may find,
And passing, turn the page that tells
A grief, then changed to something
else,
Sung by a long-forgotten mind.
But what of that ? My darken'd ways
Shall ring with music all the same :
To breathe my loss is more than
fame,
To utter love more sweet than praise.

LXXXVIII.

AGAIN at Christmas did we weave
The holly round the Christmas
hearth ;
The silent snow possess'd the earth,
And calmly fell our Christmas-eve :
The yule-clog sparkled keen with frost,
No wing of wind the region swept,
But over all things brooding slept
The quiet sense of something lost.
As in the winters left behind,
Again our ancient games had place,
The mimic picture's breathing grace,
And dance and song and hoodman-
blind.

Who show'd a token of distress ?
No single tear, no mark of pain :
O sorrow, then can sorrow wane ?
O grief, can grief be changed to less ?
O last regret, regret can die !
No—mixt with all this mystic frame,
Her-deep relations are the same,
But with long use her tears are dry.

LXXXIX.

"MORE than my brothers are to me"—
Let this not vex thee, noble heart !
I know thee of what force thou art,
To hold the costliest love in fee.
But thou and I are one in kind,
As moulded like in nature's mint,
And hill and wood and field did print
The same sweet forms in either mind.
For us the same cold streamlet curl'd
Thro' all his eddyng coves ; the
same
All winds that roam the twilight
came
In whispers of the beauteous world.



At one dear knee we proffer'd vows,
 One lesson from one book we learn'd,
 Ere childhood's flaxen ringlet turn'd
 To black and brown on kindred brows.

And so my wealth resembles thine,
 But he was rich where I was poor,
 And he supplied my want the more
 As his unlikeness fitted mine.

LXXX.

If any vague desire should rise,
 That holy Death ere Arthur died
 Had moved me kindly from his side,
 And dropt the dust on tearless eyes ;

Then fancy shapes, as fancy can,
 The grief my loss in him had
 wrought,

A grief as deep as life or thought,
 But stay'd in peace with God and man.

I make a picture in the brain ;
 I hear the sentence that he speaks ;
 He bears the burden of the weeks ;
 But turns his burden into gain.

His credit thus shall set me free ;
 And, influence-rich to soothe and
 save,

Unused example from the grave
 Reach out dead hands to comfort me.

LXXXI.

COULD I have said while he was here
 " My love shall now no further range ;
 There cannot come a mellow
 change,

For now is love mature in ear."

Love, then, had hope of richer store ;
 What end is here to my complaint ?
 This haunting whisper makes me
 faint,

" More years had made me love thee
 more."

But Death returns an answer sweet :
 " My sudden frost was sudden gain,
 And gave all ripeness to the grain,
 It might have drawn from after-heat."

LXXXII.

I WAGE not any feud with Death
 For changes wrought on form and
 face ;

No lower life that earth's embrace
 May breed with him, can fright my
 faith.

Eternal process moving on,
 From state to state the spirit walks ;
 And these are but the shatter'd
 stalks,

Or ruin'd chrysalis of one.

Nor blame I Death, because he bare

The use of virtue out of earth :

I know transplanted human worth

Will bloom to profit, elsewhere.

For this alone on Death I wreak

The wrath that garners in my heart ;

He put our lives so far apart

We cannot hear each other speak.

LXXXIII.

DIP down upon the northern shore,
 O sweet new-year delaying long ;
 Thou doest expectant nature wrong ;
 Delaying long, delay no more.

What stays thee from the clouded
 noons,

Thy sweetness from its proper place ?
 Can trouble live with April days,
 Or sadness in the summer moons ?

Bring orchis, bring the foxglove spire,
 The little speedwell's darling blue,
 Deep tulips dash'd with fiery dew,
 Laburnums, dropping-wells of fire.

O thou, new-year, delaying long,
 Delayest the sorrow in my blood,
 That longs to burst a frozen bud,
 And flood a fresher throat with song.

LXXXIV.

WHEN I contemplate all alone
 The life that had been thine below,
 And fix my thoughts on all the glow
 To which thy crescent would have
 grown ;

I see thee sitting crown'd with good,
 A central warmth diffusing bliss
 In glance and smile, and clasp and
 kiss,

On all the branches of thy blood ;

Thy blood, my friend, and partly mine ;
 For now the day was drawing on,
 When thou should'st link thy life
 with one

Of mine own house, and boys of thine

Had babbled " Uncle " on my knee ;

But that remorseless iron hour

Made cypress of her orange flower,

Despair of Hope, and earth of thee.

I seem to meet their least desire,
 To clap their cheeks, to call them
 mine.

I see their unborn faces shine

Beside the never-lighted fire.

I see myself an honour'd guest,

Thy partner in the flowery walk

Of letters, genial table-talk,

Or deep dispute, and graceful jest ;

While now thy prosperous labor fills

The lips of men with honest praise,

And sun by sun the happy days

Descend below the golden hills

With promise of a morn as fair ;

And all the train of bounteous hours

Conduct by paths of glowing powers

To reverence and the silver hair ;

Till slowly worn her earthly robe,

Her lavish mission richly wrought,

Leaving great legacies of thought,

Thy spirit should fail from off the
 globe ;

What time mine own might also flee,

As link'd with thine in love and fate,

And, hovering o'er the dolorous
 strait

To the other shore, involved in thee,



Arrive at last the blessed goal,
And He that died in Holy Land
Would reach us out the shining hand,
And take us as a single soul.

What need was that on which I leant?
A backward fancy, wherefore wake
The old bitterness again, and break
The low beginnings of content.

LXXXV.

THIS truth came borne with bier and
pall,

I felt it, when I sorrow'd most,
'Tis better to have loved and lost,
That never to have loved at all—

O true in word, and tried in deed,
Demanding, so to bring relief
To this which is our common grief,
What kind of life is that I lead;

And whether trust in things above
Be dimm'd of sorrow, or sustain'd;
And whether love for him have
drain'd

My capabilities of love;

Your words have virtue such as draws
A faithful answer from the breast,
Thro' light reproaches, half express,
And loyal unto kindly laws.

My blood an even tenor kept,
Till on mine ear this message falls,
That in Vienna's fatal walls
God's finger touch'd him, and he slept.

The great Intelligences fair
That range above our mortal state,
In circle round the blessed gate,
Received and gave him welcome there;

And led him thro' the blissful climes,
And show'd him in the fountain
fresh

All knowledge that the sons of flesh
Shall gather in the cycled times.

But I remain'd whose hopes were dim,
Whose life, whose thoughts were
little worth,

To wander on a darken'd earth,
Where all things round me breathed
of him.

O friendship, equal-poised control,
O heart, with kindest motion warm,
O sacred essence, other form,
O solemn ghost, O crowned soul!

Yet none could better know than I,
How much of act at human hands
The sense of human will demands
By which we dare to live or die.

Whatever way my days decline,
I felt and feel, tho' left alone,
His being working in mine own,
The footsteps of his life in mine;

A life that all the Muses deck'd
With gifts of grace, that might express

All comprehensive tenderness,
All-subtilizing intellect:

And so my passion hath not swerved
To works of weakness, but I find

An image comforting the mind,
And in my grief a strength reserved.
Likewise the imaginative woe,
That loved to handle spiritual strife,
Diffused the shock thro' all my life,
But in the present broke the blow.

My pulses therefore beat again
For other friends that once I met;
Nor can it suit me to forget
The mighty hopes that make us men.

I woo your love: I count it crime
To mourn for any overmuch;
I, the divided half of such
A friendship as had master'd Time;

Which masters Time indeed, and is
Eternal, separate from fears;
The all-assuming months and years
Can take no part away from this:

But Summer on the steaming floods,
And Spring that swells the narrow
brooks,

And Autumn, with a noise of rooks,
That gather in the waning woods,
And every pulse of wind and wave
Recalls, in change of light or gloom,
My old affection of the tomb,
And my prime passion in the grave:

My old affection of the tomb,
A part of stillness, yearns to speak:
"Arise, and get thee forth and seek
A friendship for the years to come.

I watch thee from the quiet shore:
Thy spirit up to mine can reach;
But in dear words of human speech
We two communicate no more."

And I, "Can clouds of nature stain
The starry clearness of the free?
How is it? Canst thou feel for me
Some painless sympathy with pain?"

And lightly does the whisper fall;
'Tis hard for thee to fathom this;
I triumph in conclusive hiss,
And that serene result of all."

So hold I commerce with the dead;
Or so methinks the dead would say;
Or so shall grief with symbols play,
And pining life be fancy-fed.

Now looking to some settled end,
That these things pass, and I shall
prove

A meeting somewhere, love with
love,

I crave your pardon, O my friend;
If not so fresh, with love as true,
I, clasping brother-hands, aver
I could not, if I would, transfer
The whole I felt for him to you.

For which be they that hold apart
The promise of the golden hours?
First love, first friendship, equal
powers,

That marry with the virgin heart.

Still mine, that cannot but deplore,
That beats within a lonely place,



That yet remembers his embrace,
But at his footstep leaps no more,
My heart, tho' widow'd, may not rest
Quite in the love of what is gone,
But seeks to beat in time with one
That warms another living breast.
Ah, take the imperfect gift I bring,
Knowing the primrose yet is dear,
The primrose of the later year,
As not unlike to that of Spring.

LXXXVI.

SWEET after showers, ambrosial air,
That rollest from the gorgeous
gloom
Of evening over brake and bloom
And meadow, slowly breathing bare
The round of space, and rapt below
Thro' all the dewy-tassell'd wood,
And shadowing down the horned
flood
In ripples, fan my brows and blow
The fever from my cheek, and sigh
The full new life that feeds thy
breath
Throughout my frame, till Doubt
and Death,
Ill brethren, let the fancy fly
From belt to belt of crimson seas
On leagues of odor streaming far,
To where in yonder orient star
A hundred spirits whisper "Peace."

LXXXVII.

I PAST beside the reverend walls
In which of old I wore the gown;
'I roved at random thro' the town,
And saw the tumult of the halls;
And heard once more in college fanes
The storm their high-built organs
make,
And thunder-music, rolling, shake
The prophets blazon'd on the panes;
And caught once more the distant
shout,
The measured pulse of racing oars
Among the willows; paced the shores
And many a bridge, and all about
The same gray flats again, and felt
The same, but not the same; and
last
Up that long walk of limes I past
To see the rooms in which he dwelt.
Another name was on the door :
I linger'd; all within was noise
Of song, and clapping hands, and
boys
That crash'd the glass and beat the
floor;
Where once we held debate, a band
Of youthful friends, on mind and
art;
And labor, and the changing mart,
And all the framework of the land;
When one would aim an arrow fair,
But send it slackly from the string;

And one would pierce an outer ring,
And one an inner, here and there;
And last the master-bowman, he,
Would cleave the mark. A willing
ear
We lent him. Who, but hung to
hear
The rapt oration flowing free
From point to point, with power and
grace
And music in the bounds of law,
To those conclusions when we saw
The God within him light his face.
And seem to lift the form, and glow
In azure orbits heavenly-wise;
And over those ethereal eyes
The bar of Michael Angelo.

LXXXVIII.

WILD bird, whose warble, liquid sweet,
Rings Eden thro' the budding quicks,
O tell me where the senses mix,
O tell me where the passions meet,
Whence radiate: fierce extremes em-
ploy
Thy spirits in the darkening leaf,
And in the midmost heart of grief
Thy passion clasps a secret joy:
And I — my harp would prelude woe,
I cannot all command the strings;
The glory of the sun of things
Will flash along the chords and go

LXXXIX.

WITCH-ELMS that counterchange the
floor
Of this flat lawn with dusk and
bright:
And thou, with all thy breadth and
height
Of foliage, towering sycamore;
How often, hither wandering down,
My Arthur found your shadows fair,
And shook to all the liberal air
The dust and din and steam of town:
He brought an eye for all he saw;
He mixt in all our simple sports;
They pleased him, fresh from brawl-
ing courts
And dusty purlieus of the law.
O joy to him in this retreat,
Immantled in ambrosial dark,
To drink the cooler air, and mark
The landscape winking thro' the heat:
O sound to rout the brood of cares,
The sweep of scythe in morning dew,
The gust that round the garden flew,
And tumbled half the mellowing
pears!
O blise, when all in circle drawn
About him, heart and ear were fed
To hear him, as he lay and read
The Tuscan poets on the lawn:
Or in the all-golden afternoon
A guest, or happy sister, sung,





Or here she brought the harp and
 flung
 A ballad to the brightening moon :
 Nor less it pleased in livelier moods,
 Beyond the bounding hill to stray,
 And break the livelong summer day
 With banquet in the distant woods ;
 Whereat we glanced from theme to
 theme,
 Discuss'd the books to love or hate,
 Or touch'd the changes of the state,
 Or threaded some Socratic dream ;
 But if I praised the busy town,
 He loved to rail against it still,
 For " ground in yonder social mill
 We rub each other's angles down,

"And merge" he said, "in form and
 gloss
 The picturesque of man and man."
 We talk'd : the stream beneath us
 ran,

The wine-flask lying couch'd in moss,
 Or cool'd within the glooming wave ;
 And last, returning from afar,
 Before the crimson-circled star
 Had fall'n into her father's grave,
 And brushing ankle-deep in flowers,
 We heard behind the woodbine veil
 The milk that bubbled in the pail,
 And buzzings of the honied hours.

XC.

HE tasted love with half his mind,
 Nor ever drank the inviolate spring
 Where highest heaven, who first
 could fling

This bitter seed among mankind ;
 That could the dead, whose dying eyes
 Were closed with wail, resume their
 life,

They would but find in child and
 wife

An iron welcome when they rise :
 'Twas well, indeed, when warm with
 wine,

To pledge them with a kindly tear,
 To talk them o'er, to wish them here,
 To count their memories half divine ;

But if they came who past away,
 Behold their brides in other hands ;
 The hard heir strides about their
 lands,

And will not yield them for a day.
 Yea, tho' their sons were none of
 these,

Not less the yet-loved sire would
 make
 Confusion worse than death, and
 shake

The pillars of domestic peace.

Ah dear but come thou back to me :
 Whatever change the years have
 wrought,

I find not yet one lonely thought
 That cries against my wish for thee.

XCI.

WHEN rosy plumelets tuft the larch,
 And rarely pipes the mounted
 thrush ;

Or underneath the barren bush
 Flits by the sea blue bird of March ;

Come, wear the form by which I know
 Thy spirit in time among thy peers,
 The hope of unaccomplish'd years
 Be large and lucid round thy brow.

When summer's hourly-mellowing
 change

May breathe, with many rosesweet,
 Upon the thousand waves of wheat,
 That ripple round the lonely grange ;

Come : not in watches of the night,
 But when the sunbeam broodeth
 warm,

Come, beauteous in thine after form,
 And like a finer light in light.

XCII.

IF any vision should reveal

Thy likeness, I might count it vain
 As but the causer of the brain :
 Yea, tho' it spake and made appeal

To chancee where our lots were cast
 Together in the days behind,
 I might but say, I hear a wind
 Of memory murmuring the past.

Yea, tho' it spake and bared to view
 A fact within the coming year ;
 And tho' the months, revolving near,
 Should prove the phantom-warning
 true,

They might not seem thy prophecies,
 But spiritual presentiments,
 And such refraction of events
 As often rises ere they rise.

XCIII.

I SHALL not see thee. Dare I say
 No spirit ever brake the band
 That stays him from the native land,
 Where first he walk'd when clasp'd in
 clay ?

No visual shade of some one lost,
 But he, the Spirit himself, may
 come
 Where all the nerve of sense is
 numb ;

Spirit to Spirit, Ghost to Ghost.
 O, therefore, from thy sightless range
 With gods in un conjectured bliss,
 O, from the distance of the abyss
 Of tenfold-complicated change,

Descend, and touch, and enter ; hear
 The wish too strong for words to
 name ;

That in this blindness of the frame
 My Ghost may feel that thine is near.

XCIV.

How pure at heart and sound in head,
 With what divine affections bold



Should be the man whose thought
 would hold
 An hour's communion with the dead.
 In vain shalt thou, or any, call
 The spirits from their golden day,
 Except, like them, thou too canst
 say,
 My spirit is at peace with all.
 They haunt the silence of the breast,
 Imaginations calm and fair,
 The memory like a cloudless air,
 The conscience as a sea at rest :
 But when the heart is full of din,
 And doubt beside the portal waits,
 They can but listen at the gates,
 And hear the household jar within.

XCV.

By night we linger'd on the lawn,
 For underfoot the herb was dry ;
 And genial warmth ; and o'er the
 sky
 The silvery haze of summer drawn ;
 And calm that let the tapers burn
 Unwavering : not a cricket chirr'd :
 The brook alone far-off was heard,
 And on the board the fluttering urn :
 And bats went round in fragrant skies,
 And wheel'd or lit the filmy shapes
 That haunt the dusk, with ermine
 capes
 And woolly breasts and beaded eyes ;
 While now we sang old songs that
 peal'd
 From knoll to knoll, where, couch'd
 at ease,
 The white kine glimmer'd, and the
 trees
 Laid their dark arms about the field.
 But when those others, one by one,
 Withdrew themselves from me and
 night,
 And in the house light after light
 Went out, and I was all alone,
 A hunger seized my heart ; I read
 Of that glad year which once had
 been,
 In those fall'n leaves which kept
 their green,
 The noble letters of the dead :
 And strangely on the silence broke
 The silent-speaking words, and
 strange
 Was love's dumb cry defying change
 To test his worth ; and strangely spoke
 The faith, the vigor, bold to dwell
 On doubts that drive the coward
 back,
 And keen thro' wordy snares to track
 Suggestion to her inmost cell.
 So word by word, and line by line,
 The dead man touch'd me from the
 past,
 And all at once it seem'd at last
 His living soul was flash'd on mine,

And mine in his was wound, and
 whirl'd
 About empyreal heights of thought,
 And came on that which is, and
 caught
 The deep pulsations of the world,
 Æonian music measuring out
 The steps of Time—the shocks of
 Chance—
 The blows of Death. At length my
 "trance
 Was cancell'd, stricken thro' with
 doubt.
 Vague words ! but ah, how hard to
 frame
 In matter-moulded forms of speech,
 Or ev'n for intellect to reach
 Thro' memory that which I became :
 Till now the doubtful dusk reveal'd
 The knolls once more where, couch'd
 at ease,
 The white kine glimmer'd, and the
 trees
 Laid their dark arms about the field :
 And suck'd from out the distant gloom
 A breeze began to tremble o'er
 The large leaves of the sycamore,
 And fluctuate all the still perfume,
 And gathering freshlier overhead,
 Rock'd the full-foliaged elms, and
 swung
 The heavy-folded rose, and flung
 The lilies to and fro, and said
 "The dawn, the dawn," and died
 away ;
 And East and West, without a
 breath,
 Mixt their dim lights, like life and
 death,
 To broaden into boundless day.

XCVI.

You say, but with no touch of scorn,
 Sweet-hearted, you, whose light blue
 eyes
 Are tender over drowning flies,
 You tell me, doubt is Devil-born.
 I know not : one indeed I knew
 In many a subtle question versed,
 Who touch'd a jarring lyre at first,
 But ever strove to make it true :
 Perplex'd in faith, but pure in deeds,
 At last he beat his music out.
 There lives more faith in honest
 doubt,
 Believe me, than in half the creeds.
 He fought his doubts and gather'd
 strength,
 He would not make his judgment
 blind,
 He faced the spectres of the mind
 And laid them : thus he came at
 length
 To find a stronger faith his own ;
 And power was with him in the
 night,



Which makes the darkness and the
light,
And dwells not in the light alone,
But in the darkness and the cloud,
As over Sinai's peaks of old,
While Israel made their gods of gold,
Altho' the trumpet blew so loud.

XCVII.

My love has talk'd with rocks and
trees ;

He finds on misty mountain-ground
His own vast shadow glory-crown'd ;
He sees himself in all he sees.

Two partners of a married life —
I look'd on these and thought of
thee

In vastness and in mystery,
And of my spirit as of a wife.

These two—they dwelt with eye on
eye,
Their hearts of old have beat in
tune,
Their meetings made December
June,

Their every parting was to die.

Their love has never past away ;
The days she never can forget
Are earnest that he loves her yet,
Whate'er the faithless people say.

Her life is lone, he sits apart,
He loves her yet, she will not weep,
Tho' rapt in matters dark and deep
He seems to slight her simple heart.

He thrids the labyrinth of the mind,
He reads the secret of the star,
He seems so near and yet so far,
He looks so cold; she thinks him kind.

She keeps the gift of years before,
A wither'd violet is her bliss :
She knows not what his greatness is:
For that, for all, she loves him more.

For him she plays, to him she sings ;
Of early faith and plighted vows ;
She knows but matters of the house,
And he, he knows a thousand things.

Her faith is fixt and cannot move,
She darkly feels him great and wise,
She dwells on him with faithful
eyes,

"I cannot understand ; I love."

XCVIII.

You leave us ; you will see the Rhine,
And those fair hills I sail'd below,
When I was there with him ; and go
By summer belts of wheat and vine
To where he breathed his latest breath
That City. All her splendor seems
No livelier than the wisp that gleams
On Lethe in the eyes of Death.

Let her great Danube rolling fair
Enwind her isles, unmark'd of me:
I have not seen, I will not see

Vienna ; rather dream that there,

A treble darkness, Evil haunts
The birth, the bridal ; friend from
friend

Is oftener parted, fathers bend
Above more graves, a thousand wants
Gnarr at the heels of men, and prey
By each cold hearth, and sadness
flings

Her shadow on the blaze of kings ;
And yet myself have heard him say,

That not in any mother town
With statelier progress to and fro
The double tides of chariots flow
By park and suburb under brown
Of lustier leaves ; no more content,
He told me, lives in any crowd,
When all is gay with lamps, and loud
With sport and song, in booth and
tent,

Imperial halls, or open plain ;
And wheels the circled dance, and
breaks
The rocket molten into flakes
Of crimson or in-emerald rain.

XCIX.

RISEST thou thus, dim dawn, again,
So loud with voices of the birds,
So thick with loving of the herds,
Day, when I lost the flower of men ;

Who tremblest thro' thy darkling red
On yon swoll'n brook that bubbles
fast

By meadows breathing of the past,
And woodlands holy to the dead ;

Who murmurest in the foliaged eaves
A song that slights the coming care,
And Autumn laying here and there
A fiery finger on the leaves ;

Who wakenest with thy balmy breath
To myriads on the genial earth,
Memories of bridal, or, of birth,
And unto myriads more, of death.

O wheresoever those may be,
Betwixt the slumber of the poles,
To-day they count as kindred souls ;
They know me not, but mourn with
me.

C.

I CLIMB the hill ; from end to end
Of all the landscape underneath,
I find no place that does not breathe
Some gracious memory of my friend ;

No gray old grange, or lonely fold,
Or low morass and whispering reed,
Or simple stile from mead to mead,
Or sheepwalk up the windy wold ;

Nor hoary knoll of ash and haw
That hears the latest linnet trill,
Nor quarry trench'd along the hill,
And haunted by the wrangling daw ;

Nor runlet tinkling from the rock ;
Nor pastoral rivulet that swerves



To left and right thro' meadowy
curves,
That feed the mothers of the flock ;
But each has pleased a kindred eye,
And each reflects a kindlier day ;
And, leaving these, to pass away,
I think once more he seems to die

CII.

UNWATCH'D, the garden bough shall
sway,
The tender blossom flutter down,
Unloved, that beech will gather
brown,
This maple burn itself away
Unloved, the sun-flower, shining fair,
Ray round with flames her disk of
seed,
And many a rose-carnation feed
With summer spice the humming air ;
Unloved, by many a sandy bar,
The brook shall babble down the
plain,
At noon or when the lesser wain
Is twisting round the polar star ;
Uncared for, gird the windy grove,
And hood the haunts of fern and
crake ;
Or into silver arrows break
The sailing moon in creek and cove ;
Till from the garden and the wild
A fresh association blow,
And year by year the landscape grow
Familiar to the stranger's child ;
As year by year the laborer tills
His wonted glebe, or lops the glades ;
And year by year our memory fades
From all the circle of the hills.

CIII.

We leave the well-beloved place
Where first we gazed upon the sky ;
The roofs, that heard our earliest
cry,
Will shelter one of stranger race.
We go, but ere we go from home,
As down the garden-walks I move,
Two spirits of a diverse love
Contend for loving masterdom.
One whispers, here thy boyhood sung
Long since its matin song, and heard
The low love-language of the bird
In native hazels tassel-hung.
The other answers, " Yea, but here
Thy feet have stray'd in after hours
With thy lost friend among the
bowers,
And this hath made them trebly dear."
These two have striven half the day,
And each prefers his separate claim,
Poor rivals in a losing game,
That will not yield each other way.
I turn to go : my feet are set
To leave the pleasant fields and
farms ;

They mix in one another's arms
To one pure image of regret.

CIII.

ON that last night before we went
From out the doors where I was
bred,
I dream'd a vision of the dead,
Which left my after-morn content.
Methought I dwelt within a hall,
And maidens with me : distant hills
From hidden summits fed with rills
A river sliding by the wall.
The hall with harp and carol rang.
They sang of what is wise and good
And graceful. In the centre stood
A statue veil'd, to which they sang ;
And which, tho' veil'd, was known to
me,
The shape of him I loved, and love
For ever : then flew in a dove
And brought a summons from the sea ;
And when they learnt that I must go
They wept and wail'd, but led the
way
To where a little shallop lay
At anchor in the flood below ;
And on by many a level mead,
And shadowing bluff that made the
banks,
We glided winding under ranks
Of iris, and the golden reed ;
And still as vaster grew the shore,
And roll'd the floods in grander
space,
The maidens gather'd strength and
grace
And presence, lordlier than before ;
And I myself, who sat apart
And watch'd them, wax'd in every
limb ;
I felt the thews of Anakim,
The pulses of a Titan's heart ;
As one would sing the death of war,
And one would chant the history
Of that great race, which is to be,
And one the shaping of a star ;
Until the forward-creeping tides
Began to foam, and we to draw
From deep to deep, to where we saw
A great ship lift her shining sides.
The man we loved was there on deck,
But thrice as large as man he bent
To greet us. Up the side I went,
And fell in silence on his neck :
Whereat these maidens with one mind
Bewail'd their lot ; I did them wrong :
" We served thee here," they said,
" so long,
And wilt thou leave us now behind ?"
So rapt I was, they could not win
An answer from my lips, but he
Replying " Enter likewise ye
And go with us : " they enter'd in.



And while the wind began to sweep
A music out of sheet and shroud,
We steer'd her toward a crimson
cloud
That landlike slept along the deep.

CIV.

THE time draws near the birth of
Christ;
The moon is hid, the night is still;
A single church below the hill
Is pealing, folded in the mist.
A single peal of bells below,
That wakens at this hour of rest
A single murmur in the breast,
That these are not the bells I know.
Like stranger's voices here they sound,
In lands where not a memory strays,
Nor landmark breathes of other days,
But all is new unhallow'd ground.

CV.

TO-NIGHT ungather'd let us leave
This laurel, let this holly stand:
We live within the stranger's land,
And strangely falls our Christmas eve.
Our father's dust is left alone
And silent under other snows:
There in due time the wood-bine
blows,
The violet comes, but we are gone.
No more shall wayward grief abuse
The genial hour with mask and mime;
For chance of place, like growth of
time,
Has broke the bond of dying use.
Let cares that petty shadows cast,
By which our lives are chiefly proved,
A little spare the night I loved,
And hold it solemn to the past.
But let no footsteps beat the floor,
Nor howl of wassail mantle warm;
For who would keep an ancient form
Thro' which the spirit breathes no
more?
Be neither song, nor game, nor feast;
Nor harp be touch'd, nor flute be
blown;
No dance, no motion, save alone
What lightens in the lucid east
Of rising worlds by yonder wood.
Long sleeps the summer in the seed;
Run out your measured arc, and
lead
The closing cycle rich in good.

CVI.

RING out, wild bells, to the wild sky,
The flying cloud, the frosty light:
The year is dying in the night:
Ring out, wild bells, and let him die.
Ring out the old, ring in the new,
Ring, happy bells, across the snow:
The year is going, let him go;
Ring out the false, ring in the true.

Ring out the grief that saps the mind,
For those that here we see no more;
Ring out the feud of rich and poor,
Ring in redress to all mankind.

Ring out a slowly dying cause,
And ancient forms of party strife;
Ring in the nobler modes of life,
With sweeter manners, purer laws.

Ring out the want, the care, the sin,
The faithless coldness of the times;
Ring out, ring out my mournful rhymes,
But ring the fuller minstrel in.

Ring out false pride in place and blood,
The civic slander and the spite;
Ring in the love of truth and right,
Ring in the common love of good.

Ring out old shapes of foul disease;
Ring out the narrowing lust of gold;
Ring out the thousand wars of old,
Ring in the thousand years of peace.

Ring in the valiant man and free,
The larger heart, the kindlier hand;
Ring out the darkness of the land,
Ring in the Christ that is to be.

CVII.

It is the day when he was born,
A bitter day that early sank
Behind a purple-frosty bank
Of vapor, leaving night forlorn.

The time admits not flowers or leaves
To deck the banquet. Piercely flies
The blast of North and East, and ice
Makes daggers at the sharpen'd eaves,

And bristles all the brakes and thorns
To yon hard crescent, as she hangs
About the wood which grides and
clangs

Its leafless ribs and iron horns
Together in the drifts that pass
To darken on the rolling brine
That breaks the coast. But fetch the
wine,

Arrange the board and brim the glass;
Bring in great logs and let them lie,
To make a solid core of heat;
Be cheerful-minded, talk and treat
Of all things ev'n as he were by;

We keep the day. With festal cheer,
With books and music, surely we
Will drink to him, whate'er he be,
And sing the songs he loved to hear.

CVIII.

I WILL not shut me from my kind,
And, lest I stiffen into stone,
I will not eat my heart alone,
Nor feed with sighs a passing wind:
What profit lies in barren faith,
And vacant yearning, tho' with
might
To scale the heaven's highest height,
Or dive below the wells of Death?



What find I in the highest place,
 But mine own phantom chanting
 hymns?
 And on the depths of death there
 swims
 The reflex of a human face.
 I'll rather take what fruit may be
 Of sorrow under human skies:
 'Tis held that sorrow makes us wise,
 Whatever wisdom sleep with thee.

CIX.

HEART-AFFLUENCE in discursive talk
 From household fountains never dry;
 The critic clearness of an eye,
 That saw thro' all the Muses' walk;
 Seraphic intellect and force
 To seize and throw the doubts of
 man;
 Impassion'd logic, which outran
 The hearer in its fiery course;
 High nature amcrous of the good,
 But touch'd with no ascetic gloom;
 And passion pure in snowy bloom
 Thro' all the years of April bloom;
 A love of freedom rarely felt,
 Of freedom in her regal seat
 Of England; not the schoolboy heat,
 The blind hysterics of the Celt;
 And manhood fused with female grace
 In such a sort, the child would twine
 A trustful hand, unask'd, in thine,
 And find his comfort in thy face;
 All these have been, and thee mine
 eyes
 Have look'd on: if they look'd in
 vain,
 My shame is greater who remain,
 Nor let thy wisdom make me wise.

CX.

Thy converse drew us with delight,
 The men of rathe and riper years:
 The feeble soul, a haunt of fears,
 Forgot his weakness in thy sight.
 On thee the loyal-hearted hung,
 The proud was half disarm'd of
 pride,
 Nor cared the serpent at thy side
 To flicker with his double tongue.
 The stern were mild when thou wert by,
 The flippant put himself to school
 And heard thee, and the brazen fool
 Was soften'd, and he knew not why;
 While I, thy dearest, sat apart,
 And felt thy triumph was as mine;
 And loved them more, that they were
 thine,
 The graceful tact, the Christian art;
 Not mine the sweetness of the skill,
 But mine the love, that will not tire,
 And, born of love, the vague desire
 That spurs an imitative will.

CXI.

THE churl in spirit, up or down
 Along the scale of ranks, thro' all,

To him who grasps a golden ball,
 By blood a king, at heart a clown;
 The churl in spirit, howe'er he veil
 His want in forms for fashion's sake,
 Will let his colish nature break
 At seasons thro' the gilded pale:
 For who can always act? but he,
 To whom a thousand memories call,
 Not being less but more than all
 The gentleness he seem'd to be,
 Best seem'd the thing he was, and
 join'd
 Each office of the social hour
 To noble manners, as the flower
 And native growth of noble mind;
 Nor ever narrowness or spite,
 Or villain fancy fleeting by,
 Drew in the expression of an eye,
 Where God and Nature met in light;
 And thus he bore without abuse
 The grand old name of gentleman,
 Defamed by every charlatan,
 And soil'd with all ignoble use.

CXII.

HIGH wisdom holds my wisdom less,
 That I, who gaze with temperate eyes
 On glorious insufficiencies,
 Set light by narrow perfectness.
 But thou, that fillest all the room
 Of all my love, art reason why
 I seem to cast a careless eye
 On souls, the lesser lords of doom.
 For what wert thou? some novel
 power
 Sprang up for ever at a touch,
 And hope could never hope too
 much,
 In watching thee from hour to hour,
 Large elements in order brought,
 And tracts of calm from tempest
 made,
 And world-wide fluctuation sway'd,
 In vassal tides that follow'd thought.

CXIII.

'Tis held that sorrow makes us wise;
 Yet how much wisdom sleeps with
 thee
 Which not alone had guided me,
 But served the seasons that may rise;
 For can I doubt, who knew the keen
 In intellect, with force and skill
 To strive, to fashion, to fulfil—
 I doubt not what thou wouldst have
 been:
 A life in civic action warm,
 A soul on highest mission sent,
 A potent voice of Parliament,
 A pillar steadfast in the storm,
 Should licensed boldness gather force,
 Becoming, when the time has birth,
 A lever to uplift the earth
 And roll it in another course,



With thousand shocks that come and
go,
With agonies, with energies,
With overthrowings, and with cries,
And undulations to and fro.

CXIV.

Who loves not Knowledge? Who shall
rail
Against her beauty? May she mix
With men and prosper! Who shall
fix

Her pillars? Let her work prevail.

But on her forehead sits a fire:
She sets her forward countenance
And leaps into the future chance,
Submitting all things to desire.

Half-grown as yet, a child, and vain—
She cannot fight the fear of death.

What is she, cut from love and faith,
But some wild Pallas from the brain
Of Demons? fiery-hot to burst
All barriers in her onward race

For power. Let her know her place;
She is the second, not the first.

A higher hand must make her mild,
If all be not in vain; and guide
Her footsteps, moving side by side
With wisdom, like the younger child:

For she is earthly of the mind,
But Wisdom heavenly of the soul.
O, friend, who earnest to thy goal
So early, leaving me behind,

I would the great world grew like thee,
Who grewest not alone in power
And knowledge, but by year and hour
In reverence and in charity.

CXV.

Now fades the last long streak of snow,
Now hourgeons every maze of quick
About the flowering squares, and
thick

By ashen roots the violets blow.

Now rings the woodland loud and long,
The distance takes a lovelier hue,
And drown'd in yonder living blue
The lark becomes a sightless song.

Now dance the lights on lawn and lea,
The flocks are whiter down the vale,
And milkier every milky sail
On winding stream or distant sea;

Where now the seamew pipes, or dives
In yonder greening gleam, and fly
The happy birds, that change their
sky
To build and brood; that live their
lives

From land to land; and in my breast
Spring wakens too; and my regret
Becomes an April violet,
And buds and blossoms like the rest.

CXVI.

Is it, then, regret for buried time
That keener in sweet April wakes,

And meets the year, and gives and
takes

The colours of the crescent prime?

Not all: the songs, the stirring air,
The life re-orient out of dust,
Cry thro' the sense to hearten trust
In that which made the world so fair.

Not all regret; the face will shine
Upon me, while I muse alone;
And that dear voice, I once have
known,

Still speak to me of me and mine:

Yet less of sorrow lives in me
For days of happy commune dead;
Less yearning for the friendship fled,
Than some strong bond which is to be.

CXVII.

O DAYS and hours, your work is this,
To hold me from my proper place,
A little while from his embrace,
For fuller gain of after bliss:

That out of distance might ensue
Desire of nearness doubly sweet;
And unto meeting when we meet,
Delight a hundredfold accrue,

For every grain of sand that runs,
And every span of shade that steals,
And every kiss of toothed wheels,
And all the courses of the suns.

CXVIII.

CONTEMPLATE all this work of Time,
The giant laboring in his youth;
Nor dream of human love and truth,
As dying nature's earth and lime;

But trust that those we call the dead
Are breathers of an ampler day
For ever nobler ends. They say,
The solid earth whereon we tread

In tracts of fluent heat began,
And grew to seeming-random forms,
The seeming prey of cyclic storms,
Till at the last arose the man;

Who throve and branch'd from clime
to clime,
The herald of a higher race,
And of himself in higher place
If so he type this work of time

Within himself, from more to more;
Or, crown'd with attributes of woe
Like glories, move his course and
show

That life is not as idle ore,
But iron dug from central gloom,
And heated hot with burning fears,
And dipt in baths of hissing tears,
And batter'd with the shocks of doom

To shape and use. Arise and fly
The reeling Faun, the sensual feast;
Move upward, working out the beast,
And let the ape and tiger die.



CXX.

DOORS, where my heart was used to beat
 So quickly, not as one that weeps
 I come once more; the city sleeps;
 I smell the meadow in the street;
 I hear a chirp of birds; I see
 Betwixt the black fronts long-withdrawn
 A light-blue lane of early dawn,
 And think of early days and thee,
 And bless thee, for thy lips are bland
 And bright the friendship of thine eye;
 And in my thoughts with scarce a sigh
 I take the pressure of thine hand.

CXXI.

I TRUST I have not wasted breath:
 I think we are not wholly brain,
 Magnetic mockeries; not in vain,
 Like Paul with beasts, I fought with Death;
 Not only cunning casts in clay:
 Let Science prove we are, and then
 What matters Science unto men,
 At least to me? I would not stay.
 Let him, the wiser man who springs
 Hereafter, up from childhood shape
 His action like the greater ape,
 But I was born to other things.

CXXI.

SAD Hesper o'er the buried sun
 And ready, thou, to die with him,
 Thon watchest all things ever dim
 And dimmer, and a glory done:
 The team is loosen'd from the wain,
 The boat is drawn upon the shore;
 Thon listenest to the closing door,
 And life is darken'd in the brain.
 Bright Phosphor, fresher for the night,
 By thee the world's great work is heard
 Beginning, and the wakeful bird;
 Behind thee comes the greater light:
 The market boat is on the stream,
 And voices hail it from the brink;
 Thou hear'st the village hammer clink,
 And see'st the moving of the team.
 Sweet Hesper-Phosphor, double name
 For what is one, the first, the last,
 Thou, like my present and my past,
 Thy place is changed; thou art the same.

CXXII.

O, WAST thou with me, dearest then,
 While I rose up against my doom,
 And yearn'd to burst the folded gloom,
 To bare the eternal Heavens again,
 To feel once more, in placid awe,
 The strong imagination roll

A sphere of stars about my soul,
 In all her motion one with law;
 If thou wert with me, and the grave
 Divide us not, be with me now,
 And enter in at breast and brow,
 Till all my blood, a fuller wave,
 Be quicken'd with a livelier breath,
 And like an inconsiderate boy,
 As in the former flash of joy,
 I slip the thoughts of life and death;
 And all the breeze of Fancy blows,
 And every dew-drop paints a bow,
 The wizard lightnings deeply glow,
 And every thought breaks out a rose.

CXXIII.

THERE rolls the deep where grew the tree.
 O earth, what changes hast thou seen!
 There where the long street roars,
 hath been
 The stillness of the central sea.
 The hills are shadows, and they flow
 From form to form, and nothing stands;
 They melt like mist, the solid lands,
 Like clouds they shape themselves and go.
 But in my spirit will I dwell,
 And dream my dream, and hold it true;
 For tho' my lips may breathe adieu,
 I cannot think the thing farewell.

CXXIV.

THAT which we dare invoke to bless;
 Our dearest faith; our ghastliest doubt;
 He, They, One, All; within, without;
 The Power in darkness whom we guess;
 I found Him not in world or sun,
 Or eagle's wing, or insect's eye;
 Nor thro' the questions men may try,
 The petty cobwebs we have spun:
 If e'er when faith had fall'n asleep,
 I heard a voice "believe no more"
 And heard an ever breaking shore
 That tumbled in the Godless deep;
 A warmth within the breast would melt
 The freezing reason's colder part,
 And like a man in wrath the heart
 Stood up and answer'd "I have felt."
 No, like a child in doubt and fear:
 But that blind clamor made me wise;
 Then was I as a child that cries,
 But, crying, knows his father near;
 And what I am beheld again
 What is, and no man understands;
 And out of darkness came the hands
 That reach thro' nature, moulding men.



CXXV.

WHATEVER I have said or sung,
Some bitter notes my harp would
give,
Yea, tho' there often seem'd to live
A contradiction on the tongue,
Yet Hope had never lost her youth ;
She did but look through dimmer
eyes ;
Or Love but play'd with gracious
lies,
Because he felt so fix'd in truth :
And if the song were full of care,
He breathed the spirit of the song ;
And if the words were sweet and
strong,
He set his royal signet there ;
A hiding with me till I sail
To seek thee on the mystic deeps,
And this electric force, that keeps
A thousand pulses dancing, fail.

CXXVI.

LOVE is and was my Lord and King,
And in his presence I attend
To hear the tidings of my friend,
Which every hour his couriers bring.
Love is and was my King and Lord.
And will be, tho' as yet I keep
Within his court on earth, and
leep
Encompass'd by his faithful guard,
And hear at times a sentinel
Who moves about from place to
place,
And whispers to the worlds of space,
In the deep night, that all is well.

CXXVII.

AND all is well, tho' faith and form
Be sunder'd in the night of fear ;
Well roars the storm to those that
hear
A deeper voice across the storm,
Proclaiming social truth shall spread,
And justice, ev'n tho' thrice again
The red fool-fury of the Seine
Should pile her barricades with dead.
But ill for him that wears a crown,
And him, the lazar, in his rags :
They tremble, the sustaining crags ;
The spires of ice are toppled down,
And molten up, and roar in flood ;
The fortress crashes from on high,
The brute earth lightens to the sky,
And the great Æon sinks in blood,
And compass'd by the fires of Hell ;
While thou, dear spirit, happy star,
O'erlook'st the tumult from afar,
And smilest, knowing all is well.

CXXVIII.

THE love that rose on stronger wings,
Unpalsied when he met with Death,
Is comrade of the lesser faith
That sees the course of human things.

No doubt vast eddies in the flood
Of onward time shall yet be made,
And throned races may degrade ;
Yet, O ye mysteries of good,
Wild Hours that fly with Hope and
Fear,
If all your office had to do
With old results that look like new ;
If this were all your mission here,
To draw, to sheathe a useless sword,
To fool the crowd with glorious lies,
To cleave a creed in sects and cries,
To change the bearing of a word,
To shift an arbitrary power,
To cramp the student at his desk,
To make old hareness picturesque
And tuft with grass a feudal tower ;
Why then my scorn might well de-
scend
On you and yours. I see in part
That all, as in some piece of art,
Is toil cöoperant to an end.

CXXIX.

DEAR friend, far off, my lost desire,
So far, so near in woe and weal ;
O loved the most, when most I feel
There is a lower and a higher ;
Known and unknown ; human, divine ;
Sweet human hand and lips and eye ;
Dear heavenly friend that canst not
die,
Mine, mine, for ever, ever mine ;
Strange friend, past, present, and to
be ;
Love deeper, darker understood ;
Behold, I dream a dream of good,
And mingle all the world with thee.

CXXX.

THY voice is on the rolling air ;
I hear thee where the waters run ;
Thou standest in the rising sun,
And in the setting thou art fair.
What art thou then ? I cannot guess ;
But tho' I seem in star and flower
To feel thee some diffusive power,
I do not therefore love thee less :
My love involves the love before ;
My love is vaster passion now ;
Tho' mix'd with God and Nature
thou,
I seem to love thee more and more.
Far off thou art, but ever nigh ;
I have thee still, and I rejoice ;
I prosper, circled with thy voice ;
I shall not lose thee tho' I die.

CXXXI.

O LIVING will that shalt endure
When all that seems shall suffer
shock,
Rise in the spiritual rock,
Flow thro' our deeds and make them
pure,



That we may lift from out of dust
 A voice as unto him that hears,
 A cry above the conquer'd years
 To one that with us works, and trust,
 With faith that comes of self-control,
 The truths that never can be proved
 Until we close with all we loved,
 And all we flow from, soul in soul.

O TRUE and tried, so well and long,
 Demand not thou a marriage lay ;
 In that it is thy marriage day
 Is music more than any song.

Nor have I felt so much of bliss
 Since first he told me that he loved
 A daughter of our house ; nor proved
 Since that dark day a day like this ;

Tho' I since then have number'd o'er
 Some thrice three years : they went
 and came,

Remade the blood and changed the
 frame,
 And yet is love not less, but more ;
 No longer caring to embalm
 In dying songs a dead regret,
 But like a statue solid-set,
 And moulded in colossal calm.

Regret is dead, but love is more
 Than in the summers that are flown,
 For I myself with these have grown
 To something greater than before ;
 Which makes appear the songs I made
 As echoes out of weaker times,
 As half but idle brawling rhymes,
 The sport of random sun and shade.

But where is she, the bridal flower,
 That must be made a wife ere noon ?
 She enters, glowing like the moon
 Of Eden on its bridal bower :

On me she bends her blissful eyes
 And then on thee ; they meet thy
 look

And brighten like the star that shok
 Betwixt the palms of paradise.

O when her life was yet in bud,
 He too foretold the perfect rose.
 For thee she grew, for thee she
 grows

For ever, and as fair as good.

And thou art worthy ; full of power ;
 As gentle ; liberal-minded, great,
 Consistent ; wearing all that weight
 Of learning lightly like a flower.

But now set out : the noon is near,
 And I must give away the bride ;
 She fears not, or with thee beside
 And me behind her, will not fear :

For I that danced her on my knees,
 That watch'd her on her nurse's arm,
 That shielded all her life from harm,
 At last must part with her to thee ;
 Now waiting to be made a wife,
 Her feet, my darling, on the dead ;

Their pensive tablets round her head,
 And the most living words of life
 Breathed in her ear. The ring is on,
 The " wilt thou " answer'd, and

again
 The " wilt thou " ask'd, till out of
 twain

Her sweet " I will " has made ye one.
 Now sign your names, which shall be
 read,

Mute symbols of a joyful morn,
 By village eyes as yet unhorn ;
 The names are sign'd, and overhead

Begins the clash and clang that tells
 The joy to every wandering breeze ;
 The blind wall rocks, and on the
 trees

The dead leaf trembles to the bells.

O happy hour, and happier hours
 Await them. Many a merry face
 Salutes them—maidens of the place,
 That pelt us in the porch with flowers.

O happy hour, behold the bride
 With him to whom her hand I gave.
 They leave the porch, they pass the
 grave

That has to-day its sunny side.

To-day the grave is bright for me,
 For them the light of life increased,
 Who stay to share the morning feast,
 Who rest to-night beside the sea.

Let all my genial spirits advance
 To meet and greet a whiter sun ;
 My drooping memory will not shun
 The foaming grape of eastern France.

It circles round, and fancy plays,
 And hearts are warm'd, and faces
 bloom,
 As drinking health to bride and
 groom

We wish them store of happy days.

Nor count me all to blame if I
 Conjecture of a stiller guest,
 Perchance, perchance, among the
 rest,

And, tho' in silence, wishing joy.

But they must go, the time draws on,
 And those white-favor'd horses wait ;
 They rise, but linger ; it is late ;
 Farewell, we kiss, and they are gone.

A shade falls on us like the dark
 From little cloudlets on the grass,
 But sweeps away as out we pass
 To range the woods, to roam the park,
 Discussing how their courtship grew,
 And talk of others that are wed,
 And how she look'd, and what he
 said,

And back we come at fall of dew.

Again the feast, the speech, the glee,
 The shade of passing thought, the
 wealth

Of words and wit, the double health,
 The crowning cup, the three-times-
 three,



And last the dance ; — till I retire ;
 Dumb is that tower which spake so
 loud,
 And high in heaven the streaming
 cloud,
 And on the downs a rising fire :
 And rise, O moon, from yonder down
 Till over down and over dale
 All night the shining vapor sail
 And pass the silent-lighted town,
 The white-faced halls, the glancing
 rills,
 And catch at every mountain head,
 And o'er the friths that branch and
 spread
 Their sleeping silver thro' the hills ;
 And touch with shade the bridal doors,
 With tender gloom the roof, the
 wall ;
 And breaking let the splendor fall
 To spangle all the happy shores
 By which they rest, and ocean sounds,
 And, star and system rolling past,
 A soul shall draw from out the vast
 And strike his being into bounds,
 And, moved thro' life of lower phase,
 Result in man, be born and think,
 And act and love, a closer link
 Betwixt us and the crowning race
 Of those that, eye to eye, shall look
 On knowledge ; under whose com-
 mand
 Is Earth and Earth's, and in their
 hand
 Is Nature like an open book ;
 No longer half-akin to brute,
 For all we thought and loved and
 did,
 And hoped, and suffer'd, is but seed
 Of what in them is flower and fruit ;
 Whereof the man, that with me trod
 This planet, was a noble type
 Appearing ere the times were ripe,
 That friend of mine who lives in God,
 That God, which ever lives and loves,
 One God, one law, one element,
 And one far-off divine event,
 To which the whole creation moves.

THE PRINCESS : A MEDLEY.

PROLOGUE.

SIR WALTER VIVIAN all a summer's
 day
 Gave his broad lawns until the set of
 sun
 Up to the people : thither flock'd at
 noon
 His tenants, wife and child, and thith-
 er half
 The neighboring borough with their
 Institute
 Of which he was the patron. I was
 there

From college, visiting the son, — the
 son
 A Walter too, — with others of our set,
 Five others : we were seven at Vivian-
 place.

And me that morning Walter show'd
 the house,
 Greek, set with busts : from vases in
 the hall
 Flowers of all heavens, and lovelier
 than their names,
 Grew side by side ; and on the pave-
 ment lay
 Carved stones of the Abbey-ruin in the
 park,
 Huge Ammonites, and the first bones
 of Time :
 And on the tables every clime and age
 Jumbled together ; celts and calumets,
 Claymore and snowshoe, toys in lava,
 fans
 Of sandal, amber, ancient rosaries,
 Laborious orient ivory sphere in
 sphere,
 The cursed Malayan crease, and hat-
 tle-clubs
 From the isles of palm : and higher on
 the walls,
 Betwixt the monstrous horns of elk
 and deer,
 His own forefathers' arms and armor
 hung.

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

" O miracle of women," said the
 book,
 " O noble heart who, being strait-be-
 sieged
 By this wild king to force her to his
 wish,
 Nor bent, nor broke, nor shunn'd a
 soldier's death,
 But now when all was lost or seem'd
 as lost —
 Her stature more than mortal in the
 burst
 Of sunrise, her arm lifted, eyes on
 fire —
 Brake with a blast of trumpets from
 the gate,



And, falling on them like a thunder-
bolt,
She trampled some beneath her horses'
heels,
And some were whelm'd with missiles
of the wall,
And some were push'd with lances
from the rock,
And part were drown'd within the
whirling brook :
O miracle of noble womanhood !"

So sang the gallant glorious chron-
icle ;
And, I all rapt in this, " Come out,"
he said,
" To the Abbey : there is Aunt Eliza-
beth
And sister Lilia with the rest." We
went
(I kept the book and had my finger in
it)
Down thro' the park : strange was the
sight to me ;
For all the sloping pasture murmur'd,
sown
With happy faces and with holiday.
There moved the multitude, a thou-
sand heads :
The patient leaders of their Institute
Taught them with facts. One rear'd a
font of stone
And drew, from butts of water on the
slope,
The fountain of the moment, playing
now
A twisted snake, and now a rain of
pearls,
Or steep-up spout whereon the gilded
ball
Danced like a wisp : and somewhat
lower down
A man with knobs and wires and vials
fired
A cannon : Echo answer'd in her sleep
From hollow fields : and here were
telescopes
For azure views ; and there a group of
girls
In circle waited, whom the electric
shock
Dislink'd with shrieks and laughter :
round the lake
A little clock-work steamer paddling
plied
And shook the lilies : perch'd about
the knolls
A dozen angry models jettied steam :
A petty railway ran ; a fire-halloon
Rose gem-like up before the dusky
groves
And dropt a fairy parachute and past :
And there thro' twenty posts of tele-
graph
They flash'd a saucy message to and
fro
Between the mimic stations ; so that
sport
Went hand in hand with Science ;
otherwise

Pure sport : a herd of boys with
clamor bowl'd
And stump'd the wicket ; babies roll'd
about
Like tumbled fruit in grass ; and men
and maids
Arranged a country dance, and flew
thro' light
And shadow, while the twangling
violin
Struck up with Soldier-laddie, and
overhead
The broad ambrosial aisles of lofty
lime
Made noise with bees and breeze from
end to end.

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



My book to mind: and opening this I
 read
 Of old Sir Ralph a page or two that
 rang
 With tilt and tourney; then the tale
 of her
 That drove her foes with slaughter
 from her walls,
 And much I praised her nobleness, and
 "Where."
 Ask'd Walter, patting Lilia's head (she
 lay
 Beside him) "lives there such a woman
 now?"

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

And one said smiling "Pretty were
 the sight
 If our old halls could change their sex,
 and flaunt
 With prudes for proctors, dowagers
 for deans,
 And sweet girl-graduates in their gold-
 en hair.
 I think they should not wear our rusty
 gowns,
 But move as rich as Emperor-moths,
 or Ralph
 Who shines so in the corner; yet I
 fear,
 If there were many Liliacs in the brood,
 However deep you might embower the
 nest,
 Some boy would spy it."

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

Petulant she spoke, and at herself
 she laugh'd;
 A rosebud set with little wilful thorns,
 And sweet as English air could make
 her, she:
 But Walter hall'd a score of names
 upon her,

And "petty Ogress," and "ungrateful
 Puss."
 And swore he long'd at college, only
 long'd,
 All else was well, for she-society,
 They boated and they cricketed; they
 talk'd
 At wine, in clubs, of art, of politics;
 They lost their weeks; they vex't the
 souls of deans;
 They rode; they betted; made a hun-
 dred friends,
 And caught the blossom of the flying
 terms,
 But miss'd the mignonette of Vivian-
 place,
 The little hearth-flower Lilia. Thus
 he spoke,
 Part banter, part affection.
 "True," she said,
 "We doubt not that. O yes, you miss'd
 us much.
 I'll stake my ruby ring upon it you
 did."

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



Perch'd on the pouted blossom of her
lips:
And Walter nodded at me; "He be-
gan,
The rest would follow, each in turn;
and so
We forged a sevenfold story. Kind?
what kind?
Chimeras, crotchets, Christmas solec-
cisms,
Seven-headed monsters only made to
kill

Time by the fire in winter."
"Kill him now,
The tyrant! kill him in the summer
too,"
Said Lilia; "Why not now," the maid-
en Aunt.

"Why not a summer's as a winter's
tale?

A tale for summer as befits the time,
And something it should be to suit the
place

Heroic, for a hero lies beneath, .
Grave, solemn!"

Walter warp'd his mouth at this
To something so mock-solemn, that I
laugh'd,

And Lilia woke with sudden-shrilling
mirth

An echo like a ghostly woodpecker,
Hid in the ruins; till the maiden
Aunt

(A little sense of wrong had touch'd
her face

With color) turn'd to me with "As
you will;

Heroic if you will, or what you will,
Or be yourself your hero if you will."

"Take Lilia, then, for heroine"
clamor'd he,

"And make her some great Princess,
six feet high,

Grand, epic, homicidal; and be you
The Prince to win her!"

"Then follow me, the Prince,"
I answer'd, "each be hero in his turn!

Seven and yet one, like shadows in a
dream.—

Heroic seems our Princess as re-
quired—

But something made to suit with Time
and place,

A Gothic ruin and a Grecian house,
A talk of college and of ladies' rights,
A feudal knight in silken masquerade,
And, yonder, shrieks and strange ex-
periments

For which the good Sir Ralph had
hurt them all—

This were a medley! we should have
him back

Who told the 'Winter's tale' to do it
for us.

No matter: we will say whatever
comes.

And let the ladies sing us, if they
will,

From time to time, some ballad or a
song
To give us breathing-space."

So I began,
And the rest follow'd: and the women

sang
Between the rougher voices of the
men,

Like linnets in the pauses of the wind:—
And here I give the story and the
songs.

I.

A PRINCE I was, blue-eyed, and fair
in face,

Of temper amorous, as the first of
May,

With lengths of yellow ringlets, like a
girl,

For on my cradle shone the Northern
star.

There lived an ancient legend in our
house.

Some sorcerer, whom a far-off grand-
sire burnt

Because he cast no shadow, had fore-
told,

Dying, that none of all our blood
should know

The shadow from the substance, and
that one

Should come to fight with shadows and
to fall.

For so, my mother said, the story ran.
And, truly, waking dreams were, more
or less,

An old and strange affection of the
house.

Myself too had weird seizures, Heaven
knows what:

On a sudden in the midst of men and
day.

And while I walk'd and talk'd as here-
tofore,

I seem'd to move among a world of
ghosts,

And feel myself the shadow of a
dream.

Our great court-Galen poised his gilt-
head cane,

And paw'd his beard, and mutter'd
"catalepsy."

My mother pitying made a thousand
prayers;

My mother was as mild as any saint,
Half-canonized by all that lock'd on
her,

So gracious was her tact and tender-
ness:

But my good father thought a king a
king;

He cared not for the affection of the
house;

He held his sceptre like a pedant's wand
To lash offence, and with long arms
and hands

Reach'd out, and pick'd offenders from
the mass

For judgment.



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

But when the days drew nigh that I
should wed,
My father sent ambassadore with furs
And jewels, gifts, to fetch her : these
brought back
A present, a great labor of the loom ;
And therewithal an answer vague as
wind :
Besides, they saw the king ; he took
the gifts ;
He said there was a compact ; that was
true :
But then she had a will ; was he to
blame ?
And maiden fancies ; loved to live
alone
Among her women ; certain, would
not wed.
That morning in the presence room
I stood
With Cyril and with Florian, my two
friends :
The first, a gentleman of broken
means
(His father's fault) but given to starts
and bursts
Of revel ; and the last, my other heart,
And almost my half-self, for still we
moved
Together, twinn'd as horse's ear and
eye.

Now, while they spake, I saw my
father's face
Grow long and troubled like a rising
moon,
Inflamed with wrath ; he started on
his feet,
Tore the king's letter, snow'd it down,
and rent
The wonder of the loom thro' warp
and woof
From skirt to skirt ; and at the last he
sware
That he would send a hundred thou-
sand men,
And bring her in a whirlwind : then
he chew'd
The thrice-turn'd cud of wrath, and
cook'd his spleen,

Communing with his captains of the
war.

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

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

Then, ere the silver sickle of that
month
Became her golden shield, I stole from
court



With Cyril and with Florian, unperceived,
 Cat-footed thro' the town and half in dread
 To hear my father's clamor at our backs
 With Ho! from some hay-window shake the night;
 But all was quiet: from the hastion'd walls
 Like threaded spiders, one by one, we dropt,
 And flying reach'd the frontier: then we crost
 To a livelier land; and so by tilth and grange,
 And vines, and blowing hosks of wilderness,
 We gain'd the mother-city thick with towers,
 And in the imperial palace found the king.

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

Too awful, sure, for what they treated of,
 But all she is and does is awful; odes
 About this losing of the child, and rhymes
 And dismal lyrics, prophesying change
 Beyond all reason: these the women sang;
 And they that know such things—I sought but peace;
 No critic I—would call them masterpieces:
 They master'd me. At last she hegg'd a boon
 A certain summer-palace which I have
 Hard by your father's frontier: I said no,
 Yet being an easy man, gave it: and there,
 All wild to found an University
 For maidens, on the spur she fled; and more
 We know not,—only this: they see no men,
 Not ev'n her brother Arac, nor the twins
 Her brethren, tho' they love her, look upon her
 As on a kind of paragon; and I (Pardon me saying it) were much loath to breed
 Dispute betwixt myself and mine; but since
 (And I confess with right) you think me bound
 In some sort, I can give you letters to her;
 And yet, to speak the truth, I rate your chance
 Almost at naked nothing."
 Thus the king:
 And I, tho' nettled that he seem'd to slur
 With garrulous ease and oily courtesies
 Our formal compact, yet, not less (all frets
 But chafing me on fire to find my bride)
 Went forth again with both my friends.
 We rode
 Many a long league hack to the North.
 At last
 From hills, that look'd across a land of hope,
 We dropt with evening on a rustic town
 Set in a gleaming river's crescent-curve,
 Close at the boundary of the liberties;
 There, enter'd an old hostel, call'd mine host
 To council, plied him with his richest wines
 And show'd the late-writ letters of the king.
 He with a long low sibilation, stared
 As blank as death in marble; then exclaim'd
 Averring it was clear against all rules



For any man to go : but as his brain
 Began to mellow, " If the king," he
 said,
 " Had given us letters, was he bound
 to speak ?
 The king would bear him out," and at
 the last —
 The summer of the vine in all his
 veins —
 " No doubt that we might make it
 worth his while.
 She once had past that way ; he heard
 her speak ;
 She scared him ; life ! he never saw
 the like ;
 She look'd as grand as doomsday and
 as grave :
 And he, he revered his liege-lady
 there ;
 He always made a point to post with
 mares ;
 His daughter and his housemaid were
 the boys :
 The land, he understood, for miles
 about
 Was till'd by women ; all the swine
 were sows,
 And all the dogs" —

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

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

On silver anvils, and the splash and
 stir
 Of fountains spouted up and showering
 down
 In meshes of the jasmine and the rose :
 And all about us peal'd the nightin-
 gale,
 Rapt in her song, and careless of the
 snare.

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

" Three ladies of the Northern em-
 pire pray
 Your Highness would enroll them with
 your own,
 As Lady Psyche's pupils." This I seal'd :
 The seal was Cupid bent above a
 scroll,
 And o'er his head Uranian Venus
 hung,
 And raised the blinding handage from
 his eyes :
 I gave the letter to be sent with dawn ;
 And then to bed, where half in doze I
 seem'd
 To float about a glimmering night, and
 watch
 A full sea glazed with muffled moon-
 light, swell
 On some dark shore just seen that it
 was rich.

As thro' the land at eve we went,
 And pluck'd the ripen'd ears,
 We fell out, my wife and I,
 O we fell out I know not why,
 And kiss'd again with tears.
 And blessings on the falling out
 That all the more endears,
 When we fall out with those we love



And kiss again with tears !
 For when we came where lies the child
 We lost in other years,
 There above the little grave,
 O there above the little grave,
 We kiss'd again with tears.

II.

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

There at a board by tome and paper
 sat,
 With two tame leopards couch'd beside
 her throne
 All beauty compass'd in a female form,
 The Princess ; liker to the inhabitant
 Of some clear planet close upon the
 Sun,
 Than our man's earth ; such eyes were
 in her head,
 And so much grace and power, breath-
 ing down
 From over her arch'd brows, with
 every turn
 Lived thro' her to the tips of her long
 hands,
 And to her feet. She rose her height,
 and said :

" We give you welcome: not without
 redound
 Of use and glory to yourselves ye
 come,
 The first-fruits of the stranger : after-
 time,
 And that full voice which circles round
 the grave,
 Will rank you nobly, mingled up with
 me.
 What! are the ladies of your land so
 tall ?"
 " We of the court," said Cyril. " From
 the court"

She answer'd, " then ye know the
 Prince ?" and he :
 " The climax of his age! as tho' there
 were
 One rose in all the world, your High-
 ness that,
 He worships your ideal": she replied:
 " We scarcely thought in our own hall
 to hear
 This harren verbiage, current among
 men,
 Light coin, the tinsel clink of compli-
 ment.
 Your flight from out your bookless
 wilds would seem
 As arguing love of knowledge and of
 power ;
 Your language proves you still the
 child. Indeed,
 We dream not of him : when we set
 our hand
 To this great work, we purposed with
 ourself
 Never to wed. You likewise will do
 well,
 Ladies, in entering here, to cast and
 fling
 The tricks, which make us toys of men,
 that so,
 Some future time, if so indeed you
 will,
 You may with those self-styled our
 lords ally
 Your fortunes, justlier balanced, scale
 with scale."

At those high words, we conscious of
 ourselves,
 Perused the matting ; then an officer
 Rose up, and read the statutes, such as
 these :
 Not for three years to correspond with
 home ;
 Not for three years to cross the Liber-
 ties ;
 Not for three years to speak with any
 men ;
 And many more, which hastily sub-
 scribed,
 We enter'd on the boards : and " Now"
 she cried
 " Ye are green wood, see ye warp not.
 Look, our hall !
 Our statues!—not of those that men
 desire,
 Sleek Odalisques, or oracles of mode,
 Nor stunted squaws of West or East ;
 but she
 That taught the Sabine how to rule,
 and she
 The foundress of the Babylonian wall,
 The Carian Artemisia strong in war,
 The Rhodope, that built the pyramid,
 Clelia, Cornelia, with the Palmyrene
 That fought Aurelian, and the Roman
 brows
 Of Agrippina. Dwell with these, and
 lose
 Convention, since to look on noble
 forums



Makes noble thro' the sensuous organ-
ism

That which is higher. O lift your na-
tures up:

Embrace our aims: work out your
freedom. Girls,

Knowledge is now no more a fountain
seal'd:

Drink deep, until the habits of the
slave,

The sins of emptiness, gossip and spite
And slander, die. Better not be at all

Than not be noble. Leave us: you
may go:

To-day the Lady Psyche will harangue
The fresh arrivals of the week before;

For they press in from all the provin-
ces,

And fill the hive."

She spoke, and bowing waved
Dismissal: back again we crost the
court

To Lady Psyche's: as we enter'd in,
There sat along the forme, like morn-
ing doves

That sun their milky bosoms on the
thatch,

A patient range of pupils; she herself
Erect behind a desk of satin-wood,

A quick brunette, well-moulded, fal-
con-eyed,

And on the hither side, or so she
look'd,

Of twenty summers. At her left, a
child,

In shining draperies, headed like a star,
Her maiden babe, a double April old,

Aglala slept. We sat: the Lady
glanced:

Then Florian; but no livelier than the
dame

That whisper'd "Asses' ears" among
the sedge,

"My sister." "Comely too by all that's
fair"

Said Cyril. "O hush, hush!" and she
began.

"This world was once a fluid haze
of light,

Till toward the centre set the starry
tides,

And eddied into suns, that wheeling
cast

The planets: then the monster, then
the man;

Tattoo'd or woaded, winter-clad in
skins,

Raw from the prime, and crushing
down his mate;

As yet we find in barbarous isles, and
here

Among the lowest."

Thereupon she took
A bird's-eye-view of all the ungracious
past;

Glanced at the legendary Amazon
As emblematic of a nobler age;

Appraised the Lycian custom, spoke
of those

That lay at wine with Lar and Lucumo;
Ran down the Persiau, Grecian, Ro-
man lines

Of empire, and the woman's state in
each,

How far from just; till warming with
her theme

She fulminated out her scorn of law
Salique

And little-footed China, touch'd on
Mahomet

With much contempt, and came to
chivalry:

When some respect, however slight,
was paid

To woman, superstition all awry:
However then commenced the dawn:

a beam

Had slanted forward, falling in a land
Of promise; fruit would follow. Deep,
indeed,

Their debt of thanks to her who first
had dared

To leap the rotten pales of prejudice,
Disyoke their necks from custom, and

assert

None lordlier than themselves but that
which made

Woman and man. She had founded;
they must build.

Here might they learn whatever men
were taught:

Let them not fear: some said their
heads were less:

Some men's were small; not they the
least of men;

For often fineness compensated size:
Besides the brain was like the hand,

and grew

With using; thence the man's, if more
was more;

He took advantage of his strength to
be

First in the field: some ages had been
lost;

But woman ripen'd earlier, and her life
Was longer; and albeit their glorious
names

Were fewer, scatter'd stars, yet since
in truth

The highest is the measure of the man,
And not the Kafir, Hottentot, Malay,

Nor those horn-handed breakers of the
glebe,

But Homer, Plato, Verulam; even so
With woman: and in arts of govern-
ment

Elizabeth and others; arts of war
The peasant Joan and others; arts of
grace

Sappho and others vied with any man:
And, last not least, she who had left
her place,

And bow'd her state to them, that they
might grow

To use and power on this Oasis, lapt
In the arms of leisure, sacred from the
blight

Of ancient influence and scorn.

At last



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

She ended here, and beckon'd us:
 the rest
 Parted; and, glowing full-faced wel-
 come she
 Began to address us, and was moving on
 In gratulation, till as when a boat
 Tacks, and the slacken'd sail flaps, all
 her voice
 Faltering and fluttering in her throat,
 she cried
 "My brother!" "Well, my sister."
 "O" she said
 "What do you here? and in this dress?
 and these?
 Why who are these? a wolf within the
 fold!
 A pack of wolves! the Lord be gra-
 cious to me!
 A plot, a plot, a plot, to ruin all!"
 "No plot, no plot," he answer'd.
 "Wretched boy,
 How saw you not the inscription on
 the gate,
 LET NO MAN ENTER IN ON PAIN OF
 DEATH?"
 "And if I had" he answer'd "who
 could think
 The softer Adams of your Academe,
 O sister, Sirens tho' they be, were such
 As chanted on the blanching bones of
 men?"
 "But you will find it otherwise" she
 said.
 "You jest: ill jesting with edge-tools!
 my vow
 Binds me to speak, and O that iron
 will,
 That axelike edge unturnable, our
 Head,
 The Princess." "Well then, Psyche,
 take my life,
 And nail me like a weasel on a grange
 For warning: bury me beside the gate,
 And cut this epitaph above my bones;
*Here lies a brother by a sister slain,
 All for the common good of womankind.*"
 "Let me die too" said Cyril "having
 seen
 And heard the Lady Psyche."

I struck in:

"Albeit so mask'd, Madam, I love the
 truth;
 Receive it; and in me behold the
 Prince
 Your countryman, affianced years ago
 To the Lady Ida: here, for here she
 was,
 And thus (what other way was left) I
 came."
 "O Sir, O Prince, I have no country;
 none;
 If any, this; but none. Whate'er I
 was
 Disrooted, what I am is grafted here.
 Affianced, Sir? love-whispers may not
 breathe
 Within this vestal limit, and how
 should I,
 Who am not mine, say, live: the thun-
 derbolt
 Hangs silent; but prepare: I speak;
 it falls."
 "Yet pause," I said: "for that in-
 scription there,
 I think no more of deadly lurks
 therein,
 Than in a clapper clapping in a garth,
 To scare the fowl from fruit: if more
 there be,
 If more and acted on, what followe?
 war;
 Your own work marr'd: for this your
 Academe,
 Whichever side be Victor, in the halloo
 Will topple to the trumpet down, and
 pass
 With all fair theories only made to
 gild
 A stormless summer." "Let the Prin-
 cess judge
 Of that" she said: "farewell Sir—and
 to you.
 I shudder at the sequel, but I go."

"Are you that Lady Psyche" I
 rejoind,
 "The fifth in line from that old
 Florian,
 Yet hangs his portrait in my father's
 hall
 (The gaunt old Baron with his beetle
 brow
 Sun-shaded in the heat of dusty fights)
 As he bestrode my Grandsire, when he
 fell,
 And all else fled: we point to it, and
 we say,
 The loyal warmth of Florian is not cold,
 But branches current yet in kindred
 veins."
 "Are you that Psyche" Florian added
 "she
 With whom I sang about the morning
 hills,
 Flung ball, flew kite, and raced the
 purple fly,
 And snared the squirrel of the glen?
 are you
 That Psyche, wont to bind my throbb-
 ing brow,



To smooth my pillow, mix the foaming draught
 Of fever, tell me pleasant tales, and read
 My sickness down to happy dreams?
 That brother-sister Psyche, both in one?
 You were that Psyche, but what are you now?
 "You are that Psyche," Cyril said,
 "for whom
 I would be that for ever which I seem,
 Woman, if I might sit beside your feet,
 And glean your scatter'd sapience."
 Then once more,
 "Are you that Lady Psyche?" I began,
 "That on her bridal morn before she
 From all her old companions, when
 Kiss'd her pale cheek, declared that
 Would still be dear beyond the southern
 hills;
 That were there any of our people there
 In want or peril, there was one to hear
 And help them: look! for such are
 "Are you that Psyche?" Florian ask'd
 "to whom,
 In gentler days, your arrow-wounded
 Came flying while you sat beside the
 The creature laid his muzzle on your
 And sobb'd, and you sobb'd with it,
 Was sprinkled on your kirtle, and you
 That was fawn's blood, not brother's,
 O by the bright head of my little niece,
 You were that Psyche, and what are
 "You are that Psyche" Cyril said
 again,
 "The mother of the sweetest little
 That ever crow'd for kisses."
 "Out upon it!"
 She answer'd, "peace! and why should
 The Spartan Mother with emotion, be
 The Lucius Junius Brutus of my kind?
 Him you call great: he for the com-
 mon weal,
 The fading politics of mortal Rome,
 As I might slay this child, if good need
 were,
 Slew both his sons: and I, shall I, on
 whom
 The secular emancipation turns
 Of half this world, be swerved from
 A prince, a brother? a little will I
 Best so, perchance, for us, and well
 for you.

O hard, when love and duty clash! I
 My conscience will not count me fleck-
 less; yet—
 Hear my conditions: promise (other-
 wise
 You perish) as you came, to slip away,
 To-day, to-morrow, soon: it shall be
 said,
 These women were too barbarous,
 would not learn;
 They fled, who might have shamed us:
 promise, all."

What could we else, we promised
 each; and she,
 Like some wild creature newly-caged,
 At to-and-fro, so pacing till she paused
 By Florian; holding out her lily arms
 Took both his hands, and smiling faint-
 ly said:
 "I knew you at the first: tho' you have
 grown
 You scarce have alter'd: I am sad and
 glad
 To see you, Florian. I give thee to
 death
 My brother! it was duty spoke, not I.
 My needful seeming harshness, pardon
 it.
 Our mother, is she well?"
 With that she kiss'd
 His forehead, then, a moment after,
 clung
 About him, and betwixt them blos-
 som'd up
 From out a common vein of memory
 Sweet household talk, and phrases of
 the hearth,
 And far allusion, till the gracious dews
 Began to glisten and to fall: and while
 They stood, so rapt, we gazing, came a
 voice,
 "I brought a message here from Lady
 Blanche."
 Back started she, and turning round
 we saw
 The Lady Blanche's daughter where
 she stood,
 Melissa, with her hand upon the lock,
 A rosy blonde, and in a college gown,
 That clad her like an April daffodily
 (Her mother's color) with her lips apart,
 And all her thoughts as fair within her
 eyes,
 As bottom agates seen to wave and
 float
 In crystal currents of clear morning
 seas.
 So stood that same fair creature at
 the door.
 Then Lady Psyche "Ah—Melissa—
 you!
 You heard us?" and Melissa, "O par-
 don me:
 I heard, I could not help it, did not
 wish:
 But, dearest Lady, pray you fear me
 not,



Nor think I bear that heart within my
breast,
To give three gallant gentlemen to
death."
"I trust you" said the other "for we
two
Were always friends, none closer, elm
and vine :
But yet your mother's jealous temper-
ament—
Let not your prudence, dearest, drowse,
or prove
The Danaïd of a leaky vase, for fear
This whole foundation ruin, and I lose
My honor, these their lives." "Ah,
fear me not"
Replied Melissa "no—I would not tell,
No, not for all Aspasia's cleverness,"
No, not to answer, Madam, all those
hard things
That Sheba came to ask of Solomon."
"Be it so" the other "that we still
may lead
The new light up, and culminate in
peace,
For Solomon may come to Sheba yet."
Said Cyril "Madam, he the wisest man
Feasted the woman wisest then, in
halls
Of Lebanonian cedar: nor should you
(Tho' madam you should answer, we
would ask)
Less welcome find among us, if you
came
Among us, debtors for our lives to you,
Myself for something more." He said
not what,
But "Thanks," she answer'd "go: we
have been too long
Together: keep your hoods about the
face ;
They do so that affect abstraction here.
Speak little; mix not with the rest ;
and hold
Your promise: all, I trust, may yet be
well."

We turn'd to go, but Cyril took the
child,
And held her round the knees against
his waist, [peter,
And blew the swoll'n cheek of a trum-
While Psyche watch'd them, smiling,
and the child
Push'd her flat hand against his face
and laugh'd ;
And thus our conference closed.
And then we stroll'd
For half the day thro' stately theatres
Bench'd crescent-wise. In each we sat,
we heard
The grave Professor. On the lecture
slate
The circle rounded under female hands
With flawless demonstration: follow'd
then
A classic lecture, rich in sentiment,
With scraps of thundrous Epic lilted
out
By violet-hooded Doctors, elegies

And quoted odes, and jewels five-
words-long
That on the stretch'd forefinger of all
Time
Sparkle for ever: then we dipt in all
That treats of whatsoever is, the state,
The total chronicles of man, the mind,
The morals, something of the frame,
the rock,
The star, the bird, the fish, the shell,
the flower,
Electric, chemic laws, and all the rest,
And whatsoever can be taught and
known ;
Till like three horses that have broken
fence,
And glutt'd all night long breast-deep
in corn,
We issued gorged with knowledge, and
I spoke :
"Why, Sirs, they do all this as well as
we,"
"They hunt old trails" said Cyril
"very well ;
But when did woman ever yet invent?"
"Ungracious!" answer'd Florian,
"have you learnt
No more from Psyche's lecture, you
that talk'd
The trash that made me sick, and
almost sad?"
"O trash" he said "but with a kernel
in it.
Should I not call her wise, who made
me wise?
And learnt? I learnt more from her
in a flash,
Than if my brainpan were an empty
hull,
And every Muse tumbled a science in.
A thousand hearts lie fallow in these
halls,
And round these halls a thousand baby
loves
Fly twanging headless arrows at the
hearts,
Whence follows many a vacant pang ;
but O
With me, Sir, enter'd in the bigger boy,
The Head of all the golden-shafted firm,
The long-limb'd lad that had a Psyche
too ;
He cleft me thro' the stomacher ; and
now
What think you of it, Florian? do I
chase
The substance or the shadow? will it
hold?
I have no sorcerer's malison on me,
No ghostly huntings like his High-
ness. I
Flatter myself that always everywhere
I know the substance when I see it.
Well,
Are castles shadows? Three of them?
Is she
The sweet proprietress a shadow? If
not,
Shall those three castles patch my tat-
ter'd coat?





For dear are those three castles to my
wants,
And dear is sister Psyche to my heart,
And two dear things are one of double
worth,
And much I might have said, but that
my zone
Unmann'd me: then the Doctors! O
to hear
The Doctors! O to watch the thirsty
plants
Imbibing! once or twice I thought to
roar,
To break my chain, to shake my mane:
but thou,
Modulate me, Soul of mincing mim-
icry!
Make liquid tremble of that bassoon,
my throat;
Abase those eyes that ever loved to
meet
Star-sisters answering under crescent
brows;
Abate the stride, which speaks of man,
and loose
A flying charm of blushes o'er this
cheek,
Where they like swallows coming out
of time
Will wonder why they came; but hark
the bell
For dinner, let us go!"
And in we stream'd
Among the columns, pacing staid and
still
By twos and threes, till all from end
to end
With beauties every shade of brown
and fair
In colors gayer than the morning mist,
The long hall glitter'd like a bed of
flowers.
How might a man not wander from
his wits
Pierced thro' with eyes, but that I
kept mine own
Intent on her, who rapt in glorious
dreams,
The second-sight of some Astræan age,
Sat compass'd with professors: they,
the while,
Discuss'd a doubt and tost it to and
fro:
A clamor thicken'd, mixt with inmost
terms
Of art and science: Lady Blanche
alone
Of faded form and haughtiest linea-
ments,
With all her autumn tresses falsely
brown,
Shot sidelong daggers at us, a tiger-
cat
In act to spring.
At last a solemn grace
Concluded, and we sought the gardens:
there
One walk'd reciting by herself, and
one
In this hand held a volume as to read,

And smoothed a petted peacock down
with that:
Some to a low song car'd a shallop by,
Or under arches of the marble bridge
Hung, shadow'd from the heat: some
hid and sought
In the orange thickets: others tost a
hall
Above the fountain-jets, and back
again
With laughter: others lay about the
lawns,
Of the older sort, and murmur'd that
their May
Was passing: what was learning unto
them?
They wish'd to marry; they could rule
a house;
Men hated learned women: but we
three
Sat muffled like the Fates; and often
came
Melissa hitting all we saw with shafts
Of gentle satire, kin to charity,
That harm'd not: then day droopt;
the chapel bells
Call'd us; we left the walks; we mixt
with those
Six hundred maidens clad in purest
white,
Before two streams of light from wall
to wall,
While the great organ almost burst his
pipes,
Groaning for power, and rolling thro'
the court
A long melodious thunder to the sound
Of solemn psalms, and silver litanies,
The work of Ida, to call down from
Heaven
A blessing on her labors for the world.

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

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

III.

MORN in the white wake of the morn-
ing star
Came frowning all the orient into
gold.



We rose, and each by other drest with
 care
 Descended to the courts that lay three
 parts
 In shadow, but the Muses' heads were
 touch'd
 Above the darkness from their native
 East.

There while we stood beside the
 fount, and watch'd
 Or seem'd to watch the dancing bubble,
 approach'd
 Melissa, tinged with wan from lack of
 sleep,
 Or grief, and glowing round her dewy
 eyes
 The circled Iris of a night of tears ;
 "And fly" she cried, "O fly, while yet
 you may !
 My mother knows : " and when I ask'd
 her "how"
 "My fault" she wept "my fault ! and
 yet not mine ;
 Yet mine in part. O hear me, pardon
 me.
 My mother, 't is her wont from night to
 night
 To rail at Lady Psyche and her side.
 She says the Princess should have been
 the Head,
 Herself and Lady Psyche the two arms ;
 And so it was agreed when first they
 came ;
 But Lady Psyche was the right hand
 now,
 And she the left, or not, or seldom used ;
 Hers more than half the students, all
 the love.
 And so last night she fell to canvass
 you :
 Her countrywomen ! she did not envy
 her.
 'Who ever saw such wild barbarians ?
 Girls?—more like men !' and at these
 words the snake,
 My secret, seem'd to stir within my
 breast ;
 And oh, Sirs, could I help it, but my
 cheek
 Began to burn and burn, and her lynx
 eye
 To fix and make me hotter, till she
 laugh'd :
 'O marvellously modest maiden, you !
 Men ! girls, like men ! why, if they
 had been men
 You need not set your thoughts in ru-
 bric thus
 For wholesale comment.' Pardon, I
 am shamed
 That I must needs repeat for my ex-
 cuse
 What looks so little graceful : 'men'
 (for still
 My mother went revolving on the word)
 'And so they are,—very like men in-
 deed—
 And with that woman closeted for
 hours !'

Then came these dreadful words out
 one by one,
 'Why—these—*are*—men : ' I shud-
 der'd : 'and you know it.'
 'O ask me nothing,' I said : 'and she
 knows too,
 And she conceals it.' So my mother
 clutch'd
 The truth at once, but with no word
 from me ;
 And now thus early risen she goes to
 inform
 The Princess : Lady Psyche will be
 crush'd ;
 But you may yet be saved, and there-
 fore fly :
 But heal me with your pardon ere you
 go."

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

Melissa shook her doubtful curls,
 and thought
 He scarce would prosper. "Tell us,"
 Florian ask'd,
 "How grew this feud betwixt the right
 and left."
 "O long ago," she said, "betwixt these
 two
 Division smoulders hidden ; 't is my
 mother,
 Too jealous, often fretful as the wind
 Pent in a crevice : much I hear with
 her :
 I never knew my father, hut she says
 (God help her) she was wedded to a
 fool ;
 And still she rail'd against the state of
 things.
 She had the care of Lady Ida's youth,
 And from the Queen's decease she
 brought her up.
 But when your sister came she won the
 heart
 Of Ida : they were still together, grew
 (For so they said themselves) inoscu-
 lated ;
 Consonant chords that shiver to one
 note ;
 One mind in all things : yet my mother
 still
 Affirms your Psyche thieved her the-
 ories,



And angled with' them for her pupil's
love :
She calls her plagiarist ; I know not
what :
But I must go : I dare not tarry " and
light,
As flies the shadow of a bird, she fled.

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

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

So saying from the court we paced,
and gain'd
The terrace ranged along the Northern
front,
And leaning there on those balusters,
high
Above the empurpled champaign,
drank the gale
That blown about the foliage under-
neath,
And sated with the innumerable rose,
Beat balm upon our eyelids. Hither
came
Cyril, and yawning " O hard task," he
cried ;
"No fighting shadows here ! I forced
a way
Thro' solid opposition crabbd and
gnarl'd.
Better to clear prime forests, heave
and thump
A league of street in summer solstice
down,
Than hammer at this reverend gentle-
woman.

I knock'd and, bidden, enter'd ; found
her there
At point to move, and settled in her
eyes
The green malignant light of coming
storm.
Sir, I was courteous, every phrase well-
oil'd,
As man's could be ; yet maiden-meek
I pray'd
Concealment : she demanded who we
were,
And why we came ? I fabled nothing
fair,
But, your example pilot, told her all.
Up went the hush'd amaze of hand and
eye.
But when I dwelt upon your old affi-
ance,
She answer'd sharply that I talk'd
astray.
I urged the fierce inscription on the
gate,
And our three lives, True—we had
lined ourselves
With open eyes, and we must take the
chance.
But such extremes, I told her, well
might harm
The woman's cause, ' Not more than
now,' she said,
'So puddled as it is with favoritism.'
I tried the mother's heart. Shame
might befall
Melissa, knowing, saying not she knew:
Her answer was 'Leave me to deal
with that.'
I spoke of war to come and many
deaths,
And she replied, her duty was to speak,
And duty duty, clear of consequences.
I grew discouraged, Sir ; but since I
knew
No rock so hard but that a little wave
May beat admission in a thousand
years,
I recommenced ; 'Decide not ere you
pause.
I find you here but in the second place,
Some say the third—the authentic
foundress you.
I offer boldly: we will seat you highest:
Wink at our advent: help my prince
to gain
His rightful bride, and here I promise
you
Some palace in our land, where you
shall reign
The head and heart of all our fair she-
world,
And your great name flow on with
broadening time
For ever.' Well, she balanced this a
little,
And told me she would answer us to-
day,
Meantime be mute: thus much, nor
more I gain'd."

He ceasing, came a message from the
Head.



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

Agreed to, this, the day fled on thro'
all
Its range of duties to the appointed
hour.
Then summon'd to the porch we went.
She stood
Among her maidens, higher by the
head,
Her back against a pillar, her foot on
one
Of those tame leopards. Kittenlike he
roll'd
And paw'd about her sandal. I drew
near;
I gazed. On a sudden my strange seiz-
ure came
Upon me, the weird vision of our house:
The Princess Ida seem'd a hollow show,
Her gay-furr'd cats a painted fantasy,
Her college and her maidens, empty
masks.
And I myself the shadow of a dream,
For all things were and were not. Yet
I felt
My heart beat thick with passion and
with awe;
Then from my breast the involuntary
sigh
Broke, as she smote me with the light
of eyes
That lent my knee desire to kneel, and
shook
My pulses, till to horse we got, and so
Went forth in long retinue following
up
The river as it narrow'd to the hills.

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

I stammer'd that I knew him—could
have wish'd—

"Our king expects—was there no pre-
contract?
There is no truer-hearted—ah, you
seem
All he prefigured, and he could not
see
The bird of passage flying south but
long'd
To follow: surely, if your Highness
keep
Your purport, you will shock him ev'n
to death,
Or baser courses, children of despair."

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

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

"Alas your Highness breathes full
East," I said,
"On that which leans to you. I know
the Prince,
I prize his truth: and then how vast a
work
To assail this gray pre-eminence of
man!
You grant me license; might I use it?
think;
Ere half be done perchance your life
may fail;
Then comes the feebler heiress of your
plan,
And takes and ruins all; and thus your
pains
May only make that footprint upon
sand
Which old recurring waves of preju-
dice
Resmooth to nothing: might I dread
that you,
With only fame for spouse and your
great deeds



For issue, yet may live in vain, and miss,
 Meanwhile, what every woman counts her due,
 Love, children, happiness?²²
 And she exclaim'd,
 "Peace, you young savage of the Northern wild!
 What! tho' your Prince's love were like a God's,
 Have we not made ourself the sacrifice?
 You are bold indeed: we are not talk'd to thus:
 Yet will we say for children, would they grew
 Like field-flowers everywhere! we like them well:
 But children die; and let me tell you, girl,
 Howe'er you babble, great deads cannot die;
 They with the sun and moon renew their light
 Forever, blessing those that look on them.
 Children—that men may pluck them from our hearts,
 Kill us with pity, break us with ourselves—
 O—children—there is nothing upon earth
 More miserable than she that has a son
 And sees him err: nor would we work for fame;
 Tho' she perhaps might reap the applause of Great,
 Who learns the one POU STO whence after-hands
 May move the world, tho' she herself effect
 But little: wherefore up and act, nor shrink
 For fear our solid aim be dissipated
 By frail successors. Would, indeed, we had been,
 In lieu of many mortal flies, a race
 Of giants living, each, a thousand years,
 That we might see our own work out, and watch
 The sandy footprint harden into stone."
 I answer'd nothing, doubtful in myself
 If that strange Poet-princess with her grand
 Imaginations might at all be won.
 And she broke out interpreting my thoughts:
 "No doubt we seem a kind of monster to you;
 We are used to that: for women, up till this
 Cramp'd under worse than South-sea-isle taboo,
 Dwarfs of the gynæceum, fall so far
 In high desire, they know not, cannot guess

How much their welfare is a passion to us.
 If we could give them surer, quicker proof—
 Oh if our end were less achievable
 By slow approaches, than by single act
 Of immolation, any phase of death,
 We were as prompt to spring against the pikes,
 Or down the fiery gulf as talk of it,
 To compass our dear sisters' liberties."
 She bow'd as if to veil a noble tear;
 And up we came to where the river sloped
 To plunge in cataract, shattering on black blocks
 A breadth of thunder. O'er it shook the woods,
 And danced the color, and, below, stuck out
 The bones of some vast bulk that lived and roar'd
 Before man was. She gazed awhile and said,
 "As these rude bones to us, are we to her
 That will be," "Dare we dream of that," I ask'd,
 "Which wrought us, as the workman and his work,
 That practice-betters?" "How," she cried, "you love
 The metaphysics! read and earn our prize,
 A golden broach; beneath an emerald plane
 Sits Diotima, teaching him that died
 Of hemlock; our device; wrought to the life;
 She rapt upon her subject, he on her:
 For there are schools for all." "And yet" I said
 "Methinks I have not found among them all
 One anatomic." "Nay, we thought of that,"
 She answer'd, "but it pleased us not: in truth
 We shudder but to dream our maids should ape
 Those monstrous males that carve the living hound,
 And cram him with the fragments of the grave,
 Or in the dark dissolving human heart,
 And holy secrets of this microcosm,
 Dabbling a shameless hand with shameful jest,
 Encarnalize their spirits: yet we know
 Knowledge is knowledge, and this matter hangs:
 Howbeit ourself, forseeing casualty,
 Nor willing men should come among us, learnt,
 For many weary moons before we came,
 This craft of healing Were you sick, ourself
 Would tend upon you. To your question now,



Which touches on the workman and
his work.
Let there be light and there was light :
't is so :
For was, and is, and will be, are hut is ;
And all creation is one act at once,
The birth of light : but we that are not
all,
As parts, can see but parts, now this,
now that,
And live, perforce, from thought to
thought, and make
One act a phantom of succession : thus
Our weakness somehow shapes the
shadow, Time ;
But in the shadow will we work, and
mould
The woman to the fuller day."

She spake
beyond,
With kindled eyes : we rode a league
And, o'er a bridge of pinewood cross-
ing, came
On flowery levels underneath the crag,
Full of all beauty. "O how sweet" I
said
(For I was half-oblivious of my mask)
"To linger here with one that loved
us," "Yea"
She answer'd "or with fair philoso-
phies
That lift the fancy ; for indeed these
fields
Are lovely, lovelier not the Elysian
lawns,
Where paced the Demigods of old, and
saw
The soft white vapor streak the crown-
ed towers
Built to the Sun : " then, turning to
her maids,
"Pitch our pavilion here upon the
sword ;
Lay out the viands." At the word,
they raised
A tent of satin, elaborately wrought
With fair Corinna's triumph ; here she
stood,
Engirt with many a florid maiden-
cheek,
The woman - conqueror ; woman - con-
quer'd there
The hearded Victor of ten-thousand
hymns,
And all the men mourn'd at his side :
but we
Set forth to climb ; then, climbing,
Cyril kept
With Psyche, with Melissa Florian, I
With mine affianced. Many a little
hand
Glanced like a touch of sunshine on
the rocks,
Many a light foot shone like a jewel set
In the dark crag : and then we turn'd,
we wound
About the cliffs, the copees, out and in,
Hammering and clinking, chattering
stony names

Of shale and hornblende, rag and trap
and tuff,
Amygdaloid and trachyte, till the Sun
Grew broader toward his death and
fell, and all
The rosy heights came out above the
lawns.

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

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

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

IV.

"THERE sinks the nebulous star we
call the Sun,
If that hypothesis of theirs be sound"
Said Ida ; "let us down and rest ;"
and we
Down from the lean and wrinkled pre-
cipices,
By every coppice-feather'd chasm and
cleft,
Dropt thro' the ambrosial gloom to
where below
No bigger than a glow-worm shone the
tent
Lamp-lit from the inner. Once she
lean'd on me,
Descending ; once or twice she lent her
hand,
And blissful palpitations in the blood,
Stirring a sudden transport rose and
fell.
But when we planted level feet and
dipt
Beneath the satin dome and enter'd in,
There leaning deep in hrolder'd down
we sank
Our elbows : on a tripod in the midst
A fragrant flame rose, and before us
glow'd
Fruit, blossom, viand, amber wine, and
gold.
Then she "Let some one sing to us :
lightlier move



The minutes fledged with music :” and
a maid,
Of those beside her, smote her harp,
and sang.

“Tears, idle tears, I know not what
they mean,
Tears from the depth of some divine
depair
Rise in the heart, and gather to the
eyes,
In looking on the happy Autumn-
fields,
And thinking of the days that are no
more.

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

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

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

She ended with such passion that the
tear,
She sang of, shook and fell, an erring
pearl
Lost in her bosom : but with some dis-
dain
Answer’d the Princess “If indeed
there haunt
About the moulder’d lodges of the Past
So sweet a voice and vague, fatal to
men,
Well needs it we should cram our ears
with wool
And so pace by : but thine are fancies
hatch’d
In silken-folded idleness; nor is it
Wiser to weep a true occasion lost,
But trim our sails, and let old by-gones
be,
While down the streams that float us
each and all
To the issue, goes, like glittering bergs
of ice,

Throne after throne, and molten on
the waste
Becomes a cloud : for all things serve
their time
Toward that great year of equal might
and rights,
Nor would I fight with iron laws, in
the end
Found goldou : let the past be past;
let be
Their cancell’d Babels : tho’ the rough
kex break
The starr’d mosaic, and the beard-
blown goat
Hang on the shaft, and the wild fig-
tree split
Their monstrous idols, care not while
we hear
A trumpet in the distance pealing
news
Of better, and Hope, a poisoning eagle,
burns
Above the unrisen morrow :” then to
me;
“Know you no song of your own land,”
she said,
“Not such as moans about the retro-
spect,
But deals with the other distance and
the hues
Of promise; not a death’s-head at the
wine.”

Then I remember’d one myself had
made,
What time I watch’d the swallow
winging south
From mine own land, part made long
since, and part
Now while I sang, and maidenlike as
far
As I could ape their treble, did I sing.

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

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

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

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

“Why lingereth she to clothe her
heart with love,



Delaying as the tender ash delays
To clothe herself, when all the woods
are green?

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

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

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

I ceased, and all the ladies, each at
each,
Like the Ithacensian suitors in old
time,
Stared with great eyes, and laugh'd
with alien lips,
And knew not what they meant; for
still my voice

Rang false; but smiling "Not for
thee," she said,
"O Bulbul, any rose of Gulistan
Shall burst her veil: marsh-divers,
rather, maid,
Shall croak thee sister, or the meadow-
crake

Grate her harsh kindred in the grass:
and this
A mere love-poem! O for such, my
friend,
We hold them slight: they mind us of
the time

When we made bricks in Egypt.
Knaves are men,
That lute and flute fantastic tender-
ness,
And dress the victim to the offering up.
And paint the gates of Hell with Par-
adise,
And play the slave to gain the tyranny.
Poor soul! I had a maid of honor once;
She wept her true eyes blind for such
a one.

A rogue of canzonets and serenades.
I loved her. Peace be with her. She
is dead.

So they blaspheme the muse! but
great is song
Used to great ends: ourself have often
tried

Valkyrian hymns, or into rhythm have
dash'd
The passion of the prophetess; for
song

Is duer unto freedom, force and growth
Of spirit than to junketing and love.
Love is it? Would this same mock-
love, and this

Mock-Hymen were laid up like winter
bats,
Till all men grew to rate us at our
worth,
Not vassals to be beat, nor petty babes
To be dandled, no, but living wills,
and sphered
Whole in ourselves and owed to none.
Enough!
But not to leaven play with profit,
you,
Know you no song, the true growth of
your soil,
That gives the manners of your coun-
trywomen?"

She spoke and turn'd her sumptuous
head with eyes
Of shining expectation fixt on mine.
Then while I dragg'd my brains for
such a song,
Cyril, with whom the bell-mouth'd
glass had wrought,
Or master'd by the sense of sport, be-
gan

To troll a careless, careless tavern-
catch
Of Moll and Meg, and strange experi-
ences

Unmeet for ladies. Florian nodded at
him,
I frowning; Psyche flush'd and wann'd
and shook;

The lilylike Melissa droop'd her brows;
"Forbear" the Princess cried; "For-
bear, Sir" I;
And heated thro' and thro' with wrath
and love,

I smote him on the breast; he started
up;
There rose a shriek as of a city sack'd;
Melissa clamor'd "Flee the death;"
"To horse"

Said Ida; "home! to horse!" and
fled, as flies
A troop of snowy doves athwart the
dusk,

When some one batters at the dove-
cote doors,
Disorderly the women. Alone I stood
With Florian, cursing Cyril, vext at
heart,

In the pavilion: there like parting
hopes

I heard them passing from me: hoof
by hoof,

And every hoof a knell to my desires,
Clang'd on the bridge; and then an-
other shriek,

"The Head, the Head, the Princess, O
the Head!"

For blind with rage she miss'd the
plank, and roll'd

In the river. Out I sprang from glow
to gloom:

There whirl'd her white robe like a
blossom'd branch

Rapt to the horrible fall: a glance I
gave,

No more; but woman-vested as I was



Plunged; and the flood drew; yet I
 caught her; then
 Oaring one arm, and bearing in my left
 The weight of all the hopes of half the
 world,
 Strove to buffet to land in vain. A
 tree
 Was half-disrooted from his place and
 stoop'd
 To drench his dark locks in the gurg-
 ling wave
 Mid-channel. Right on this we drove
 and caught,
 And grasping down the boughs I gain'd
 the shore.

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

A little space was left between the
 horns,
 Thro' which I clamber'd o'er at top
 with pain,
 Dropt on the sward, and up the linden
 walks,
 And, tost on thoughts that changed
 from hue to hue,
 Now poring on the glowworm, now the
 star,
 I paced the terrace, till the Bear had
 wheel'd
 Thro' a great arc his seven slow suns.
 A step
 Of lightest echo, then a loffier form
 Than female, moving thro' the uncer-
 tain gloom,
 Disturb'd me with the doubt "if this
 were she"
 But it was Florian. "Hist O Hist," he
 said,

"They seek us: out so late is out of
 routes.
 Moreover 'seize the strangers' is the
 cry.
 How came you here?" I told him:
 "I" said he,
 "Last of the train, a moral leper, I,
 To whom none spake, half-sick at
 heart, return'd.
 Arriving all confused among the rest
 With hooded brows I crept into the
 hall,
 And, couch'd behind a Judith, under-
 neath
 The head of Holofernes peep'd and saw.
 Girl after girl was call'd to trial: each
 Disclaim'd all knowledge of us: last
 of all,
 Melissa: trust me, Sir, I pitied her.
 She, question'd if she knew us men,
 at first
 Was silent; closer prest, denied it not:
 And then, demanded if her mother
 knew,
 Or Psyche, she affirm'd not, or denied:
 From whence the Royal mind, familiar
 with her,
 Easily gather'd either guilt. She sent
 For Psyche, but she was not there; she
 call'd
 For Psyche's child to cast it from the
 doors;
 She sent for Blanche to accuse her
 face to face;
 And I slept out: but whither will you
 now?
 And where are Psyche, Cyril? both are
 fled:
 What, if together? that were not so
 well.
 Would rather we had never come! I
 dread
 His wildness, and the chances of the
 dark."

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

Scarce had I ceased when from a
 tamarisk near
 Two Proctors leapt upon us, crying,
 "Names:"



He, standing still, was clutch'd; but I
 To thrid ^{began} the musky-circl'd mazes,
 And double in and out the boles, and
 race
 By all the fountains: fleet I was of
 foot:
 Before me shower'd the rose in flakes;
 hehind
 I heard the puff'd pursuer; at mine
 ear
 Bubbled the nightingale and heeded
 not,
 And secret laughter tickled all my soul.
 At last I hook'd my ankle in a vine,
 That claspt the feet of a Mnemosyne,
 And falling on my face was caught and
 known.

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

Then, as we came, the crowd divid-
 ing clove
 An advent to the throne: and there
 beside,
 Half-naked as if caught at once from
 bed
 And tumbled on the purple footcloth,
 lay
 The lily-shining child; and on the left,
 Bow'd on her palms and folded up
 from wrong,
 Her round white shoulder shaken with
 her sobs,
 Melissa knelt; but Lady Blanche erect
 Stood up and spake, an affinent orator.

"It was not thus, O Princess, in old
 days:
 You prized my counsel, lived upon my
 lips:
 I led you then to all the Castalies;
 I fed you with the milk of every Muse;
 I loved you like this kneeler, and you
 me
 Your second mother: those were gra-
 cious times.
 Then came your new friend: you be-
 gan to change—

I saw it and grieved—to slacken and to
 cool;
 Till taken with her seeming openness
 You turn'd your warmer currents all
 to her,
 To me you froze: this was my need
 for all.
 Yet I bore up in part from ancient love,
 And partly that I hoped to win you
 back,
 And partly conscious of my own deserts,
 And partly that you were my civil head,
 And chiefly you were born for some-
 thing great,
 In which I might your fellow-worker
 be,
 When time should serve; and thus a
 noble scheme
 Grew up from seed we two long since
 had sown;
 In us true growth, in her a Jonah's
 gourd,
 Up in one night and due to sudden sun:
 We took this palace; but even from
 the first
 You stood in your own light and dark-
 en'd mine.
 What student came but that you planed
 her path
 To Lady Psyche, younger, not so wise,
 A foreigner, and I your countrywoman,
 I your old friend and tried, she new in
 all?
 But still her lists were swell'd and mine
 were lean;
 Yet I bore up in hope she would be
 known:
 Then came these wolves: *they* knew
 her: *they* endured,
 Long-closeted with her the yestermorn,
 To tell her what they were, and she to
 hear:
 And me none told: not less to an eye
 like mine,
 A lidless watcher of the public weal,
 Last night, their mask was patent, and
 my foot
 Was to you: but I thought again: I
 fear'd
 To meet a cold 'We thank you, we shall
 hear of it
 From Lady Psyche:' you had gone to
 her,
 She told, perforce; and winning easy
 grace,
 No doubt, for slight delay, remain'd
 among us
 In our young nursery still unknown,
 the stem
 Less grain than touchwood, while my
 honest heat
 Were all miscounted as malignant
 haste
 To push my rival out of place and
 power.
 But public use required she should be
 known;
 And since my oath was ta'en for public
 use,
 I broke the letter of it to keep the sense.



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

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

Thereat the Lady stretch'd a vulture
 throat,
 And shot from crooked lips a haggard
 smile.
 " The plan was mine. I built the nest"
 she said
 " To hatch the cuckoo. Rise !" and
 stoop'd to updrag
 Melissa : she, half on her mother
 propt,
 Half-drooping from her, turn'd her
 face, and cast
 A liquid look on Ida, full of prayer,
 Which melted Florian's fancy as she
 hung,
 A Niobean daughter, one arm out,
 Appealing to the bolts of Heaven ; and
 while
 We gazed upon her came a little stir
 About the doors, and on a sudden
 rush'd

Among us, out of breath, as one pur-
 sued,
 A woman-post in flying raiment. Fear
 Stared in her eyes, and chalk'd her
 face, and wing'd
 Her transit to the thrones, whereby she
 fell
 Delivering seal'd despatches which the
 Head
 Took half-amazed, and in her lion's
 mood
 Tore open, silent we with blind sur-
 mise
 Regarding, while she read, till over
 brow
 And cheek and bosom brake the wrath-
 ful bloom
 As of some fire against a stormy cloud,
 When the wild peasant rights himself,
 the rick
 Flames, and his anger reddens in the
 heavens ;
 For anger most it seem'd, while now
 her breast.
 Beaten with some great passion at her
 heart,
 Palpitated, her hand shook, and we
 heard
 In the dead hush the papers that she
 held
 Rustle : at once the lost lamb at her
 feet
 Sent out a bitter bleating for its dam ;
 The plaintive cry jarr'd on her ire ;
 she crush'd
 The scrolls together, made a sudden
 turn
 As if to speak, but, utterance falling
 her,
 She whirl'd them on to me, as who
 sh^old say
 " Read " and I read—two letters—one
 her sire's.

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

The second was my father's running
 thus :
 " You have our son : touch not a hair
 of his head :
 Render him up unscathed : give him
 your hand :
 Cleave to your contract : tho' indeed
 we hear
 You hold the woman is the better man ;
 A rampant heresy, such as if it spread



Would make all women kick against
 their Lords
 Thro' all the world, and which might
 well deserve
 That we this night should pluck your
 palace down ;
 And we will do it, unless you send us
 back
 Our son, on the instant, whole."
 So far I read ;
 And then stood up and spoke impet-
 uously.

"O not to pry and peer on your re-
 serve,
 But led by golden wishes, and a hope
 The child of regal compact, did I break
 Your precinct ; not a scorners of your
 sex
 But venerator, zealous it should be
 All that it might be : hear me, for I
 hear,
 Tho' man, yet human, whatso'er your
 wrongs,
 From the flaxen curl to the gray lock a
 life
 Less mine than yours : my nurse would
 tell me of you ;
 I habbled for you, as babies for the
 moon,
 Vague brightness ; when a boy, you
 stoop'd to me
 From all high places, lived in all fair
 lights,
 Came in long breezes rapt from inmost
 south
 And blown to inmost north ; at eve and
 dawn
 With Ida, Ida, Ida, rang the woods ;
 The leader wildswan in among the
 stars
 Would clang it, and lapt in wreaths of
 glowworm light
 The mellow breaker murmur'd Ida.
 Now,
 Because I would have reach'd you,
 had you been
 Sphered up with Cassiopëia, or the en-
 throned
 Persephone in Hades, now at length,
 Those winters of abeyance all worn
 out,
 A man I came to see you : but, indeed,
 Not in this frequency can I lend full
 tongue,
 O noble Ida, to those thoughts that
 wait
 On you, their centre : let me say but
 this,
 That many a famous man and woman,
 town
 And landskip, have I heard of, after
 seen
 The dwarfs of presage ; tho' when
 known, there grew
 Another kind of beauty in detail
 Made them worth knowing : but in you
 I found
 My boyish dream involved and dazzled
 down

And master'd, while that after-beauty
 makes
 Such head from act to act, from hour
 to hour,
 Within me, that except you slay me
 here,
 According to your bitter statute-book,
 I cannot cease to follow you, as they
 say
 The seal does music ; who desire you
 more
 Than growing boys their manhood ;
 dying lips,
 With many thousand matters left to
 do,
 The breath of life ; O more than poor
 men wealth,
 Than sick men health—yours, yours,
 not mine—but half
 Without you ; with you, whole ; and of
 those halves
 You worthiest ; and howe'er you block
 and bar
 Your heart with system out from mine,
 I hold
 That it becomes no man to nurse de-
 spair,
 But in the teeth of clenched antagon-
 isms
 To follow up the worthiest till he die .
 Yet that I came not all unauthorized
 Behold your father's letter."
 On one knee
 Kneeling, I gave it, which she caught,
 and dash'd
 Unopen'd at her feet : a tide of fierce
 Invective seem'd to wait behind her
 lips,
 As waits a river level with the dam
 Ready to burst and flood the world
 with foam :
 And so she would have spoken, but
 there rose
 A hubbub in the court of half the
 maids
 Gather'd together : from the illumined
 hall
 Long lanes of splendor slanted o'er a
 press
 Of snowy shoulders, thick as herded
 ewes,
 And rainbow robes, and gems and gem-
 like eyes,
 And gold and golden heads ; they to
 and fro
 Fluctuated, as flowers in storm, some
 red, some pale,
 All open-mouth'd, all gazing to the
 light,
 Some crying there was an army in the
 land,
 And some that men were in the very
 walls,
 And some they cared not ; till a clamor
 grew
 As of a new-world Babel, woman-built,
 And worse-confounded : high above
 them stood
 The placid marble Muses, looking
 peace.



Not peace she look'd, the Head : but
 rising up
 Robed in the long night of her deep
 hair, so
 To the open window moved, remaining
 there
 Fixt like a beacon-tower above the
 waves
 Of tempest, when the crimson-rolling
 eye
 Glares ruin, and the wild birds on the
 light
 Dash themselves dead. She stretch'd
 her arms and call'd
 Across the tumult and the tumult fell.

"What fear ye brawlers? am not I
 your Head?
 On me, me, me, the storm first breaks:
 I dare
 All these male thunderbolts: what is
 it ye fear?
 Peace! there are those to avenge ye
 and they come:
 If not,—myself were like enough, O
 girls,
 To unfurl the maiden banner of our
 rights,
 And clad in iron burst the ranks of
 war,
 Or, falling, protomartyr of our cause,
 Die: yet I blame you not so much for
 fear;
 Six thousand years of fear have made
 you that
 From which I would redeem you; but
 for those
 That stir this hubbub—you and you—I
 know
 Your faces there in the crowd—to-
 morrow morn
 We hold a great convention: then shall
 they
 That love their voices more than duty,
 learn
 With whom they deal, dismiss'd in
 shame to live
 No wiser than their mothers, house-
 hold stuff,
 Live chattels, mincers of each other's
 fame,
 Full of weak poison, turnspits for the
 clown,
 The drunkard's football, laughing-
 stocks of Time,
 Whose brains are in their hands and
 in their heels,
 But fit to flaunt, to dress, to dance, to
 thrum,
 To tramp, to scream, to burnish, and
 to scour,
 For ever slaves at home and fools
 abroad."

She, ending, waved her hands: there-
 at the crowd
 Muttering, dissolved: then with a
 smile, that look'd
 A stroke of cruel sunshine on the cliff,

When all the glens are drown'd in
 azurs gloom
 Of thunder-shower, she floated to us
 and said:

"You have done well and like a
 gentleman,
 And like a prince: you have our
 thanks for all:
 And you look well too in your woman's
 dress:
 Well have you done and like a gentle-
 man.
 You saved our life: we owe you bitter
 thanks:
 Better have died and spilt our bones in
 the flood—
 Then men had said—but now—What
 hinders me
 To take such bloody vengeance on you
 both?
 Yet since our father—Wasps in our
 good hive,
 You would-be quenchers of the light
 to be,
 Barbarians, grosser than your native
 bears—
 O would I had his sceptre for one
 hour!
 You that have dared to break our
 bound, and gull'd
 Our servants, wrong'd and lied and
 thwarted us—
 I wed with thee! I bound by precon-
 tract
 Your bride, your bonds slave! not tho'
 all the gold
 That veins the world were pack'd to
 make your crown,
 And every spoken tongue should lord
 you. Sir,
 Your falsehood and yourself are hate-
 ful to us:
 I trample on your offers and on you:
 Begone: we will not look upon you
 more.
 Here, push them out at gates."
 In wrath she spake.
 Then those eight mighty daughters of
 the plough
 Bent their broad faces toward us and
 address'd
 Their motion: twice I sought to plead
 my cause,
 But on my shoulder hung their heavy
 hands,
 The weight of destiny: so from her face
 They push'd us, down the steps, and
 thro' the court,
 And with grim laughter thrust us out
 at gates.

We cross'd the street and gain'd a
 petty mound
 Beyond it, whence we saw the lights
 and heard
 The voices murmuring. While I list-
 en'd, came
 On a sudden the weird seizure and the
 doubt:



I seem'd to move among a world of
ghosts ;
The Princess with her monstrous wo-
man-guard,
The jest and earnest working side by
side,
The cataract and the tumult and the
kings
Were shadows ; and the long fantastic
night
With all its doings had and had not
been,
And all things were and were not.
This went by
As strangely as it came, and on my
spirits
Settled a gentle cloud of melancholy ;
Not long ; I shook it off ; for spite of
doubts
And sudden ghostly shadowings I was
one
To whom the touch of all mischance
but came
As night to him that sitting on a hill
Sees the midsummer, midnight, Nor-
way sun
Set into sunrise : then we moved away.

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

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

Arranged the favor, and assumed the
Prince.

v.

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

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

At length my Sire, his rough cheek
wet with tears,
Panted from weary sides " King, you
are free !
We did but keep you surety for our
son,
If this be he,—or a draggled mawkin,
thou,
That tends her bristled grunners in the
sludge : "
For I was drench'd with ooze, and torn
with briars,
More crumpled than a poppy from the
sheath,
And all one rag, disprinc'd from head
to heel,
Then some one sent beneath his vault-
ed palm
A whisper'd jest from some one near
him " Look,
He has been among his shadows." " Sa-
tan take
The old women and their shadows ! "
(thus the King



Roar'd) "make yourself a man to fight
with men.

Go: Cyril told us all."

As hoys that slink
From ferule and the trespass-chiding
eye,

Away we stole, and transient in a trice
From what was left of faded woman-
elough

To sheathing splendors and the golden
scale

Of harness, issued in the sun, that now
Leapt from the dewy shoulders of the
Earth,

And hit the Northern hills. Here Cyril
met us,

A little shy at first, but by and by
We twain with mutual pardon ask'd
and given

For stroke and song, resolder'd peace,
whereon

Follow'd his tale. Amazed he flew away
Thro' the dark land, and later in the
night

Had come on Psyche weeping: "then
we fell

Into your father's hand, and there she
lies,

But will not speak, nor stir."

He show'd a tent
A stone-shot off: we enter'd in, and
there

Among piled arms and rough accoutre-
ments,

Pitiful sight, wrapp'd in a soldier's
cloak,

Like some sweet sculpture draped from
head to foot,

And push'd by rude hands from its
pedestal,

All her fair length upon the ground
she lay:

And at her head a follower of the camp,
A charr'd and wrinkled piece of wo-
manhood,

Sat watching like a watcher by the
dead.

Then Florian knelt, and "Come" he
whisper'd to her,

"Lift up your head, sweet sister: lie
not thus.

What have you done but right? you
could not slay

Me, nor your prince. look up: be com-
forted:

Sweet is it to have done the thing one
ought,

When fall'n in darker ways." And
likewise I:

"Be comforted: have I not lost her
too,

In whose least act abides the nameless
charm

That none has else for me?" She
heard, she moved,

She moan'd, a folded voice; and up
she sat,

And raised the cloak from brows as
pale and smooth

As those that mourn half-shrouded
over death

In deathless marble. "Her" she said
"my friend—

Parted from her—betray'd her cause
and mine—

Where shall I breathe? why kept ye
not your faith?

O base and bad! what comfort? none
for me!"

To whom remorseful Cyril "Yet I pray
Take comfort: live, dear lady, for your
child!"

At which she lifted up her voice and
cried.

"Ah me, my babe, my blossom, ah
my child,

My one sweet child, whom I shall see
no more!

For now will cruel Ida keep her back;
And either she will die from want of
care,

Or sicken with ill-usage, when they
say

The child is hers—for every little
fault,

The child is hers; and they will beat
my girl

Remembering her mother: O my flow-
er!

Or they will take her, they will make
her hard,

And she will pass me by in after-life
With some cold reverence worse than
were she dead.

Ill mother that I was to leave her
there,

To lag behind, scared by the cry they
made,

The horror of the shame among them
all:

But I will go and sit beside the doors,
And make a wild petition night and
day,

Until they hate to hear me like a wind
Wailing for ever, till they open to me,
And lay my little blossom at my feet,

My babe, my sweet Aglaia, my one
child:

And I will take her up and go my way,
And satisfy my soul with kissing her:

Ah! what might that man not deserve
of me,

Who gave me back my child?" "Be
comforted"

Said Cyril "you shall have it:" but
again

She veil'd her brows, and prone she
sank, and so

Like tender things that being caught
feign death,

Spoke not, nor stir'd.

By this a murmur ran
Thro' all the camp and inward raced
the scouts

With rumor of Prince Arac hard at
hand.

We left her by the woman, and with-
out



Found the gray kings at parle : and
 "Look you" cried
 My father "that our compact be fulfil'd :
 You have spoilt this child ; she laughs
 at you and man :
 She wrongs herself, her sex, and me
 and him :
 But red-faced war has rods of steel and
 fire ;
 She yields, or war."
 Then Gama turn'd to me :
 "We fear, indeed, you spent a stormy
 time
 With our strange girl : and yet they
 say that still
 You love her. Give us, then, your
 mind at large :
 How say you, war or not ?"
 "Not war, if possible,
 O king," I said, "lest from the abuse
 of war,
 The desecrated shrine, the trampled
 year,
 The smouldering homestead, and the
 household flower
 Torn from the lintel—all the common
 wrong—
 A smoke go up thro' which I loom to
 her
 Three times a monster : now she light-
 ens scorn
 At him that mars her plan, but then
 would hate
 (And every voice she talk'd with ratify
 it,
 And every face she look'd on justify it)
 The general foe. More soluble is this
 knot,
 By gentleness than war. I want her
 love.
 What were I nigher this altho' we
 dash'd
 Your cities into shards with catapults,
 She would not love ;—or brought her
 chain'd, a slave,
 The lifting of whose eyelash is my lord,
 Not ever would she love ; but brood-
 ing turn
 The hook of scorn, till all my fitting
 chance
 Were caught within the record of her
 wrongs,
 And crush'd to death : and rather, Sire,
 than this
 I would the old God of war himself
 were dead,
 Forgotten, rusting on his iron hills,
 Rotting on some wild shore with ribs
 of wreck,
 Or like an old-world mammoth bulk'd
 in ice,
 Not to be molten out."
 And roughly spake
 My father, "Tut, you know them not,
 the girls.
 Boy, when I hear you prate I almost
 think
 That idiot legend credible. Look you,
 Sir !

Man is the hunter ; woman is his game :
 The sleek and shining creatures of the
 chase,
 We hunt them for the beauty of their
 skins ;
 They love us for it, and we ride them
 down.
 Wheedling and siding with them ! Out !
 for shame !
 Boy, there's no rose that's half so dear
 to them
 As he that does the thing they dare
 not do,
 Breathing and sounding beauteous hat-
 tle, comes
 With the air of the trumpet round him,
 and leaps in
 Among the women, snares them by the
 score
 Flatter'd and fluster'd, wins, tho'
 dash'd with death
 He reddens what he kisses : thus I won
 Your mother, a good mother, a good
 wife,
 Worth winning ; but this firebrand—
 gentleness
 To such as her ! if Cyril spake her true,
 To catch a dragon in a cherry net,
 To trip a tigress with a gossamer,
 Were wisdom to it."
 "Yea but Sire," I cried,
 "Wild natures need wise curbs. The
 soldier ? No :
 What dares not Ida do that she should
 prize
 The soldier ? I beheld her when she rose
 The yesternight, and storming in ex-
 tremes
 Stood for her cause, and flung defiance
 down
 Gagelike to man, and had not abunn'd
 the death,
 No, not the soldier's : yet I hold her,
 king,
 True woman : but you clash them all
 in one,
 That have as many differences as we.
 The violet varies from the lily as far
 As oak from elm : one loves the sol-
 dier, one
 The silken priest of peace, one this,
 one that,
 And some unworthily ; their sinless
 faith,
 A maiden moon that sparkles on a sty,
 Glorifying clown and satyr ; whence
 they need
 More breadth of culture : is not Ida
 right ?
 They worth it ? truer to the law with-
 in ?
 Severer in the logic of a life ?
 Twice as magnetic to sweet influences
 Of earth and heaven ? and she of whom
 you speak,
 My mother, looks as whole as some
 serene
 Creation minted in the golden moods
 Of sovereign artists ; not a thought, a
 touch,



But pure as lines of green that streak
the white
Of the first snowdrop's inner leaves ;
I say,
Not like the piebald miscellany, man,
Bursts of great heart and slips in sensu-
al mire,
But whole and one : and take them all-
in-all,
Were we ourselves but half as good, as
kind,
As truthful, much that Ida claims as
right
Had ne'er been mooted, but as frankly
theirs
As dues of Nature. To our point : not
war :
Lest I lose all."
"Nay, nay, you spake but sense,"
Said Gama. "We remember love our-
self .
In our sweet youth ; we did not rate
him then
This red-hot iron to be shaped with
blows.
You talk almost like Ida : *she* can talk ;
And there is something in it as you say :
But you talk kindlier : we esteem you
for it.—
He seems a gracious and a gallant
Prince,
I would he had our daughter : for the
rest,
Our own detention, why, the causes
weigh'd,
Fatherly fears—you used us courte-
ously—
We would do much to gratify your
Prince—
We pardon it ; and for your ingress
here
Upon the skirt and fringe of our fair
land,
You did but come as goblins in the
night,
Nor in the furrow broke the plough-
man's head,
Nor burnt the grange, nor buss'd the
milking-maid,
Nor robb'd the farmer of his bowl of
cream :
But let your Prince (our royal word
upon it,
He comes hack safe) ride with us to
our lines,
And speak with Arac : Arac's word is
thrice [done—
As ours with Ida : something may he
I know not what—and ours shall see
us friends.
You, likewise, our late guests, if so
you will,
Follow us : who knows ? we four may
build some plan
Foursquare to opposition."
Here he reach'd
White hands of farewell to my sire,
who growl'd
An answer which, half-muffled in his
beard,

Let so much out as gave us leave to
go.

Then rode we with the old king
across the lawns
Beneath huge trees, a thousand rings
of Spring
In every bole, a song on every spray
Of birds that piped their Valentines,
and woke
Desire in me to infuse my tale of love
In the old king's ears, who promised
help, and oozed
All o'er with honey'd answer as we
rode ;
And blossom-fragrant slipt the heavy
dews
Gather'd by night and peace, with each
light air
On our mail'd heads : but other
thoughts than Peace
Burnt in us, when we saw the embat-
tled squares,
And squadrons of the Prince, tramp-
ling the flowers
With clamor: for among them rose a cry
As if to greet the king ; they made a
halt ;
The horses yell'd ; they clash'd their
arms ; the drum
Beat ; merrily-blowing shrill'd the
martial fife ;
And in the blast and bray of the long
horn
And serpent-throated bugle, undulated
The banner : anon to meet us lightly
pranced
Three captains out; nor ever had I seen
Such thews of men : the midmost and
the highest
Was Arac : all about his motion clung
The shadow of his sister, as the beam
Of the East, that play'd upon them,
made them glance
Like those three stars of the airy
Giant's zone.
That glitter burnish'd by the frosty
dark ;
And as the fiery Sirius alters hue,
And hickers into red and emerald,
shone
Their morions, wash'd with morning,
as they came.

And I that prated peace, when first I
heard
War-music, felt the blind wildbeast of
force,
Whose home is in the sinews of a man,
Stir in me as to strike : then took the
king
His three broad sons ; with now a wan-
dering hand
And now a pointed finger, told them all :
A common light of smiles at our dis-
guise
Broke from their lips, and, ere the
windy jest
Had labor'd down within his ample
lungs,



The genial giant, Arac, roll'd himself
Thrice in the saddle, then burst out in
words.

"Our land invaded, 'sdeath! and he
himself

Your captive, yet my father wills not
war:

And, 'sdeath! myself, what care I, war
or no?

But then this question of your troth re-
mains:

And there's a downright honest mean-
ing in her;

She flies too high, she flies too high!
and yet

She ask'd but space and fairplay for her
scheme;

She prest and prest it on me—I my-
self,

What know I of these things? but,
life and soul!

I thought her half-right talking of her
wrongs;

Isay she flies too high, 'sdeath! what
of that?

I take her for the flower of woman-
kind,

And so I often told her, right or wrong,
And, Prince, she can be sweet to those
she loves,

And, right or wrong, I care not: this is
all,

I stand upon her side: she made me
swear it—

'Sdeath—and with solemn rites by
candle-light—

Swear by St. something—I forget her
name—

Her that talked down the fifty wisest
men;

She was a princess too; and so I swore.
Come, this is all; she will not: waive
your claim:

If not, the foughten field, what else, at
once

Decides it, 'sdeath! against my father's
will."

I lagg'd in answer loath to render up
My precontract, and loath by brainless
war

To cleave the rift of difference deeper
yet;

Till one of those two brothers, half
aside

And fingering at the hair about his lip,
To prick us on to combat "Like to
like!

The woman's garment hid the woman's
heart."

A taunt that clench'd his purpose like
a blow!

For fiery-short was Cyril's counter-
scoff,

And sharp I answer'd, touch'd upon
the point

Where idle boys are cowards to their
shame,

"Decide it here: why not? we are
three to three."

Then spake the third, "But three to
three? no more?"

No more, and in our noble sister's
cause?

More, more, for honor: every captain
waits

Hungry for honor, angry for his king.
More, more, some fifty on a side, that
each

May breathe himself, and quick! by
overthrow

Of these or those, the question settled
die."

"Yea" answered I "for this wild
wreath of air,

This flake of rainbow flying on the
highest

Foam of men's deeds—this honor, if
ye will.

It needs must be for honor if at all:
Since, what decision? if we fail, we fail,

And if we win, we fail: she would not
keep

Her compact," "'Sdeath! but we will
'send to her,"

Said Arac, "worthy reasons why she
should

Bide by this issue: let our missive
thro,

And you shall have her answer by the
word."

"Boys!" shrieked the old king, but
vainlier than a hen

To her false daughters in the pool; for
none

Regarded; neither seem'd there more
to say:

Back rode we to my father's camp, and
found

He thrice had sent a herald to the gates,
To learn if Ida yet would cede our
claim,

Or by denial flush her babbling wells
With her own people's life: three times
he went:

The first, he blew and blew, but none
appear'd:

He batter'd at the doors; none came:
the next,

An awful voice within had warn'd him
thence:

The third, and those eight daughters
of the plough

Came sallying thro' the gates, and
caught his hair,

And so belabor'd him on rib and cheek
They made him wild: not less one
glance he caught

Thro' open doors of Ida station'd
there

Unshaken, clinging to her purpose,
firm

Tho' compass'd by two armies and the
noise

Of arms; and standing like a stately
Pine

Set in a cataract on an island-crag,



When storm is on the heights, and
right and left
Suck'd from the dark heart of the long
hills roll
The torrents, dash'd to the vale : and
yet her will
Bred will in me to overcome it or fall.

But when I told the king that I was
pledged
To fight in tourney for my bride, he
clash'd
His iron palms together with a cry ;
Himself would tilt it out among the
lads :
But overborne by all his bearded lords
With reasons drawn from age and
state, perforce
He yielded, wrath and red, with fierce
demur :
And many a bold knight started up in
heat,
And sware to combat for my claim till
death.

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

" O brother, you have known the
pangs we felt,
What heats of indignation when we
heard
Of those that iron-cramp'd their wo-
men's feet ;
Of lands in which at the altar the poor
bride
Gives her harsh groom for bridal-gift
a scourge ;
Of living hearts that crack within the
fire
Where smoulder their dead despots ;
and of those,—
Mothers,—that, all prophetic pity,
sing
Their pretty maids in the running
flood, and swoops
The vulture, beak and talon, at the
heart
Made for all noble motion : and I saw

That equal baseness lived in sleeker
times
With smoother men : the old leaven
leaven'd all :
Millions of throats would hawl for civil
rights,
No woman named : therefore I set my
face
Against all men, and lived but for
mine own.
Far off from men I built a fold for
them :
I stored it full of rich memorial :
I fenced it round with gallant insti-
tutes,
And biting laws to scare the beasts of
prey,
And prosper'd ; till a rout of saucy
boys
Brake on us at our books, and marr'd
our peace,
Mask'd like our maids, blustering I
know not what
Of insolence and love, some pretext
held
Of baby troth, invalid, since my will
Seal'd not the bond—the striplings !—
for their sport !—
I tamed my leopards : shall I not tame
these ?
Or you ? or I ? for since you think me
touch'd
In honor—what, I would not aught of
false—
Is not our cause pure ? and whereas I
know
Your prowess, Arac, and what mother's
blood
You draw from, fight ; you failing, I
abide
What end soever : fail you will not.
Still
Take not his life : he risk'd it for my
own ;
His mother lives : yet whatsoever you
do,
Fight and fight well ; strike and strike
home. O dear
Brothers, the woman's Angel guards
you, you
The sole men to be mingled with our
cause,
The sole men we shall prize in the
aftertime,
Your very armor hallow'd, and your
statues
Rear'd, sung to, when, this gad-fly
brush'd aside,
We plant a solid foot into the Time,
And mould a generation strong to move
With claim on claim from right to
right, till she
Whose name is yoked with children's,
know herself ;
And Knowledge in our own land make
her free,
And, ever following those two crowned
twins,
Commerce and conquest, shower the
fiery grain



Of freedom broadcast over all that
orbs
Between the Northern and the South-
ern morn."

Then came a postscript dash'd across
the rest.

" See that there be no traitors in your
camp :

We seem a nest of traitors—none to
trust

Since our arms fail'd — this Egypt-
plague of men !

Almost our maids were better at their
homes,

Than thus man-girdled here : indeed I
think

Our chiefest comfort is the little child
Of one unworthy mother ; which she
left :

She shall not have it back : the child
shall grow

To prize the authentic mother of her
mind.

I took it for an hour in mine own bed
This morning : there the tender orphan
hands

Felt at my heart, and seem'd to charm
from thence

The wrath I nursed against the world :
farewell."

I ceased ; he said : " Stubborn, but
she may sit

Upon a king's right hand in thunder-
storms,

And breed up warriors ! See now, tho'
yourself

Be dazzled by the wildfire Love to
sloughs

That swallow common sense, the spind-
ling king,

This Gama swamp'd in lazy tolerance.
When the man wants weight, the wo-
man takes it up,

And topples down the scales ; but this
is fixt

As are the roots of earth and base of all ;
Man for the field and woman for the
hearth :

Man for the sword and for the needle
she :

Man with the head and woman with
the heart :

Man to command and woman to obey ;
All else confusion. Look you ! the gray
mare

Is ill to live with, when her whinny
ehrrills

From tile to scullery, and her small
goodman

Shrinks in his arm-chair while the fires
of Hell

Mix with his hearth : but you—she's
yet a colt—

Take, break her : strongly groom'd and
straitly curb'd

She might not rank with those detest-
able

That let the bantling scald at home,
and brawl

Their rights or wrongs like potherbs
in the street.

They say she's comely ; there's the
fairer chance :

I like her none the less for rating at
her !

Besides, the woman wed is not as we,
But suffers change of frame. A lusty
brace

Of twins may weed her of her folly.
Boy,

The bearing and the training of a child
Is woman's wisdom."

Thus the hard old king :

I took my leave, for it was nearly noon:
I pored upon her letter which I held,
And on the little clause " take not his
life : "

I mused on that wild morning in the
woods,

And on the " Follow, follow, thou shalt
win : "

I thought on all the wrathful king had
said,

And how the strange betrothment was
to end :

Then I remember'd that burnt sorcer-
er's curse

That one should fight with shadows
and should fall ;

And like a flash the weird affection
came :

King, camp, and college turn'd to hol-
low shows ;

I seem'd to move in old memorial tilts,
And doing battle with forbidden
ghosts,

To dream myself the shadow of a
dream :

And ere I woke it was the point of
noon,

The lists were ready. Empanoplied
and plumed

We enter'd in, and waited, fifty there
Opposed to fifty, till the trumpet blared
At the barrier like a wild horn in a
land

Of echoes, and a moment, and once
more

The trumpet, and again : at which the
storm

Of galloping hoofs bare on the ridge of
spears

And riders front to front, until they
closed

In conflict with the crash of shivering
points,

And thunder. Yet it seem'd a dream,
I dream'd

Of fighting. On his hanches rose the
steed,

And into fiery splinters leapt the lance,
And out of stricken helmets sprang
the fire.

Part sat like rocks : part reel'd but
kept their seats :

Part roll'd on the earth and rose again
and drew :





Part stumbled mixt with floundering
horses. Down
From those two bulks at Arac's side,
and down
From Arac's arm, as from a giant's flail,
The large blows rain'd, as here and
everywhere
He rode the mellay, lord of the ringing
lists,
And all the plain,—brand, mace, and
shaft, and shield—
Shock'd, like an iron-clanging anvil
bang'd
With hammers; till I thought, can this
be he
From Gama's dwarfish loins ? if this be
so,
The mother makes us most—and in my
dream
I glanced aside, and saw the palace-
front
Alive with fluttering scarfs and ladies'
eyes,
And highest, among the statues, statue-
like,
Between a cymbal'd Miriam and a Jael,
With Psyche's babe, was Ida watching
us,
A single hand of gold about her hair,
Like a Saint's glory up in heaven : but
she
No saint—inexorable—no tenderness—
Too hard, too cruel : yet she sees me
fight
Yea, let her see me fall ! with that I
drave
Among the thickest and hore down a
Prince,
And Cyril, one. Yea, let me make my
dream
All that I would. But that large-mould-
ed man,
His visage all agrin as at a wake,
Made at me thro' the press, and stag-
gering back
With stroke on stroke the horse and
horseman, came
As comes a pillar of electric cloud,
Flaying the roofs and sucking up the
drains,
And shadowing down the champain
till it strikes
On a wood, and takes, and breaks, and
cracks, and splits,
And twists the grain with such a roar
that Earth
Reels, and the herdsman cry ; for
everything
Gave way before him : only Florian,
he
That loved me closer than his own
right eye,
Thrust in between ; but Arac rode him
down :
And Cyril seeing it, push'd against the
Prince,
With Psyche's color round his helmet,
tough,
Strong, supple, sinew-corded, apt at
wrms ;

But tougher, heavier, stronger, he that
smote
And threw him : last I spurr'd ; I felt
my veins
Stretch with fierce heat ; a moment
hand to hand,
And sword to sword, and horse to
horse we hung,
Till I struck out and shouted ; the
blade glanced ;
I did but shear a feather, and dream
and truth
Flow'd from me ; darkness closed me ;
and I fell.

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

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

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

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

VI.

My dream had never died or lived
again.

As in some mystic middle state I lay ;
Seeing I saw not, hearing not I heard ;
Tho', if I saw not, yet they told me all
So often that I speak as having seen.

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

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

" Our enemies have fall'n, have
fall'n : the seed,
The little seed they laughed at in the
dark,



Has risen and cleft the soil, and
grown a hulk
Of spanless girth, that lays on every
side
A thousand arms and rushes to the
Sun.

"Our enemies have fall'n, have
fall'n : they came ;
The leaves were wet with women's
tears : they heard
A noise of songs they would not un-
derstand :
They mark'd it with the red cross to the
fall,
And would have strown it, and are
fall'n themselves.

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

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

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

"And now, O maids, behold our sanc-
tuary
Is violate, our laws broken : fear we
not
To break them more in their behoof,
whose arms
Champion'd our cause and won it with
a day
Blanch'd in our annals, and perpetual
feast,
When dames and heroines of the gold-
en year
Shall strip a hundred hollows bare of
Spring,
To rain an April of ovation round
Their statues, borne aloft, the three :
but come,

We will be liberal, since our rights are
won.
Let them not lie in the tents with
coarse mankind,
Ill nurses ; hut descend, and proffer
these
The brethren of our blood and cause,
that there
Lie bruised and maim'd, the tender
ministries
Of female hands and hospitality."

She spoke, and with the babe yet in
her arms,
Descending, hurst the great bronze
valves, and led
A hundred maids in train across the
Park.
Some cowl'd, and some bare-headed,
on they came,
Their feet in flowers, her loveliest : by
them went
The enamor'd air sighing, and on their
curls
From the high tree the blossom waver-
ing fell,
And over them the tremulous isles of
light
Slided, they moving under shade : but
Blanche
At distance follow'd : so they came :
anon
Thro' open field into the lists they
wound
Timorously ; and as the leader of the
herd
That holds a stately fretwork to the
Sun,
And follow'd up by a hundred airy
does,
Steps with a tender foot, light as on
air,
The lovely, lordly creature floated on
To where her wounded brethren lay ;
there stay'd ;
Knelt on one knee,—the child on one,
—and prest
Their hands, and call'd them dear de-
liverers,
And happy warriors, and immortal
names,
And said " You shall not lie in the
tents but here,
And nursed by those for whom you
fought, and served
With female hands and hospitality."

Then, whether moved by this, or was
it chance,
She past my way. Up started from my
side
The old lion, glaring with his whelp-
less eye,
Silent ; but when she saw me lying
stark.
Disheilm'd and mute, and motionlessly
pale,
Cold ev'n to her, she sigh'd ; and when
she saw



The haggard father's face and rever-
end beard
Of grisly twine, all dabbled with the
blood
Of his own son, shudder'd, a twitch of
pain
Tortured her mouth, and o'er her fore-
head past
A shadow, and her hue changed, and
she said:
"He saved my life: my brother slew
him for it."
No more: at which the king in bitter
scorn
Drew from my neck the painting and
the tress,
And held them up: she saw them, and
a day
Rose from the distance on her memory,
When the good Queen, her mother,
shore the tress
With kisses, ere the days of Lady
Blanche:
And then once more she look'd at my
pale face:
Till understanding all the foolish work
Of Fancy, and the bitter close of all,
Her iron will was broken in her mind;
Her noble heart was molten in her
breast;
She bow'd, she set the child on the
earth; she laid
A feeling finger on my brows, and
presently
"O Sire," she said, "he lives: he is
not dead:
O let me have him with my brethren
here
In our own palace: we will tend on him
Like one of these; if so, by any means,
To lighten this great clog of thanks,
that make
Our progress falter to the woman's
goal."

She said: but at the happy word "he
lives"
My father stoop'd, re-father'd o'er my
wounds.
So those two foes above my fall'n life.
With brow to brow like night and eve-
ning mixt
Their dark and gray, while Psyche ever
stole
A little nearer, till the babe that byns,
Half-lapt in glowing gauze and golden
brede,
Lay like a new-fall'n meteor on the
grass,
Uncared for, spied its mother and began
A blind and babbling laughter, and to
dance
Its body, and reach its fatling innocent
arms
And lazy lingering fingers. She the ap-
peal
Brook'd not, but clamoring out, "Mine
—mi'e—not yours,
It is not yours, but mine; give me the
child"

Ceased all on tremble: piteous was the
cry:
So stood the unhappy mother open-
mouth'd,
And turn'd each face her way: wan
was her cheek
With hollow watch, her blooming man-
tle torn,
Red grief and mother's hunger in her
eye,
And down dead-heavy sank her curls,
and half
The sacred mother's bosom, panting,
burst
The laces toward her babe; but she
nor cared
Nor knew it, clamoring on, till Ida
heard,
Look'd up, and rising slowly from me,
stood
Erect and silent, striking with her
glance
The mother, me, the child; but he
that lay
Beside us, Cyril, battered as he was,
Trail'd himself up on one knee; then
he drew
Her robe to meet his lips, and down
she look'd
At the arm'd man sideways, pitying as
it seem'd,
Or self-involved; but when she learnt
his face,
Remembering his ill-omen'd song,
arose
Once more thro' all her height, and
o'er him grew
Tall as a figure lengthen'd on the sand
When the tide ebbs in sunshine, and
he said:
"O fair and strong and terrible!
Lioness
That with your long locks play the
Lion's mane!
But Love and Nature, these are two
more terrible
And stronger. See, your foot is on our
necks,
We vanquish'd, you the Victor of your
will.
What would you more? give her the
child! remain
Orb'd in your isolation: he is dead,
Or all as dead: henceforth we let you
be:
Win you the hearts of women; and be-
ware
Lest, where you seek the common love
of these,
The common hate with the revolving
wheel
Should drag you down, and some great
Nemesis
Break from a darken'd future, crown'd
with fire,
And tread you out for ever: but how-
soe'er
Fix'd in yourself, never in your own
arms



To hold your own, deny nothers to her,
 Give her the child! O if, I say, you
 keep
 One pulse that beats true woman, if
 you loved
 The breast that fed or arm that dan-
 died you,
 Or own one part of sense not flint to
 prayer,
 Give her the child! or if you scorn to
 lay it,
 Yourself, in hands so lately claspt with
 yours,
 Or speak to her, your dearest, her one
 fault
 The tenderness, not yours, that could
 not kill,
 Give me it: I will give it her.”

He said:

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

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

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

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

“I've heard that there is iron in the
 blood,
 And I believe it. Not one word? not
 one?
 Whence drew you this steel temper?
 not from me,
 Not from your mother now a saint with
 saints.
 She said you had a heart—I heard her
 say it—
 ‘Our Ida has a heart’—just ere she
 died—
 ‘But see that some one with authority
 Be near her still’—and I—I sought
 for one—
 All people said she had authority—
 The Lady Blanche: much profit! Not
 one word;
 No! tho' your father sues: see how
 you stand
 Stiff as Lot's wife, and all the good
 knights maim'd,
 I trust that there is no one hurt to
 death,
 For your wild whim: and was it then
 for this,
 Was it for this we gave our palace up,
 Where we withdrew from summer heats
 and state,
 And had our wine and chess beneath
 the planes,
 And many a pleasant hour with her
 that's gone,
 Ere you were horn to vex us? Is it
 kind?
 Speak to her I say: is this not she of
 whom,
 When first she came, all flush'd you
 said to me



Now had you got a friend of your own
 age,
 Now could you share your thought ;
 now should men see
 Two women faster welded in one love
 Than pairs of wedlock ; she you walk'd
 with, she
 You talk'd with, whole nights long, up
 in the tower,
 Of sine and arc, spheroid and azimuth,
 And right ascension, Heaven knows
 what ; and now
 A word, but one, one little kindly word,
 Not one to spare her : out upon you,
 flint !
 You love nor her, nor me, nor any ; nay,
 You shame your mother's judgment
 too. Not one ?
 You will not ? well — no heart have
 you, or such
 As fancies like the vermin in a nut
 Have fretted all to dust and bitter-
 ness." *"*
 So said the small king moved beyond
 his wont.

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

He rose, and while each ear was
 prick'd to attend
 A tempest, thro' the cloud that dimm'd
 her broke
 A genial warmth and light once more,
 and shone
 Thro' glittering drops on her sad friend.
" Come hither,
 O Psyche," she cried out, "embrace
 me, come,
 Quick while I melt ; make reconcile-
 ment sure
 With one that cannot keep her mind
 an hour :
 Come to the hollow heart they slander
 so !

Kiss and be friends, like children being
 chid !
I seem no more : *I* want forgiveness
 too :
I should have had to do with none but
 maids,
 That have no links with men. Ah false
 but dear,
 Dear traitor, too much loved, why ?—
 why ?—Yet see,
 Before these kings we embrace you yet
 once more
 With all forgiveness, all oblivion,
 And trust, not love, you less.
 And now, O sire,
 Grant me your son, to nurse, to wait
 upon him,
 Like mine own brother. For my debt
 to him,
 This nightmare weight of gratitude, *I*
 know it ;
 Taunt me no more : yourself and yours
 shall have
 Free adit ; we will scatter all our maids
 Till happier times each to her proper
 hearth :
 What use to keep them here—now ?
 grant my prayer.
 Help, father, brother, help ; speak to
 the king :
 Thaw this male nature to some touch
 of that
 Which kills me with myself, and drags
 me down
 From my fixt height to mob me up with
 all
 The soft and milky rabble of woman-
 kind,
 Poor weakling ev'n as they are."
 Passionate tears
 Follow'd : the king replied not : Cyril
 said :
 Your brother, Lady, — Florian, — ask
 for him
 Of your great head—for he is wounded
 too—
 That you may tend upon him with the
 prince."
" Ay so," said Ida with a bitter smile,
" Our laws are broken : let him enter
 too."
 Then Violet, she that sang the mourn-
 ful song,
 And had a cousin troubled on the plain,
 Petition'd too for him. *"* Ay so," she
 said,
" I stagger in the stream : *I* cannot
 keep
 My heart an eddy from the brawling
 hour :
 We break our laws with ease, but let it
 be."
" Ay so ?" said Blanche : "Amazed
 am *I* to hear
 Your Highness : but your Highness
 breaks with ease
 The law your Highness did not make :
 't was *I*.
I had been wedded wife, *I* knew man-
 kind,



And block'd them out ; but these men
came to woo
Your Highness— verily I think to
win."

So she, and turn'd askance a wintry
eye :
But Ida with a voice, that like a bell
Toll'd by an earthquake in a trembling
tower,
Rang ruin, answer'd full of grief and
scorn.

"Fling our doors wide ! all, all, not
one, but all,
Not only he, but by my mother's soul,
Whatever man lies wounded, friend or
foe,
Shall enter, if he will. Let our girls flit,
Till the storm die ! but had you stood
by us,
The roar that breaks the Pharos from
his base
Had left us rock. She fain would sting
us too,
But shall not. Pass, and mingle with
your likes.
We brook no further insult but are
gone."

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

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

Descending, struck athwart the hall,
and shot
A flying splendor out of brass and steel,
That o'er the statues leapt from head
to head,
Now fired an angry Pallas on the helm,
Now set a wrathful Dian's moon on
flame,
And now and then an echo started up,
And shuddering fled from room to
room, and died
Of fright in far apartments.

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

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

Ask me no more.

Ask me no more : what answer should
I give ?
I love not hollow cheek or faded eye :
Yet, O my friend, I will not have thee
die !
Ask me no more, lest I should bid thee
live ;

Ask me no more.

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

Ask me no more.

VII.

'So was their sanctuary violated,
So their fair college turn'd to hospital ;
At first with all confusion : by and by



Sweet order lived again with other laws :

A kindlier influence reign'd ; and everywhere

Low voices with the ministering hand Hung round the sick : the misdeeds came, they talk'd,

They sang, they read : till she not fair, began

To gather light, and she that was, became

Her former beauty treble ; and to and fro

With books, with flowers, with Angel offices,

Like creatures native unto gracious act, And in their own clear element they moved.

But sadness on the soul of Ida fell, And hatred of her weakness, blent with shame.

Old studies fall'd ; seldom she spoke ; but oft

Clemb to the roofs, and gazed alone for hours

On that disastrous leagner, swarms of men

Darken'ing her female field : void was her use,

And she as one that climbs a peak to gaze

O'er land and main, and sees a great black cloud

Drag inwards from the deeps, a wall of night,

Blot out the slope of sea from verge to shore,

And suck the blinding splendor from the sand,

And quenching lake by lake and tarn by tarn

Expunge the world : so fared she gazing there ;

So blacken'd all her world in secret, blank

And waste it seem'd and vain ; till down she came,

And found fair peace once more among the sick.

And twilight dawn'd ; and morn by morn the lark

Shot up and shrill'd in flickering gyres, but I

Lay silent in the muffled cage of life : And twilight gloom'd ; and broader-grown the bowers

Drew the great night into themselves, and Heaven,

Star after star, arose and fell ; but I, Deeper than these weird doubts could reach me, lay

Quite sunder'd from the moving Universe,

Nor knew what eye was on me, nor the hand

That nursed me, more than infants in their sleep.

But Psyche tended Florian : with her oft,

Melisea came ; for Blanche had gone, but left

Her child among us, willing she should keep

Court-favor : here and there the small bright head,

A light of healing, glanced about the couch,

Or thro' the parted silks the tender face

Peep'd, shining in upon the wounded man

With blush and smile, a medicine in themselves

To wile the length from languorous hours, and draw

The sting from pain ; nor seem'd it strange that soon

He rose up whole, and those fair charities

Join'd at her side ; nor stranger seem'd that hearts

So gentle, so employ'd, should close in love,

Than when two dew-drops on the petal shake

To the same sweet air, and tremble deeper down,

And slip at once all-fragrant into one.

Less prosperously the second suit obtain'd

At first with Psyche. Not tho' Blanche had sworn

That after that dark night among the fields,

She needs must wed him for her own good name ;

Not tho' he built upon the babe restored ;

Nor tho' she liked him, yielded she, but fear'd

To incense the Head once more ; till on a day

When Cyril pleaded, Ida came behind Seen but of Psyche : on her foot she hung

A moment, and she heard, at which her face

A little flush'd, and she past on ; but each

Assumed from thence a half-consent involved

In stillness, plighted troth, and were at peace.

Nor only these : Love in the sacred halls

Held carnival at will, and flying struck With showers of random sweet on maid and man.

Nor did her father cease to press my claim,

Nor did mine own now reconciled ; nor yet

Did those twin brothers, risen again and whole ;

Nor Arac, satiate with his victory.



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

Last I woke sane, but wellnigh close
 to death
 For weakness : it was evening : silent
 light
 Slept on the painted walls, wherein
 were wrought
 Two grand designs ; for on one side
 arose
 The women up in wild revolt, and
 storm'd
 At the Opplian law. Titanic shapes,
 they cramm'd
 The forum, and half-crush'd among
 the rest
 A dwarf-like Cato cower'd. On the
 other side
 Hortensia spoke against the tax ; be-
 hind,
 A train of dames : by axe and eagle sat,
 With all their foreheads drawn in Ro-
 man scowls,

And half the wolf's-milk curdled in
 their veins,
 The fierce triumvirs ; and before them
 paused
 Hortensia, pleading : angry was her
 face.

I saw the forms : I knew not where
 I was :
 They did but look like hollow shows ;
 nor more
 Sweet Ida : palm to palm she sat : the
 dew
 Dwelt in her eyes, and softer all her
 shaps
 And rounder seem'd : I moved : I
 seiz'd : a touch
 Came round my wrist, and tears upon
 my hand :
 Then all for languor and self-pity ran
 Mine down my face, and with what life
 I had,
 And like a flower that cannot all un-
 fold,
 So drench'd it is with tempest, to the
 sun,
 Yet, as it may, turns toward him, I on
 her
 Fixt my faint eyes, and utter'd whis-
 peringly :

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

I could no more, but lay like one in
 trances,
 That hears his burial talk'd of by his
 friends,
 And cannot speak, nor move, nor make
 one sign,
 But lies and dreads his doom. She
 turn'd ; she paus'd ;
 She stoop'd ; and out of languor leapt
 a cry ;
 Leapt fiery Passion from the brinks of
 death ;
 And I believed that in the living world
 My spirit closed with Ida's at the lips ;
 Till hack I fell, and from mine arms
 she rose
 Glowing all over noble shame ; and all
 Her false self slipt from her like a
 robe,
 And left her woman, lovelier in her
 mood
 Than in her mould that other, when
 she came
 From barren deeps to conquer all with
 love ;
 And down the streaming crystal dropt ;
 and she
 Far-feebed by the purple island-sides,
 Naked, a double light in air and wave,



To meet her Graces, where they deck'd
her out
For worship without end; nor end of
mine,
Stateliest, for thee! but mute she
glided forth,
Nor glanced behind her, and I sank
and slept,
Fill'd thro' and thro' with Love, a
happy sleep.

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

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

"Now droops the milk-white pea-
cock like a ghost,
And like a ghost she glimmers on to
me.

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

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

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

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

"Come down, O maid, from yonder
mountain height:
What pleasure lives in height (the
shepherd sang)
In height and cold, the splendor of the
hills?
But cease to move so near the Hea-
vens, and cease,
To glide a sunbeam by the blasted
Pine,
To sit a star upon the sparkling spire;
And come, for Love is of the valley,
come
For Love is of the valley, come thou
down
And find him; by the happy threshold,
he,
Or hand in hand with Plenty in the
maize,

Or red with spirted purple of the vats,
Or foxlike in the vine; nor cares to
walk

With Death and Morning on the silver
horns,
Nor wilt thou snare him in the white
ravine,
Nor find him dropt upon the firths of
ice,
That huddling slant in furrow-cloven
falls

To roll the torrent out of dusky doors:
But follow; let the torrent dance
thee down

To find him in the valley; let the wild
Lean-headed Eagles yelp alone, and
leave

The monstrous ledges there to slope,
and spill

Their thousand wreaths of dangling
water-smoke,

That like a broken purpose waste in
air:

So waste not thou; but come; for all
the vales

Await thee; azure pillars of the hearth
Arise to thee; the children call, and I
Thy shepherd pipe, and sweet is every
sound,

Sweeter thy voice, but every sound is
sweet;

Myriads of rivulets hurrying thro' the
lawn,

The moan of doves in immemorial elms,
And murmuring of innumerable bees."

So she low-toned; while with shut
eyes I lay

Listening; then look'd. Pale was the
perfect face;

The bosom with long sighs labor'd;
and meek

Seem'd the full lips, and mild the lu-
minous eyes,

And the voice trembled and the hand.
She said

Brokenly, that she knew it, she had
fail'd

In sweet humility; had fail'd in all;
That all her labor was but as a block
Left in the quarry; but she still were

loath,
She still were loath to yield herself to
one,

That wholly scorn'd to help their equal
rights

Against the sons of men, and barbarous
laws.

She pray'd me not to judge their cause
from her

That wrong'd it, sought far less for
truth than power

In knowledge: something wild within
her breast,

A greater than all knowledge, beat her
down.

And she had nursed me there from
week to week:

Much had she learnt in little time. In
part



It was ill counsel had misled the girl
To vex true hearts : yet was she but a
girl—

“ Ah fool, and made myself a Queen
of farce !

When comes another such ? never, I
think,

Till the Sun drop dead from the signs.”

Choked, and her forehead sank upon
her hands,

And her great heart thro' all the fault-
ful Past

Went sorrowing in a pause I dared not
break ;

Till notices of a change in the dark
world

Was lispt about the acacias, and a bird,
That early woke to feed her little ones,
Sent from a dewy breast a cry for light:
She moved, and at her feet the volume
fell.

“ Blame not thyself too much,” I
said, “ nor blame

Too much the sons of men and barba-
rous laws ;

These were the rough ways of the
world till now.

Henceforth thou hast a helper, me,
that know

(The woman's cause is man's : they rise
or sink

Together) dwarf'd or godlike, bond or
free :

For she that out of Lethe scales with
man

The shining steps of Nature, shares
with man

His nights, his days, moves with him
to one goal,

Stays all the fair young planet in her
hands—

If she be small, slight-natured, misera-
ble,

How shall men grow ? but work no
more alone !

Our place is much : as far as in us lies
We two will serve them both in aiding

(her—
Will clear away the parasitic forms
That seem to keep her up but drag her
down—)

Will leave her space to burgeon out of
all

Within her—let her make herself her
own

To give or keep, to live and learn and be
All that not harms distinctive woman-
hood.

For woman is not undevelop't man,
But diverse : could we make her as the
man,

Sweet Love were slain : his dearest
bond is this,

(Not like to like, but like in difference.
Yet in the long years liker must they
grow ;

The man be more of woman, she of
man ;

He gain in sweetness and in moral
height,

Nor lose the wrestling thews that
throw the world ;

She mental breadth, nor fail in child-
ward care,

Nor lose the childlike in the larger
mind ;

Till at the last she set herself to man,
Like perfect music unto noble words)

And so these twain, upon the skirts of
Time,

Sit side by side, full-summ'd in all
their powers,

(Dispensing harvest, sowing the To-be,
Self-reverent each and reverencing
each,

Distinct in individualities,
But like each other ev'n as those who
love.)

Then comes the statelier Eden back to
men :

Then reign the world's great brides,
chaste and calm :

Then springs the crowning race of hu-
mankind.

May these things be !”

Sighing she spoke “ I fear
They will not.”

“ Dear, but let us type them
now

In our own lives ; and this proud
watchword rest

Of equal ; seeing either sex alone
is half itself, and in true marriage lies

Nor equal, nor unequal : each fulfils
Defect in each, and always thought in
thought,

Purpose in purpose, will in will, they
grow,

The single pure and perfect animal,
The two-cell'd heart beating, with one
full stroke,

Life.”

And again sighing she spoke : “ A
dream

That once was mine ! what woman
taught you this ?”

“ Alone ” I said “ from earlier than
I know,

Immersed in rich foreshadowings of
the world,

I loved the woman : he, that doth not,
lives

A drowning life, besotted in sweet self,
Or pines in sad experience worse than
death,

Or keeps his wing'd affections clipt with
crime :

Yet was there one thro' whom I loved
her, one

Not learned, save in gracious house-
hold ways,

Not perfect, nay, but full of tender
wants,

No Angel, but a dearer being, all dipt
In Angel instincts, breathing Paradise,
Interpreter between the Gods and
men,



Who look'd all native to her place, and yet
 On tiptoe seem'd to touch upon a sphere
 Too gross to tread, and all male minds
 perforce
 Sway'd to her from their orbits as they
 moved,
 And girdled her with music. Happy he
 With such a mother ! faith in woman-
 kind
 Beats with his blood, and trust in all
 things high
 Comes easy to him, and tho' he trip
 and fall
 He shall not blind his soul with clay." "But I,"
 Said Ida, tremulously, "so all unlike—
 It seems you love to cheat yourself
 with words :
 This mother is your model. I have heard
 Of your strange doubts : they well
 might be : I seem
 A mockery to my own self. Never,
 Prince ;
 You cannot love me."
 "Nay but thee" I said
 "From yearlong poring on thy pictured
 eyes,
 Ere seen I loved, and loved thee seen,
 and saw
 Thee woman thro' the crust of iron
 moods
 That mask'd thee from men's reverence
 up, and forced
 Sweet love on pranks of saucy boyhood :
 now,
 Giv'n back to life, to life indeed, thro'
 thee,
 Indeed I love : the new day comes, the
 light
 Dearer for night, as dearer thou for
 faults
 Lived over : lift thine eyes ; my doubts
 are dead,
 My haunting sense of hollow shows ;
 the change,
 This truthful change in thee has kill'd
 it. Dear,
 Look up, and let thy nature strike on
 mine,
 Like yonder morning on the blind half-
 world ;
 Approach and fear not ; breathe upon
 my brows ;
 In that fine air I tremble, all the past
 Melts mist-like into this bright hour,
 and this
 Is morn to more, and all the rich to-
 come
 Reels, as the golden Autumn woodland
 reels
 Athwart the smoke of burning weeds.
 Forgive me,
 I waste my heart in signs : let be.
 My bride,
 My wife, my life. O we will walk this
 world,
 Yoked in all exercise of noble end,
 And so thro' those dark gates across
 the wild

That no man knows. Indeed I love
 thee : come,
 Yield thyself up : my hopes and thine
 are one :
 Accomplish thou my manhood and
 thyself ;
 Lay thy sweet hands in mine and trust
 to me."

CONCLUSION.

So closed our tale, of which I give you
 all
 The random scheme as wildly as it rose :
 The words are mostly mine ; for when
 we ceased
 There came a minute's pause, and
 Walter said,
 "I wish she had not yielded !" then
 to me,
 "What, if you drest it up poetically !"
 So pray'd the men, the women : I gave
 assent :
 Yet how to bind the scattered scheme
 of seven
 Together in one sheaf ? What style
 could suit ?
 The men required that I should give
 throughout
 The sort of mock-heroic gigantesque,
 With which we banter'd little Lilia first :
 The women — and perhaps they felt
 their power,
 For something in the ballads which
 they sang,
 Or in their silent influence as they sat,
 Had ever seem'd to wrestle with bur-
 lesque,
 And drove us, last, to quite a solemn
 close —
 They hated banter, wish'd for some-
 thing real,
 A gallant fight, a noble princess—why
 Not make her true-heroic—true-sub-
 lime ?
 Or all, they said, as earnest as the close ?
 Which yet with such a framework
 scarce could be.
 Then rose a little feud betwixt the two,
 Betwixt the mockers and the realists :
 And I, betwixt them both, to please
 them both,
 And yet to give the story as it rose,
 I moved as in a strange diagonal,
 And may be neither pleased myself nor
 them.

But Lilia pleased me, for she took no
 part
 In our dispute : the sequel of the
 tale
 Had touch'd her ; and she sat, she
 pluck'd the grass,
 She flung it from her, thinking : last,
 she fixt
 A showery glance upon her aunt, and
 said,
 "You — tell us what we are" who
 might have told,



For she was cramm'd with theories out
of hooks,
But that there rose a shout : the gates
were closed
At sunset, and the crowd were swarming
now,
To take their leave, about the garden
rails.

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

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

"Have patience," I replied, "our-
selves are full
Of social wrong ; and maybe wildest
dreams
Are but the needful preludes of the
truth :
For me, the genial day, the happy crowd,
The sport half-science, fill me with a
faith,
This fine old world of ours is but a
child
Yet in the go-cart. Patience ! Give it
time
To learn its limbs : there is a hand that
guides."

In such discourse we gain'd the gar-
den rails,
And there we saw Sir Walter where he
stood,
Before a tower of crimson holly-oaks,
Among six boys, head under head, and
look'd
No little lily-handed Baronet he,
A great broad-shoulder'd genial Eng-
lishman,
A lord of fat prize-oxen and of sheep,
A raiser of huge melons and of pine,
A patron of some thirty charities,
A pamphleteer on guano and on grain,
A quarter-sessions chairman, ahler
none ;
Fair-hair'd and redder than a windy
morn ;
Now shaking hands with him, now
him, of those
That stood the nearest—now address'd
to speech—
Who spoke few words and pithy, such
as closed
Welcome, farewell, and welcome for
the year
To follow : a shout rose again, and
made
The long line of the approaching rook-
ery swerve
From the elms, and shook the branches
of the deer
From slope to slope thro' distant ferns,
and rang
Beyond the hourn of sunset ; O, a shout
More joyful than the city-roar that hails
Premier or king ! Why should not these
great Sirs
Give up their parks some dozen times
a year
To let the people breathe ? So thrice
they cried,
I likewise, and in groups they stream'd
away.

But we went back to the Abbey, and
sat on,
So much the gathering darkness
charm'd : we sat
But spoke not, rapt in nameless reverie,
Perhaps upon the future man : the
walls
Blacken'd about us, bats wheel'd, and
owls whoop'd,



And gradually the powers of the night,
That range above the region of the
wind,
Deepening the courts of twilight broke
them up
Thro' all the silent spaces of the worlds,
Beyond all thought into the Heaven of
Heavens.

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

ENOCH ARDEN.

LONG lines of cliff breaking have left a
chasm ;
And in the chasm are foam and yellow
sands ;
Beyond, red roofs about a narrow
wharf
In cluster ; then a moulder'd, church ;
and higher
A long street climbs to one tall-tower'd
mill,
And high in heaven behind it a gray
down
With Danish barrows ; and a hazelwood,
By autumn nutters haunted, flourishes
Green in a cuplike hollow of the down.

Here on this beach a hundred years ago,
Three children of three houses, Annie
Lee,
The prettiest little damsel in the port,
And Philip Ray the miller's only son,
And Enoch Arden a rough sailor's lad
Made orphan by a winter shipwreck,
play'd
Among the waste and lumber of the
shore,
Hard coils of cordage, swarthy fishing-
nets,
Anchors of rusty fluke, and boats up-
drawn ;
And built their castles of dissolving
sand
To watch them overflow'd, or following
up
And flying the white breaker, daily left
The little footprint daily wash'd away.

A narrow cave ran in beneath the
cliff :
In this the children play'd at keeping
house.
Enoch was host one day, Philip the
next,
While Annie still was mistress ; but at
times
Enoch would hold possession for a
week :
" This is my house and this my little
wife."

" Mine too " said Philip " turn and
turnabout."
When, if they quarrell'd, Enoch strong-
er-made
Was master ; then would Philip, his
blue eyes
All flooded with the helpless wrath of
tears,
Shriek out " I hate you, Enoch," and
at this
The little wife would weep for com-
pany,
And pray them not to quarrel for her
sake,
And say she would be little wife to
both.

But when the dawn of rosy child-
hood past,
And the new warmth of life's ascend-
ing sun
Was felt by either, either fixt his heart
On that one girl ; and Enoch spoke his
love,
But Philip loved in silence ; and the
girl
Seem'd kinder unto Philip than to
him ;
But she loved Enoch ; tho' she knew it
not,
And would if ask'd deny it. Enoch set
A purpose evermore before his eyes,
To hoard all savings to the uttermost,
To purchase his own boat, and make a
home
For Annie : and so prosper'd that at
last
A luckier or a holder fisherman,
A careful in peril, did not breathe
For leagues along that breaker-beaten
coast
Than Enoch. Likewise had he served
a year
On hoard a merchantman, and made
himself
Full sailor ; and he thrice had pluck'd a
life
From the dread sweep of the down-
streaming seas :
And all men look'd upon him favorably :
And ere he touch'd his one-and-twen-
tieth May
He purchased his own boat, and made
a home
For Annie, neat and nestlike, halfway
up
The narrow street that clamber'd
toward the mill.

Then, on a golden autumn eventide,
The younger people making holiday,
With bag and sack and basket, great
and small,
Went nutting to the hazels. Philip
stay'd
(His father lying sick and needing him)
An hour behind ; but as he climb'd the
hill,
Just where the prone edge of the wood
began



To feather toward the hollow, saw the pair,
 Enoch and Annie, sitting hand-in-hand,
 His large grey eyes and weather-beaten face
 All-kindled by a still and sacred fire,
 That burn'd as on an altar. Philip
 look'd,
 And in their eyes and faces read his
 doom ;
 Then, as their faces drew together,
 groan'd,
 And slipt aside, and like a wounded life
 Crept down into the hollows of the
 wood ;
 There, while the rest were loud in merr-
 ry-making.
 Had his dark hour unseen, and rose
 and past
 Bearing a lifelong hunger in his heart.

So these were wed, and merrily rang
 the bells,
 And merrily ran the years. seven happy
 years,
 Seven happy years of health and com-
 petence,
 And mutual love and honorable toil ;
 With children ; first a daughter. In
 him woke,
 With his first babe's first cry, the noble
 wish

To save all earnings to the uttermost,
 And give his child a better bringing-up
 Than his had been, or hers ; a wish re-
 new'd,
 When two years after came a boy to he
 The rosy idol of her solitudes,
 While Enoch was abroad on wrathful
 seas,
 Or often journeying landward ; for in
 truth
 Enoch's white horse, and Enoch's
 ocean-spoil
 In ocean-smelling osier, and his face,
 Rough-redden'd with a thousand winter
 gales,
 Not only to the market-cross were
 known,
 But in the leafy lanes behind the down
 Far as the portal-warding lion-whelp,
 And peacock-yewtree of the lonely
 Hall,
 Whose Friday fare was Enoch's minis-
 tering.

Then came a change, as all things
 human change.
 Ten miles to northward of the narrow
 port
 Open'd a larger haven : thither used
 Enoch at times to go by land or sea ;
 And once when there, and clambering
 on a mast
 In harbor, by mischance he slipt and
 fell :
 A limb was broken when they lifted
 him ;
 And while he lay recovering there, his
 wife

Bore him another son, a sickly one :
 Another hand crept too across his trade
 Taking her bread and theirs : and on
 him fell,
 Altho' a grave and staid God-fearing
 man,
 Yet lying thus inactive, doubt and
 gloom.
 He seem'd, as in a nightmare of the
 night,
 To see his children leading evermore
 Low miserable lives of hand-to-mouth,
 And her, he loved, a beggar : then he
 pray'd
 " Save them from this, whatever comes
 to me."
 And while he pray'd, the master of
 that ship
 Enoch had served in, hearing his mis-
 chance,
 Came, for he knew the man and valued
 him,
 Reporting of his vessel China bound,
 And wanting yet a boatswain. Would
 he go ?
 There yet were many weeks before she
 sail'd,
 Sail'd from this port, Would Enoch
 have the place ?
 And Enoch all at once assented to it,
 Rejoicing at that answer, to his prayer.

So now that shadow of mischance ap-
 pear'd
 No graver than as when some little
 cloud
 Cuts off the fiery highway of the sun,
 And isles a light in the offing ; yet the
 wife—
 When he was gone—the children—
 What to do ?

Then Enoch lay long-pondering on his
 plans ;
 To sell the boat—and yet he loved her
 well—
 How many a rough sea had he weath-
 er'd in her !
 He knew her, as a horseman knows
 his horse—
 And yet to sell her—then with what she
 brought
 Buy goods and stores—set Annie forth
 in trade
 With all that seamen needed or their
 wives—
 So might she keep the house while he
 was gone.
 Should he not trade himself out yonder ?
 go
 This voyage more than once ? yea twice
 or thrice—
 As oft as needed—last, returning rich,
 Become the master of a larger craft,
 With fuller profits lead an easier life,
 Have all his pretty young ones edu-
 cated,
 And pass his days in peace among his
 own.



Thus Enoch in his heart determined
all :
Then moving homeward came on Annie
pale,
Nursing the sickly babe, her latest-
born.
Forward she started with a happy cry,
And laid the feeble infant in his arms ;
Whom Enoch took, and handled all his
limbs,
Appraised his weight and fondled
father-like,
But had no heart to break his purposes
To Annie, till the morrow, when he
spoke.

Then first since Enoch's golden ring
had girt
Her finger, Annie fought against his
will ;
Yet not with brawling opposition she,
But manifold entreaties, many a tear,
Many a sad kiss by day by night
renew'd
(Sure that all evil would come out of it)
Besought him, supplicating, if he cared
For her or his dear children, not to go.
He not for his own self caring but her,
Her and her children, let her plead in
vain ;
So grieving held his will, and bore it
thro.

For Enoch parted with his old sea-
friend,
Bought Annie goods and stores, and set
his hand
To fit their little streetward sitting-
room
With shelf and corner for the goods
and stores.
So all day long till Enoch's last at home
Shaking their pretty cabin, hammer
and axe,
Auger and saw, while Annie seem'd to
hear
Her own death-scaffold raising, shrill'd
and rang,
Till this was ended, and his careful
hand,—
The space was narrow,—having order'd
all
Almost as neat and close as Nature
packs
Her blossom or her seedling, paused ;
and he,
Who needs would work for Annie to
the last,
Ascending tired, heavily slept till morn
And Enoch faced this morning of
farewell
Brightly and boldly. All his Annie's
fears,
Save, as his Annie's, were a laughter to
him.
Yet Enoch as a brave God-fearing man
Bow'd himself down, and in that
mystery
Where God-in-man is one with man-
in-God,

Pray'd for a blessing on his wife and
babes
Whatever came to him : and then he
said
" Annie, this voyage by the grace of
God
Will bring fair weather yet to all of us.
Keep a clean hearth and a clear fire
for me,
For I'll be back, my girl, before you
know it."
Then lightly rocking baby's cradle
and he,
This pretty, puny, weakly little one,—
Nay—for I love him all the better for
it—
God bless him, he shall sit upon my
knees
And I will tell him tales of foreign
parts,
And make him merry, when I come
home again.
Come Annie, come, cheer up before I
go."

Him running on thus hopefully she
heard
And almost hoped herself ; but when
he turn'd
The current of his talk to graver things
In sailor fashion roughly sermonizing
On providence and trust in Heaven,
she heard,
Heard and not heard him ; as the vil-
lage girl,
Who sets her pitcher underneath the
spring,
Musing on him that need to fill it for
her,
Hears and not hears, and lets it over-
flow.

At length she spoke " O Enoch, you
are wise ;
And yet for all your wisdom well know I
That I shall look upon your face no
more."

" Well then " said Enoch, " I shall
look on yours.
Annie, the ship I sail in passes here
(He named the day) ; get you a sea-
man's glass,
Spy out my face, and laugh at all your
fears."

But when the last of those last mo-
ments came,
" Annie, my girl, cheer up, be com-
forted,
Look to the babes ; and till I come
again,
Keep everything shipshape, for I must
go.
And fear no more for me ; or if you fear
Cast all your cares on God ; that an-
chor holds.
Is he not yonder in those uttermost
Parts of the morning ? if I flee to these
Can I go from him ? and the sea is His,
The sea is His : He made it."



Enoch rose
 Cast his strong arms about his drooping
 wife,
 And kiss'd his wonder-stricken little
 ones ;
 But for the third, the sickly one, who
 slept
 After a night of feverous wakefulness,
 When Annie would have raised him
 Enoch said
 " Wake him not ; let him sleep ; how
 should the child
 Remember this ? " and kiss'd him in
 his cot.
 But Annie from her baby's forehead
 clipt
 A tiny curl, and gave it : this he kept
 Thro' all his future ; but now hastily
 caught
 His bundle, waved his hand, and went
 his way.

She when the day, that Enoch men-
 tion'd, came,
 Borrow'd a glass, but all in vain ; per-
 haps
 She could not fix the glass to suit her
 eye ;
 Perhaps her eye was dim, hand tremu-
 lous ;
 She saw him not : and while he stood
 on deck
 Waving, the moment and the vessel
 past.

Ev'n to the last dip of the vanishing
 sail
 She watch'd it, and departed weeping
 for him ;
 Then, tho' she mourn'd his absence as
 his grave,
 Set her sad will no less to chime with
 his,
 But thro' not in her trade, not being
 bred
 To barter, nor compensating the want
 By shrewdness, neither capable of lies,
 Nor asking overmuch and taking less,
 And still foreboding " what would
 Enoch say ? "
 For more than once, in days of diffi-
 culty
 And pressure, had she sold her wares
 for less
 Than what she gave in buying what she
 sold :
 She fall'd and sadden'd knowing it ;
 and thus,
 Expectant of that news which never
 came,
 Gain'd for her own a scanty sustenance
 And lived a life of silent melancholy.

Now the third child was sickly-born
 and grew
 Yet sicklier, tho' the mother cared
 for it
 With all a mother's care : nevertheless,
 Whether her business often call'd her
 from it,

Or thro' the want of what it needed
 most,
 Or means to pay the voice who best
 could tell
 What most it needed—howsoe'er it was,
 After a lingering,—ere she was aware,—
 Like the caged bird escaping suddenly,
 The little innocent soul flitted away.

In that same week when Annie
 buried it,
 Philip's true heart, which hunger'd for
 her peace
 (Since Enoch left he had not look'd
 upon her),
 Smote him, as having kept aloof so
 long,
 " Surely " said Philip " I may see her
 now,
 May be some little comfort " there-
 fore went,
 Past thro' the solitary room in front,
 Paused for a moment at an inner door,
 Then struck it thrice, and, no one
 opening,
 Enter'd ; but Annie, seated with her
 grief,
 Fresh from the burial of her little one,
 Cared not to look on any human face,
 But turn'd her own toward the wall
 and wept.
 Then Philip standing up said falter-
 ingly
 " Annie, I came to ask a favor of you."

He spoke ; the passion in her moan'd
 reply
 " Favor from one so sad and so forlorn
 As I am ! " half abash'd him ; yet
 unask'd,
 His bashfulness and tenderness at war,
 He set himself beside her, saying to
 her :

" I came to speak to you of what he
 wish'd,
 Enoch, your husband : I have ever said
 You chose the best among us—a strong
 man :
 For where he fixt his heart he set his
 hand
 To do the thing he will'd, and bore it
 thro' .
 And wherefore did he go this weary
 way,
 And leave you lonely ? not to see the
 world—
 For pleasure ?—nay, but for the where-
 withal
 To give his babes a better bringing-up
 Than his had been or yours ; that was
 his wish.
 And if he come again, next will he be
 To find the precious morning hours
 were lost,
 And it would vex him even in his
 grave,
 If he could know his babes were run-
 ning wild
 Like colts about the waste. So, Annie,
 now—



Have we not known each other all our
lives ?
I do beseech you by the love you bear
Him and his children not to say me
nay—
For, if you will, when Enoch comes
again
Why then he shall repay me—if you
will,
Annie—for I am rich and well-to-do,
Now let me put the boy and girl to
school :
This is the favor that I came to ask.”

Then Annie with her brows against
the wall
Answer'd “ I cannot look you in the
face ;
I seem so foolish and so broken down.
When you came in my sorrow broke
me down ;
And now I think your kindness breaks
me down ;
But Enoch lives ; that is borne in on
me :
He will repay you : money can be
repaid ;
Not kindness such as yours.”

And Philip ask'd
“ Then you will let me, Annie ? ”

There she turn'd,
She rose, and fixt her swimming eyes
upon him,
And dwelt a moment on his kindly
face,
Then calling down a blessing on his
head
Caught at his hand, and wrung it pas-
sionately,
And past into the little garth beyond.
So lifted up in spirit he moved away.
Then Philip put the boy and girl to
school,
And bought them needful books, and
everyway,
Like one who does his duty by his
own,
Made himself theirs ; and tho' for
Annie's sake,
Fearing the lazy gossip of the port,
He oft denied his heart his dearest wish
And seldom crost her threshold, yet
he sent
Gifts by the children, garden-herbs
and fruit,
The late and early roses from his wall,
Or cones from the down, and now and
then,
With some pretext of fineness in the
meal
To save the offence of charitable, flour
From his tall mill that whistled on the
waste.

But Philip did not fathom Annie's
mind :
Scarce could the woman when he came
upon her,

Out of full heart and boundless grati-
tude
Light on a broken word to thank him
with.
But Philip was her children's all-in-
all ;
From distant corners of the street they
ran
To greet his hearty welcoms heartily ;
Lords of his house and of his mill were
they ;
Worried his passive ear with petty
wrongs
Or pleasures, hung upon him, play'd
with him
And call'd him Father Philip. Philip
gain'd
As Enoch lost ; for Enoch seem'd to
them
Uncertain as a vision or a dream,
Faint as a figure seen in early dawn
Down at the far end of an avenue,
Going we know not where : and so ten
years,
Since Enoch left his hearth and native
land,
Fled forward, and no news of Enoch
came.

It chanced one evening Annie's chil-
dren long'd
To go with others, nutting to the wood,
And Annie would go with them ; then
they begg'd
For Father Philip (as they call'd him)
too :
Him, like the working bee in blossom-
dust,
Blanch'd with his mill, they found ;
and saying to him
“ Come with us Father Philip ” he
denied ;
But when the children pluck'd at him
to go,
He laugh'd, and yielded readily to
their wish,
For was not Annie with them ? and
they went.

But after scaling half the weary
down,
Just where the prone edge of the wood
began
To feather toward the hollow, all her
force
Fail'd her ; and sighing “ let me rest ”
she said :
So Philip rested with her well-content ;
While all the younger ones with jubi-
lant cries
Broke from their elders, and tumultu-
ously
Down thro' the whitening hazels made
a plunge
To the bottom, and dispersed, and bent
or broke
The lithe reluctant boughs to tear
away
Their tawny clusters, crying to each
other



And calling, here and there, about the wood.

But Philip sitting at her side forgot
Her presence, and remember'd one
dark hour
Here in this wood, when like a wound-
ed life
He crept into the shadow : at last he
said
Lifting his honest forehead " Listen,
Annie,
How merry they are down yonder in
the wood.
Tired, Annie?" for she did not speak
a word.
"Tired?" but her face had fall'n upon
her hands;
At which, as with a kind of anger in
him,
" The ship was lost " he said " the
ship was lost!
No more of that! why should you kill
yourself
And make them orphans quite!" And
Annie said
" I thought not of it: but—I know
not why—
Their voices make me feel so solitary."

Then Philip coming somewhat closer
spoke.
" Annie, there is a thing upon my
mind,
And it has been upon my mind so long,
That tho' I know not when it first
came there,
I know that it will out at last. O
Annie,
It is beyond all hope, against all
chance,
That he who left you ten long years
ago
Should still be living; well then—let
me speak:
I grieve to see you poor and wanting
help:
I cannot help you as I wish to do
Unless—they say that women are so
quick—
Perhaps you know what I would have
you know—
I wish you for my wife. I fain would
prove
A father to your children: I do think
They love me as a father: I am sure
That I love them as if they were mine
own;
And I believe, if you were fast my wife,
That after all these sad uncertain
years,
We might be still as happy as God
grants
To any of His creatures. Think upon
it:
For I am well-to-do—no kin, no care,
No burden, save my care for you and
yours:
And we have known each other all
our lives,

And I have loved you longer than you
know."

Then answer'd Annie; tenderly she
spoke:
" You have been as God's good angel
in our house.
God bless you for it, God reward you
for it,
Philip, with something happier than
myself.
Can one love twice? can you be ever
loved
As Enoch was? what is it that you
ask?"
" I am content " he answer'd " to be
loved
A little after Enoch." " O " she cried
Scared as it were " dear Philip, wait a
while:
If Enoch comes—hnt Enoch will not
come—
Yet wait a year, a year is not so long:
Surely I shall be wiser in a year:
O wait a little!" Philip sadly said
" Annie, as I have waited all my life
I well may wait a little." " Nay " she
cried
" I am bound: you have my promise—
in a year:
Will you not hide your year as I bide
mine?"
And Philip answer'd " I will bide my
year."

Here both were mute, till Philip glan-
cing up
Beheld the dead flame of the fallen
day
Pass from the Danish harrow over-
head;
Then fearing night and chill for Annie
rose,
And sent his voice beneath him thro'
the wood,
Up came the children laden with their
spoil;
Then all descended to the port, and
there
At Annie's door he paused and gave
his hand,
Saying gently " Annie, when I spoke
to you,
That was your hour of weakness. I
was wrong.
I am always bound to you, hnt you are
free."
Then Annie weeping answer'd " I am
bound."

She spoke; and in one moment as it
were,
While yet she went about her hous-
hold ways,
Ev'n as she dwelt upon his latest
words,
That he had loved her longer than she
knew,
That autumn into autumn flash'd
again,



And there he stood once more before
 her face,
 Claiming her promise. "Is it a year?"
 she ask'd.
 "Yes, if the nuts" he said "be ripe
 again:
 Come out and see." But she—she
 put him off—
 So much to look to—such a change—
 a month—
 Give her a month—she knew that she
 was bound—
 A month—no more. Then Philip with
 his eyes
 Full of that life-long hunger, and his
 voice
 Shaking a little like a drunkard's hand,
 "Take your own time, Annie, take
 your own time."
 And Annie could have wept for pity of
 him;
 And yet she held him on delayingly
 With many a scarce-believable excuse,
 Trying his truth and his long-suffer-
 ance,
 Till half-another year had slipped away.

By this the lazy gossips of the port,
 Abhorrent of a calculation cross,
 Began to chafe as at a personal wrong.
 Some thought that Philip did but trifle
 with her;
 Some that she but held off to draw
 him on;
 And others laugh'd at her and Philip
 too,
 As simple folk that knew not their
 own minds;
 And one, in whom all evil fancies
 clung
 Like serpent eggs together, laughingly
 Would hint at worse in either. Her
 own son
 Was silent, tho' he often look'd his
 wish;
 But evermore the daughter prest upon
 her
 To wed the man so dear to all of them
 And lift the household out of pover-
 ty;
 And Philip's rosy face contracting
 grew
 Careworn and wan; and all these
 things fell on her
 Sharp as reproach.

At last one night it chanced
 That Annie could not sleep, but ear-
 estly
 Pray'd for a sign "my Enoch is he
 gone?"
 Then compass'd round by the blind
 wall of night
 Brook'd not the expectant terror of
 her heart,
 Started from bed, and struck herself a
 light,
 Then desperately seized the holy Book,
 Suddenly set it wide to find a sign,

Suddenly put her finger on the text,
 "Under the palm-tree." That was
 nothing to her:
 No meaning there: she closed the
 Book and slept:
 When lo! her Enoch sitting on a
 height,
 Under a palm-tree, over him the Sun:
 "He is gone" she thought "he is
 happy, he is singing
 Hosanna in the highest: yonder shines
 The Sun of Righteousness, and these
 be palms
 Whereof the happy people strewing
 cried
 'Hosanna in the highest!'" Here she
 woke,
 Resolved, sent for him and said wildly
 to him
 "There is no reason why we should not
 wed."
 "Then for God's sake," he answer'd,
 "both our sakes,
 So you will wed me, let it be at once."

So these were wed and merrily rang
 the bells,
 Merrily rang the bells and they were
 wed.
 But never merrily beat Annie's heart.
 A footstep seem'd to fall beside her
 path,
 She knew not whence; a whisper on
 her ear,
 She knew not what; nor loved she to
 be left
 Alone at home, nor ventured out alone.
 What ail'd her then, that ere she
 enter'd, often
 Her hand dwelt lingeringly on the
 latch,
 Fearing to enter: Philip thought he
 knew:
 Such doubts and fears were common to
 her state,
 Being with child: but when her child
 was born,
 Then her new child was as herself
 renew'd,
 Then the new mother came about her
 heart,
 Then her good Philip was her all-in-
 all,
 And that mysterious instinct wholly
 died.

And where was Enoch? prosper-
 ously sail'd
 The ship "Good Fortune," tho' at set-
 ting forth
 The Biscay, roughly ridging eastward,
 shook
 And almost overwhelm'd her, yet
 unvext
 She slept across the summer of the
 world,
 Then after a long tumble about the
 Cape
 And frequent interchange of foul and
 fair



She passing thro' the summer world
 again,
 The breath of heaven came continu-
 ally
 And sent her sweetly by the golden
 isles,
 Till silent in her oriental haven.

There Enoch traded for himself, and
 bought
 Quaint monsters for the market of
 those times.
 A gilded dragon, also, for the habes.

Less lucky her home-voyage : at first
 indeed
 Thro' many a fair sea-circle, day by
 day,
 Scarce-rocking, her full-busted figure-
 head
 Stared o'er the ripple feathering from
 her bows :
 Then follow'd calms, and then winds
 variable,
 Then haffing, a long course of them ;
 and last
 Storm, such as drove her under moon-
 less heavens
 Till hard upon the cry of " breakers "
 came
 The crash of ruin, and the loss of all
 But Enoch and two others. Half the
 night,
 Buo'y'd upon floating tackle and broken
 spars,
 These drifted, stranding on an isle at
 morn
 Rich, but the loneliest in a lonely sea.
 No want was there of human sus-
 tenance
 Soft fruitage, mighty nuts, and nourish-
 ing roots ;
 Nor save for pity was it hard to take
 The helpless life so wild that it was
 tame.
 There in a seaward-gazing mountain-
 gorge
 They built, and thatch'd with leaves of
 palm, a hut,
 Half hut, half native cavern. So the
 three,
 Set in this Eden of all plenteousness,
 Dwelt with eternal summer, ill-con-
 tent.

For one, the youngest, hardly more
 than boy,
 Hurt in that night of sudden ruin and
 wreck,
 Lay lingering out a five-years' death-
 in-life.
 They could not leave him. After he
 was gone,
 The two remaining found a fallen stem ;
 And Enoch's comrade, careless of him-
 self,
 Fire-hollowing this in Indian fashion,
 fell
 Sun-stricken, and that other lived
 alone.

In those two deaths he read God's
 warning " wait."

The mountain wooded to the peak,
 the lawns
 And winding glades high up like ways
 to Heaven,
 The slender coco's drooping crown of
 plumes,
 The lightning flash of insect and of
 bird,
 The lustre of the long convolvuluses
 That coil'd around the stately stems,
 and ran
 Ev'n to the limit of the land, the
 glows
 And glories of the broad belt of the
 world,
 All these he saw ; but what he fain had
 seen
 He could not see, the kindly human
 face,
 Nor ever hear a kindly voice, but heard
 The myriad shriek of wheeling ocean-
 fowl,
 The league-long roller thundering on
 the reef,
 The moving whisper of huge trees that
 branch'd
 And blossom'd in the zenith, or the
 sweep
 Of some precipitous rivulet to the
 wave,
 As down the shore he ranged, or all
 day long
 Sat often in the seaward-gazing gorge,
 A shipwreck'd sailor, waiting for a
 sail :
 No sail from day to day, but every
 day
 The sunrise broken into scarlet shafts
 Among the palms and ferns and preci-
 pices ;
 The blaze upon the waters to the east ;
 The blaze upon his island overhead ;
 The blaze upon the waters to the west ;
 Then the great stars that globed them-
 selves in Heaven,
 The hollower-hollowing ocean, and
 again
 The scarlet shafts of sunrise — hut no
 sail.

There often as he watch'd or seem'd
 to watch,
 So still, the golden lizard on him
 paused,
 A phantom made of many phantoms
 moved
 Before him haunting him, or he him-
 self
 Moved haunting people, things and
 places, known
 Far in a darker isle beyond the line ;
 The habes, their babble, Annie, the
 small house,
 The climbing street, the mill, the leafy
 lanes,
 The peacock-yewtree and the lonely
 Hall,





The horse he drove, the hoat he sold,
the chill
November dawns and dewy-glooming
downs,
The gentle shower, the smell of dying
leaves,
And the low moan of leaden-color'd
seas.

Once likewise, in the ringing of his
ears,
Tho' faintly, merrily — far and far
away —
He heard the pealing of his parish
bells ;
Then, tho' he knew not wherefore,
started up
Shuddering, and when the beauteous
bateful isle
Return'd upon him, had not his poor
heart
Spoken with That, which being every-
where
Lets none, who speaks with Him, seem
all alone,
Surely the man had died of solitude.

Thus over Enoch's early-silvering
head
The sunny and rainy seasons came and
went
Year after year. His hopes to see his
own,
And pace the sacred old familiar fields,
Not yet had perish'd, when his lonely
doom
Came suddenly to an end. Another
ship
(She wanted water) blown by baffling
winds,
Like the Good Fortune, from her des-
tined course,
Stay'd by this isle, not knowing where
she lay :
For since the mate had seen at early
dawn
Across a break on the mist-wreathen
isle
The silent water slipping from the
hills,
They sent a crew that landing burst
away
In search of stream or fount, and fill'd
the shores
With clamor. Downward from his
mountain gorge
Stept the long-hair'd long-bearded soli-
tary,
Brown, looking hardly human, strange-
ly clad,
Muttering and mumbling, idiot like it
seem'd,
With inarticulate rage, and making
signs
They knew not what : and yet he led
the way
To where the rivalets of sweet water
ran ;
And ever as he mingled with the crew,
And heard them talking, his long-
bounden tongue.

Was loosen'd, till he made them un-
derstand ;
Whom, when their casks were fill'd
they took aboard :
And there the tale he utter'd broken-
ly,
Scarce-credited at first but more and
more,
Amazed and melted all who listen'd
to it :
And clothes they gave him and free
passage home ;
But oft he work'd among the rest and
shook
His isolation from him. None of these
Came from his county, or could answer
him,
If question'd, aught of what he cared
to know.
And dull the voyage was with long
delays,
The vessel scarce sea-worthy ; but
evermore
His fancy fled before the lazy wind
Returning, till beneath a clouded
moon
He like a lover down thro' all his blood
Drew in the dewy meadow morning
breath
Of England, blown across her ghostly
wall :
And that same morning officers and
men
Levied a kindly tax upon themselves,
Pitying the lonely man, and gave him
it :
Then moving up the coast they landed
him,
Ev'n in that harbor whence he sail'd
before.

There Enoch spoke no word to any
one,
But homeward — home — what home ?
had he a home ?
His home, he walk'd. Bright was that
afternoon,
Sunny but chill ; till drawn thro' either
chasm,
Where either havens open'd on the
deeps,
Roll'd a sea-haze and whelm'd the
world in gray ;
Cut off the length of highway on be-
fore,
And left but narrow breadth to left and
right
Of wither'dholt or tilth or pasturage.
On the nigh-naked tree the Robin
pip'd
Disconsolate, and thro' the dripping
haze
The dead weight of the dead leaf bore
it down :
Thicker the drizzle grew, deeper the
gloom ;
Last, as it seem'd, a great mist-blotted
light
Flared on him, and he came upon the
place.



Then down the long street having
 slowly stolen,
 His heart foreshadowing all calamity,
 His eyes upon the stones, he reach'd
 the home
 Where Annie lived and loved him, and
 his babes
 In those far-off seven happy years
 were born;
 But finding neither light nor murmur
 there
 (A bill of sale gleam'd thro' the drizzle)
 crept
 Still downward thinking "dead or dead
 to me!"

Down to the pool and narrow wharf
 he went,
 Seeking a tavern which of old he
 knew,
 A front of timber-crost antiquity,
 So propt, worm-eaten, ruinously old,
 He thought it must have gone; but he
 was gone
 Who kept it; and his widow, Miriam
 Lane,
 With dally-dwindling profits held the
 house;
 A haunt of brawling seamen once, but
 now
 Still, with yet a bed for wandering
 men.
 There Enoch rested silent many days.

But Miriam Lane was good and gar-
 rulous,
 Nor let him be, but oft' breaking in,
 Told him, with other annals of the
 port,
 Not knowing — Enoch was so brown,
 so bow'd,
 So broken — all the story of his house.
 His baby's death, her growing poverty,
 How Philip put her little ones to
 school,
 And kept them in it, his long wocing
 her,
 Her slow consent, and marriage, and
 the birth
 Of Philip's child: and o'er his counte-
 nance
 No shadow past, nor motion: anyone,
 Regarding, well had deem'd he felt the
 tale
 Less than the teller: only when she
 closed
 "Enoch, poor man, was cast away and
 lost"
 He, shaking his gray head pathetically,
 Repeated muttering "cast away and
 lost;"
 Again in deeper inward whispers
 "lost!"

But Enoch yearn'd to see her face
 again;
 "If I might look on her sweet face
 again
 And know that she is happy." So the
 thought
 Haunted and harass'd him, and drove
 him forth,

At evening when the dull November
 day
 Was growing duller twilight, to the
 hill.
 There he sat down gazing on all be-
 low;
 There did a thousand memories roll
 upon him,
 Unspeakable for sadness. By and by
 The ruddy square of comfortable light,
 Far-blazing from the rear of Philip's
 house,
 Allured him, as the beacon-blaze al-
 lures
 The bird of passage, till he madly
 strikes
 Against it, and beats out his weary life.
 For Philip's dwelling fronted on the
 street,
 The latest house to landward; but he-
 hind,
 With one small gate that open'd on the
 waste,
 Flourish'd a little garden square and
 wall'd:
 And in it throve an ancient evergreen,
 A yewtree, and all round it ran a walk
 Of shingle, and a walk divided it:
 But Enoch shunn'd the middle walk
 and stole
 Up by the wall, behind the yew; and
 thence
 That which he better might have
 shunn'd, if griefs
 Like his have worse or better, Enoch
 saw.

For cups and silver on the burnish'd
 board
 Sparkled and shone; so genial was the
 hearth;
 And on the right hand of the hearth
 he saw
 Philip, the slighted suitor of old times,
 Stout, rosy, with his babe across his
 knees,
 And o'er her second father stoopt a
 girl,
 A later but a loftier Annie Lee,
 Fair-hair'd and tall, and from her lift-
 ed hand
 Dangled a length of ribbon and a ring
 To tempt the babe, who rear'd his
 creasy arms,
 Caught at and ever miss'd it, and they
 laugh'd:
 And on the left hand of the hearth he
 saw
 The mother glancing often toward her
 babe,
 But turning now and then to speak
 with him,
 Her son, who stood beside her tall and
 strong,
 And saying that which pleased him, for
 he smiled.
 Now when the dead man come to life
 beheld
 His wife his wife no more, and saw the
 babe



Hers, yet not his, upon the father's
 knee,
 And all the warmth, the peace, the
 happiness,
 And his own children tall and beauti-
 ful,
 And him, that other, reigning in his
 place,
 Lord of his rights and of his children's
 love,
 Then he, tho' Miriam Lane had told
 him all,
 Because things seen are mightier than
 things heard,
 Stagger'd and shook, holding the
 branch, and fear'd
 To send abroad a shrill and terrible
 cry,
 Which in one moment, like the blast
 of doom,
 Would shatter all the happiness of the
 hearth.

He therefore turning softly like a
 thief,
 Lest the harsh shingle should grate
 underfoot,
 And feeling all along the garden-wall,
 Lest he should swoon and tumble and
 be found,
 Crept to the gate, and open'd it, and
 closed,
 As lightly as a sick man's chamber-
 door,
 Behind him, and came out upon the
 waste.

And there he would have knelt, but
 that his knee
 Were feeble, so that falling prone he
 dug
 His fingers into the wet earth, and
 pray'd.

"Too hard to bear! why did they
 take me thence?
 O God Almighty, blessed Saviour,
 Thou
 That didst uphold me on my lonely
 isle,
 Uphold me, Father, in my loneliness
 A little longer! aid me, give me
 strength
 Not to tell her, never to let her know,
 Help me not to break in upon her
 peace.
 My children too! must I not speak to
 these?
 They know me not. I should betray
 myself.
 Never: no father's kiss for me—the
 girl
 So like her mother, and the boy, my
 son."

There speech and thought and na-
 ture fail'd a little,
 And he lay tranced; but when he rose
 and paced
 Back toward his solitary home again,

All down the long and narrow street he
 went
 Beating it in upon his weary brain,
 As tho' it were the burden of a song,
 "Not to tell her, never to let her
 know."

He was not all unhappy. His resolve
 Uppore him, and firm faith, and ever-
 more
 Prayer from a living source within the
 will,
 And beating up thro' all the bitter
 world,
 Like fountains of sweet water in the
 sea,
 Kept him a living soul. "This miller's
 wife"
 He said to Miriam "that you told me
 of,
 Has she no fear that her first husband
 lives?"
 "Ay, ay, poor soul" said Miriam,
 "fear enow!
 If you could tell her you had seen him
 dead,
 Why, that would be her comfort;"
 and he thought
 "After the Lord has call'd me she
 shall know,
 I wait His time" and Enoch set himself
 Scorning an alms, to work whereby to
 live.
 Almost to all things could he turn his
 hand.
 Cooper he was and carpenter, and
 wrought
 To make the boatmen fishing-nets, or
 help'd
 At lading and unlading the tall barks,
 That brought the stunted commerce of
 those days;
 Thus earn'd a scanty living for him-
 self:
 Yet since he did but labor for himself,
 Work without hope, there was not life
 in it
 Whereby the man could live; and as
 the year
 Roll'd itself round again to meet the
 day
 When Enoch had return'd, a languor
 came
 Upon him, gentle sickness, gradually
 Weakening the man, till he could do
 no more,
 But kept the house, his chair, and last
 his bed.
 And Enoch bore his weakness cheer-
 fully.
 For sure no gladlier does the stranded
 wreck
 See thro' the gray skirts of a lifting
 squall
 The boat that bears the hope of life
 approach
 To save the life despair'd of, than he
 saw
 Death dawning on him, and the close
 of all.



For thro' that dawning gleam'd a kindlier hope
 On Enoch thinking "after I am gone,
 Then may she learn I loved her to the last."
 He call'd aloud for Miriam Lane and said
 "Woman, I have a secret—only swear,
 Before I tell you—swear upon the book
 Not to reveal it, till you see me dead."
 "Dead" clamor'd the good woman
 "hear him talk!
 I warrant, man, that we shall bring you round."
 "Swear" added Enoch sternly "on the book."
 And on the book, half-frighted, Miriam swore.
 Then Enoch rolling his gray eyes upon her,
 "Did you know Enoch Arden of this town?"
 "Know him?" she said "I knew him far away.
 Ay, ay, I mind him coming down the street;
 Held his head high, and cared for no man, he."
 Slowly and sadly Enoch answer'd her;
 "His head is low, and no man cares for him.
 I think I have not three days more to live;
 I am the man." At which the woman gave
 A half-incredulous, half-hysterical cry.
 "You Arden, you! nay, — sure he was a foot
 Higher than you be." Enoch said again
 "My God has bow'd me down to what I am;
 My grief and solitude have broken me;
 Nevertheless, know you that I am he
 Who married—but that name has twice been changed—
 I married her who married Philip Ray.
 Sit, listen." Then he told her of his voyage,
 His wreck, his lonely life, his coming back,
 His gazing in on Annie, his resolve.
 And how he kept it. As the woman heard,
 Fast flow'd the current of her easy tears,
 While in her heart she yearn'd incessantly
 To rush abroad all round the little haven,
 Proclaiming Enoch Arden and his woes;
 But awed and promise-bounden she forbore,
 Saying only "See your bairns before you go!
 Eh, let me fetch 'em, Arden," and arose
 Eager to bring them down, for Enoch hung

A moment on her words, but then replied.
 "Woman, disturb me not now at the last,
 But let me hold my purpose till I die.
 Sit down again; mark me and understand,
 While I have power to speak. I charge you now,
 When you shall see her, tell her that I died
 Blessing her, praying for her, loving her;
 Save for the bar between us, loving her
 As when she laid her head beside my own.
 And tell my daughter Annie, whom I saw
 So like her mother, that my latest breath
 Was spent in blessing her and praying for her.
 And tell my son that I died blessing him.
 And say to Philip that I blest him too;
 He never meant us anything but good.
 But if my children care to see me dead,
 Who hardly knew me living, let them come,
 I am their father; but she must not come,
 For my dead face would vex her after-life.
 And now there is but one of all my blood
 Who will embrace me in the world-to-be:
 This hair is his: she cut it off and gave it,
 And I have borne it with me all these years,
 And thought to bear it with me to my grave;
 But now my mind is changed, for I shall see him,
 My babe in bliss: wherefore when I am gone,
 Take, give her this, for it may comfort her:
 It will moreover be a token to her,
 That I am he."

He ceased; and Miriam Lane
 Made such a voluble answer promising all,
 That once again he roll'd his eyes upon her
 Repeating all he wish'd, and once again
 She promised.

Then the third night after this,
 While Enoch slumber'd motionless and pale,
 And Miriam watch'd and dozed at intervals,
 There came so loud a calling of the sea,
 That all the houses in the haven rang.



He woke, he rose, he spread his arms
abroad
Crying with a loud voice "a sail! a
sail!
I am saved;" and so fell back and
spoko no more.

So past the strong heroic soul away.
And when they buried him the little
port
Had seldom seen a costlier funeral.

AYLMER'S FIELD.

1793.

DUST are our frames; and, gilded
dust, our pride
Looks only for a moment whole and
sound;
Like that long-buried body of the
king,
Found lying with his urns and orna-
ments,
Which at a touch of light, an air of
heaven,
Slipt into ashes and was found no
more.

Here is a story which in rougher
shape
Came from a grizzled cripple, whom I
saw
Sunning himself in a waste field
alone—
Old, and a mine of memories—who had
served,
Long since, a bygone Rector of the
place,
And been himself a part of what he
told.

SIR AYLMEY AYLMEY that almighty
man,
The county God—in whose capacious
hall,
Hung with a hundred shields, the
family tree
Sprang from the midriff of a prostrate
king—
Whose blazing wyvern weathercock'd
the spire,
Stood from his walls and wing'd his
entry-gates
And swang besides on many a windy
sign—
Whose eyes from under a pyramidal
head
Saw from his windows nothing save
his own—
What lovelier of his own had he than
her,
His only child, his Edith, whom he
loved
As heiress and not heir regretfully?
But "he that marries her marries her
name"

This fiat somewhat soothed himself
and wife,
His wife a faded beauty of the Baths,
Insipid as the Queen upon a card;
Her all of thought and bearing hardly
more
Than his own shadow in a sickly sun.

A land of hops and poppy-mingled
corn,
Little about it stirring save a brook!
A sleepy land where under the same
wheel
The same old rut would deepen year
by year;
Where almost all the village had one
name;
Where Aylmer follow'd Aylmer at the
Hall
And Averill Averill at the Rectory
Thrice over; so that Rectory and Hall,
Bound in an immemorial intimacy,
Were open to each other; tho' to
dream
That Love could bind them closer well
had made
The hoar hair of the Baronet bristle up
With horror, worse than had he heard
his priest
Preach an inverted scripture, sons of
men
Daughters of God; so sleepy was the
land.

And might not Averill, had he will'd
it so,
Somewhere beneath his own low range
of roots,
Have also set his many-shielded tree?
There was an Aylmer-Averill marriage
once,
When the red rose was redder than it-
self,
And York's white rose as red as Lan-
caster's,
With wounded peace which each had
prick'd to death.
"Not proven" Averill said, or laugh-
ingly
"Some other race of Averills"—
prov'n or no,
What cared he? what, if other or the
same?
He lean'd not on his fathers but him-
self.
But Leolin, his brother, living oft
With Averill, and a year or two before
Call'd to the bar, but ever call'd away
By one low voice to one dear neighbor-
hood,
Would often, in his walks with Edith,
claim
A distant kinship to the gracious
blood
That shook the heart of Edith hearing
him.

Sanguine he was: a but less vivid
hue



Than of that islet in the chestnut-
bloom
Flamed in his cheek ; and eager eyes,
that still
Took joyful note of all things joyful,
beam'd,
Beneath a manelike mass of rolling
gold,
Their best and brightest, when they
dwelt on hers,
Edith, whose pensive beauty, perfect
else,
But subject to the season or the mood,
Shone like a mystic star between the
less
And greater glory varying to and fro,
We know not wherefore ; hounteously
made,
And yet so finely, that a troublous
touch
Thinn'd, or would seem to thin her in
a day,
A joyous to dilate, as toward the
light.
And these had been together from the
first.
Leolin's first nurse was, five years af-
ter, hers :
So much the boy foreran ; but when
his date
Doubled her own, for want of play-
mates, he
(Since Averill was a decade and a
half
His elder, and their parents under-
ground)
Had tost his ball and flown his kite,
and roll'd
His hoop to pleasure Edith, with her
dipt
Against the rush of the air in the prone
swing,
Made blossom-ball or daisy-chain, ar-
ranged.
Her garden, sow'd her name and kept
it green
In living letters, told her fairy-tales,
Show'd her the fairy footings on the
grass,
The little dells of cowslip, fairy palms,
The petty mare-stail forest, fairy pines,
Or from the tiny pitted target blew
What look'd a flight of fairy arrows
aim'd
All at one mark, all hitting : make-be-
lieves
For Edith and himself : or else he
forged,
But that was later, boyish histories
Of battle, bold adventure, dungeon,
wreck,
Flights, terrors, sudden rescues, and
true love
Crown'd after trial ; sketches rude and
faint,
But where a passion yet unborn per-
haps
Lay hidden as the music of the moon
Sleeps in the plain eggs of the nightin-
gale.

And thus together, save for college-
times
Or Temple-eaten terms, a couple, fair
As ever painter painted, poet sang,
Or Heav'n in lavish bounty moulded,
grew.
And more and more, the maiden
woman-grown,
He wasted hours with Averill ; there,
when first
The tented winter-field was broken up
Into that phalanx of the summer
spears
That soon should wear the garland ;
there again
When burr and bino were gather'd ;
lastly there
At Christmas ; ever welcome at the
Hall.
On whose dull sameness his full tide of
youth
Broke with a phosphorescence cheer-
ing even
Mylady ; and the Baronet yet had laid
No bar between them : dull and self-
involved,
Tall and erect, but bending from his
height
With half-allowing smiles for all the
world,
And mighty courteous in the main—
his pride
Lay deeper than to wear it as his
ring—
He, like an Aylmer in his Aylmerism,
Would care no more for Leolin's walk-
ing with her
Than for his old Newfoundland's,
when they ran
To loose him at the stables, for he rose
Two-footed at the limit of his chain,
Roaring to make a third : and how
should Love,
Whom the cross-lightnings of four
chance-met eyes
Flash into fiery life from nothing, fol-
low
Such dear familiarities of dawn ?
Seldom, but when he does, Master of
all.

So these young hearts not knowing
that they loved,
Not she at least, nor conscious of a
bar
Between them, nor by plight or broken
ring
Bound, but an immemorial intimacy,
Wander'd at will, but oft accompanied
By Averill : his, a brother's love, that
lung
With wings of brooding shelter o'er
her peace,
Might have been other, save for Leo-
lin's—
Who knows ? but so they wander'd,
hour by hour
Gather'd the blossom that rebloom'd,
and drank
The magic cup that fill'd itself anew.



A whisper half reveal'd her to herself.
 For out beyond her lodges, where the brook
 Vocal, with here and there a silence, ran
 By sallowy rims, arose the laborers' homes,
 A frequent haunt of Edith, on low knolls
 That dimpling died into each other, huts,
 At random scatter'd, each a nest in bloom.
 Her art, her hand, her counsel all had wrought
 About them; here was one that, summer-blanch'd,
 Was parcel-bearded with the traveler's joy
 In autumn, parcel ivy-clad; and here
 The warm-blue breathings of a hidden heart
 Broke from a bower of vine and honey-suckle:
 One look'd all rosetree, and another wore
 A close-set rohe of jasmine sown with stars:
 This had a rosy sea of gillyflowers
 About it; this, a milky-way on earth,
 Like visions in the Northern dreamer's heavens,
 A lily-avenue climbing to the doors;
 One, almost to the martin-haunted eaves
 A summer burial deep in hollyhocks;
 Each, its own charm; and Edith's everywhere;
 And Edith ever visitant with him,
 He but less loved than Edith, of her poor:
 For she—so lowly-lovely and so loving,
 Queenly responsive when the loyal hand
 Rose from the clay it work'd in as she past,
 Not sowing hedgerow texts and passing by,
 Nor dealing goodly counsel from a height
 That makes the lowest hate it, but a voice
 Of comfort and an open hand of help,
 A splendid presence flattering the poor roofs
 Revered as theirs, but kindlier than themselves
 To ailing wife or wailing infancy
 Or old bedridden palsy,—was adored;
 He, loved for her and for himself. A grasp
 Having the warmth and muscles of the heart,
 A childly way with children, and a laugh
 Ringing like proven golden coinage true,
 Were no false passport to that easy realm,

Where once with Leolin at her side,
 the girl,
 Nursing a child, and turning to the warmth
 The tender pink five-beaded baby-soles,
 Heard the good mother softly whisper
 "Bless,
 God bless 'em: marriages are made in Heaven."

A flash of semi-jealousy clear'd it to her.
 My lady's Indian kinsman unannounced
 With half a score of swarthy faces came.
 His own, tho' keen and bold and soldierly,
 Sear'd by the close ecliptic, was not fair;
 Fairer his talk, a tongue that ruled the hour,
 Tho' seeming boastful: so when first he dash'd
 Into the chronicle of a deedful day,
 Sir Aylmer half forgot his lazy smile
 Of patron "Good! my lady's kinsman! good!"
 My lady with her fingers interlock'd,
 And rotatory thumbs on silken knees,
 Call'd all her vital spirits into each ear
 To listen: unawares they fitted off,
 Busying themselves about the flower-age
 That stood from out a stiff brocade in which,
 The meteor of a splendid season, she,
 Once with this kinsman, ah so long ago,
 Stept thro' the stately minuet of those days:
 But Edith's eager fancy hurried with him
 Snatch'd thro' the perilous passes of his life:
 Till Leolin ever watchful of her eye
 Hated him with a momentary hate.
 Wife-hunting, as the rumor ran, was he:
 I know not, for he spoke not, only shower'd
 His oriental gifts on every one
 And most on Edith: like a storm he came,
 And shook the house, and like a storm he went.

Among the gifts he left her (possibly
 He flow'd and ebb'd uncertainly to return
 When others had been tested) there was one,
 A dagger, in rich sheath with jewels on it
 Sprinkled about in gold that branch'd
 itself
 Fine as ice-ferns on January panes
 Made by a breath. I know not whence at first,



Nor of what race, the work; but as he
 told
 The story, storming a hill-fort of
 thieva
 He got it; for their captain after fight,
 His comrades having fought their last
 below,
 Was climbing up the valley; at whom
 he shot:
 Down from the beetling crag to which
 he clung
 Tumbled the tawny rascal at his feet,
 This dagger with him, which when now
 admired
 By Edith whom his pleasure was to
 please,
 At once the costly Sahib yielded to
 her.

And Leolin, coming after he was
 gone,
 Tost over all her presents petulantly:
 And when she show'd the wealthy
 scabard, saying
 "Look what a lovely piece of work-
 manship!"
 Slight was his answer "Well—I care
 not for it;"
 Then playing with the blade he prick'd
 his hand,
 "A gracious gift to give a lady, this!"
 "But would it be more gracious"
 ask'd the girl
 "Were I to give this gift of his to one
 That is no lady?" "Gracious? No"
 said he.
 "Me?—but I cared not for it, O par-
 don me,
 I seem to be ungraciousness itself."
 "Take it" she added sweetly "tho'
 his gift;
 For I am more ungracious ev'n than
 you,
 I care not for it either;" and he said
 "Why then I love it:" but Sir Ayl-
 mer past,
 And neither loved nor liked the thing
 he heard.

The next day came a neighbor.
 Blues and reds
 They talk'd of: blues were sure of it,
 he thought:
 Then of the latest fox—where started
 —kill'd
 In such a bottom: "Peter had the
 brush,
 My Peter, first:" and did Sir Aylmer
 know
 That great pock-pitten fellow had been
 caught?
 Then made his pleasure echo, hand to
 hand,
 And rolling as it were the substance
 of it
 Between his palms a moment up and
 down—
 "The birds were warm, the birds were
 warm upon him;
 We have him now:" and had Sir
 Aylmer heard—

Nay, but he must—the land was ring-
 ing of it—
 This blacksmith-border marriage—one
 they knew—
 Raw from the nursery—who could
 trust a child?
 That cursed France with her egali-
 ties!
 And did Sir Aylmer (deferentially
 With nearing chair and lower'd ac-
 cent) think—
 For people talk'd—that it was wholly
 wise
 To let that handsome fellow Averill
 walk
 So freely with his daughter? people
 talk'd—
 The boy might get a notion into him;
 The girl might be entangled ere she
 knew.
 Sir Aylmer Aylmer slowly stiffening
 spoke:
 "The girl and boy, Sir, know their dif-
 ferences!"
 "Good" said his friend "hut watch!"
 and he "enough,
 More than enough, Sir! I can guard
 my own."
 They parted, and Sir Aylmer Aylmer
 watch'd.

Pale, for on her the thunders of the
 house
 Had fallen first, was Edith that same
 night;
 Pale as the Jephtha's daughter, a
 rough piece
 Of early rigid color, under which
 Withdrawing by the counter door to
 that
 Which Leolin open'd, she cast back
 upon him
 A piteous glance, and vanish'd. He,
 as one
 Caught in a hurst of unexpected storm,
 And pelted with outrageous epithets,
 Turning beheld the Powers of the
 House
 On either side the hearth, indignant;
 her,
 Cooling her false cheek with a feather-
 fan,
 Him glaring, by his own stale devil
 spurr'd,
 And, like a beast hard-riden, breath-
 ing hard,
 "Ungenerous, dishonorable, base,
 Presumptuous! trusted as he was with
 her,
 The sole succeder to their wealth,
 their lands,
 The last remaining pillar of their
 house,
 The one transmitter of their ancient
 name,
 Their child," "Our child!" "Our
 heiress!" "Ours!" for still,
 Like echoes from beyond a hollow,
 came
 Her sicklier iteration. Last he said



"Boy, mark me! for your fortunes are
 to make.
 I swear you shall not make them out
 of mine.
 Now inasmuch as you have practised
 on her,
 Perplext her, made her half forget her-
 self,
 Swerve from her duty to herself and
 us—
 Things in an Aylmer deem'd impossi-
 ble,
 Far as we track ourselves—I say that
 this—
 Else I withdraw favor and countenance
 From you and yours forever—shall you
 do.
 Sir, when you see her—but you shall
 not see her—
 No, you shall write, and not to her, but
 me:
 And you shall say that having spoken
 with me,
 And after look'd into yourself, you
 find
 That you meant nothing—as indeed
 you know
 That you meant nothing. Such a match
 as this!
 Impossible, prodigious!" These were
 words,
 As meted by his measure of himself,
 Arguing boundless forbearance: after
 which,
 And Leolin's horror-stricken answer,
 "I
 So foul a traitor to myself and her,
 Never O never," for about as long
 As the wind-hover hangs in balance,
 paused
 Sir Aylmer reddening from the storm
 within,
 Then broke all bonds of courtesy, and
 crying
 "Boy, should I find you by my doors
 again,
 My men shall lash you from them like
 a dog;
 Hence!" with a sudden execration
 drove
 The footstool from before him, and
 arose;
 So, stammering "scoundrel" out of
 teeth that ground
 As in a dreadful dream, while Leolin
 still
 Retreated half-aghast, the fierce old
 man
 Follow'd, and under his own lintel
 stood
 Storming with lifted hands, a hoary
 face
 Meet for the reverence of the hearth,
 but now,
 Beneath a pale and unimpassion'd
 moon, [form'd.
 Vext with unworthy madness, and de-
 Slowly and conscious of the rageful
 eyes

That watch'd him, till he heard the
 ponderous door
 Close, crashing with long echoes thro'
 the land,
 Went Leolin; then, his passions all in
 flood
 And masters of his motion, furiously
 Down thro' the bright lawns to his
 brother's ran,
 And foam'd away his heart at Averill's
 ear:
 Whom Averill solaced as he might,
 amazed:
 The man was he, had been his father's
 friend:
 He must have seen, himself had seen
 it long:
 He must have known, himself had
 known: besides,
 He never yet had set his daughter
 forth
 Hers in the woman-markets of the
 west,
 Where our Caucasians let themselves
 be sold.
 Some one, he thought, had slander'd
 Leolin to him.
 "Brother, for I have loved you more
 as son
 Than brother, let me tell you: I my-
 self—
 What is their pretty saying? jilted,
 is it?
 Jilted I was: I say it for your peace.
 Pain'd, and, as hearing in myself the
 shame
 The woman should have borne, humili-
 ated,
 I lived for years a stunted sunless life;
 Till after our good parents past away
 Watching your growth, I seem'd again
 to grow.
 Leolin, I almost sin in envying you:
 The very whitest lamb in all my fold
 Loves you: I know her: the worst
 thought she has
 Is whiter even than her pretty hand:
 She must prove true: for, brother,
 where two fight
 The strongest wins, and truth and love
 are strength,
 And you are happy: let her parents
 be."
 But Leolin cried out the more upon
 them—
 Insolent, brainless, heartless! heiress,
 wealth,
 Their wealth, their heiress! wealth
 enough was theirs
 For twenty matches. Were he lord of
 this,
 Why twenty boys and girls should
 marry on it,
 And forty blest ones bless him, and
 himself
 Be wealthy still, ay wealthier. He
 believed
 This filthy marriage-hindering Mam-
 mon made



The harlot of the cities : nature crost
 Was mother of the foul adulteries
 That saturate soul with body. Name,
 too ! name,
 Their ancient name ! they *might* be
 proud ; its worth
 Was being Edith's. Ah how pale she
 had look'd
 Darling, to-night ! they must have
 rated her
 Beyond all tolerance. These old pheasant-lords,
 These partridge-breeders of a thousand
 years,
 Who had mildew'd in their thousands,
 doing nothing
 Since Egbert—why, the greater their
 disgrace !
 Fall back upon a name ! rest, rot in
 that !
 Not *keep* it noble ; make it nobler ?
 fools,
 With such a vantage-ground for noble-
 ness !
 He had known a man, a quintessence
 of man,
 The life of all—who madly loved—and
 he,
 Thwarted by one of these old father-
 fools,
 Had riot'd his life out, and made an
 end.
 He would not do it ! her sweet face
 and faith
 Held him from that : but he had pow-
 ers, he knew it :
 Back would he to his studies, make a
 name,
 Name, fortune too : the world should
 ring of him
 To shame these mouldy Aylmers in
 their graves :
 Chancellor, or what is greatest would
 he be—
 " O brother, I am grieved to learn your
 grief—
 Give me my fling, and let me say my
 say."

At which, like one that sees his own
 excess,
 And easily forgives it as his own,
 He laugh'd ; and when was muts ; but
 presently
 Wept like a storm : and honest Averill
 seeing
 How low his brother's mood had fallen,
 fetch'd
 His richest beeswing from a binn re-
 served
 For banquets, praised the waning red,
 and told
 The vintage—when *this* Aylmer came
 of age—
 Then drank and past it ; till at length
 the two,
 Tho' Leolin flamed and fell again,
 agreed
 That much allowance must be made
 for men.

After an angry dream this knidlier glow
 Faded with morning, but his purpose
 held.

Yet once by night again the lovers
 met,
 A perilous meeting under the tall
 pines
 That darken'd all the northward of
 her Hall.
 Him, to her meek and modest bosom
 prest
 In agony, she promised that no force,
 Persuasion, no, nor death could alter
 her :
 He, passionately hopefuller, would go,
 Labor for his own Edith, and return
 In such a sunlight of prosperity
 He should not be rejected. " Write to
 me !
 They loved me, and because I love
 their child
 They hate me : there is war between
 us, dear,
 Which breaks all bonds but ours ; we
 must remain
 Sacred to one another." So they talk'd,
 Poor children, for their comfort : the
 wind blew ;
 The rain of heaven, and their own hit-
 ter tears,
 Tears, and the careless rain of heaven,
 mixt
 Upon their faces, as they kiss'd each
 other
 In darkness, and above them roar'd
 the pine.

So Leolin went ; and as we task
 ourselves
 To learn a language known but smat-
 teringly
 In phrases here and there at random,
 toil'd
 Mastering the lawless science of our
 law,
 That codeless myriad of precedent,
 That wilderness of single instances,
 Thro' which a few, by wit or fortune
 led,
 May beat a pathway out to wealth and
 fame.
 The jests, that flash'd about the plead-
 er's room,
 Lightning of the hour, the pun, the
 scurrilous tale,—
 Old scandals buried now seven de-
 cades deep
 In other scandals that have lived and
 died,
 And left the living scandal that shall
 die—
 Were dead to him already ; bent as he
 was
 To make disproof of scorn, and strong
 in hopes,
 And prodigal of all brain-labor he,
 Charier of sleep, and wine, and exer-
 cise,
 Except when for a breathing-while at
 eve,



Some niggard fraction of an hour, he
 ran
 Beside the river-bank : and then in-
 deed
 Harder the timss were, and the hands
 of power
 Were bloodier, and the according
 hearts of men
 Seem'd harder too; but the soft river-
 breeze,
 Which fann'd the gardens of that rival
 rose
 Yet fragrant in a heart remembering
 His former talks with Edith, on him
 breathed
 Far purer in his rushings to and fro,
 After his books, to flush his blood with
 air,
 Then to his books again.. My lady's
 cousin,
 Half-sickening of his pension'd after-
 noon,
 Drove in upon the student once or
 twice.
 Ran a Malayan muck against the
 tines,
 Had golden hopes for France and all
 mankind,
 Answer'd all queries touching those at
 home
 With a heaved shoulder and a saucy
 smile,
 And fain had haled him out into the
 world,
 And air'd him there: his nearer friend
 would say
 "Screw not the cord too sharply lest it
 snap."
 Then left alone he pluck'd her dagger
 forth
 From where his worldless heart had
 kept it warm,
 Kissing his vows upon it like a knight.
 And wrinkled benches often talk'd of
 him
 Approvingly, and prophesied his rise :
 For heart, I think, help'd head ; her
 letters too,
 Tho' far between, and coming fitfully
 Like broken music, written as she
 found
 Or made occasion, being strictly
 watch'd,
 Charm'd him thro' every labyrinth till
 he saw
 An end, a hope, a light breaking upon
 him.

But they that cast her spirit into
 flesh,
 Her worldly-wise begetters, plagued
 themselves
 To sell her, those good parents, for her
 good.
 Whatever eldest-born of rank or
 wealth
 Might lie within their compass, him
 they lured
 Into their net made pleasant by the
 baits

Of gold and beauty, wooing him to woo.
 So month by month the noise about
 their doors,
 And distant blaze of those dull ban-
 quets, made
 The nightly wirer of their innocent
 hare
 Falter before he took it. All in vain,
 Sullen, defiant, pitying, wroth, return'd
 Leolin's rejected rivals from their suit
 So often, that the folly taking wings
 Slipt o'er those lazy limits down the
 wind
 With rumor, and became in other
 fields
 A mockery to the yeomen over ale,
 And laughter to their lords : but those
 at home,
 As hunters round a hunted creature
 draw
 The cordon close and closer toward
 the death,
 Narrow'd her goings out and comings
 in ;
 Forbade her first the house of Averill,
 Then closed her access to the wealthier
 farms,
 Last from her own home-circle of the
 poor
 They barr'd her : yet she bore it : yet
 her cheek
 Kept color : wondrous ! but, O mys-
 tery !
 What amulet drew her down to that
 old oak,
 So old, that twenty years before, a part
 Falling had let appear the brand of
 John—
 Once grovelike, each huge arm a tree,
 but now
 The broken base of a black tower, a
 cave
 Of touchwood, with a single flourishing
 spray.
 There the manorial lord too curiously
 Raking in that millennial touchwood-
 dust
 Found for himself a bitter treasure-
 trové ;
 Burst his own wyvern on the seal, and
 read
 Writhing a letter from his child, for
 which
 Came at the moment Leolin's emis-
 sary,
 A crippled lad, and coming turn'd to
 fly,
 But scared with threats of jail and
 halter gave
 To him that fluster'd his poor parish
 wits
 The letter which he brought, and swore
 besides
 To play their go-between as heretofore
 Nor let them know themselves be-
 tray'd ; and then,
 Soul stricken at their kindness to him,
 went
 Hating his own lean heart and mis-
 erable.



Thenceforward oft from out a despot
 dream
 The father panting woke, and oft, at
 dawn
 Aroused the black republic on his
 elms.
 Sweeping the frothy fly from the fescue
 brush'd
 Thro' the dim meadow toward his
 treasure-trove,
 Seized it, took home, and to my lady,—
 who made
 A downward crescent of her minion
 mouth,
 Listless in all despondence,—read ;
 and tore,
 As if the living passion symbol'd there
 Were living nerves to feel the rent ;
 and burnt,
 Now chafing at his own great self de-
 fied,
 Now striking on huge stumbling-blocks
 of scorn
 In babyisms, and dear diminutives
 Scatter'd all over the vocabulary
 Of such a love as like a chidden child,
 After much wailing, hush'd itself at last
 Hopeless of answer : then tho' Averill
 wrote
 And bade him with good heart sustain
 himself—
 All would be well—the lover heeded
 not,
 But passionately restless came and
 went,
 And rustling once at night about the
 place,
 There by a keeper shot at, slightly
 hurt,
 Raging return'd : nor was it well for
 her
 Kept to the garden now, and grove of
 pines,
 Watch'd even there ; and one was set
 to watch
 The watcher, and Sir Aylmer watch'd
 them all,
 Yet bitterer from his readings : once
 indeed,
 Warm'd with his wines, or taking pride
 in her,
 She look'd so sweet, he kiss'd her ten-
 derly
 Not knowing what possess'd him : that
 one kiss
 Was Leolin's one strong rival upon
 earth ;
 Seconded, for my lady follow'd suit,
 Seem'd hope's returning rose : and
 then ensued
 A Martin's summer of his faded love,
 Or ordeal by kindness ; after this
 He seldom crost his child without a
 sneer ;
 The mother flow'd in shallower acri-
 monies :
 Never one kindly smile, one kindly
 word :
 So that the gentle creature shut from
 all

Her charitable use, and face to face
 With twenty montas of silence, slowly
 lost
 Nor greatly cared to lose, her hold on
 life.
 Laet, some low fever ranging round to
 spy
 The weakness of a people or a house,
 Like flies that haunt a wound, or deer,
 or men,
 Of almost all that is, hurting the hurt—
 Save Christ as we believe him—found
 the girl
 And flung her down upon a couch of
 fire,
 Where careless of the household faces
 near,
 And crying upon the name of Leolin,
 She, and with her the race of Aylmer,
 past.

Star to star vibrates light : may soul
 to soul
 Strike thro' a finer element of her own ?
 So,—from afar,—touch as at once ? or
 why
 That night, that moment, when she
 named his name,
 Did the keen shriek "yes love, yes
 Edith, yes,"
 Shriill, till the comrade of his chambers
 woke,
 And came upon him half-arisen from
 sleep,
 With a weird bright eye, sweating and
 trembling,
 His hair as it were crackling into
 flames,
 His body half flung forward in pursuit,
 And his long arms stretch'd as to grasp
 a flyer :
 Nor knew he wherefore he had made
 the cry ;
 And being much befool'd and idioted
 By the rough amity of the other, sank
 As into sleep again. The second day,
 My lady's Indian kinsman rushing in,
 A breaker of the bitter news from
 home,
 Found a dead man, a letter edged with
 death
 Beside him, and the dagger which
 himself
 Gave Edith, reddened with no handit's
 blood :
 "From Edith" was engraven on the
 blade.

Then Averill went and gazed upon
 his death.
 And when he came again, his flock be-
 lieved—
 Beholding how the years which are
 not Time's
 Had blasted him—that many thousand
 days
 Were clipt by horror from his term of
 life.
 Yet the sad mother, for the second
 death



Scarce touch'd her thro' that nearness
of the first,
And being used to find her pastor
texts,
Sent to the harrow'd brother, praying
him
To speak before the people of her
child,
And fixt the Sabbath. Darkly that
day rose :
Autumn's mock sunshine of the faded
woods
Was all the life of it; for hard on
these,
A breathless burden of low-folded
heavens
Stifed and chill'd at once; but every
roof
Sent out a listener: many too had
known
Edith among the hamlets round, and
since
The parents' harshness and the hap-
less loves
And double death were widely mur-
mur'd, left
Their own gray tower, or plain-faced
tabernacle,
To hear him; all in mourning these,
and these
With blots of it about them, ribbon,
glove
Or kerchief; while the church,—one
night, except
For greenish gimmerings thro' the
lancets,—made
Still paler the pale head of him, who
tower'd
Above them, with his hopes in either
grave.

Long o'er his bent brows linger'd
Averill,
His face magnetic to the hand from
which
Livid he pluck'd it forth, and labor'd
thro'
His brief prayer-prelude, gave the
verse "Behold,
Your house is left unto you desolate!"
But lapsed into so long a pause again
As half amazed half frighted all his
flock:
Then from his height and loneliness
of grief
Bore down in flood, and dash'd his
angry heart
Against the desolations of the world.

Never since our bad earth became
one sea,
Which rolling o'er the palaces of the
proud,
And all but those who knew the living
God—
Eight that were left to make a purer
world—
When since had flood, fire, earthquake,
thunder, wrought
Such waste and havoc as the idolatries

Which from the low light of mortality
Shot up their shadows to the Heaven
of Heavens,
And worshipt their own darkness as
the Highest?
"Gash thyself, priest, and honor thy
brute Baäl,
And to thy worst self sacrifice thyself,
For with thy worst self hast thou
clothed thy God.
Then came a Lord in no wise like to
Baäl.
The babe shall lead the lion. Surely
now
The wilderness shall blossom as the
rose.
Crown thyself, worm, and worship thine
own lusts!—
No coarse and blockish God of acreage
Stands at thy gate for thee to grovel
to—
Thy God is far diffused in noble groves
And princely halls, and farms, and
flowing lawns,
And heaps of living gold that daily
grow,
And title-scrolls and gorgeous herald-
ries.
In such a shape dost thou behold thy
God.
Thou wilt not gash thy flesh for him;
for thine
Fares richly, in fair linen, not a hair
Rnited upon the scarfskin, even while
The deathless ruler of thy dying house
Is wounded to the death that cannot
die;
And tho' thou numberest with the fel-
lowers
Of One who cried 'leave all and follow
me.'
Thee therefore with His light about
thy feet,
Thee with His message ringing in thine
ears,
Thee shall thy brother man, the Lord
from Heaven,
Born of a village girl, carpenter's son,
Wonderful, Prince of peace, the Mighty
God,
Count the more base idolater of the two;
Crueller: as not passing thro' the fire
Bodies, but souls—thy children's—
thro' the smoke,
The blight of low desires—darkening
thine own
To thine own likeness; or if one of
these,
Thy better born unhappily from thee,
Should, as by miracle, grow straight
and fair—
Friends, I was bid to speak of such a
one
By those who most have cause to sor-
row for her—
Fairer than Rachel by the palmy well,
Fairer than Ruth among the fields of
corn,
Fair as the Angel that said 'hail' she
seem'd,



Who entering fill'd the house with sudden light
 For so mine own was brighten'd: where indeed
 The roof so lowly but that beam of Heaven
 Dawn'd sometime thro' the doorway? whose the babe
 Too ragged to be fondled on her lap,
 Warm'd at her bosom? The poor child of shame,
 The common care whom no one cared for, leapt
 To greet her, wasting his forgotten heart,
 As with the mother he had never known,
 In gambols; for her fresh and innocent eyes
 Had such a star of morning in their blue,
 That all neglected places of the field
 Broke into nature's music when they saw her.
 Low was her voice, but won mysterious way
 Thro' the seal'd ear to which a louder one
 Was all but silence—free of alms her hand—
 The hand that robed your cottage-walls with flowers
 Has often toll'd to clothe your little ones;
 How often placed upon the sick man's brow
 Cool'd it, or laid his feverish pillow smooth!
 Had you one sorrow and she shared it not?
 One burden and she would not lighten it?
 One spiritual doubt she did not soothe?
 Or when some heat of difference sparkled out,
 How sweetly would she glide between your wraths,
 And steal you from each other! for she walk'd
 Wearing the light yoke of that Lord of love, [see!
 Who still'd the rolling wave of Gall-
 And one—of him I was not bid to speak—
 Was always with her, whom you also knew.
 Him too you loved, for he was worthy love.
 And these had been together from the first;
 They might have been together till the last.
 Friends, this frail bark of ours, when sorely tried,
 May wreck itself without the pilot's guilt,
 Without the captain's knowledge: hope with me.
 Whose shame is that, if he went hence with shame?

Nor mine the fault, if losing both of these
 I cry to vacant chairs and widow'd walls,
 'My house is left unto me desolate.'"
 While thus he spoke, his hearers wept; but some,
 Sons of the glebe, with other frowns than those
 That knit themselves for summer shadow, scowl'd
 At their great lord. He, when it seem'd he saw
 No pale sheet-lightnings from afar, but fork'd
 Of the near storm, and aiming at his head,
 Sat anger-charm'd from sorrow, soldier-like,
 Erect: but when the preacher's cadence flow'd
 Softening thro' all the gentle attributes
 Of his lost child, the wife, who watch'd his face,
 Paled at a sudden twitch of his iron mouth;
 And "O pray God that he hold up" she thought
 "Or surely I shall shame myself and him."
 "Nor yours the blame—for who beside your hearths
 Can take her place—if echoing me you cry
 'Our house is left unto us desolate!'
 But thou, O thou that killest, hadst thou known,
 O thou that stonest, hadst thou understood
 The things belonging to thy peace and ours!
 Is there no prophet but the voice that calls
 Doom upon kings, or in the waste 'Repent'
 Is not our own child on the narrow way,
 Who down to those that saunter in the broad
 Cries 'come up hither,' as a prophet to us?
 Is there no stoning save with flint and rock?
 Yes, as the dead we weep for testify—
 No desolation but by sword and fire?
 Yes, as your moanings witness, and myself
 Am lonelier, darker, earthlier for my loss.
 Give me your prayers, for he is past your prayers,
 Not past the living fount of pity in Heaven.
 But I that thought myself long-suffering, meek,
 Exceeding 'poor in spirit'—how the words
 Have twisted hack upon themselves, and mean



Vileness, we are grown so proud—I
wish'd my voice
A rushing tempest of the wrath of God
To blow these sacrifices thro' the
world—
Sent like the twelve-divided concu-
bine
To inflame the tribes : but there—out
yonder—earth
Lightens from her own central Hell—
O there
The red fruit of an old idolatry—
The heads of chiefs and princes fall so
fast,
They cling together in the ghastly
sack—
The land all shambles—naked mar-
riages
Flash from the bridge, and ever-mur-
der'd France,
By shores that darken with the gather-
ing wolf,
Runs in a river of blood to the sick
sea.
Is this a time to madden madness
then ?
Was this a time for these to flaunt
their pride ?
May Pharaoh's darkness, folds as dense
as those
Which hid the Holiest from the peo-
ple's eyes
Ere the great death, shroud this great
sin from all !
Doubtless our narrow world must can-
vass it :
O rather pray for those and pity them,
Who thro' their own desire accom-
plish'd bring
Their own gray hairs with sorrow to
the grave—
Who broke the bond which they de-
sired to break,
Which else had link'd their race with
times to come—
Who wove coarse webs to snare her
purity,
Grossly contriving their dear daugh-
ter's good—
Poor soule, and knew not what they
did, but sat
Ignorant, devising their own daugh-
ter's death !
May not that earthly chastisement suf-
fice ?
Have not our love and reverence left
them bare ?
Will not another take their heritage ?
Will there be children's laughter in
their hall
For ever and for ever, or one stone
Left on another, or is it a light thing
That I their guest, their host, their an-
cient friend,
I made by these the last of all my race
Must cry to these the last of theirs, as
cried
Christ ere His agony to those that swore
Not by the temple but the gold, and
made

Their own traditions God, and slew the
Lord,
And left their memories a world's
curse— Behold,
Your house— is left unto you des-
olate ? ”

Ended he had not, but she brook'd
no more :
Long since her heart had beat re-
morselessly,
Her cramped-up sorrow pain'd her, and
a sense
Of meanness in her nnresisting life.
Then their eyes vext her ; for on en-
tering
He had cast the curtains of their seat
aside—
Black velvet of the costliest—she hor-
self
Had seen to that : fain had she closed
them now,
Yet dared not stir to do it, only near'd
Her husband inch by inch, but when
she laid,
Wifelike, her hand in one of his, he
veil'd
His face with the other, and at once,
as falls
A creper when the prop is broken,
fell
The woman shrieking at his feet, and
swoon'd.
Then her own people bore along the
nave
Her pendent hands, and narrow mea-
gre face
Seam'd with the shallow cares of fifty
years :
And her the Lord of all the landscape
round
Ev'n to his last horizon, and of all
Who peer'd at him so keenly, follow'd
out
Tall and erect, but in the middle aisle
Reel'd, as a footsore ox in crowded
ways
Stumbling across the market to his
death,
Unpitied ; for he groped as blind, and
seem'd
Always about to fall, grasping the
pews
And oaken finials till he touch'd the
door ;
Yet to the lychgate, where his chariot
stood,
Strode from the porch, tall and erect
again.

But nevermore did either pass the
gate
Save under pall with hearers. In one
month,
Thro' weary and yet ever wearier
hours,
The childless mother went to seek her
child ;
And when he felt the silence of his
house



About him, and the change and not
 the change,
 And those fixt eyes of painted ances-
 tors
 Staring for ever from their gilded walls
 On him their last descendant, his own
 head
 Began to droop, to fall; the man be-
 came
 Imbecile; his one word was "des-
 olate";
 Dead for two years before his death
 was he;
 But when the second Christmas came,
 escaped
 His keepers, and the silence which he
 felt,
 To find a deeper in the narrow gloom
 By wife and child; nor wanted at his
 end
 The dark retinue reverencing death
 At golden thresholds; nor from tender
 hearts,
 And those who sorrow'd o'er a van-
 ish'd race,
 Pity, the violet on the tyrant's grave.
 Then the great Hall was wholly broken
 down,
 And the broad woodland parcell'd into
 farms;
 And where the two contrived their
 daughter's good,
 Lies the hawk's cast, the mole has
 made his run,
 The hedgehog underneath the plantain
 bores,
 The rabbit fondles his own harmless
 face,
 The slow-worm creeps, and the thin
 weasel there
 Follows the mouse, and all is open
 field.

SEA DREAMS.

A CITY clerk, hut gently born and
 bred;
 His wife, an unknown artist's orphan
 child—
 One babe was theirs, a Margaret, three
 years old:
 They, thinking that her clear german-
 der eye
 Droopt in the giant-factoried city-
 gloom,
 Came, with a month's leave given them
 to the sea:
 For which his gains were dock'd, how-
 ever small:
 Small were his gains, and hard his
 work; besides,
 Their slender household fortunes (for
 the man
 Had risk'd his little) like the little
 thrift,
 Trembled in perilous places o'er a
 deep:
 And oft, when sitting all alone, his
 face

Would darken, as he cursed his credu-
 lousness,
 And that one unctious mouth which
 lured him, rogue,
 To buy strange shares in some Peru-
 vian mine,
 Now seaward-bound for health they
 gain'd a coast,
 All sand and cliff and deep-inrunning
 cave,
 At close of day; slept, woke, and went
 the next,
 The Sabbath, pious variers from the
 church,
 To chapel; where a heated pulpiteer,
 Not preaching simple Christ to simple
 men,
 Announced the coming doom, and ful-
 minated
 Against the scarlet woman and her
 creed:
 For sideways up he swung his arms,
 and shriek'd
 "Thus, thus with violence," ev'n as if
 he held
 The Apocalyptic millstone, and him-
 self
 Were that great Angel; "Thus with
 violence
 Shall Babylon be cast into the sea;
 Then comes the close." The gentle-
 hearted wife
 Sat shuddering at the ruin of a world;
 He at his own; hut when the wordy
 storm
 Had ended, forth they came and paced
 the shore,
 Ran in and out the long sea-framing
 caves,
 Drank the large air, and saw, but
 scarce believed
 (The sootflake of so many a summer
 still
 Clung to their fancies) that they saw
 the sea.
 So now on sand they walk'd, and now
 on cliff,
 Lingering about the thymy promonto-
 ries,
 Till all the sails were darken'd in the
 west,
 And rosed in the east: then homeward
 and to bed:
 Where she, who kept a tender Chris-
 tian hope
 Haunting a holy text, and still to that
 Returning, as the bird returns, at
 night,
 "Let not the sun go down upon your
 wrath,"
 Said, "Love, forgive him;" hut he
 did not speak;
 And silenced by that silence lay the
 wife,
 Remembering her dear Lord who died
 for all,
 And musing on the little lives of
 men,
 And how they mar this little by their
 feuds.



But while the two were sleeping, a
 full tide
 Rose with ground-swell, which, on the
 foremost rocks
 Touching, upjettied in spirts of wild
 sea-smoke,
 And scaled in sheets of wasteful foam,
 and fell
 In vast sea-cataracts—ever and anon
 Dead claps of thunder from within the
 cliffs
 Heard thro' the living roar. At this
 the babe,
 Their Margaret cradled near them,
 wail'd and woke
 The mother, and the father suddenly
 cried,
 "A wreck, a wreck!" then turn'd, and
 groaning said,
 "Forgive! How many will say, 'for-
 give,' and find
 A sort of absolution in the sound
 To hate a little longer! No; the sin
 That neither God nor man can well
 forgive,
 Hypocrisy, I saw it in him at once.
 Is it so true that second thoughts are
 best?
 Not first, and third, which are a riper
 first?
 Too ripe, too late! they come too late
 for use.
 Ah love, there surely lives in man and
 beast
 Something divine to warn them of
 their foes:
 And such a sense, when first I fronted
 him,
 Said, 'trust him not;' but after, when
 I came
 To know him more, I lost it, knew him
 less;
 Fought with what seem'd my own un-
 charity;
 Sat at his table; drank his costly
 wines;
 Made more and more allowance for his
 talk;
 Went further, fool! and trusted him
 with all,
 All my poor scrapings from a dozen
 years
 Of dust and deskwork: there is no
 such mine,
 None; but a gulf of ruin, swallowing
 gold,
 Not making. Ruin'd! ruin'd! the sea
 roars
 Ruin: a fearful night!"
 "Not fearful; fair,"
 Said the good wife, "if every star in
 heaven
 Can make it fair: you do but hear the
 tide.
 Had you ill dreams?"
 "O yes," he said, "I dream'd
 Of such a tide swelling toward the
 land,
 And I from out the boundless outer
 deep

Swept with it to the shore, and enter'd
 one
 Of those dark caves that run beneath
 the cliffs.
 I thought the motion of the boundless
 deep
 Bore through the cave, and I was
 heaved upon it
 In darkness: then I saw one lovely
 star
 Larger and larger. 'What a world,' I
 thought,
 'To live in!' but in moving on I found
 Only the landward exit of the cave,
 Bright with the sun upon the stream
 beyond:
 And near the light a giant woman sat,
 All over earthy, like a piece of earth,
 A pickaxe in her hand: then out I
 slipt
 Into a land all sun and blossom, trees
 As high as heaven, and every bird that
 sings:
 And here the night-light flickering in
 my eyes
 Awoke me."

"That was then your dream," she
 said,
 "Not sad, but sweet."

"So sweet, I lay," said he,
 "And mused upon it, drifting up the
 stream
 In fancy, till I slept again, and pieced
 The broken vision; for I dream'd that
 still
 The motion of the great deep bore me
 on.
 And that the woman walk'd upon the
 brink:
 I wonder'd at her strength, and ask'd
 her of it:
 'It came,' she said, 'by working in the
 mines:'
 O then to ask her of my shares, I
 thought;
 And ask'd; but not a word; she shook
 her head.
 And then the motion of the current
 ceased,
 And there was rolling thunder; and we
 reach'd
 A mountain, like a wall of burrs and
 thorns;
 But she with her strong feet up the
 steep hill
 Trod out a path: I follow'd; and at
 top
 She pointed seaward; there a fleet of
 glass,
 That seem'd a fleet of jewels under me,
 Sailing along before a gloomy cloud
 That not one moment ceased to thun-
 der, past
 In sunshine: right across its track
 there lay,
 Down in the water, a long reef of gold,
 Or what seem'd gold: and I was glad
 at first



To think that in our often-ransack'd world
 Still so much gold was left; and then
 I fear'd
 Lest the gay navy there should splinter
 on it,
 And fearing waved my arm to warn
 them off;
 An idle signal, for the brittle fleet
 (I thought I could have died to save it)
 near'd,
 Touch'd, clink'd, and clash'd, and van-
 ish'd, and I woke,
 I heard the clash so clearly. Now I see
 My dream was Life; the woman honest
 Work;
 And my poor ventures but a fleet of
 glass
 Wreck'd on a reef of visionary gold."

"Nay," said the kindly wife to com-
 fort him,
 "You raised your arm, you tumbled
 down and broke
 The glass with little Margaret's medi-
 cine in it;
 And, breaking that, you made and
 broke your dream:
 A trifle makes a dream, a trifle breaks."

"No trifle," groan'd the husband;
 "yesterday
 I met him suddenly in the street, and
 ask'd
 That which I ask'd the woman in my
 dream.
 Like her, he shook his head. 'Show
 me the books!'
 He dodged me with a long and loose
 account,
 'The books, the books!' but he, he
 could not wait,
 Bound on a matter he of life and
 death:
 When the great Books (see Daniel
 seven and ten)
 Were open'd, I should find he meant
 me well;
 And then began to bloat himself, and
 ooze
 All over with the fat affectionate smile
 That makes the widow lean. 'My
 dearest friend,
 Have faith, have faith! We live by
 faith,' said he;
 'And all things work together for the
 good
 Of those'—it makes me sick to quote
 him—last
 Gript my hand hard, and with God-
 bless-you went.
 I stood like one that had received a
 blow:
 I found a hard friend in his loose
 accounts,
 A loose one in the hard grip of his hand,
 A curse in his God-bless-you: then
 my eyes
 Pursued him down the street, and far
 away,

Among the honest shoulders of the
 crowd,
 Read rascal in the motions of his back,
 And scoundrel in the supple-sliding
 knee."

"Was he so bound, poor soul?" said
 the good wife;
 "So are we all: but do not call him,
 love,
 Before you prove him, rogue, and
 proved, forgive.
 His gain is loss; for he that wrongs his
 friend
 Wrongs himself more, and ever bears
 about
 A silent court of justice in his breast,
 Himself the judge and jury, and himself
 The prisoner, at the bar, ever con-
 demn'd:
 And that drags down his life: then
 comes what comes
 Hereafter: and he meant, he said he
 meant, you well."

"With all his conscience and one
 eye askew"—
 Love, let me quote these lines, that
 you may learn
 A man is likewise counsel for himself,
 Too often, in that silent court of yours—
 'With all his conscience and one eye
 askew,
 So false, he partly took himself for
 true;
 Whose pious talk, when most his heart
 was dry,
 Made wet the crafty crowsfoot round
 his eye;
 Who, never naming God except for
 gain,
 So never took that useful name in
 vain;
 Made Him his catspaw and the Cross
 his tool,
 And Christ the bait to trap his dupe
 and fool;
 Nor deeds of gift, but gifts of grace he
 forged,
 And snake-like slimed his victim ere
 he gorged;
 And oft at Bible meetings, o'er the
 rest
 Arising, did his holy oily best,
 Dropping the too rough H in Hell and
 Heaven,
 To spread the Word by which himself
 had thriven.'
 How like you this old satire?"

"Nay," she said,
 "I loathe it: he had never kindly heart,
 Nor ever cared to better his own kind,
 Who first wrote satire, with no pity in it.
 But will you hear my dream, for I had
 one
 That altogether went to music? Still
 It awed me."

Then she told it, having dream'd
 Of that same coast.





"—But round the North, a light,
 A belt, it seem'd, of luminous vapor,
 lay,
 And ever in it a low musical note
 Swell'd up and died ; and, as itswell'd,
 a ridge
 Of breaker issued from the belt, and
 still
 Grew with the growing note, and when
 the note
 Had reach'd a thunderous fulness, on
 those cliffs
 Broke, mixt with awful light (the same
 as that
 Living within the belt) whereby she saw
 That all those lines of cliffs were cliffs
 no more,
 But huge cathedral fronts of every age
 Grave, florid, stern, as far as eye could
 see,
 One after one : and then the great
 ridge drew,
 Lessening to the lessening music, back,
 And past into the belt and swell'd
 again
 Slowly to music : ever when it broke
 The statues, king or saint, or founder
 fell ;
 Then from the gaps and chasms of ruin
 left
 Came men and women in dark clusters
 round,
 Some crying, ' Set them up ! they shall
 not fall !'
 And others ' Let them lie, for they
 have fall'n.'
 And still they strove and wrangled ;
 and she grieved
 In her strange dream, she knew not
 why, to find
 Their wildest wallings never out of
 tune
 With that sweet note ; and ever as their
 shrieks
 Ran highest up the gamut, that great
 wave
 Returning, while none mark'd it, on
 the crowd
 Broke, mixt with awful light, and
 show'd their eyes
 Glaring, and passionate looks, and
 swept away
 The men of flesh and blood, and men
 of stone,
 To the waste deeps together.

" Then I fixt
 My wistful eyes on two fair images,
 Both crown'd with stars and high
 among the stars,—
 The Virgin Mother standing with her
 child
 High up on one of those dark minster-
 fronts—
 Till she began to totter, and the child
 Clung to the mother, and sent out a cry
 Which mixt with little Margaret's, and
 I woke,
 And my dream awed me:—well—but
 what are dreams ?

Yours came but from the breaking of
 glass,
 And mine but from the crying of a
 child."

" Child ? No ! " said he, " but this
 tide's roar, and his,
 Our Boanerges with his threats of doom,
 And loud-lung'd Antibabylonianisms
 (Altho' I grant but little music there)
 Went both to make your dream : but
 if there were
 A music harmonizing our wild cries,
 Sphere-music such as that you dream'd
 about,
 Why, that would make our passions
 far too like
 The discords dear to the musician. No—
 One shriek of hate would jar all the
 hymns of heaven :
 True Devils with no ear, they howl in
 tune
 With nothing but the Devil ! "

" ' True ' indeed !
 One of our town, but later by an hour
 Here than ourselves, spoke with me on
 the shore ;
 While you were running down the
 sands, and made
 The dimpled flounce of the sea-fur-
 below flap,
 Good man, to please the child. She
 brought strange news.
 Why were you silent when I spoke to-
 night ?
 I had set my heart on your forgiving
 him
 Before you knew. We must forgive the
 dead."

" Dead ! who is dead ? "
 " The man your eye pursued.
 A little after you had parted with him,
 He suddenly dropt dead of heart-
 disease."

" Dead ? he ? of heart-disease ? what
 heart had he
 To die of ? dead ! "

" Ah, dearest, if there be
 A devil in man, there is an angel too,
 And if he did that wrong you charge
 him with,
 His angel broke his heart. But your
 rough voice
 (You spoke so loud) has roused the
 child again.
 Sleep, little birdie, sleep ! will she not
 sleep
 Without her ' little birdie ' ? well then,
 sleep,
 And I will sing you ' birdie.' "

Saying this,
 The woman half turn'd round from
 him she loved,
 Left him one hand, and reaching thro'
 the night
 Her other, found (for it was close beside)
 And half embraced the basket cradle-
 head



With one soft arm, which, like the
pliant bough
That moving moves the nest and nest-
ling, away'd
The cradle, while she sang this baby
song.

What does little birdie say
In her nest at peep of day?
Let me fly, says little birdie,
Mother, let me fly away.
Birdie, rest a little longer,
Till the little wings are stronger.
So she rests a little longer,
Then she flies away.

What does little baby say,
In her bed at peep of day?
Baby says, like little birdie,
Let me rise and fly away.
Baby, sleep a little longer,
Till the little limbs are stronger.
If she sleeps a little longer
Baby too shall fly away.

"She sleeps; let us too, let all evil,
sleep.

He also sleeps—another sleep than ours.
He can do no more wrong: forgive him,
dear.

"And I shall sleep the sounder!"

Then the man,

"His deeds yet live, the worst is yet to
come.

Yet let your sleep for this one night
be sound:

I do forgive him!"

"Thanks, my love," she said,

"Your own will be the sweeter," and
they slept.

THE GRANDMOTHER.

I.

AND Willy, my eldest-born, is gone,
you say, little Anne?
Ruddy, and white, and strong on his
legs, he looks like a man.
And Willy's wife has written; she
never was over-wise.
Never the wife for Willy: he wouldn't
take my advice.

II.

For, Annie, you see, her father was not
the man to save,
Hadh't a head to manage, and drank
himself into his grave.
Pretty enough, very pretty! but I was
against it for one.
Eh!—but he wouldn't hear me—and
Willy, you say, is gone.

III.

Willy, my beauty, my eldest-born, the
flower of the flock;
Never a man could fling him; for
Willy stood like a rock.

"Here's a leg for a babe of a week!"
says doctor; and he would be
bound,
There was not his like that year in
twenty parishes round.

IV.

Strong of his hands, and strong on his
legs, but still of his tongue!
I ought to have gone before him: I
wonder he went so young.
I cannot cry for him, Annie: I have
not long to stay;
Perhaps I shall see him the sooner, for
he lived far away.

V.

Why do you look at me, Annie? you
think I am hard and cold;
But all my children have gone before
me, I am so old:
I cannot weep for Willy, nor can I
weep for the rest;
Only at your age, Annie, I could have
wept with the best.

VI.

For I remember a quarrel I had with
your father, my dear,
All for a slanderous story, that cost me
many a tear.
I mean your grandfather, Annie: it
cost me a world of woe,
Seventy years ago, my darling, seventy
years ago.

VII.

For Jenny, my cousin, had come to the
place, and I knew right well
That Jenny had tript in her time: I
knew, but I would not tell.
And she to be coming and slandering
me, the base little liar!
But the tongue is a fire as you know,
my dear, the tongue is a fire.

VIII.

And the parson made it his text that
week, and he said likewise,
That a lie which is half a truth is ever
the blackest of lies,
That a lie which is all a lie may bemet
and fought with outright,
But a lie which is part a truth is a
harder matter to fight.

IX.

And Willy had not been down to the
farm for a week and a day;
And all things look'd half-dead, tho' it
was the middle of May.
Jennie, to slander me, who knew what
Jennie had been!
But soiling another, Annie, will never
make one's self clean.

X.

And cried myself wellnigh blind, and
all of an evening late



I climb'd to the top of the garth, and
stood by the road at the gate.
The moon like a rick on fire was rising
over the dale,
And whit, whit, whit, in the bush beside
me chirrupt the nightingale.

XI.

All of a sudden he stoep : there past
by the gate of the farm,
Willy,—he didn't see me,—and Jenny
hung on his arm.
Out into the road I started, and spoke
I scarce knew how ;
Ah, there's no fool like the old one—
it makes me angry now.

XII.

Willy stood up like a man, and look'd
the thing that he meant ;
Jenny, the viper, made me a mocking
courtesy, and went.
And I said, " Let us part : in a hundred
years it'll be all the same,
You cannot love me at all, if you love
not my good name."

XIII.

And he turn'd, and I saw his eyes all
wet, in the sweet moonshine :
" Sweetheart, I love you so well that
your good name is mine.
And what do I care for Jane, let her
speak of you well or ill ;
But marry me out of hand : we too
shall be happy still."

XIV.

" Marry you, Willy !" said I, " but I
needs must speak my mind,
And I fear you'll listen to tales, he
jealous and hard and unkind."
But he turn'd and claspt me in his arms,
and answer'd, " No, love, no ;"
Seventy years ago, my darling, seventy
years ago.

XV.

So Willy and I were wedded : I wore a
lilac gown ;
And the ringers rang with a will, and
he gave the ringers a crown.
But the first that ever I bare was dead
before he was born,
Shadow and shine is life, little Annie,
flower and thorn.

XVI.

That was the first time, too, that ever
I thought of death.
There lay the sweet little body that
never had drawn a breath.
I had not wept, little Annie, not since
I had been a wife ;
But I wept like a child that day, for the
babe had fought for his life

XVII.

His dear little face was troubled, as if
with anger or pain :

I look'd at the still little body—his
trouble had all been in vain.
For Willy I cannot weep, I shall see
him another morn :
But I wept like a child for the child
that was dead before he was
born.

XVIII.

But he cheer'd me, my good man, for
he seldom said me nay :
Kind, like a man, was he ; like a man,
too, would have his way :
Never jealous—not he : we had many a
happy year ;
And he died, and I could not weep—
my own time seem'd so near.

XIX.

But I wish'd it had been God's will that
I too, then could have died ;
I began to be tired a little, and fain
had slept at his side.
And that was ten years back, or more,
if I don't forget :
But as to the childre, Annie, they're
all about me yet.

XX.

Pattering over the boards, my Annie
who left me at two,
Patter she goes, my own little Annie,
an Annie like you :
Pattering over the boards, she comes
and goes at her will,
While Harry is in the five-acre and
Charlie ploughing the hill.

XXI.

And Harry and Charlie, I hear them
too—they sing to their team :
Often they come to the door in a pleas-
ant kind of a dream.
They come and sit by my chair, they
hover about my head—
I am not always certain if they be alive
or dead.

XXII.

And yet I know for a truth, there's
none of them left alive ;
For Harry went at sixty, your father
at sixty-five :
And Willy, my eldest-born, at nigh
threescore and ten ;
I knew them all as babies, and now
they're elderly men.

XXIII.

For mine is a time of peace, it is not
often I grieve ;
I am oftener sitting at home in my fa-
ther's farm at eve :
And the neighbors come and laugh and
gossip, and so do I ;
I find myself often laughing at things
that have long gone by.

XXIV.

To be sure the preacher says, our sins
should make us sad :



But mine is a time of peace, and there
is Grace to be had ;
And God, not man, is the Judge of us
all when life shall cease ;
And in this Book, little Annie, the
message is one of Peace.

XXV.

And age is a time of peace, so it be
free from pain,
And happy has been my life ; but I
would not live it again.
I seem to be tired a little, that's all,
and long for rest ;
Only at your age, Annie, I could have
wept with the best.

XXVI.

So Willy has gone, my beauty, my
eldest-born, my flower ;
But how can I weep for Willy, he has
but gone for an hour,—
Gone for a minute, my son, from this
room into the next ;
I, too, shall go in a minute. What time
have I to be vexed ;

XXVII.

And Willy's wife has written, she
never was over-wise.
Get me my glasses, Annie : thank God
that I keep my eyes.
There is but a trifle left you, when I
shall have past away.
But stay with the old woman now : you
cannot have long to stay.

NORTHERN FARMER.

OLD STYLE.

I.

WHEER 'asta beän saw long and meä
liggin' 'ere aloän ?
Noorse ? thoort nowt o' a noorse: whoy,
Doctor's abeän an' agoän :
Says that I moänt 'a naw moor aäle :
but I beänt a fool :
Git ma my aäle, for I beänt a-gocin' to
breäk my rule.

II.

Doctors, they knaws nowt, for a says
what's nawways true :
Naw soort o' koind o' use to säy the
things that a do.
I've 'ed my point o' aäle ivry noight
sin' I beän 'ere,
An' I've 'ed my quart ivry market-
noight for foorty year.

III.

Parson's a beän loikewise, an' a sittin
'ere o' my bed.
"The amoghty's a taäkin o' you to
'issén, my friend," a said,
An' a towd ma my sins, an' 's toithe
were due, an' I gied it in hond ;
I done my duty by 'm, as I 'a done by
the lond.

IV.

Larn'd a ma' beä, I reckons I 'anno
sa mooch to larn.
But a cast oop, thot a did, 'boot Bess,
Marrie's bairn.
Thaw a knaws I hallus voäted wi
Squoire an' 'choorch an staäte,
An' i' the woost o' toimes I wur nive
agin the raäte.

V.

An' I hallus coomed to's choorch afoo
moy Sally wur deäd,
An' 'eerd un a hummin' awaäy loike :
buzzard-clock * ower my eäd
An' I niver knaw'd whot a meän'd bi
I thowt a 'ad summut to säy
An' I thowt a said whot owt to 'a a säi
an' I coom'd awaäy.

VI.

Bessy Marrie's bairn ! tha knaws she
lääid it to meä.
Mowt 'a beän, mayhap, for she wur :
bad un, sheä.
'Siver, I kep 'm, I kep 'm, my lass, tha
mun understand ;
I done my duty hy 'm as I 'a done
by the lond.

VII.

But Parson a comes an' a goos, an' :
says it eäsy an' freeä
"The amoghty's a taäkin o' you to
'issén, my friend," says 'eä.
I weänt säy men be lojärs, thaw sum
mun said it in 'aäste :
But a reäds wonn earnin a weeäk
an' I 'a stuhb'd Thurnab,
waäste.

VIII.

D'ya moind the waäste, my lass ? naw
naw, tha was not born then ;
Theer wur a boggle in it, I often 'eer
'm mysen ;
Moäst loike a butter-bump, † for I 'eer
'm about an' aboot,
But I stuhb'd 'm oop wi' the lot, an
raäved an' rembled 'm oot.

IX.

Keäper's it wur ; fo' they fun 'm thee
a-lääd on 'is face
Doon i' the woild 'enemies † afoor
coomed to the plaäce.
Noäks or Thimblehy—toaner 'ed sho
'm as deäd as a naäil.
Noäks wur 'ang'd for it oop at 'soize-
but git ma my aäle.

X.

Dubbut look at the waäste ; thee
warn't not feeäd for a cow ;
Nowt at all but bracken an' fuzz, ar
look at it now—
Warn't worth nowt a haäcra, an' no'
theer's lots o' feeäd,
Fourscoor yows upon it an' some on i
doon in seeäd.

* Cockchafer.

† Bittern.

‡ Anemones.



XI.

Nobbut a bit on it 's left, an' I meän'd
to 'a stubb'd it at fall,
Done it ia-year I meän'd, an' runn'd
plough thru' it an' all,
If godamoighty an' parson 'ud nobbut
let ma aloän,
Meä, wi' haäts conderd haäcre o'
Squire's, an' lond o' my oän.

XII.

Do godamoighty knaw what a 's doing
a-taäkin' o' meä ?
I heänt wonn as saws 'ere a beän an'
yonder a peä ;
An' Squire 'ull be sa mad an' all—a'
dear a' dear!
And I 'a managed for Squire come
Michaelmas thutty year.

XIII.

A mowt 'a taäen owd Joänes, as 'ant
nor a 'aäpoth o' sense,
Or a mowt 'a taäsn young Robins—a
niver mended a fence :
But godamoighty a moost taäke meä
an' taäke ma now
Wi' 'aäf the cows to cauve an' Thurna-
by hoalms to plough !

XIV.

Look 'ow quoloty smoles when they
seeäs ma a passin' by,
Says to thessén naw doubt " what a
man a beä sewer-ly !"
For they knaws what I beän to Squire
sin fust a comed to the 'All ;
I done my duty by Squire an' I done
my duty by hall.

XV.

Squire's in Lunnon, an' summun I
reckons 'ull 'a to wroite,
For whoä 's to howd the lond ater meä
thot muddles ma quoit ;
Sartin-sewer I beä, thot a weänt niver
give it to Joänes,
Naw nor a moänt to Robins—a niver
rembles the stoäns.

XVI.

But summun 'ull come ater meä may
hap wi' is kittle o' steäm
Huzzin' an' maäzin' the blessed feälde
wi' the Divil's oän teäm.
If I mun doy I mun doy, an' loife they
says is sweet,
But if I mun doy I mun doy, for I
couldn abeär to see it.

XVII.

What atta stannin' theer for, an' doesn
bring ma the 'aäle ?
Doctor's a toätler, laas, an a 's hallüs i'
the owd taäle ;
I weänt breäk rules for Doctor, a knaws
naw moor nor a floy ;
Git ma my 'aäle I tell tha, an' if I mun
doy I mun doy.

TITHONUS.

THE woods decay, the woods decay and
fall,
The vapors weep their burden to the
ground,
Man comes and tills the field and lies
beneath,
And after many a summer dies the
swan.
Ms only cruel immortality
Consumes : I wither slowly in thine
arms,
Here at the quiet limit of the world,
A white-hair'd shadow roaming like a
dream
The ever silent spaces of the East,
Far-folded mists, and gleaming halls
of morn.

Alas ! for this gray shadow, once a
man—
So glorious in his beauty and thy
choies,
Who madest him thy chosen, that he
seem'd
To his great heart none other than a
God !
I ask'd thee, " Give me immortality."
Then did'st thou grant mine asking
with a smile,
Like wealthy men who care not how
they give.
But thy strong Hours indignant work'd
their wills,
And beat me down and marr'd and
wasted me,
And tho' they could not end me, left
me maim'd
To dwell in presence of immortal youth,
Immortal age beside immortal youth,
And all I was, in ashes. Can thy love,
Thy beauty, make amends, tho' even
now,
Close over us, the silver star, thy guide,
Shines in those tremulous eyes that fill
with tears
To hear me ? Let me go : take back
thy gift :
Why should a man desire in any way
To vary from the kindly race of men,
Or pass beyond the goal of ordinance
Where all should pause, as is most
meet for all ?

A soft air fans the cloud apart ;
there comes
A glimpse of that dark world where I
was born.
Once more the old mysterious glimmer
steals
From thy pure brows, and from thy
shoulders pure,
And bosom beating with a heart re-
new'd.
Thy cheek begins to redden thro' the
gloom,
Thy sweet eyes brighten slowly close
to mine.



Ere yet they blind the stars, and the
wild team
Which love thee, yearning for thy
yoke, arise,
And shake the darkness from their
loosen'd manes,
And beat the twilight into flakes of
fire.

Lo ! ever thus thou growest beautiful
In silence, then before thine answer
given
Departest, and thy tears are on my
cheek.

Why wilt thou ever scare me with
thy tears,
And make me tremble lest a saying
learnt,
In days far-off, on that dark earth, be
true ?
"The Gods themselves cannot recall
their gifts."

Ay me ! ay me ! with what another
heart
In days far-off, and with what other
eyes
I used to watch—if I be he that
watch'd—
The lucid outline forming round thee ;
saw
The dim curls kindle into sunny rings ;
Changed with thy mystic change, and
felt my blood
Glow with the glow that slowly crim-
son'd all
Thy presence and thy portals, while I
lay,
Mouth, forehead, eyelids, growing
dewy-warm
With kisses balmier than half-opening
buds
Of April, and could hear the lips that
kiss'd
Whispering I knew not what of wild
and sweet,
Like that strange song I heard Apollo
sing,
While I lion like a mist rose into
towers.

Yet hold me not for ever in thine
East :
How can my nature longer mix with
thine ?
Coldly thy rosy shadows bathe me, cold
Are all thy lights, and cold my wrin-
kled feet
Upon thy glimmering thresholds, when
the steam
Floats up from those dim fields about
the homes
Of happy men that have the power to
die,
And grassy barrows of the happier
dead.
Reless me, and restore me to the
ground ;

Thou seest all things, thou wilt see my
grave :
Thou wilt renew thy beauty morn by
morn ;
I earth in earth forget these empty
courts,
And thee returning on thy silver
wheels.

THE VOYAGE.

I.
We left behind the painted buoy
That tosses at the harbor-mouth ;
And madly danced our hearts with joy,
As fast we fled to the South :
How fresh was every sight and sound
On open main or winding shore !
We knew the merry world was round,
And we might sail for evermore.

II,
Warm broke the breeze against the
brow,
Dry sang the tackle, sang the sail :
The Lady's-head upon the prow
Caught the shrill salt, and sheer'd
the gale.
The broad seas swell'd to meet the keel,
And swept behind : so quick the run,
We felt the good ship shake and reel,
We seem'd to sail into the Sun !

III.
How oft we saw the Sun retire,
And burn the threshold of the night,
Fall from his Ocean-lane of fire,
And sleep beneath his pillar'd light !
How oft the purple-skirted robe
Of twilight slowly downward drawn,
As thro' the slumber of the globe
Again we dash'd into the dawn !

IV.
New stars all night above the brim
Of waters lighten'd into view ;
They climb'd as quickly, for the rim
Changed every moment as we flew.
Far ran the naked moon across
The houseless ocean's heaving field,
Or flying shone, the silver boss
Of her own halo's dusky shield ;

V.
The peaky islet shifted shapes,
High towns on hills were dimly seen,
We past long lines of Northern capes
And dewy Northern meadows green.
We came to warmer waves, and deep
Across the boundless east we drove,
Where those long swells of breaker
sweep

The nutmeg rocks and isles of cloves.
By peaks that flamed, or, all in shade,

VI.
Gloom'd the low coast and quivering
brine
With ashy rains, that spreading made



Fantastic plume or sable pine ;
By sands and steaming flats and floods,
Of mighty mouth, we scudded fast,
And hills and scarlet-mingled woods
Glow'd for a moment as we past.

VII.

O hundred shores of happy climes,
How swiftly stream'd ye by the bark!
At times the whole sea burn'd, at times
With wakes of fire we tore the dark;
At times a carven craft would shoot
From havens hid in fairy hovers,
With naked limbs and flowers and fruit,
But we nor paused for fruit nor
flowers.

VIII.

For one fair Vision ever fled
Down the waste waters day and
night,
And still we follow'd where she led,
In hope to gain upon her flight.
Her face was evermore unseen,
And fixt upon the far sea-line ;
But each man murnur'd, "O, my
Queen,
I follow till I make thee mine."

IX.

And now we lost her, now she gleam'd
Like Fancy made of golden air,
Now nearer to the prow she seem'd
Like Virtue firm, like Knowledge
fair,
Now high on waves that idly burst
Like Heavenly Hope she crown'd
the sea,
And now, the bloodless point reversed,
She bore the blade of Liberty.

X.

And only one among us—him
We pleased not—he was seldom
pleas'd :
He saw not far : his eyes were dim :
But ours he swore were all diseas'd.
"A ship of fools," he shriek'd in spite,
"A ship of fools," he sneer'd and
wept.
And overboard one stormy night
He cast his body, and on we wept.

XI.

And never sail of ours was furl'd,
Nor anchor dropt at eve or morn ;
We loved the glories of the world,
But laws of nature were our scorn ;
For blasts would rise and rave and
cease,
But whence were those that drove
the sail
Across the whirlwind's heart of peace,
And to and thro' the counter-gale ?

XII.

Again to colder climes we came,
For still we follow'd where she led :
Now mate is blind and captain lame,
And half the crew are sick or dead.

But blind or lame or sick or sound
We follow that which flies before :
We know the merry world is round,
And we may sail for evermore.

IN THE VALLEY OF CAUTERETZ.

ALL along the valley, stream that flash-
est white,
Deepening thy voice with the deepening
of the night,
All along the valley, where thy waters
flow,
I walk'd with one I loved two and thir-
ty years ago.
All along the valley while I walk'd to-
day,
The two and thirty years were a mist
that rolls away ;
For all along the valley, down thy
rocky bed
Thy living voice to me was as the voice
of the dead,
And all along the valley, by rock and
cave and tree,
The voices of the dead was a living
voice to me.

THE FLOWER.

ONCE in a golden hour
I cast to earth a seed.
Up there came a flower,
The people said, a weed.
To and fro they went
Thro' my garden-bower,
And muttering discontent
Curs'd me and my flower.
Then it grew so tall
It wore a crown of light,
But thieves from o'er the wall,
Stole the seed by night.
Sow'd it far and wide
By every town and tower,
Till all the people cried,
"Splendid is the flower."
Read my little fable :
He that runs may read.
Most can raise the flowers now,
For all have got the seed.
And some are pretty enough,
And some are poor indeed
And now again the people
Call it but a weed.

REQUIESCAT.

FAIR is her cottage in its place,
Where yon broad water sweetly slow-
ly glides.
It sees itself from thatch to base
Dream in the sliding tides.



And fairer she, but ah how soon to die !
Her quiet dream of life this hour
may cease.
Her peaceful being slowly passes by
To some more perfect peace.

—
THE SAILOR BOY.

He rose at dawn and, fired with hope,
Shot o'er the seething harbor-bar,
And reach'd the ship and caught the
rope,
And whistled to the morning star.
And while he whistled long and loud
He heard a fierce mermaid cry,
"O boy, tho' thou art young and proud,
I see the place where thou wilt lie."
"The sands and yeasty surges mix
In caves about the dreary bay,
And on thy ribs the limpet sticks,
And in thy heart the scrawl shall
play."
"Fool," he answered, "death is sure
To those that stay and those that
roam,
But I will nevermore endure
To sit with empty hands at home."
"My mother clings about my neck,
My sisters crying 'Stay for shame';
My father raves of death and wreck,
They are all to blame, they are all to
blame."
"God help me ! save I take my part
Of danger on the roaring sea,
A devil rises in my heart,
Far worse than any death to me."

—
THE ISLET.

"WHITHER, O whither, love, shall we
go,
For a score of sweet little summers or
so ?"
The sweet little wife of the singer said,
On the day that followed the day she
was wed,
"Whither, O whither, love, shall we
go ?"
And the singer shaking his curly head
Turn'd as he sat, and struck the keys
There at his right with a sudden crash,
Singing, "And shall it be over the seas
With a crew that is neither rnde nor
rash,
But a bevy of Froses apple-cheek'd,
In a shallop of crystal ivory-beak'd,
With a satin sail of a ruby glow,
To a sweet little Eden on earth that I
know,
A mountain islet pointed and peak'd ;
Waves on a diamond shingle dash,
Cataract brooks to the ocean run,
Fairly-delicate palaces shine
Mixt with myrtle and clad with vine,
And overstream'd and silvery-streak'd

With many a rivulet high against the
Sun
The facets of the glorious mountain
flash
Above the valleys of palm and pine."
"Thither, O thither, love, let us go."
"No, no, no !
For in all that exquisite isle, my dear,
There is but one bird with a musical
throat,
And his compass is but one of a single
note,
That it makes one weary to hear."
"Mock me not, mock me not ! love, let
us go."
"No, love, no.
For the bud ever breaks into bloom on
the tree,
And a storm never wakes in the lonely
sea,
And a worm is there in the lonely wood,
That pierces the liver and blackens the
blood,
And makes it a sorrow to be."

—
THE RINGLET.

"YOUR ringlets, your ringlets,
That look so golden-gay,
If you will give me one, but one,
To kiss it night and day,
Then never chilling touch of Time
Will turn it silver-gray ;
And then shall I know it is all true
gold
To flame and sparkle and stream as of
old,
Till all the comets in heaven are cold,
And all her stars decay."
"Then take it, love, and put it by ;
This cannot change, nor yet can I."

2.

"My ringlet, my ringlet,
That art so golden-gay,
Now never chilling touch of Time
Can turn thee silver-gray ;
And a lad may wink, and a girl may
hint,
And a fool may say his say ;
For my doubts and fears were all amiss,
And I swear henceforth by this and
this,
That a doubt will only come for a kiss,
And a fear to be kiss'd away."
"Then kiss it, love, and put it by :
If this can change, why so can I."

II.

O Ringlet, O Ringlet,
I kiss'd you night and day,
And Ringlet, O Ringlet,
You still are golden-gay,
But Ringlet, O Ringlet,
You should be silver-gray :
For what is this which now I'm told,



I that took you for true gold,
She that gave you's bough and sold,
Sold, sold.

2.

O Ringlet, O Ringlet
She blush'd a rosy red,
When Ringlet, O Ringlet,
She clipt you from her head,
And Ringlet, O Ringlet,
She gave you me, and said,
"Come kiss it, love, and put it by :
If this can change, why so can I."
O fie, you golden nothing, fie
You golden lie.

3.

O Ringlet, O Ringlet,
I count you much to blame,
For Ringlet, O Ringlet,
You put me much to shame,
So Ringlet, O Ringlet,
I doom you to the flame.
For what is this which now I learn,
Has given all my faith a turn ?
Burn, you glossy heretic, burn,
Burn, burn.

A WELCOME TO ALEXANDRA.

MARCH 7, 1863.

SEA-KINGS' daughter from over the sea,
Alexandra !
Saxon and Norman and Dane are we,
But all of us Danes in our welcome of
thee,

Alexandra !
Welcome her, thunders of fort and of
fleet !

Welcome her, thundering cheer of the
street !

Welcome her, all things youthful and
sweet,

Scatter the blossom under her feet !
Break, happy land, into earlier flowers !
Make music, O bird, in the new-budded
bowers !

Blazon your mottoes of blessing and
prayer !

Welcome her, welcome her, all that is
ours !

Warble, O bugle, and trumpet, blare !
Flags, flutter out upon turrets and tow-
ers !

Flames, on the windy headland flare !
Utter your jubilee, staeple and spire !
Clash, ye bells, in the merry March
air !

Flash, ye cities, in rivers of fire !
Rush to the roof, sudden rocket, and
higher

Melt into stars for the land's desire !
Roll and rejoice, jubilant voice,
Roll as a ground-swell dash'd on the
strand,

Roar as the sea when he welcomes the
land,

And welcome her, welcome the land's
desire,
The sea-king's daughter as happy as
fair,
Blissful bride of a blissful heir,
Bride of the heir of the kings of the
sea,—
O joy to the people, and joy to the
throne,
Come to us, love us and make us your
own :
For Saxon or Dane or Norman we,
Teuton or Celt, or whatever we be,
We are each all Dane in our welcome
of thee,

Alexandra!

DEDICATION.

DEAR, near and true — no truer Time
himself
Can prove you, tho' he make you ever-
more

Dearer and nearer, as the rapid of life
Shoots to the fall—take this, and pray
that he,

Who wrote it, honoring your sweet faith
in him,

May trust himself ; and spite of praise
and scorn,
As one who feels the immeasurable
world,

Attain the wise indifference of the wise ;
And after Autumn past — if left to
pass

His autumn into seeming-leafless
days —

Draw toward the long frost and longest
night,
Wearing his wisdom lightly, like the
fruit

Which in our winter woodland looks a
flower.*

EXPERIMENTS.

BOADICEA.

WHILE about the shore of Mona those
Neronian legionaries

Burnt and broke the grove and altar of
the Druid and Druidess,

Far in the East Boadicea, standing
loftily charioted,

Mad and maddening all that heard her
in her fierce volubility,
Girt by half the tribes of Britain, near
the colony C mulo dune,
Yell'd and shriek'd between her daugh-
ters o'er a wild confederacy.

"They that scorn the tribes and call
us Britain's barbarous populates,
Did they hear me, would they listen,
did they pity me supplicating ?
Shall I heed them in their anguish ?
shall I brook to be suppliated ?

* The fruit of the Spindle-tree (*Euonymus
Europaeus*.)



Hear Icenian, Catiuechlanian, hear
 Coritanian, Trinobant !
 Must their ever-ravening eagle's beak
 and talon annihilate us ?
 Tear the noble heart of Britain, leave
 it gorily quivering ?
 Bark an answer, Britain's raven ! bark
 and blacken innumerable,
 Blacken round the Roman carrion,
 make the carcass a skeleton,
 Kite and kestrel, wolf and wolfkin,
 from the wilderness, wallow in it,
 Till the face of Bel be brighten'd, Tara-
 nis be propitiated.
 Lo their colony half-defended ! lo their
 colony, Cámulodúne !
 There the horde of Roman robbers mock
 at a barbarous adversary.
 There the hive of Roman liars worship
 a gluttonous emperor-Idiot.
 Such is Rome, and this her deity : hear
 it, Spirit of Cássivéláun !

"Hear it, Gods ! the Gods have heard
 it, O Icenian, O Coritanian !
 Doubt not ye the Gods have answer'd,
 Catiuechlanian, Trinobant.
 These have told us all their anger in
 miraculous utterances,
 Thunder, a flying fire in heaven, a mur-
 mur heard aerially,
 Phantom sound of blows descending,
 moan of an enemy massacred,
 Phantom wail of women and children,
 multitudinous agonies.
 Bloodily flow'd the Tamesa rolling
 phantom bodies of horses and
 men ;
 Then the phantom colony smoulder'd
 on the reflux estuary ;
 Lastly yonder yester-even, suddenly
 giddily tottering —
 There was one who watch'd and told
 me—down their statue of Victory
 fell.
 Lo their precious Roman handling, lo
 the colony Cámulodúne,
 Shall we teach it a Roman lesson ? shall
 we care to be pitiful ?
 Shall we deal with it as an infant ?
 shall we dandle it amorously ?

"Hear Icenian, Catiuechlanian, hear
 Coritanian, Trinobant !
 While I roved about the forest, long
 and bitterly meditating,
 There I heard them in the darkness, at
 the mystical ceremony,
 Loosely robed in flying raiment, sang
 the terrible prophesies.
 'Fear not, isle of blowing woodland,
 isle of silvery parapets !
 Tho' the Roman eagle shadow thee, tho'
 the gathering enemy narrow
 thee,
 Thou shalt wax and he shall dwindle,
 thou shalt be the mighty one
 yet !
 Thine the liberty, thine the glory, thine
 the deeds to be celebrated,

Thine the myriad-rolling ocean, light
 and shadow illimitable,
 Thine the lands of lasting summer,
 many-blossoming Paradises,
 Thine the North and thine the South
 and thine the battle-thunder of
 God.

So they chanted : how shall Britain
 light upon auguries happier ?
 So they chanted in the darkness, and
 there cometh a victory now.

"Hear Icenian, Catiuechlanian, hear
 Coritanian, Trinobant !
 Me the wife of rich Prasutagus, me the
 lover of liberty,
 Me they seized and me they tortured,
 me they lash'd and humiliated,
 Me the sport of ribald Veterana, mine
 of ruffian violators !
 See they sit, they hide their faces, mis-
 erable in ignominy !

Wherefore in me burns an anger, not
 by bleed to be satiated.
 Lo the palaces and the temple, lo the
 colony Cámulodúne !

There they ruled, and thence they
 wasted all the flourishing territy,

Thither at their will they haled the yel-
 low-ringed Britoness —
 Bloodily, bloodily fall the battle-axe,
 unexhausted, inexorable.

Shout Icenian, Catiuechlanian, shout
 Coritanian, Trinobant,

Till the victim hear within and yearn
 to hurry precipitously

Like the leaf in a roaring whirlwind,
 like the smoke in a hurricane
 whirl'd.

Lo the colony, there they rioted in the
 city of Cúnobeline !

There they drank in cups of emerald,
 there at tables of ebony lay,
 Rolling on their purple couches in
 their tender effeminacy.

There they dwelt and there they rioted ;
 there — there — they dwell no
 more.

Burst the gates, and burn the palaces,
 break the works of the statu-
 ary.

Take the hoary Roman head and shat-
 ter it, hold it abominable,
 Cut the Roman boy to pieces in his lust
 and voluptuousness,

Lash the maiden into swooning, me
 they lash'd and humiliated,

Chop the breasts from off the mother,
 dash the brains of the little one
 out,

Up my Britons, on my chariot, on my
 chargers, trample them under
 us."

So the Queen Boádicéa, standing
 loftily charioted,
 Brandishing in her hand a dart and
 rolling glances Honesá-like,
 Yell'd and shriek'd between her daugh-
 ters in her fierce volubility.



SPECIMEN OF A TRANSLATION OF THE ILIAD. 215

Till her people all around the royal
chariot agitated,
Madly dash'd the darts together, writh-
ing barbarous lineaments,
Made the noise of forest woodlands,
when they shiver in January,
Roar'd as when the rolling breakers
boom and blanch on the precip-
ices,
Yell'd as when the winds of winter tear
an oak on a promontory.
So the silent colony hearing her tumultu-
ous adversaries
Clash the darts and on the buckler beat
with rapid unanimous hand,
Thought on all her evil tyrannies, all
her pitiless avarice,
Till she felt the heart within her fall
and flutter tremulously,
Then her pulses at the clamoring of her
enemy fainted away.
Out of evil evil flourishes, out of tyr-
anny tyranny buds.
Ran the land with Roman slaughter,
multitudinous agonies.
Perish'd many a maid and matron,
many a valorous legionary.
Fell the colony, city, and citadel, Lon-
don, Verulam, Camulodune.

IN QUANTITY.

MILTON.

Alcaics.

O MIGHTY-MOUTH'D inventor of har-
monies,
O skill'd to sing of Time or Eternity,
God-gifted organ-voice of England,
Milton, a name to resound for ages ;
Whose Titan angels, Gabriel, Abdiel,
Starr'd from Jehovah's gorgeous armo-
ries,
Tower, as the deep-domed empyrean
Rings to the roar of an angel onset—
Me rather all that howery loneliness,
The brooks of Eden mazily murmuring,
And bloom profuse and cedar arches
Charm, as a wanderer out in ocean,
Where some refulgent sunset of India
Streams o'er a rich ambrosial ocean isle,
And crimson-hued the stately palm-
woods
Whisper in odorous heights of even.

Hendecasyllabics.

O YOU chorus of indolent reviewers,
Irresponsible, indolent reviewers,
Look, I come to the test, a tiny poem
All composed in a metre of Catullus,
All in quantity, careful of my motion,
Like the skater on ice that hardly bears
him,
Lest I fall unawares before the people,
Waking laughter in indolent reviewers.
Should I flounder awhile without a
tumble
Thro' this metrification of Catullus,
They should speak to me not without a
welcome,

All that chorus of indolent reviewers.
Hard, hard, hard is it, only not to tum-
ble,
So fantastical is the dainty metre.
Wherefore slight me not wholly, nor
believe me
Too presumptuous, indolent reviewers.
Oblatant Magazines, regard me rather—
Since I blush to belaud myself a mo-
ment—
As some rare little rose, a piece of in-
most
Horticultural art, or half coquette-like
Maiden not to be greeted unbenignly.

SPECIMEN OF A TRANSLATION
OF THE ILIAD IN BLANK
VERSE.

So Hector said, and sea-like roar'd his
host ;
Then loosed their sweating horses from
the yoke,
And each beside his chariot bound his
own ;
And oxen from the city, and goodly
sheep
In haste they drove, and honey-hearted
wine
And bread from out the houses brought,
and heap'd
Their firewood, and the winds from off
the plain
Roll'd the rich vapor far into the hea-
ven.
And these all night upon the bridge* of
war
Sat glorying ; many a fire before them
blazed :
As when in heaven the stars about the
moon
Look beautiful, when all the winds are
laid,
And every height comes out, and jut-
ting peak
And valley, and the immeasurable
heavens
Break open to their highest, and all the
stars
Shine, and the Shepherd gladdens in
his heart :
So many a fire between the ships and
stream
Of Xanthus blazed before the towers of
Troy,
A thousand on the plain ; and close by
each
Sat fifty in the blaze of burning fire ;
And champing golden grain, the horses
stood
Hard by their charlots, waiting for the
dawn.†

Iliad VIII. 542-561.

* Or, ridge.

† Or more literally,—

And eating hoary grain and pulse the
steeds
Stood by their cars, waiting the throned
morn.



1865.—1866.

I stood on a tower in the wet,
And new Year and old Year met,
And winds were roaring and blowing;
And I said, "O years, that meet in tears,
Have ye aught that is worth the know-
ing?"

Science enough and exploring,
Wanderers coming and going,
Matter enough for deploring,
But aught that is worth the know-
ing?"

Seas at my feet were flowing,
Waves on the shingle pouring,
Old Year roaring and blowing,
And New Year blowing and roaring.

THE OLD SEAT.

DEAR Lady Clara Vere de Vere,
How strange with you once more to
meet,
To hold your hand, to hear your voice,
To sit beside you on this seat!
You mind the time we sat here last?—
Two little children-lovers we,
Each loving each with simple faith,
I all to you—you all to me.

Ah! Lady Clara Vere de Vere,
We sit together now as then;
I press your hand, you meet my glance,
We seem as if we loved again.
But in my heart I feel the truth,
The dear old times have passed away:
The love that once possessed our souls
We do but simulate to-day.

Since last we met my Lady Vere,
You've grown in years and culture
too,
And, putting childish things away,
Have ceased to be sincere and true,
Naught caring for a single soul,
You spare no trouble, reck no pain,
To add another name unto
The bead-roll of the hearts you've
slain.

To you, my Lady Vere de Vere,
What is it that a heart may break?
You had no hazard in the game—
He should have played with equal
stake.
You did but seek to while away
The slow hours of an idle night;
The fault lay with the fool who failed
To read your character aright.

But, Lady Clara Vere de Vere,
You make your wares by far too
cheap;
Your net claims all as fish that comes
Within the limit of its sweeps.
You sit beside me here to-day,
You try to make me love again
But I am safe the while I think
You've sat thus with a score of men.

Still, Lady Clara, Clara, dear,
Beneath your finished mask I see
The gentle heart, the honest mind,
That made you once so dear to me.
Your voice is still as sweet as then,
Your face is still as pure and good:
I see the graces of my love
All ripened in her womanhood.

If some day, Clara Vere de Vere,
You weary of the counterfeit,
And look with yearning back upon
The old times link'd with this seat—
If you would change your fleeting loves
For one true love for evermore,
Then we will come and see this place,
And sit together, as of yore.

But meanwhile, Lady Vere de Vere,
Of me win all renown you may;
A plaything fresh my heart for you,
A new world for your sovereign sway
Bring all your practised charms in
play,
Shoot all your darts, they cannot
hurt;

For when we meet I clothe me in
The proved chain-armor of a flirt.

THE VICTIM.

I.

A PLAGUE upon the people fell,
A famine after laid them low,
Then thorp and byre arose in fire,
For on them brake the sudden foe;
So thick they died the people cried
"The Gods are moved against the
land."

The Priest in horror about his altar
To Thor and Odin lifted a hand:
"Help us from famine
And plague and strife!
What would you have of us?
Human life?
Were it our nearest,
Were it our dearest,
(Answer, O answer)
We give you his life."

II.

But still the foeman spoil'd and burn'd
And cattle died, and deer in wood,
And bird in air, and fishes turn'd
And whiten'd all the rolling flood;
And dead men lay all over the way,
Or down in a furrow scathed with
flame:
And ever and aye the Priesthood
moan'd

Till at last it seem'd that an answer
came:
"The King is happy
In child and wife;
Take you his dearest,
Give us a life."

III.

The Priest went out by heath and hill;
The King was hunting in the wild;
They found the mother sitting still;



She cast her arms about the child,
The child was only eight summers old,
His beauty still with his years in-
creased,
His face was ruddy, his hair was gold,
He seem'd a victim due to the priest.
The Priest beheld him,
And cried with joy,
"The Gods have answer'd :
We give them the boy,"

VI.

The King return'd from out the wild,
He bore but little game in hand ;
The mother said "They have taken
the child
To spill his blood and heal the land ;
The land is sick, the people diseas'd,
And blight and famine on all the lea ;
The holy Gods, they must be appeas'd,
So I pray you tell the truth to me.
They have taken our son,
They will have his life.
Is he your dearest ?
Or I, the wife ?"

V.

The King bent low, with hand on brow,
He stay'd his arms upon his knee :
"O wife, what use to answer now ?
For now the Priest has judged for
me."
The King was shaken with holy fear :
"The Gods," he said, "would have
chosen well ;
Yet both are near, and both are dear,
And which the dearest I cannot
tell !"
But the Priest was happy,
His victim won :
"We have his dearest,
His only son !"

VI

The rites prepared, the victim bared,
The knife uprising toward the blow,
To the altar-stone she sprang alone,
"Me, not my darling, no !"
He caught her away with a sudden cry ;
Suddenly from him brake his wife,
And shrieking "I am his dearest, I —
I am his dearest !" rush'd on the
knife.
And the Priest was happy,
"O, Father Odin,
We give you a life.
Which was his nearest ?
Who was his dearest ?
The Gods have answer'd ;
We give them the wife !"

LUCRETIVS.

LUCILIA, wedded to Lucretius, found
Her master cold ; for when the morn-
ing flush
Of passion and the first embrace had
died

Between them, tho' he loved her none
the less,
Yet often when the woman heard his
foot
Return from pacings in the field, and
ran
To greet him with a kiss, the master
took
Small notice, or ansterely, for—his
mind
Half buried in some weightier agru-
ment,
Or fancy-borne perhaps upon the rise
And long roll of the Hexameter—he
past
To turn and ponder those three hun-
dred scrolls
Left by the Teacher whom he held
divine.
She brook'd it not ; but wrathful, pet-
ulant
Dreaming some rival, sought and found
a witch
Who brew'd the philtre which had
power, they said,
To lead an errant passion home again.
And this, at times, she mingled with
his drink,
And this destroy'd him ; for the wicked
broth
Confused the chemic labor of the blood,
And tickling the brute brain within
the man's
Made havoc among those tender cells,
and check'd
His power to shape : he loathed him-
self ; and once
After a tempest woke upon a morn
That mock'd him with returning calm,
and cried ;

"Storm in the night ! for thrice I
heard the rain
Rushing ; and once the flash of a thun-
derbolt—
Methought I never saw so fierce a fork—
Struck out the streaming mountain-
side, and show'd
A riotous confluence of watercourses
Blanching and billowing in a hollow
of it,
Where all but yester-eve was dusty-dry.

"Storm, and what dreams, ye holy
Gods, what dreams !
For thrice I waken'd after dreams.
Perchance
We do but recollect the dreams that
come
Just ere the waking : terrible ! for it
seem'd
A void was made in Nature ; all her
bonds
Crack'd ; and I saw the flaring atom-
streams
And torrents of her myriad universe,
Ruing along the illimitable iuane,
Fly on to clash together again, and
make
Another and another frame of things



For ever : that was mine, my dream, I
 knew it—
 Of and belonging to me, as the dog
 With inward yelp and restless forefoot
 plies
 His function of the woodland : but the
 next !
 I thought that all the blood by Sylla
 shed
 Came driving rainlike down again on
 earth,
 And where it dash'd the reddening
 meadow, sprang
 No dragon warriors from Cadmean
 teeth,
 For these I thought my dream would
 show to me,
 But girls, Hetaïrai, curious in their art,
 Hired animalisms, vile as those that
 made
 The mulberry-faced Dictator's orgies
 worse
 Than aught they fable of the quiet
 Gods.
 And hands they mixt, and yell'd and
 round me drove
 In narrowing circles till I yell'd again
 Half-suffocated, and sprang up, and
 saw—
 Was it the first beam of my latest day?

“ Then, then, from utter gloom stood
 out the breasts,
 The breasts of Helen, and hoveringly
 a sword
 Now over and now under, now direct,
 Pointed itself to pierce, but sank down
 shamed
 At all that beauty ; and as I stared, a
 fire,
 The fire that left a roofless Ilion,
 Shot out of them, and scorch'd me that
 I woke.

“ Is this thy vengeance, holy Venus,
 thine,
 Because I would not one of thine own
 doves,
 Not ev'n a rose, were offer'd to thee ?
 thine,
 Forgetful how my rich procœmion
 makes
 Thy glory fly along the Italian field,
 In lays that will outlast thy Deity ?

“ Deity ? nay, thy worshippers. My
 tongue
 Trips, or I speak profanely. Which of
 these
 Angers thee most, or angers thee at all ?
 Not if thou be'st of those who, far
 aloof
 From envy, hate and pity, and spite
 and scorn,
 Live the great life which all our great-
 est fain
 Would follow, centred in eternal calm.

“ Nay, if thou canst, O Goddess, like
 ourselves

Touch, and be touch'd, then would I
 cry to thee
 To kiss thy Mavors, roll thy tender
 arms
 Round him, and keep him from the
 lust of blood
 That makes a steaming slaughter-
 house of Rome.

“ Ay, but I meant not thee ; I meant
 not her,
 Whom all the pines of Ida shook to
 see
 Slide from that quiet heaven of hers,
 and tempt
 The Trojan, while his neat-herds were
 abroad ;
 Nor her that o'er her wounded hunter
 wept
 Her Deity false in human-amorous
 tears ;
 Nor whom her beardless apple-arbiter
 Decided fairest. Rather, O ye Gods,
 Poet-like, as the great Sicilian called
 Calliope to grace his golden verse—
 Ay, and this Kypriis also—did I take
 That popular name of thine to shadow
 forth
 The all-generating powers and genial
 heat
 Of Nature, when she strikes thro' the
 thick blood
 Of cattle, and light is large, and lambs
 are glad
 Nosing the mother's udder, and the
 bird
 Makes his heart voice amid the blaze
 of flowers :
 Which things appear the work of
 mighty Gods.

“ The Gods ! and if I go my work is
 left
 Unfinish'd — if I go. The Gods, who
 haunt
 The lucid interspace of world and
 world,
 Where never creeps a cloud, or moves
 a wind,
 Nor ever falls the least white star of
 snow,
 Nor ever lowest roll of thunder moans,
 Nor sound of human sorrow mounts to
 mar
 Their sacred everlasting calm ! and
 such,
 Not all so fine, nor so divine a calm,
 Not such, nor all unlike it, man may
 gain
 Letting his own life go. The Gods,
 the Gods !
 If all be atoms, how then should the
 Gods
 Being atomic not be dissoluble,
 Not follow the great law ? My master
 held
 That Gods there are, for all men so
 believe.
 I prest my footsteps into his, and meant
 Surely to lead my Memmius in a train



Of flowery clauses on ward to the proof
That Gods there are, and deathless.
Meant? I meant?

I have forgotten what I meant: my
mind
Stumbles, and all my faculties are
lamed.

“Look where another of our Gods,
the Sun,
Apollo, Delius, or of older use
All-seeing Hyperion—what you will—
Has mounted yonder; since he never
sware,

Except his wrath were wreak'd on
wretched man,
That he would only shine among the
dead

Hereafter; tales! for never yet on
earth

Could dead flesh creep, or bits of
roasting ox

Moan round the spit—nor knows he
what he sees;

King of the East altho' he seem, and
girt

With song and flame and fragrance,
slowly lifts

His golden feet on those empurpled
stairs

That climb into the windy halls of
heaven:

And here he glances on an eye new-
born,

And gets for greeting but a wail of
pain;

And here he stays upon a freezing orb
That fain would gaze upon him to the
last;

And here upon a yellow eyelid fall'n
And closed by those who mourn a
friend in vain,

Not thankful that his troubles are no
more.

And me, altho' his fire is on my face
Blinding, he sees not, nor at all can tell
Whether I mean this day to end myself,
Or lend an ear to Plato where he says,
That men like soldiers may not quit
the post

Allotted by the Gods: but he that
holds

The Gods are careless, wherefore need
he care

Greatly for them, nor rather plunge at
once,

Being troubled, wholly out of sight,
and sink

Past earthquake—ay, and gout and
stone, that break

Body toward death, and palsy, death-
in-life,

And wretched age—and worst disease
of all,

These prodigies of myriad nakednesses,
And twisted shapes of lust, unspeak-
able,

Abominable, strangers at my hearth
Not welcome, harpies miring every
dish,

The phantom husks of something
fouly done,

And fleeting thro' the boundless uni-
verse,

And blasting the long quiet of my
breast

With animal heat and dire insanity?

“How should the mind, except it
loved them, clasp

These idols to herself? or do they fly
Now thinner, and now thicker, like the
flakes

In a fall of snow, and so press in, per-
force

Of multitude, as crowds that in an
hour

Of civic tumult jam the doors, and bear
The keepers down, and throng, their
rags and they,

The basest, far into that council-hall
Where sit the best and stateliest of the
land?

“Can I not fling this horror off me
again,

Seeing with how great ease Nature can
smile,

Balmier and nobler from her bath of
storm,

At random ravage? and how easily
The mountain there has cast his cloudy
slough,

Now towering o'er him in serenest air,
A mountain o'er a mountain,—ay, and
within

All hollow as the hopes and fears of
men?

“But who was he, that in the garden
enared

Picus and Faunus, rustic Gods? a tale
To laugh at—more to laugh at in my-
self—

For look! what is it? there? you
arbutus

Totters; a noiseless riot underneath
Strikes through the wood, sets all the
tops quivering—

The mountain quickens into Nymph
and Faun;

And here an Oread—how the sun de-
lights

To glance and shift about her slippery
sides,

And rosy knees and supple rounded-
ness,

And budded bosom-peaks—who this
way runs

Before the rest—A satyr, a satyr, see,
Follows; but him I proved impossible;

Two-natured is no nature: yet he draws
Nearer and nearer, and I scan him now

Beastlier than any phantom of his kind
That ever butted his rough brother-
brute

For lust or lusty blood or provender:
I hate, abhor, spit, sicken at him; and
she

Loathes him as well; such a precipi-
tate heel,



Fledged as it were with Mercury's
ankle-wing,
Whirls her to me : but will she fling
herself,
Shameless upon me ? Catch her, goat-
foot : nay,
Hide, hide them, million-myrtled wil-
derness,
And cavern-shadowing laurels, hide !
do I wish—
What?—that the bush were leafless ?
or to whelm
All of them in one massacre ! O ye
Gods,
I know you careless, yet, behold, to you
From childly wont and ancient use I
call—
I thought I lived securely as your-
selves—
No lewdness, narrowing envy, monkey-
spite,
No madness of ambition, avarice, none:
No larger feast than under plane or
pine
With neighbors laid along the grass, to
take
Only such cups as left us friendly-
warm,
Affirming each his own philosophy—
Nothing to mar the sober majesties
Of settled, sweet, Epicurean life.
But now it seems some unseen monster
lays
His vast and filthy hands upon my will,
Wrenching it backward into his ; and
spoils
My hiss in being ; and 'twas not great ;
For save when shutting reasons up in
rhythm,
Or Heliconian honey in living words,
To make a truth less harsh, I often
grew
Tired of so much within our little life,
Or of so little in our little life—
Poor little life that toddles half an
hour
Crown'd with a flower or two, and there
an end—
And since the nobler pleasure seems to
fade,
Why should I, beastlike as I find my-
self,
Not manlike end myself?—our privi-
lege—
What beast has heart to do it ? And
what man,
What Roman would he dragg'd in tri-
umph thus ?
Not I ; not he, who bears one name
with her
Whose death-blow struck the dateless
doom of kings,
When, brooking not the Tarquin in her
veins,
She made her blood in sight of Colla-
tine
And all his peers, flushing the guiltless
air,
Spout from the maiden fountain in her
heart.

And from it sprang the Common-
wealth, which breaks
As I am breaking now !
" And therefore now
Let her, that is the womb and tomb of
all,
Great Nature, take, and forcing far
apart
Those blind beginnings that have made
me man
Dash them anew together at her will
Through all her cycles—into man once
more,
Or beast or bird or fish, or opulent
flower :
But till this cosmic order everywhere
Shatter'd into one earthquake in one
day
Cracks all to pieces,—and that hour
perhaps
Is not so far when momentary man
Shall seem no more a something to
himself,
But he, his hopes and hates, his homes
and fanes,
And even his bones long laid within
the grave,
The very sides of the grave itself shall
pass,
Vanishing, atom and void, atom and
void,
Into the unseen forever,—till that hour,
My golden work in which I told a truth
That stays the rolling Ixionian wheel
And numbs the Fury's ringlet-snake,
and plucks
The mortal soul from out immortal
hell,
Shall stand : ay, surely : then it fails
at last
And perishes as I must ; for O Thou,
Passionless bride, divine Tranquility,
Yearn'd after by the wisest of the wise,
Who fail to find thee, being as thou art
Without one pleasure and without one
pain,
Howbeit I know thou surely must be
mine
Or soon or late, yet out of season, thus
I woo thee roughly, for thou carest not
How roughly men may woo thee so they
win—
Thus—thine : the soul flies out and dies
in the air."

With that he drove the knife into his
side :
She heard him raging, heard him fall ;
ran in,
Beat breast, tore hair, cried out upon
herself
As having fail'd in duty to him, shriek'd
That she but meant to win him back,
fell on him,
Clasp'd, kiss'd him, wail'd : he an-
swer'd, " Care not thou !
Thy duty ? What is duty ? Fare thee
well ! "



SONG.

My life is full of weary days,
But good things have not kept aloof,
Nor wandered into other ways:
I have not lack'd thy mild reproof,
Nor golden largesse of thy praise.

And now shake hands across the brink
Of that deep grave to which I go:
Shake hands once more: I cannot sink
So far—far down, but I shall know
The voice, and answer from below.

THE CAPTAIN.

A LEGEND OF THE NAVY.

HE that only rules by terror
Doeth grievous wrong.
Deep as Hell I count his error,
Let him hear my song.
Brave the Captain was: the seamen
Made a gallant crew,
Gallant sons of English freemen,
Sailors bold and true.
But they hated his oppression,
Stern he was and rash;
So for every light transgression
Doom'd them to the lash.
Day by day more harsh and cruel
Seem'd the Captain's mood.
Secret wrath like smother'd fuel
Burnt in each man's blood.
Yet he hoped to purchase glory,
Hoped to make the name
Of his vessel great in story,
Whereae'er he came.
So they past by capes and islands,
Many a harbor-mouth,
Sailing under palmy highlands
Far within the South.
On a day when they were going
O'er the lone expanse,
In the north, her canvas flowing,
Rose a ship of France.
Then the Captain's color heighten'd,
Joyful came his speech:
But a cloudy gladness lighten'd
In the eyes of each.
"Chase," he said: the ship flew for-
ward,
And the wind did blow;
Stately, lightly, went she Norward,
Till she near'd the foe.
Then they look'd at him they hated,
Had what they desired:
Mute with folded arms they waited—
Not a gun was fired.
But they heard the foeman's thunder
Roaring out their doom;
All the air was torn in sunder,
Crashing went the boom,
Spars were splinter'd, decks were shat-
ter'd,
Bullets fell like rain;
Over mast and deck were scatter'd
Blood and brains of men.

Spars were splinter'd; decks were
broken:

Every mother's son—
Down they dropt—no word was spo-
ken—

Each beside his gun.
On the decks as they were lying,
Were their faces grim.
In their blood, as they lay dying,
Did they smile on him.

Those, in whom he had reliance
For his noble name,
With one smile of still defiance
Sold him unto shame.
Shame and wrath his heart confound-
ed,

Pale he turn'd and red,
Till himself was deadly wounded
Falling on the dead.

Dismal error! fearful slaughter!

Years have wander'd by,
Side by side beneath the water
Crew and Captain lie;
There the sunlit ocean tossea
O'er them mouldering,
And the lonely seabird crosses
With one waft of the wing.

THREE SONNETS TO A
COQUETTE.

I.

CARESS'D or chidden by the dainty
hand,
And singing airy trifles this or that,
Light Hope at Beauty's call would
perch and stand,
And run thro' every change of sharp
and flat;
And Fancy came and at her pillow
sat,
When sleep had bound her in his rosy
band,
And chased away the still-recurring
gnat,
And woke her with a lay from fairy
land.
But now they live with Beauty leas and
less,
For Hope is other Hope and wanders
far,
Nor cares to lisp in love's delicious
creeda;
And Fancy watches in the wilderness,
Poor Fancy sadder than a single star,
That sets at twilight in a land of
reeds.

II.

The form, the form alone is eloquent
A nobler yearning never broke he
rest
Than but to dance and sing, be gayly
drest,
And win all eyes with all accomplish-
ment:
Yet in the waltzing-circle as we went,
My fancy made me for a moment
blest



To find my heart so near the beautiful
 breast
 That once had power to rob it of content.
 A moment came the tenderness of
 tears,
 The phantom of a wish that once could
 move,
 A ghost of passion that no smiles
 restore—
 For ah ! the slight coquette, she cannot
 love,
 And if you kiss'd her feet a thousand
 years,
 She still would take the praise, and
 care no more.

III.

Wan Sculptor weepst thou to take the
 cast
 Of those dead lineaments that near
 thee lie ?
 O sorrowest thou, pale Painter, for the
 past,
 In painting some dead friend from
 memory ?
 Weep on : beyond his object Love can
 last :
 His object lives : more cause to weep
 have I :
 My tears, no tears of love, are flowing
 fast,
 No tears of love, but tears that Love
 can die.
 I pledge her not in any cheerful cup,
 Nor care to sit beside her where she
 sits—
 Ah pity—hint it not in human
 tones,
 But breathe it into earth and close it
 up
 With secret death for ever, in the pits
 Which some green Christmas crams
 with weary bones.

MOVE eastward, happy earth, and
 leave
 Yon orange sunset waning slow :
 From fringes of the faded eve,
 O, happy planet, eastward go ;
 Till over thy dark shoulder glow
 Thy silver sister-world, and rise
 To glass herself in dewy eyes
 That watch me from the glen below.
 Ah, bear me with thee, smoothly borne,
 Dip forward under starry light,
 And move me to my marriage-morn,
 And round again to happy night.

BREAK, break, break,
 On thy cold gray stones, O Sea !
 And I would that my tongue could utter
 the
 Thoughts that arise in me.
 O well for the fisherman's boy,
 That he shouts with his sister at play !
 O well for the sailor lad,
 That he sings in his boat on the bay.

And the stately ships go on
 To their haven under the hill ;
 But O for the touch of a vanish'd hand,
 And the sound of a voice that is still !

Break, break, break,
 At the foot of thy crags, O Sea !
 But the tender grace of a day that is
 dead
 Will never come back to me.

THE POET'S SONG.

THE rain had fallen, the Poet arose,
 He pass'd by the town and out of the
 street,
 A light wind blew from the gates of the
 sun,
 And waves of shadow went over the
 wheat,
 And he eat him down in a lonely place,
 And chanted a melody loud and
 sweet,
 That made the wild-swan pause in her
 clond,
 And the lark drop down at his feet.
 The swallow stopt as he hunted the
 bee.
 The snake slipt under a spray,
 The wild hawk stood with the down on
 his beak,
 And stared, with his foot on the prey,
 And the nightingale thought, "I have
 sung many songs,
 But never a one so gay,
 For he sings of what the world will be
 When the years have died away."

SONG.

LADY, let the rolling drums
 Beat to battle where thy warrior stands:
 Now thy face across his fancy comes,
 And gives the battle to his hands.

Lady, let the trumpets blow,
 Clasp thy little babes about thy knee :
 Now their warrior father meets the foe,
 And strikes him dead for thine and
 thee.

SONG.

HOME they brought him slain with
 spears—
 They brought him home at even-fall:
 All alone she sits and hears
 Echoes in his empty hall,
 Sounding on the morrow.

The Sun peep'd in from open field,
 The boy began to leap and prance,
 Rode upon his father's lance,
 Beat upon his father's shield—
 "O hush, my joy, my sorrow."





ON A MOURNER.

I.

NATURE, so far as in her lies,
Imitates God, and turns her face
To every land beneath the skies,
Counts nothing that she meets with
base,
But lives and loves in every place ;

II.

Fills out the homely quickset-screens,
And makes the purple lilac ripe,
Steps from her airy hill, and greens
The swamp, where hums the dropping
snipe,
With moss and braided marish-pipe ;

III.

And on thy heart a finger lays,
Saying, "Beat quicker, for the time
Is pleasant, and the woods and ways
Are pleasant, and the beech and lime
Put forth and feel a gladder clime."

IV.

And murmurs of a deeper voice,
Going before to some far shrine,
Teach that sick heart the stronger
choice,
Till all thy life one way incline
With one wide will that closes thine.

V.

And when the zoning eve has died
Where yon dark valleys wind forlorn,
Come Hope and Memory, spouse and
bride,
From out the borders of the morn,
With that fair child betwixt them
born.

VI.

And when no mortal motion jars
The blackness round the tombing
sod,
Thro' silence and the trembling stars
Comes Faith from tracts no feet have
trod,
And Virtue, like a household god

VII.

Promising empire ; such as those
That once at dead of night did greet
Troy's wandering prince, so that he
rose
With sacrifice, while all the fleet
Had rest by stony hills of Crete.

NORTHERN FARMER.

NEW STYLE.

I.

DOSN'T thou 'ear my 'erse's legs, as
they canters awaaky ?
Proputty, proputty, proputty—that 's
what I 'ears 'em saay.

Proputty, proputty, proputty—Sam,
thou 's an ass for thy pains :
Theer 's moor sense '1 one o' 'is legs nor
in all thy braains.

II.

Woä—theer 's a craw to pluck wi' tha,
Sam : yon 's parson's 'ouse—
Dosh't thou know that a man mun be
eäther a man or a mouse ?
Time to think on it then ; for thou 'll
be twenty to weeäk.*
Proputty, proputty—woä then woä—
let ma 'ear nysen speak.

III.

Me an' thy muther, Sammy, 'as beän
a-talkin' o' thee ;
Thou 's been talkin' to muther, an' she
beän a tellin' it me.
Thou 'll not marry for munny—thou 's
sweet upo' parson's lass—
Noä—thou 'll marry for luvv—an' we
boäth on us thinks tha an ass.

IV.

Seeä'd her to-daäy goä by—Saäint's-
daäy—they was ringing the bells.
She 's a beauty thou thinks—an' soä is
scours o' gells,
Them as 'as munny an' all—wot 's a
beauty?—the flower as blows.
But proputty, proputty sticks, an' pro-
putty, proputty graws.

V.

Do'ant be stunt : † taäke time : I knaws
what maäkes tha sa mad.
Warn't I craäzed fur the lasses mysen
when I wur a lad ?
But I knaw'd a Quaäker feller as often
'as tow'd ma this :
"Doänt thou marry for munny, but goä
wheer munny is !"

VI.

An' I went wheer munny war : an' thy
mother coom to 'and,
Wi' lots o' munny laäid by, an' a nice-
tish bit o' land.
Maäybe she warn't a beauty :—I niver
giv it a thowt—
But warn't she as good to cuddle an'
kiss as a lass as 'ant nowt ?

VII.

Parson's lass 'ant nowt, an' she weänt
'a nowt when 'e's deäid,
Mun be a guvness, lad, or summut, and
addle ‡ her breäid :
Why? fur 'e's nobbut a curate, an'
weänt niver git naw 'igher ;
An' 'e maäde the bed as 'e lig's on afoor
'e coom'd to the shire.

VIII.

And thin 'e coom'd to the parish wi'
lots o' 'Varsity debt,

* This week. † Obstinate. ‡ Earn.



Stook to his faall they did, an' 'e 'ant
got shut on 'em yet.
An' 'e ligis on 'is back i' the grip, wi'
noån to lend 'im a shove,
Woorse nor a far-welter'd * yows : fur,
Sammy, 'e married fur luvv.

IX.

Luvv ? what 's luvv ? thou can luvv thy
lass an' 'er munny too,
Maakin' 'em goå together as they 've
good right to do.
Could'n I luvv thy muther hy cause o'
'er munny laaå hy ?
Naåy—fur I luvv'd 'er a vast sight moor
fur it : reason why.

X.

Ay an' thy muther says thou wants to
marry the lass,
Cooms of a gentleman burn : an' we
boåth on us thinks tha an ass.
Woå then, propetty, wiltha ?—an ass as
near as mayns nowt— †
Woå then, wiltha ? dangtha !—the bees
is as fell as owt. ‡

XI.

Breåk me a bit o' the esh for his 'eåd,
lad, out o' the fence !
Gentleman burn ! what 's gentleman
burn ? is it shillins an' pence ?
Propetty, propetty 's ivrything 'ere,
an', Sammy, I 'm blest
If it is n't the saåme oop yonder, fur
them as 'as it 's the best.

XII.

Tis'n them as 'as munny as hreåks into
'ouses an' steåls.
Them as 'as coåts to their backs an'
taåkes their regular meåls.
Noå, but it 's them as niver knaws
wheer a meål 's to bè 'ad.
Taåke my word for it, Sammy, the poor
in a loomp is had.

XIII.

Them or their feythers, tha sees, mun
a beån a laåzy lot,
Fur work mun 'a gone to the gittin'
whiniver munny was got.
Feyther 'ad ammost nowt ; leaåstwaays
'is munny was 'id.
But 'e tued an' moil'd 'issén deåd, an'
'e died a good un, 'e did.

XIV.

Loock thou theer wheer Wiggleshy
beck comes out by the 'ill !
Feyther run up to the farm, an' I runs
up to the mill ;
An' I 'll run up to the brig, an' that
thou 'll live to see ;
And if thou marries a good un I 'll
leave the land to thee.

* Or fow-welter'd,—said of a sheep lying on
its back in the furrow.

† Makes noåtio.

‡ The flies are as fierce as anything.

XV.

Thim 's my noåtions, Sammy, wheerby
I means to stick ;
But if thou marries a had un, I 'll leåve
the land to Dick.—
Coom oop, propetty, propetty—that 's
what I 'ears 'im saåy—
Propetty, propetty, propetty—canter
an' canter awaåy.

THE GOLDEN SUPPER.

[This poem is founded upon a story in Boccaccio.

A young lover, Julian, whose cousin and foster-sister, Camilla, has been wedded to his friend and rival, Lionel, endeavors to narrate the story of his own love for her and the strange sequel of it. He speaks of having been haunted in delirium by visions and the sound of bells, sometimes tolling for a funeral, and at last ringing for a marriage ; but he breaks away, overcome, as he approaches the Event, and a witness to it completes the tale.]

HE flies the event : he leaves the event
to me :
Poor Julian—how he rush'd away ; the
bells,
Those marriage-bells, echoing in ear
and heart—
But cast a parting glance at me, you
saw,
As who should say "continue." Well,
he had
One golden hour—of triumph shall I
say ?
Solace at least—before he left his home.
Would you had seen him in that hour
of his !
He moved thro' all of it majestically—
Restrain'd himself quite to the close—
but now—

Whether they *were* his lady's mar-
riage-bells,
Or prophets of them in his fantasy,
I never ask'd : but Lionel and the girl
Were wedded, and our Julian came
again
Back to his mother's house among the
pines.
But these, their gloom, the mountainus
and the Bay,
The whole land weigh'd him down as
Ætna does
The Giant of Mythology : he would go,
Would leave the land for ever, and had
gone
Surely, but for a whisper "Go not yet,"
Some warning, and divinely as it
seem'd
By that which follow'd—but of this I
deem
As of the visions that he told—the
event
Glanced back upon them in his after
life,
And partly made them—tho' he knew
it not.



And thus he stay'd and would not
look at her—
No, not for months: but when the
eleventh moon
After their marriage lit the lover's Bay,
Heard yet once more the tolling bell,
and said,
Would you could toll me out of life,
but found—
All softly as his mother broke it to
him—
A crueller reason than a crazy ear,
For that low knell tolling his lady
dead—
Dead—and had lain three days without
a pulse:
All that look'd on her had pronounced
her dead.
And so they bore her (for in Julian's
land
They never nail a dumb head up in
elm),
Bore her free-faced to the free airs of
heaven,
And laid her in the vault of her own
kin.

What did he then? not die: he is
here and hale—
Not plunge headforemost from the
mountain there,
And leave the name of Lover's Leap:
not he:
He knew the meaning of the whisper
now,
Thought that he knew it. "This, I
stay'd for this:
O love, I have not seen you for so long.
Now, now, will I go down into the
grave,
I will be all alone with all I love,
And kiss her on the lips. She is his no
more:
The dead returns to me, and I go down
To kiss the dead."

The fancy stirr'd him so
He rose and went, and entering the dim
vault.
And, making there a sudden light, be-
held
All round about him that which all
will be.
The light was but a flash, and went
again.
Then at the far end of the vault he saw
His 'ady with the moonlight on her
face;
Her breast as in a shadow-prison,
bars
Of black and hands of silver, which the
moon
Struck from an open grating overhead
High in the wall, and all the rest of
her
Drown'd in the gloom and horror of the
vault.

"It was my wish," he said, "to pass,
to sleep,

To rest, to be with her—till the great
day
Peal'd on us with that music which
rights all,
And raised us hand in hand." And
kneeling there
Down in the dreadful dust that once
was man,
Dust, as he said, that once was loving
hearts,
Hearts that had beat with such a love
as mine—
Not such as mine, no, nor for such as
her—
He softly put his arm about her neck
And kiss'd her more than once, till
helpless death
And silence made him bold—nay, but
I wrong him,
He revered his dear lady even in
death;
But, placing his true hand upon her
heart,
"O, you warm heart," he mean'd, "not
even death
Can chill you all at once:" then start-
ing, thought
His dreams had come again. "Do I
wake or sleep?
Or am I made immortal, or my love
Mortal once more?" It beat—the
heart—it beat:
Faint—but it beat: at which his own
began
To pulse with such a vehemence that
it drown'd
The feebler motion underneath his
hand.
But when at last his doubts were sat-
isfied,
He raised her softly from the sepul-
chre,
And, wrapping her all over with the
cloak
He came in, and now striding fast, and
now
Sitting awhile to rest, but evermore
Holding his golden burden in his arms,
So bore her thro' the solitary land
Back to the mother's house where she
was born.

There the good mother's kindly min-
istering,
With half a night's appliances, recall'd
Her fluttering life: she rais'd an eye
that ask'd
"Where?" till the things familiar to
her youth
Had made a silent answer: then she
spoke,
"Here! and how came I here?" and
learning it
(They told her somewhat rashly as I
think)
At once began to wander and to wail,
"Ay, but you know that you must
give me back:
Send! bid him come;" but Lionel was
away—



Stung by his loss had vanish'd, none
knew where.

"He casts me out," she wept, "and
goes"—a wail

That seeming something, yet was nothing,
born

Not from believing mind, but shatter'd
nerve,

Yet haunting Julian, as her own re-
proof

At some precipitance in her burial.
Then, when her own true spirit had

return'd,
"Oyes, and you," she said, "and none
but you.

For you have given me life and love
again,

And none but you yourself shall tell
him of it,

And you shall give me back when he
returns."

"Stay then a little," answer'd Julian,
"here,

And keep yourself, none knowing, to
yourself;

And I will do your will. I may not
stay,

No, not an hour; but send me notice
of him

When he returns, and then will I re-
turn,

And I will make a solemn offering of
you

To him you love." And faintly she re-
plies,

"And I will do your will, and none
shall know."

Not know? with such a secret to be
known.

But all their house was old and loved
them both,

And all the house had known the
loves of both;

Had died almost to serve them any
way,

And all the land was waste and soli-
tary:

And then he rode away; but after
this,

An hour or two, Camilla's travail came
Upon her, and that day a boy was born,

Heir of his face and land, to Lionel.

And thus our lonely lover rode
away,

And pausing at a hostel in a marsh,
There fever seized upon him: myself

was then
Travelling that land, and meant to
rest an hour;

And sitting down to such a base re-
past,

It makes me angry yet to speak of it—
I heard a groaning overhead, and

climb'd
The moulder'd stairs (for everything
was vile)

And in a loft, with none to wait on
him,

Found, as it seem'd, a skeleton alone,
Raving of dead men's dust and beating
hearts.

A dismal hostel in a dismal land,
A flat malarian world of reed and
rush!

But there from fever and my care of
him

Sprang up a friendship that may help
us yet.

For while we roam'd along the dreary
coast,

And waited for her message, piece by
piece

I learnt the drearier story of his life;
And, tho' he loved and honor'd Lionel,

Found that the sudden wail his lady
made

Dwelt in his fancy: did he know her
worth,

Her beauty even? should he not be
taught,

Ev'n by the price that others set upon
it,

The value of that jewel he had to
guard?

Suddenly came her notice and we
past,

I with our lover to his native Bay.

This love is of the brain, the mind,
the soul:

That makes the sequel pure; tho'
some of us

Beginning at the sequel know no more.
Not such am I: and yet I say, the bird

That will not hear my call, however
sweet,

But if my neighbor whistle answers
him—

What matter? there are others in the
wood.

Yet when I saw her (and I thought him
crazed,

Tho' not with such a craziness as needs
A cell and keeper), those dark eyes of
hers—

Oh! such dark eyes! and not her eyes
alone,

But all from these to where she
touch'd on earth.

For such a craziness as Julian's
seem'd

No less than one divine apology.

So sweetly and so modestly she
came

To greet us, her young hero in her
arms!

"Kiss him," she said. "You gave me
life again.

He, but for you, had never seen it
once.

His other father you! Kiss him, and
then

Forgive him, if his name be Julian
too."



Talk of lost hopes and broken heart !
 his own
 Sent such a flame into his face, I
 knew
 Some sudden vivid pleasure hit him
 there.

But he was all the more resolved to
 go,
 And sent at once to Lionel, 'praying
 him
 By that great love they both had borne
 the dead,
 To come and revel for one hour with
 him
 Before he left the land for evermore ;
 And then to friends—they were not
 many—who lived
 Scatteringly about that lonely land of
 his,
 And bade them to a banquet of fare-
 wells.

And Julian made a solemn feast : I
 never
 Sat at a costlier ; for all round his hall
 From column on to column, as in a
 wood,
 Not such as here—an equatorial one,
 Great garlands swung and blossom'd ;
 and beneath,
 Heirlooms, and ancient miracles of
 Art,
 Chalice and salver, wines that, Heaven
 knows when,
 Had suck'd the fire of some forgotten
 sun
 And kept it thro' a hundred years of
 gloom,
 Yet glowing in a heart of ruby—cups
 Where nymph and god ran ever round
 in gold—
 Others of glass as costly—some with
 gems
 Movable and resettable at will
 And trebling all the rest in value—Ah,
 heavens !
 Why need I tell you all?—suffice to
 say
 That whatsoever such a house as his,
 And his was old, has in it rare or fair
 Was brought before the guest : and
 they, the guests,
 Wonder'd at some strange light in
 Julian's eyes
 (I told you that he had his golden
 hour),
 And such a feast, ill-suited as it
 seem'd
 To such a time, to Lionel's loss and
 his,
 And that resolved self-exile from a
 land
 He never would revisit, such a feast
 So rich, so strange, and stranger ev'n
 than rich,
 But rich as for the nuptials of a king.

And stranger yet, at one end of the
 hall

'Two great funereal curtains, looping
 down,
 Parted a little ere they met the floor,
 About a picture of his lady, taken
 Some years before, and falling hid the
 frame.
 And just above the parting was a
 lamp :
 So the sweet figure folded round with
 night
 Seem'd stepping out of darkness with
 a smile.

Well then—our solemn feast—we ate
 and drank,
 And might—the wines being of such
 nobleness—
 Have jested also, but for Julian's
 eyes,
 And something weird and wild about
 it all :
 What was it? for our lover seldom
 spoke,
 Scarce touch'd the meats ; but ever
 and anon
 A priceless goblet with a priceless
 wine
 Arising, show'd he drank beyond his
 use ;
 And when the feast was near an end,
 he said :

“There is a custom in the Orient,
 friends—
 I read of it in Persia—when a man
 Will honor those who feast with him,
 he brings
 And shows them whatsoever he ac-
 counts
 Of all his treasures the most beautiful,
 Gold, jewels, arms, whatever it may
 be.
 This custom—”

Pausing here a moment, all
 The guests broke in upon him with
 meeting hands
 And cries about the banquet—“Beau-
 tiful !
 Who could desire more beauty at a
 feast ?”

The lover answer'd, “There is more
 than one
 Here sitting who desires it. Laud me
 not
 Before my time, but hear me to the
 close.
 This custom steps yet further when the
 guest
 Is loved and honor'd to the uttermost.
 For after he has shown him gems or
 gold,
 He brings and sets before him in rich
 guise
 That which is thrice as beautiful as
 these,
 The beauty that is dearest to his heart—
 ‘O my heart's lord, would I could show
 you,’ he says.



'Ev'n my heart too.' And I propose
to-night
To show you what is dearest to my
heart,
And my heart too.

"But solve me first a doubt.
I knew a man, not many years ago ;
He had a faithful servant, one who
loved

His master more than all on earth be-
side.

He falling sick, and seeming close on
death,

His master would not wait until he
died,

But bade his menials bear him from
the door,

And leave him in the public way to
die.

I knew another, not so long ago,
Who found the dying servant, took him
home,

And fed, and cherish'd him, and saved
his life.

I ask you now, should this first master
claim

His service, whom does it belong to ?
him

Who thrust him out, or him who saved
his life ? "

This question, so flung down before
the guests,

And balanced either way by each, at
length

When some were doubtful how the law
would hold,

Was handed over by consent of all
To one who had not spoken, Lionel.

Fair speech was his, and delicate of
phrase.

And he beginning languidly—his loss
Weigh'd on him yet—but warming as
he went,

Glanced at the point of law, to pass it
by,

Affirming that as long as either lived,
By all the laws of love and grateful-

ness,
The service of the one so saved was
due

All to the saver—adding, with a smile,
The first for many weeks—a semi-

smile
As at a strong conclusion—"body and
soul

And life and limbs, all his to work his
will."

Then Julian made a secret sign to
me

To bring Camille down before them
all.

And crossing her own picture as she
came,

And looking as much lovelier as her-
self

Is lovelier than all others—on her head
A diamond circlet, and from under this

A veil, that seem'd no more than gilded
air,

Flying by each fine ear, an Eastern
gauze

With seeds of gold—so, with that grace
of hers,

Slow-moving as a wave against the
wind,

That flings a mist behind it in the sun—
And bearing high in arms the mighty

babe,
The younger Julian, who himself was
crown'd

With roses, none so rosy as himself—
And over all her babe and her the

jewels
Of many generations of his house

Sparkled and flash'd, for he had decked
them out

As for a solemn sacrifice of love—
So she came in :—I am long in telling

it
I never yet beheld a thing so strange,
Sad, sweet, and strange together—

floated in,—
While all the guests in mute amaze-

ment rose,—
And slowly pacing to the middle hall,

Before the board, there paused and
stood, her breast

Hard-heaving, and her eyes upon her
feet,

Not daring yet to glance at Lionel.
But him she carried, him nor lights nor

feast
Dazed or amazed, nor eyes of men :

who cared
Only to use his own, and staring wide

And hungering for the gilt and jewell'd
world

About him, look'd, as he is like to
prove,

When Julian goes, the lord of all he
saw.

"My guests," said Julian : "you are
honor'd now

Ev'n to the uttermost : in her behold
Of all my treasures the most beautiful,

Of all things upon earth the dearest to
me."

Then waving us a sign to seat ourselves,
Led his dear lady to a chair of state.

And I, by Lionel sitting, saw his face
Five, and dead ashes and all fire again

Thrice in a second, felt him tremble
too,

And heard him muttering, "So like, so
like ;

She never had a sister. I knew none.
Some cousin of his and hers—O God,

so like !"
And then he suddenly ask'd her if she

were.
She shook, and cast her eyes down, and

was dumb.
And then some other question'd if she

came
From foreign lands, and still she did
not speak.



Another, if the boy were hers: but
 she
 To all their queries answer'd not a
 word,
 Which made the amazement more, till
 one of them
 Said, shuddering, "Her spectre!" But
 his friend
 Replied, in half a whisper, "Not at
 least
 The spectre that will speak if spoken to.
 Terrible pity, if one so beautiful
 Prove, as I almost dread to find her,
 dumb!"

But Julian, sitting by her, answer'd
 all:
 "She is but dumb, because in her you
 see
 That faithful servant whom we spoke
 about,
 Obedient to her second master now;
 Which will not last. I have here to-
 night a guest
 So bound to me by common love and
 loss—
 What! shall I hind him more? in his
 behalf,
 Shall I exceed the Persian, giving him
 That which of all things is the dearest
 to me,
 Not only showing? and he himself pro-
 nounced
 That my rich gift is wholly mine to
 give.

"Now all be dumb, and promise all
 of you
 Not to break in on what I say by word
 Or whisper, while I show you all my
 heart."
 And then began the story of his love
 As here to-day, but not so wordily—
 The passionate moment would not suf-
 fer that—
 Past thro' his visions to the burial;
 thence
 Down to this last strange hour in his
 own hall;
 And then rose up, and with him all his
 guests
 Once more as by enchantment; all but
 he,
 Lionel, who fain had risen, but fell
 again,
 And sat as if in chains—to whom he
 said:

"Take my free gift, my cousin, for
 your wife;
 And were it only for the giver's sake,
 And tho' she seem so like the one you
 lost,
 Yet cast her not away so suddenly,
 Lest there be none left here to bring
 her back:
 I leave this land forever." Here he
 ceased.

Then taking his dear lady by one
 hand,

And bearing on one arm the noble
 babe,
 He slowly brought them both to Lion-
 nel.
 And there the widower husband and
 dead wife
 Rns'h'd each at each with a cry, that
 rather seem'd
 For some new death than for a life re-
 new'd;
 At this the very babe began to wail;
 At once they turn'd, and caught and
 brought him in
 To their charm'd circle, and, half kill-
 ing him
 With kisses, round him closed and
 claspt again.
 But Lionel, when at last he freed him-
 self
 From wife and child, and lifted up a
 face
 All over glowing with the sun of life,
 And love, and boundless thanks—the
 sight of this
 So frighted our good friend, that turn-
 ing to me
 And saying, "It is over: let us go—"
 There were our horses ready at the
 doors—
 We bade them no farewell, but mount-
 ing these
 He past forever from his native land;
 And I with him, my Julian, back to
 mine.

 WAGES.

GLORY of warrior, glory of orator,
 glory of song,
 Paid with a voice flying by to be lost
 on an endless sea—
 Glory of Virtue, to fight, to struggle,
 to right the wrong—
 Nay, but she aim'd not at glory, no
 lover of glory she:
 Give her the glory of going on, and still
 to be.
 The wages of sin is death: if the
 wages of Virtue be dust,
 Would she have heart to endure for
 the life of the worm and the fly?
 She desires no isles of the blest, no
 quiet seats of the just,
 To rest in a golden grove, or to bask
 in a summer sky:
 Give her the wages of going on, and
 not to die.

 THE HIGHER PANTHEISM.

THE sun, the moon, the stars, the seas,
 the hills and the plains—
 Are not these, O Soul, the Vision of
 Him who reigns?
 Is not the Vision He? tho' He be not
 that which He seems?



Dreams are true while they last, and
do we not live in dreams ?
Earth, these solid stars, this weight of
body and limb,
Are they not sign and symbol of thy
division from Him ?
Dark is the world to thee : thyself art
the reason why ;
For is He not all but thou, that hast
power to feel " I am I ?"
Glory about thee, without thee ; and
thou fulfill'st thy doom,
Making Him broken gleams, and a
stifled splendor and gloom.
Speak to Him thou for He hears, and
Spirit with Spirit can meet—
Closer is He than breathing, and nearer
than hands and feet.
God is law, say the wise ; O Soul, and
let us rejoice,
For if He thunder by law the thunder
is yet His voice.
Law is God, say some : no God at all.
says the fool ;
For all we have power to see is :
straight staff bent in a pool ;
And the ear of man cannot hear, and
the eye of man cannot see ;
But if we could see and hear, this
Vision—were it not He ?

SONG.

FLOWER in the crannied wall.
I pluck you out of the crannies ;—
Hold you here, root and all, in my
hand,
Little flower—but if I could under-
stand
What you are, root and all, and all in
all,
I should know what God and man is.

LITERARY SQUABBLES.

Alas God ! the petty fools of rhyme
That shriek and sweat in pigmy wars
Before the stony face of Time,
And look'd at by the silent stars :
Who hate each other for a song,
And do their little best to bite
And pinch their brethren in the throng,
And scratch the very dead for spite :
And strain to make an inch of room
For their sweet selves, and cannot hear
The sullen Lethe rolling doom
On them and theirs and all things
here :
When one small touch of Charity
Could lift them nearer God-like state
Than if the crowded Orb should cry
Like those who cried Diana great :

And I too, talk, and lose the touch
I talk of. Surely, after all,
The noblest answer unto such
Is perfect stillness when they brawl.

DEDICATION.

THESE to His Memory—since he held
them dear,
Perchance as finding there uncon-
sciously
Some image of himself—I dedicate,
I dedicate, I consecrate with tears—
These Idylls.

And indeed He seems to me
Scarce other than my own ideal knight,
" Who revered his conscience as
his king ;
Whose glory was, redressing human
wrong ;
Who spake no slander, no, nor listen'd
to it ;
Who loved one only and who clave to
her—"
Her—over all whose realms to their
last isle,
Commingled with the gloom of immi-
nent war,
The shadow of His loss drew like
eclipse,
Darkening the world. We have lost
him : he is gone :
We know him now : all narrow jeal-
ousies
Are silent ; and we see him as he
moved,
How modest, kindly, all-accomplish'd,
wise,
With what sublime repression of him-
self,
And in what limits, and how tenderly ;
Not swaying to this faction or to that ;
Not making his high place the lawless
perch
Of wing'd ambitions, nor a vantage-
ground
For pleasure ; but thro' all this tract
of years
Wearing the white flower of a blame-
less life,
Before a thousand peering littlenesses,
In that fierce light which beats upon a
throne,
And blackens every blot : for where is
he,
Who dares foreshadow for an only son
A lovelier life, a more unstain'd, than
his ?
Or how should England dreaming of
his sons
Hope more for these than some inher-
itance
Of such a life, a heart, a mind as thine,
Thou noble Father of her Kings to be,
Laborious for her people and her
poor—
Voice in the rich dawn of an ampler
day—



Far-sighted summoner of War and
Waste
To fruitful strifes and rivalries of
peace—
Sweet nature gilded by the gracious
gleam
Of letters, dear to Science, dear to Art,
Dear to thy land and ours, a Prince in-
deed,
Beyond all titles, and a household
name,
Hereafter, thro' all times, Albert the
Good.

Break not, O woman's-heart, but still
endure;
Break not, for thou art Royal, but en-
dure,
Remembering all the beauty of that
star
Which shone so close beside Thee, that
ye made
One light together, but has past and
leaves
The Crown a lonely splendor.

May all love,
His love, unseen but felt, o'ershadow
Thee,
The love of all Thy sons encompass
Thee,
The love of all Thy daughters cherish
Thee,
The love of all Thy people comfort
Thee,
Till God's love set Thee at his side
again!

THE COMING OF ARTHUR.

LEODOGRAN, the King of Cameliard,
Had one fair daughter, and none other
child;
And she was fairest of all flesh on
earth,
Guinevere, and in her his one delight.

For many a petty king ere Arthur
came
Ruled in this isle, and ever waging war
Each upon other, wasted all the land;
And still from time to time the heathen
host
Swarm'd overseas, and harried what
was left.
And so there grew great tracts of wil-
derness,
Wherein the beast was ever more and
more,
But man was less and less, till Arthur
came.
For first Anrelius lived and fought and
died,
And after him King Uther fought and
died,
But either fail'd to make the kingdom
one.
And after these King Arthur for a
space

And thro' the puissance of his Table
Round,
Drew all their petty principedome under
him,
Their king and head, and made a realm,
and reign'd.

And thus the land of Cameliard was
waste,
Thick with wet woods, and many a
beast therein,
And none or few to scare or chase the
beast;
So that wild dog, and wolf and boar
and bear
Came night and day, and rooted in the
fields,
And wallowed in the gardens of the
king.
And ever and anon the wolf would
steal
The children and devour, but now and
then,
Her own brood lost or dead, lent her
fierce teat
To human sucklings; and the children,
housed
In her foul den, there at their meat
would growl,
And mock their foster-mother on four
feet,
Till, straighten'd, they grew up to wolf-
like men,
Worse than the wolves. And King
Leodogran
Groan'd for the Roman legions here
again,
And Cæsar's eagle: then his brother
king,
Rience, assail'd him: last a heathen
horde,
Reddening the sun with smoke and
earth with blood,
And on the spike that split the moth-
er's heart
Spitting the child, brake on him, till,
amazed,
He knew not whither he should turn
for aid.

But—for he heard of Arthur newly
crown'd,
Tho' not without an uproar made by
those
Who cried, "He is not Uther's son"—
the king
Sent to him, saying, "Arise, and help
us thou!
For here between the man and beast
we die."

And Arthur yet had done no deed of
arms,
But heard the call, and came: and
Guinevere
Stood by the castle walls to watch him
pass;
But since he neither wore on helm or
shield
The golden symbol of his kinghood,



But rode a simple knight among his
knights,
And many of these in richer arms than
he,
She saw him not, or mark'd not, if she
saw,
One among many, tho' his face was
bare.
But Arthur, looking downward as he
past,
Felt the light of her eyes into his life
Smite on the sudden, yet rode on, and
pitch'd
His tents beside the forest. And he
drave
The heathen, and he slew the beast,
and fell'd
The forest, and let in the sun, and
made
Broad pathways for the hunter and
the knight;
And so return'd.

For while he linger'd there,
A doubt that ever smoulder'd in the
hearts
Of those great Lords and Barons of his
realm
Flash'd forth and into war: for most
of these
Made head against him, crying, "Who
is he
That he should rulè us? who hath
proven him,
King Uther's son? for lo! we look at
him
And find nor face nor bearing, limbs
nor voice,
Are like to those of Uther whom we
knew.
This is the son of Gorlois, not the
king;
This is the son of Anton, not the king."

And Arthur, passing thence to battle,
felt
Travail, and throes and agonies of the
life,
Desiring to be join'd with Guinevere;
And thinking as he rode, "Her father
said
That there between the men and beast
they die.
Shall I not lift her from this land of
beasts
Up to my throne, and side by side with
me?
What happiness to reign a lonely king,
Vext—O ye stars that shudder over me,
O earth that soundest hollow under
me,
Vext with waste dreams? for saving I
be join'd
To her that is the fairest under heaven,
I seem as nothing in the mighty world,
And cannot will my will, nor work my
work
Wholly, nor make myself in mine own
realm
Victor and lord. But were I join'd
with her,

Then might we live together as one
life,
And reigning with one will in every-
thing
Have power on this dark land to light-
en it,
And power on this dead world to make
it live."

And Arthur from the field of battle
sent
Ulfius, and Brastias, and Bedivere,
His new-made knights, to King Leo-
dogran,
Saying, "If I in aught have served
thees well,
Give me thy daughter Guinevere to
wife."

Whom when he heard, Leodogran in
heart
Debating—"How should I that am a
king,
However much he help me at my need,
Gives my one daughter saving to a king,
And a king's son"—lifted his voice,
and call'd
A hoary man, his chamberlain, to
whom
He trusted all things, and of him re-
quired
His counsel: "Knowest thou aught
of Arthur's birth?"

Then spake the hoary chamberlain
and said,
"Sir King, there be but two old men
that know:
And each is twice as old as I; and one
is Merlin, the wise man that ever
served
King Uther thro' his magic art; and
one
is Merlin's master (so they call him)
Bleys,
Who taught him magic; but the
scholar ran
Before the master, and so far, that
Bleys
Laid magic by, and sat him down, and
wrote
All things and whatsoever Merlin did
In one great annal-book, where after-
years
Will learn the secret of our Arthur's
birth."

To whom the King Leodogran re-
plied,
"O friend, had I been holpen half as
well
By this King Arthur as by thees to-day,
Then beast and man had had their
share of me:
But summon here before us once more
Ulfius, and Brastias, and Bedivere."

Then, when they came before him,
the king said,
"I have seen the cuckoo chased by
lesser fowl,





And reason in the chase : but where-
fore now
Do these your lords stir up the heat of
war,
Some calling Arthur horn of Gorlois,
Others of Anton? Tell me, ye your-
selves,
Hold ye this Arthur for King Uther's
son?"

And Ulfus and Brastias answer'd,
"Ay."
Then Bedivere, the first of all his
knights
Knighted by Arthur at his crowning,
spake—
For bold in heart and act and word
was he,
Whenever slander breathed against
the king—

"Sir, there be many rumors on this
head :
For there be those who hate him in
their hearts,
Call him baseborn, and since his ways
are sweet,
And theirs are bestial, hold him less
than man :
And there be those who deem him
more than man,
And dream he dropt from heaven: but
my belief

In all this matter—so ye care to learn—
Sir, for ye know that in King Uther's
time
The prince and warrior Gorlois, he
that held
Tintagil castle by the Cornish sea,
Was wedded with a winsome wife,
Ygerne :

And daughters had she borne him,—
one whereof,
Lot's wife, the Queen of Orkney, Bel-
licent,
Hath ever like a loyal sister cleaved
To Arthur,—but a son she had not
borne.

And Uther cast upon her eyes of love :
But she, a stainless wife to Gorlois,
So loathed the bright dishonor of his
love,
That Gorlois and King Uther went to
war:

And overthrown was Gorlois and slain.
Then Uther in his wrath and heat he-
sieged
Ygerne within Tintagil, where her
men,

Seeing the mighty swarm about their
walls,
Left her and fled, and Uther enter'd
in,
And there was none to call to but him-
self.

So, compass'd by the power of the
king,
Enforc'd she was to wed him in her
tears,
And with a shameful swiftness; after-
ward,

Not many moons, King Uther died him-
self,
Moaning and wailing for an heir to rule
After him, lest the realm should go to
wrack.

And that same night, the night of the
new year,
By reason of the bitterness and grief
That vext his mother, all before his
time

Was Arthur born, and all as soon as
born

Deliver'd at a secret postern gate
To Merlin, to be holden far apart
Until his hour should come; because
the lords

Of that fierce day were as the lords of
this,

Wild beasts, and surely would have
torn the child

Piecemeal among them, had they
known; for each

But sought to rule for his own self and
hand,

And many hated Uther for the sake
Of Gorlois. Wherefore Merlin took the
child,

And gave him to Sir Anton, an old
knight

And ancient friend of Uther; and his
wife

Nursed the young prince, and rear'd
him with her own;

And no man knew. And ever since
the lords

Have foughten like wild beasts among
themselves,

So that the realm has gone to wrack :
but now,

This year, when Merlin (for his hour
had come)

Brought Arthur forth, and set him in
the hall,

Proclaiming, 'Here is Uther's heir,
your king,'

A hundred voices cried, 'Away with
him!

No king of ours! a son of Gorlois he,
Or else the child of Anton, and no
king,

Or else baseborn.' Yet Merlin thro'
his craft,

And while the people clamor'd for a
king,

Had Arthur crown'd; but after, the
great lords

Banded, and so brake out in open
war."

Then while the king debated with
himself

If Arthur were the child of shamsful-
ness,

Or horn the son of Gorlois, after death,
Or Uther's son, and horn before his
time,

Or whether there were truth in any-
thing

Said by these three, there came to
Cameliard,



With Gawain and young Mordred, her
two sons,
Lot's wife, the Queen of Orkney, Belli-
cent;
Whom as he could, not as he would, the
king
Made feast for, saying, as they sat at
meat,

"A doubtful throne is ice on summer
seas—
Ye come from Arthur's court: think
ye this king—
So few his knights, however brave they
he—
Hath body enow to beat his foemen
down?"

"O king," she cried, "and I will tell
thee: few,
Few, but all brave, all of one mind
with him;
For I was near him when the savage
yells
Of Uther's peerage died, and Arthur
sat
Crown'd on the days, and his warriors
cried,
'Be thou the king, and we will work
thy will
Who love thee.' Then the king in low
deep tones,
And simple words of great authority,
Bound them by so strait vows to his
own self,
That when they rose, knighted from
kneeling, some
Were pale as at the passing of a ghost,
Some flush'd, and others dazed, as one
who wakes
Half-blinded at the coming of a light.

"But when he spake and cheer'd his
Table Round
With large divine and comfortable
words
Beyond my tongue to tell thee—I be-
held
From eye to eye thro' all their Order
flash
A momentary likeness of the king:
And ere it left their faces, thro' the
cross
And those around it and the Crucified,
Down from the casement over Arthur,
smote
Flame-color, vert and azure, in three
rays,
One falling upon each of three fair
queens,
Who stood in silence near his throne,
the friends
Of Arthur, gazing on him, tall, with
bright
Sweet faces, who will help him at his
need.

"And there I saw mage Merlin,
whose vast wit

And hundred winters are but as the
hands
Of loyal vassals toiling for their liege.

"And near him stood the Lady of
the Lake,
Who knows a subtler magic than his
own—
Clothed in white samite, mystic, won-
derful.
She gave the king his huge cross-hilted
sword,
Whereby to drive the heathen out: a
mist
Of incense curl'd about her, and her
face
Wellnigh was hidden in the minster
gloom;
But there was heard among the holy
hymns
A voice as of the waters, for she dwells
Down in a deep, calm, whatsoever
storms
May shake the world, and when the
surface rolls,
Hath power to walk the waters like
our Lord.

"There likewise I beheld Excalibur
Before him at his crowning borne, the
sword
That rose from out the bosom of the
lake,
And Arthur row'd across and took it—
rich
With jewels, elfin Urim, on the blit,
Bewildering heart and eye—the blade
so bright.
That men are blinded by it—on one
side,
Graven in the oldest tongue of all this
world,
'Take me,' but turn the blade and you
shall see,
And written in the speech ye speak
yourself,
'Cast me away!' And sad was Ar-
thur's face
Taking it, but old Merlin counsell'd
him,
'Take thou and strike! the time* to
cast away
Is yet far off.' So this great brand the
king
Took, and by this will beat his foemen
down."

Thereat Leodogran rejoiced, but
thought
To sift his doubtings to the last, and
ask'd
Fixing full eyes of question on her
face,
"The swallow and the swift are near
akin,
But thou art closer to this noble prince,
Being his own dear sister;" and she
said,
"Daughter of Gorlois and Ygerne am
I;"



"And therefore Arthur's sister," ask'd
the King.
She answer'd, "These be secret things,"
and sign'd
To those two sons to pass and let them
be.
And Gawain went, and breaking into
song
Sprang out, and follow'd by his flying
hair
Ran like a colt, and leapt at all he saw:
But Modred laid his ear beside the
doors,
And there half heard; the same that
afterward
Struck for the throne, and striking
round his doom.

And then the Queen made answer,
"What know I?
For dark my mother was in eyes and
hair,
And dark in hair and eyes am I; and
dark
Was Gorlo's, yea and dark was Uther
too,
Wellnigh to blackness; but this king
is fair
Beyond the race of Britons and of men.
Moreover always in my mind I hear
A cry from out the dawning of my life,
A mother weeping and I hear her say,
'O that ye had some brother, pretty
one,
To guard thee on the rough ways of the
'world.'"

"Ay," said the King, "and hear ye
such a cry?
But when did Arthur chance upon thee
first?"

"O king!" she cried, "and I will
tell thee true:
He found me first when yet a little
maid:
Beaten I had been for a little fault
Whereof I was not guilty; and out I
ran
And flung myself down on a bank of
heath,
And hated this fair world and all
therein,
And wept, and wish'd that I were dead;
and he—
I know not whether of himself he
came,
Or brought by Merlin, who, they say,
can walk
Unseen at pleasure—he was at my side,
And spake sweet words, and comforted
my heart,
And dried my tears, being a child with
me.
And many a time he came, and ever-
more
As I grew greater grew with me; and
sad
At times he seem'd, and sad with him
was I.

Stern too at times, and then I loved
him not,
But sweet again, and then I loved him
well.
And now of late I see him less and
less,
But those first days had golden hours
for me,
For then I surely thought he would be
king.

"But let me tell thee now another
tale:
For Bleys, our Merlin's master, as they
say,
Died but of late, and sent his cry to
me,
To hear him speak before he left his
life.
Shrunk like a fairy changeling lay the
mage,
And when I enter'd told me that him-
self
And Merlin ever served about the
king,
Uther, before he died, and on the
night
When Uther in Tintagil past away
Moaning and wailing for an heir, the
two
Left the still king, and passing forth
to breathe,
Then from the castle gateway by the
chasm
Descending thro' the dismal night—a
night
In which the bounds of heaven and
earth were lost—
Beheld, so high upon the dreary
deeps
It seem'd in heaven, a ship, the shape
thereof
A dragon wing'd, and all from stem to
stern
Bright with a shining people on the
decks,
And gone as soon as seen. And then
the two
Dropt to the cove, and watch'd the
great sea fall,
Wave after wave, each mightier than
the last,
Till last, a ninth one, gathering half
the deep
And full of voices, slowly rose and
plunged
Roaring, and all the wave was in a
flame:
And down the wave and in the flame
was borne
A naked babe, and rode to Merlin's
feet,
Who stoopt and caught the babe, and
cried 'The King!
Here is an heir for Uther!' And the
fringe
Of that great breaker, sweeping up the
strand,
Lash'd at the wizard as he spake the
word,



And all at once all round him rose in fire.
 So that the child and he were clothed in fire.
 And presently thereafter follow'd calm,
 Free sky and stars; 'And this same child,' he said,
 'Is he who reigns; nor could I part in peace
 Till this were told.' And saying this
 the seer
 Went thro' the strait and dreadful pass
 of death,
 Not ever to be question'd any more
 Save on the further side; but when I met
 Merlin, and ask'd him if these things
 were truth—
 The shining dragon and the naked child
 Descending in the glory of the seas—
 He laugh'd as is his wont, and answer'd me
 In riddling triplets of old time, 'and
 said :

“Rain, rain, and sun ! a rainbow in the sky !
 A young man will be wiser by and by ;
 An old man's wit may wander ere he die.
 Rain, rain, and sun ! a rainbow on the sea !
 And truth is this to me, and that to thee ;
 And truth or clothed or naked let it be.
 Rain, sun, and rain ! and the free blossom blows :
 Sun, rain, and sun ! and where is he who knows ?
 From the great deep to the great deep he goes.”

“So Merlin riddling anger'd me ; but thou
 Fear not to give this king thine only child,
 Guinevere : so great bards of him will sing
 Hereafter ; and dark sayings from of old
 Ranging and ringing thro' the minds of men,
 And echo'd by old folk beside their fires
 For comfort after their wage-work is done,
 Speak of the king ; and Merlin in our time
 Hath spoken also, not in jest, and sworn
 Tho' men may wound him that he will not die,
 But pass, again to come ; and then or now
 Utterly smite the heathen underfoot,
 Till these and all men hail him for their king.”

She spake and King Leodogran rejoiced,
 But musing “ Shall I answer yea or nay ? ”
 Doubted, and drowsed, nodded and slept, and saw,
 Dreaming, a slope of land that ever grew,
 Field after field, up to a height, the peak
 Haze-hidden, and thereon a phantom king,
 Now looming, and now lost ; and on the slope
 The sword rose, the hind fell, the herd was driven,
 Fire glimpsed ; and all the land from roof and rick,
 In drifts of smoke before a rolling wind,
 Stream'd to the peak, and mingled with the haze
 And made it thicker ; while the phantom king
 Sent out at times a voice ; and here or there
 Stood one who pointed toward the voice, the rest
 Slew on and hurt, crying, “ No king of ours,
 No son of Uther, and no king of ours ; ”
 Till with a wink his dream was changed, the haze
 Descended, and the solid earth became
 As nothing, and the king stood out in heaven.
 Crown'd. And Leodogran awoke, and sent
 Ulfus, and Brastias, and Bedivere,
 Back to the court of Arthur answering yea.

Then Arthur charged his warrior whom he loved
 And honor'd most, Sir Lancelot, to ride forth
 And bring the Queen ;—and watch'd him from the gates :
 And Lancelot past away among the flowers,
 (For then was latter April) and return'd
 Among the flowers, in May, with Guinevere.
 To whom arrived, by Dubric the high saint,
 Chief of the church in Britain, and before
 The stateliest of her altar-shrines, the king
 That morn was married, while in stainless white,
 The fair beginners of a nobler time,
 And glorying in their vows and him, his knights
 Stood round him, and rejoicing in his joy.
 And holy Dubric spread his hands and spake,





'Reign ye, and live and love, and
make the world
Other, and may thy Queen be one with
thee,
And all this Order of thy Table Round
Fulfil the boundless purpose of their
king."

Then at the marriage feast came in
from Rome,
The slowly-fading mistress of the
world,
Great lords, who claim'd the tribute as
of yore.
But Arthur spake, "Behold, for these
have sworn
To fight my wars, and worship me their
king ;
The old order changeth, yielding place
to new ;
And we that fight for our fair father
Christ,
Seeing that ye be grown too weak and
old
To drive the heathen from your Roman
wall,
No tribute will we pay : " so those
great lords
Drew back in wrath, and Arthur strove
with Rome
And Arthur and his knighthood for a
space
Were all one will, and thro' that
strength the king
Drew in the petty principdoms under
him,
Fought, and in twelve great battles
overcame
The heathen hordes, and made a realm
and reign'd.

GARETH AND LYNETTE.*

WITH THIS POEM THE AUTHOR CON-
CLUDES "THE IDYLS OF THE KING."

The last tall son of Lot and Belli-
cent,
And tallest, Gareth, in a showerful
spring
stared at the spate. A slender-shafted
Pine
Lost footing, fell, and so was whirl'd
away—
'How he went down," said Gareth,
"as a false knight
Or evil king before my lance if lance
Were mine to use—O senseless catar-
act,
bearing all down in thy precipitancy—
and yet thou art but swollen with cold
snows,
and mine is living blood : thou dost
His will,

* GARETH follows THE COMING OF
ARTHUR, and THE LAST TOURNAMENT pre-
cedes GUINEVERE.

The Maker's, and not knowest, and I
that know,
Have strength and wit, in my good
mother's hall
Linger with vacillating obedience,
Prison'd, and kept and coax'd and
whistled to—
Since the good mother holds me still a
child—
Good mother is bad mother unto me !
A worse were better ; yet no worse
would I.
Heaven yield her for it, but in me put
force
To weary her ears with one continuous
prayer,
Until she let me fly discharg'd to sweep
In ever-highering eagle-circles up
To the great Sun of Glory, and thence
swoop
Down upon all things base, and dash
them dead,
A knight of Arthur, working out his
will,
To cleanse the world. Why, Gawain,
when he came
With Modred hither in the summer-
time,
Ask'd me to tilt with him, the proven
knight,
Modred for want of worthier was the
judge.
Then I so shook him in the saddle, he
said,
'Thou hast half prevail'd against me,
said so—he—
Tho' Modred biting his thin lips was
mute,
For he is always sullen : what care
I ? "

And Gareth went, and hovering
round her chair
Ask'd, "Mother, tho' ye count me still
the child,
Sweet mother, do ye love the child ? "
She laugh'd,
"Thou art hut a wild-geese to question
it."
"Then, mother, and ye love the child,"
he said,
"Being a goose and rather tame than
wild,
Hear the child's story." "Yea, my
well-beloved,
An't were but of the goose and golden
eggs."

And Gareth answer'd her with kind-
ling eyes,
"Nay, nay, good mother, but this egg
of mine
Was finer gold than any goose can lay ;
For this an Eagle, a royal Eagle, laid
Almost beyond eye-reach, on such a
palm
As glitters gilded in thy Book of
Hours.
And there was ever haunting round the
palm



A lusty youth, but poor, who often saw
The splendor sparkling from aloft, and
thought
'An I could climb and lay my hand
upon it,
Then were I wealthier than a leash of
kings.'
But ever when he reach'd a hand to
climb,
One, that had loved him from his child-
hood, caught
And stay'd him, 'Climb not lest thou
break thy neck,
I charge thee by my love,' and so the
boy,
Sweet mother, neither clomb, nor brake
his neck,
But brake his very heart in pining for
it,
And past away."

To whom the mother said,
"True love, sweet son, had risk'd him-
self and climb'd,
And handed down the golden treasure
to him."

And Gareth answer'd her with kind-
ling eyes,
"Gold? said I gold?—ay, then, why
he, or she,
Or whos'er it was, or half the world
Had ventured—*had* the thing I spake
of been
Mere gold—but this was *all* of that true
steel,
Whereof they forged the brand Excal-
ibur,
And lightnings played about it in the
storm,
And all the little fowl were flurried at
it,
And there were cries and clashings in
the nest,
That sent him from his senses: let me
go."

Then Bellicent bemoan'd herself and
said,
"Hast thou no pity upon my loneli-
ness?
Lo, where thy father Lot beside the
hearth
Lies like a log, and all but smoulder'd
out!
For ever since when traitor to the King
He fought against him in the Baron's
war,
And Arthur gave him back his terri-
tory,
His age hath slowly droopt, and now lies
there
A yet warm-corpse, and yet unburial-
able,
No more; nor sees, nor hears, nor
speaks, nor knows.
And both thy brethren are in Arthur's
hall,
Albeit neither loved with that full
love;
I feel for thee, nor worthy such a love:

Stay therefore thou; red berries charm
the bird,
And thee, mine innocent, the jousts,
the wars,
Who never knewest finger-ache, nor
pang
Of wrench'd or broken limb—an often
chance
In those brain-stunning shocks, and
tourney-falls,
Frights to my heart; but stay: follow
the deer
By these tall firs and our fast-falling
burns;
So make thy manhood mightier day by
day;
Sweet is the chase: and I will seek thee
out
Some comfortable bride and fair, to
grace
Thy climbing life, and cherish my
prone year,
Till falling into Lot's forgetfulness
I know not thee, myself, nor anything.
Stay, my best son! ye are yet more boy
than man."

Then Gareth, "An ye hold me yet for
child,
Hear yet once more the story of the
child.
For, mother, there was once a King,
like ours;
The prince his heir, when tall and mar-
riageable,
Ask'd for a bride; and thereupon the
King
Set two before him. One was fair,
strong, arm'd—
But to be won by force—and many men
Desired her; one, good lack, no man
desired,
And these were the conditions of the
King:
That save he won the first by force, he
needs
Must wed that other, whom no man de-
sired,
A red-faced bride who knew herself so
vile,
That evermore she long'd to hide her-
self,
Nor fronted man or woman, eye to eye—
Yea—some she cleaved to, but they
died of her.
And one—they call'd her Fame; and
one, O Mother,
How can you keep me tether'd to you—
Shame!
Man am I grown, a man's work must I
do.
Follow the deer? follow the Christ,
the King,
Live pure, speak true, right wrong,
follow the King—
Else, wherefore born?"

To whom the mother said,
"Sweet son, for there he many who
deem him not,



He will not deem him, wholly proven
 King—
 Albeit in mine own heart I knew him
 King,
 When I was frequent with him in my
 youth,
 And heard him Kingly speak, and
 doubted him
 No more than he, himself; but felt
 him mine,
 Of closest kin to me: yet—wilt thou
 leave
 Thine easeful bidding here, and risk
 thine all,
 Life, limbs, for one that is not proven
 King?
 Stay, till the cloud that settles round
 his birth
 Hath lifted but a little. Stay, sweet
 son."

And Gareth answer'd quickly, "Not
 an hour,
 so that ye yield me—I will walk thro'
 fire,
 Mother, to gain it—your full leave to
 go.
 Not proven, who swept the dust of
 ruin'd Rome
 From off the threshold of the realm,
 and crush'd
 The Idolaters, and made the people
 free?
 Who should he King save him who
 makes us free?"

So when the Queen, who long had
 sought in vain
 To break him from the intent to which
 he grew,
 Found her son's will unwaveringly
 one,
 she answer'd craftily, "Will ye walk
 thro' fire?
 Who walks thro' fire will hardly heed
 the smoke.
 Ay, go then, an ye must: only one
 proof,
 before thou ask the King to make thee
 knight,
 if thine obedience and thy love to me,
 thy mother,—I demand."

And Gareth cried,
 'A hard one, or a hundred, so I go.
 Nay—quick! the proof to prove me to
 the quick!'"

But slowly spake the mother, look-
 ing at him,
 'Prince, thou shalt go disguised to
 Arthur's hall,
 and hire thyself to serve for meats
 and drinks
 among the scullions and the kitchen-
 knaves,
 and those that hand the dish across
 the bar.
 For shalt thou tell thy name to any
 one.

And thou shalt serve a twelvemonth
 and a day."

For so the Queen believed that when
 her son
 Beheld his only way to glory lead
 Low down thro' villain kitchen-vassal-
 age,
 Her own true Gareth was too princely-
 proud
 To pass thereby; so should he rest
 with her,
 Closed in her castle from the sound of
 arms.

Silent a while was Gareth, then
 replied,
 "The thrall in person may be free in
 soul,
 And I shall see the jousts. Thy son
 am I,
 And since thou art my mother, must
 obey.
 I therefore yield me freely to thy will;
 For hence will I, disguised, and hire
 myself
 To serve with scullions and with kitch-
 en-knaves;
 Nor tell my name to any—no, not the
 King."

Gareth awhile linger'd The mother's
 eye,
 Full of the wistful fear that he would
 go,
 And turning toward him wheresoe'er
 he turn'd,
 Perplext his outward purpose, till an
 hour,
 When waken'd by the wind which with
 full voice
 Swept bellowing thro' the darkness on
 to dawn,
 He rose, and out of slumber calling two
 That still had tended on him from his
 birth,
 Before the wakeful mother heard him,
 went.

The three were clad like tillers of the
 soil.
 Southward they set their faces. The
 birds made
 Melody on branch, and melody in mid-
 air.
 The damp hill-slopes were quicken'd
 into green,
 And the live green had kindled into
 flowers,
 For it was past the time of Easterday.

So, when their feet were planted on
 the plain
 That broaden'd toward the base of
 Camelot,
 Far off they saw the silver misty morn
 Rolling her smoke about the Royal
 mount,
 That rose between the forest and the
 field.
 At times the summit of the high city
 flash'd;



At times the spires and turrets half-
way down
Prick'd thro' the mist ; at times the
great gate shone
Only, that open'd on the field below :
Aun, the whole fair city had disap-
pear'd.

Then those who went with Gareth
were amazed,
One crying, " Let us go no farther, lord.
Here is a city of Enchanters, built
By fairy Kings." The second echo'd
him,
" Lord, we have heard from our wise
men at home
To Northward, that this King is not
the King,
But only changeling out of Fairyland,
Who drave the heathen hence by sor-
cery
And Merlin's glamour." Then the
first again,
" Lord, there is no such city anywhere,
But all a vision."

Gareth answer'd them
With laughter, swearing he had glam-
mour enow
In his own blood, his principedom, youth
and hopes,
To plunge old Merlin in the Arabian
sea ;
So push'd them all unwilling toward
the gate.
And there was no gate like it under
heaven ;
For barefoot on the keystone, which
was lined
And rippled like an ever-fleeting
wave,
The Lady of the Lake stood : all her
dress
Wept from her sides as water flowing
away ;
But like the cross her great and goodly
arms
Stretch'd under all the cornice and up-
held :
And drops of water fell from either
hand ;
And down from one a sword was hung,
from one
A censer, either worn with wind and
storm ;
And o'er her breast floated the sacred
fish ;
And in the space to left of her, and
right,
Were Arthur's wars in weird devices
done,
New things and old co-twisted, as if
Time
Were nothing, so inveterately, that
men
Were giddy gazing there ; and over all
High on the top were these three
Queens, the friends
Of Arthur, who should help him at his
need.

Then those with Gareth for so long a
space
Stared at the figures, that at last it
seem'd
The dragon-boughts and elvish emblem-
ings
Began to move, seethe, twine and curl ;
they call'd
To Gareth, " Lord, the gateway is
alive."

And Gareth likewise on them fixt his
eyes
So long, that ev'n to him they seem'd
to move.
Out of the city a blast of music peal'd.
Back from the gate started the three,
to whom
From out thereunder came an ancient
man,
Long-bearded, saying, " Who he ye,
my sons ?"

Then Gareth, " We be tillers of the
soil,
Who leaving share in furrow come to
see
The glories of our King : but these, my
men,
(Your city moved so weirdly in the
mist.)
Doubt if the King be King at all, or
come
From fairyland ; and whether this be
built
By magic, and by fairy Kings and
Queens ;
Or whether there be any city at all,
Or all a vision : and this music now
Hath scared them both, but tell thou
these the truth."

Then that old Seer made answer
playing on him
And saying, " Son, I have seen the good
ship sail
Keel upward and mast downward in
the heavens,
And solid turrets topsy-turvy in air :
And here is truth ; but an it please
thee not,
Take thou the truth as thou hast told
it me.
For truly, as thou sayest, a Fairy King
And Fairy Queens have built the city,
son ;
They came from out a sacred mountain
cleft
Toward the sunrise, each with harp in
hand,
And built it to the music of their harps.
And as thou sayest it is enchanted, son,
For there is nothing in it as it seems
Saving the King ; tho' some there be
that hold
The King a shadow, and the city real :
Yet take thou heed of him, for, so thou
pass
Beneath this archway, then wilt thou
become



A thrall to his enchantments, for the
King
Will bind thee by such vows, as is a
shame
A man should not be bound by, yet the
which
No man can keep ; but, so thou dread
to swear,
Pass not beneath this gateway, but
abide
Without, among the cattle of the field.
For, an ye heard a music, like enow
They are building still, seeing the city
is built
To music, therefore never built at all,
And therefore built forever."

Gareth spake
Anger'd, " Old Master, reverence thine
own heard
That looks as white as utter truth, and
seems
Welhigh as long as thou art statured
tall !
Why mockest thou the stranger that
hath been
To thee fair-spoken ? "

But the Seer replied,
" Know ye not then the Riddling of
the Barde ?
' Confusion, and illusion, and relation,
Elusion, and occasion, and evasion ? '
I mock thee not but as thou mockest
me,
And all that see thee, for thou art not
who
Thou seemest, but I know thee who
thou art.
And now thou goest up to mock the
King,
Who cannot brook the shadow of any
lie."

Unmockingly the mocker ending
here
Turn'd to the right, and past along the
plain ;
Whom Gareth looking after said, " My
men,
Our one white lie sits like a little ghost
Here on the threshold of our enterprise.
Let love be blamed for it, not she, nor
I :
Well, we will make amends."

With all good cheer
He spake and laugh'd, then enter'd
with his twain
Camelot, a city of shadowy palaces,
And stately, rich in emblem and the
work
Of ancient kings who did their days in
stone ;
Which Merlin's hand, the Mage at Ar-
thur's court,
Knowing all arts, had touch'd, and
everywhere
At Arthur's ordinance, tipt with lessen-
ing peak

And pinnacle, and had made it spire
to heaven.
And ever and anon a knight would
pass
Outward, or inward to the hall : his
arms
Clash'd ; and the sound was good to
Gareth's ear.
And out of hower and casement shyly
glanced
Eyes of pure women, wholesome stars
of love ;
And all about a healthful people slept
As in the presence of a gracious king.

Then into hall Gareth ascending
heard
A voice, the voice of Arthur, and
beheld
Far over heads in that long-vaulted
hall
The splendor of the presence of the
King
Throned, and delivering doom — and
look'd no more—
But felt his young heart hammering
in his ears,
And thought, " For this half-shadow
of a lie
The truthful King will doom me when
I speak."

Yet pressing on, tho' all in fear to find
Sir Gawain or Sir Modred, saw nor one
Nor other, but in all the listening eyes
Of those tall knights, that ranged
about the throne,
Clear honor shining like the dewy star
Of dawn, and faith in their great King,
with pure
Affection, and the light of victory,
And glory gain'd, and evermore to gain.

Then came a widow crying to the
King,
" A boon, Sir King ! Thy father,
Uther, reft
From my dead lord a field with vio-
lence :
For howsoe'er at first he proffer'd gold,
Yet, for the field was pleasant in our
eyes,
We yielded not ; and then he reft us
of it
Perforce, and left us neither gold nor
field."

Said Arthur, " Whether would ye ?
gold or field ? "
To whom the woman weeping, " Nay,
my lord,
The field was pleasant in my husband's
eye."

And Arthur, " Have thy pleasant
field again,
And thrice the gold for Uther's use
thereof,
According to the years. No boon is
here,
But justice, so thy say be proven true.



Accused, who from the wrongs his
father did
Would shape himself a right ! ”

And while she past,
Came yet another widow crying to him
“ A boon, Sir King ! Thine enemy,
King, am I.
With thine own hand thou slewest my
dear lord,
A knight of Uther, in the Barons’ war,
When Lot and many another rose and
fought
Against thee, saying thou wert basely
born.
I held with these, and loathe to ask
thee aught.
Yet lo ! my husband’s brother had my
son
Thrall’d in his castle, and hath starved
him dead ;
And standeth seized of that inheritance
Which thou that slewest the sire hast
left the son.
So tho’ I scarce can ask it thee for hate,
Grant me some knight to do the battle
for me,
Kill the foul thief, and wreak me for
my son.”

Then strode a good knight forward,
crying to him,
“ A boon, Sir King ! I am her kins-
man, I.
Give me to right her wrong, and slay
the man.”

Then came Sir Kay, the seneschal,
and cried,
“ A boon, Sir King ! ev’n that thou
grant her none,
This raller, that hath mock’d thee in
full hall—
None ; or the wholesome boon of gyve
and gag.”

But Arthur, “ We sit, King, to help
the wrong’d
Thro’ all our realm. The woman loves
her lord.
Peace to thee, woman, with thy loves
and hates !
The kings of old had doom’d thee to
the flames,
Aurelius Emrys would have scourged
thee dead,
And Uther slit thy tongue : but get
thee hence—
Lest that rough humor of the kings of
old
Return upon me ! Thou that art her
kin,
Go likewise ; lay him low and slay him
not,
But bring him here, that I may judge
the right,
According to the justice of the King :
Then, he be guilty, by that deathless
King
Who lived and died for men, the man
shall die.”

Then came in hall the messenger of
Mark,
A name of evil savor in the land,
The Cornish king. In either hand he
bore
What dazzled all, and shone far-off as
shines
A field of charlock in the sudden sun
Between two showers, a cloth of palest
gold,
Which down he laid before the throne,
and knelt,
Delivering, that his Lord, the vassal
king,
Was ev’n upon his way to Camelot ;
For having heard that Arthur of his
grace
Had made his goodly cousin, Tristram,
knight,
And, for himself was of the greater
state,
Being a king, he trusted his liege-lord
Would yield him this large honor all
the more
So pray’d him well to accept this cloth
of gold,
In token of true heart and fealty.

Then Arthur cried to rend the cloth,
to rend
In pieces, and so cast it on the hearth
An oak-tree smoulder’d there. “ The
goodly knight !
What ! shall the shield of Mark stand
among these ? ”
For, midway down the side of that
long hall
A stately pile,—whereof along the
front,
Some blazon’d, some but carven, and
some blank,
There ran a treble range of stony
shields,—
Rose, and high-arching overbrow’d the
hearth.
And under every shield a knight was
named :
For this was Arthur’s custom in his
hall ;
When some good knight had done one
noble deed,
His arms were carven only ; but if
twain
His arms were blazon’d also ; but if
none
The shield was blank and bare without
a sign
Saving the name beneath ; and Gareth
saw
The shield of Gawain blazon’d rich
and hright,
And Modred’s blank as death ; and
Arthur cried
To rend the cloth and cast it on the
hearth.

“ More like are we to reave him of
his crown
Than make him knight because men
call him king.”



The kings we found, ye know we stay'd
 their hands
 From war among themselves, but left
 them kings;
 Of whom were any bounteous, merci-
 ful,
 Truth-speaking, brave, good livers,
 them we enroll'd
 Among us, and they sit within our
 hall,
 But Mark hath tarnish'd the great
 name of king,
 As Mark would sully the low state of
 churl:
 And, seeing he hath sent us cloth of
 gold,
 Return, and meet, and hold him from
 our eyes,
 Lest we should lap him up in cloth of
 lead,
 Silenced forever—craven—a man of
 plots
 Craft, poisonous counsels, wayside am-
 bushings—
 No fault of thine: let Kay, the senes-
 chal,
 Look to thy wants, and send thee satis-
 fied—
 Accursed, who strikes nor lets the
 hand be seen!"

And many another suppliant crying
 came
 With noise of ravage wrought by beast
 and man,
 And evermore a knight would ride
 away.
 Last Gareth leaning both hands
 heavily
 Down on the shoulders of the twain,
 his men,
 Approach'd between them toward the
 King, and ask'd,
 "A boon, Sir King (his voice was all
 ashamed),
 "For see ye not how weak and hun-
 ger worn
 I seem—leaning on these? grant me
 to serve
 For meat and drink among thy kitchen-
 knives
 A twelvemonth and a day, nor seek
 my name.
 Hereafter I will fight."

To him the King,
 "A goodly youth and worth a goodlier
 boon!
 But an thou wilt no goodlier, then
 must Kay,
 The master of the meats and drinks,
 be thine."

He rose and past; then Kay, a man
 of mien
 Wan-sallow as the plant that feels it-
 self
 Root-bitten by white lichen,
 "Lo ye now!
 This fellow hath broken from some
 Abbey, where,

God wot, he had not beef and brewis
 enow,
 However that might chance! but an
 he work,
 Like any pigeon will I cram his crop,
 And sleeker shall he shine than any
 hog."

Then Lancelot standing near, "Sir
 Seneschal,
 Sleuth-hound thou knowest, and gray,
 and all the honnds;
 A horse thou knowest, a man thou
 dost not know:
 Broad brows and fair, a fluent hair
 and fine,
 High nose, a nostril large and fine,
 and hands
 Large, fair and fine!—Some young
 lad's mystery—
 But, or from sheepcot or king's hall,
 the boy
 Is noble-natured. Treat him with all
 grace,
 Lest he should come to shame thy
 judging of him."

Then Kay, "What murmurest thou
 of mystery?
 Think ye this fellow will poison the
 King's dish?
 Nay, for he spake too fool-like: mys-
 tery!
 Tut, an the lad were noble, he had
 ask'd
 For horse and armor: fair and fine,
 forsooth!
 Sir Fine-face, Sir Fair-hands? but see
 thou to it
 That thine own fineness, Lancelot,
 some fine day
 Undo these not—and leave my man to
 me."

So Gareth all for glory underwent
 The sooty yoke of kitchen vassalage;
 Ate with young lads his portion by the
 door,
 And couch'd at night with grimy
 kitchen-knives.
 And Lancelot ever spake him pleas-
 antly,
 But Kay the seneschal who loved him
 not
 Would hustle and harry him, and
 labor him
 Beyond his comrade of the hearth, and
 set
 To turn the broach, draw water, or
 hew wood,
 Or grosser tasks; and Gareth bow'd
 himself
 With all obedience to the King, and
 wrought
 All kind of service with a noble ease
 That graced the lowliest act in doing
 it.
 And when the thralls had talk among
 themselves,
 And one would praise the love that
 linkt the King



And Lancelot—how the King had saved
his life
In battle twice, and Lancelot once the
King's—
For Lancelot was the first in Tourna-
ment,
But Arthur mightiest on the battle-
field—
Gareth was glad. Or if some other
told,
How once the wandering forester at
dawn,
Far over the blue tams and hazy seas,
On Caer-Eryri's highest found the
King,
A naked babe, of whom the Prophet
spoke,
"He passes to the Isle Avilion,
He passes and is heal'd and cannot
die"—
Gareth was glad. But if their talk
were foul,
Then would he whistle rapid as any
lark,
Or carol some old roundelay, and so
loud
That first they mock'd, but after, rever-
enced him.
Or Gareth telling some prodigious tale
Of knights, who sliced a red life-buh-
hling way
Thro' twenty folds of twisted dragon,
held
All in a gap-mouth'd circle his good
mates
Lying or sitting round him, idle hands,
Charm'd; till Sir Kay, the seneschal,
would come
Blustering upon them, like a sudden
wind
Among dead leaves, and drive them
all apart.
Or when the thralls had sport among
themselves,
So there were any trial of mastery,
He, by two yards in casting bar or
stone,
Was counted best; and if there chanced
a joust,
So that Sir Kay nodded him leave to go,
Would hurry thither, and when he
saw the knights
Clash like the coming and retiring
waves,
And the spear spring, and good horse
reel, the boy
Was half beyond himself for ecstasy.

So for a month he wrought among
the thralls;
But in the weeks that follow'd, the
good Queen,
Repentant of the word she made him
swear,
And saddening in her childless castle,
sent,
Between the increasent and decreasent
moon,
Arms for her son, and loosed him from
his vow.

This, Gareth hearing from a squire
of Lot
With whom he used to play at tourney
once,
When both were children, and in
lonely haunts
Would scratch a ragged oval on the
sand,
And each at either dash from either
end—
Shame never made' girl redder than
Gareth joy.
He laugh'd; he sprang. "Out of the
smoke, at once
I leap from Satan's foot to Peter's
knee—
These news be mine, none other's—
nay, the King's—"
Descend into the city:" whereon he
sought
The King alone, and found, and told
him all.

"I have stagger'd thy strong Gawain
in a tilt
For pastime: yea, he said it: joust
can I.
Make me thy knight—in secret! let
my name
Be hid'd'n, and give me the first quest,
I spring
Like flame from ashes."

Here the King's calm eye
Fell on, and check'd, and made him
flush, and bow
Lowly, to kiss his hand, who answer'd
him,
"Son, the good mother let me know
thee here,
And sent her wish that I would yield
thee thine.
Make thee my knight? my knights are
sworn to vows
Of utter hardihood, utter gentleness,
And, loving, utter faithfulness in love,
And uttermost obedience to the King."

Then Gareth, lightly springing from
his knees,
"My King, for hardihood I can promise
thee.
For uttermost obedience make de-
mand
Of whom ye gave me to, the Seneschal,
No mellow master of the meats and
drinks!
And as for love, God wot, I love not
yet,
But love I shall, God willing."

And the King—
"Make thee my knight in secret? yea,
but he,
Our noblest brother, and our truest
man,
And one with me in all, he needs must
know."

"Let Lancelot know, my King, let
Lancelot know,
Thy noblest and thy truest"



And the King—
 “But wherefore would ye men should wonder at you!
 Nay, rather for the sake of me, their King,
 And the deed's sake my knighthood do the deed,
 Than to be noised of.”

Merrily Gareth ask'd,
 “Have I not earn'd my cake in baking of it?
 Let be my name until I make my name!
 My deeds will speak: it is but for a day.”
 So with a kindly hand on Gareth's arm
 Smiled the great King, and half-unwillingly
 Loving his hasty youthhood yielded to him.
 Then, after summoning Lancelot privily,
 “I have given him the first quest: he is not proven.
 Look therefore when he calls for this in hall,
 Thou get to horse and follow him far away.
 Cover the lions on thy shield, and see
 Far as thou mayest, he be nor ta'en nor slain.”

Then that same day there past into the hall
 A damsel of high lineage, and a brow
 May-blossom, and a cheek of apple-blossom,
 Hawk-eyes; and lightly was her slender nose
 Tip-tilted like the petal of a flower;
 She into hall past with her page and cried,
 “O King, for thou hast driven the foe without,
 See to the foe within! bridge, ford, beset
 By bandits, every one that owns a tower
 The Lord for half a league. Why sit ye there?
 Rest would I not, Sir King, an I were king,
 Till ev'n the lonest hold were all as free
 From cursed bloodshed, as thine altar-cloth
 From that blest blood it is a sin to spill.”

“Comfort thyself,” said Arthur, “I nor mine
 Rest: so my knighthood keep the vows they swore,
 The wastest moorland of our realm shall be
 Safe, damsel, as the centre of this hall.
 What is thy name? thy need?”

“My name?” she said—
 “Lynette my name; noble; my need, a knight
 To combat for my sister, Lyonore,
 A lady of high lineage, of great lands,
 And comely, yea, and comelier than myself.
 She lives in Castle Perilous: a river
 Runs in three loops about her living-place;
 And o'er it are three passings, and three knights
 Defend the passings, brethren, and a fourth
 And of that four the mightiest, holds her stay'd
 In her own castle and so besieges her
 To break her will, and make her wed with him:
 And but delays his purport till thou send
 To do the battle with him, thy chief man
 Sir Lancelot whom he trusts to overthrow,
 Then wed, with glory; but she will not wed
 Save whom she loveth, or a holy life.
 Now therefore have I come for Lancelot.”

Then Arthur mindful of Sir Gareth ask'd,
 “Damsel, ye know this Order lives to crush
 All wrongers of the Realm. But say, these four,
 Who be they? What the fashion of the men?”

“They be of foolish fashion, O Sir King,
 The fashion of that old knight-errantry
 Who ride abroad and do but what they will;
 Courteous or bestial from the moment,
 Such as have nor law nor king; and three of these
 Proud in their fantasy call themselves the Day,
 Morning-Star, and Noon-Sun, and Evening-Star,
 Being strong fools; and never a whit more wise
 The fourth, who alway rideth arm'd in black,
 A huge man-beast of boundless savagery.
 He names himself the Night and of-
 tener Death.
 And wears a helmet mounted with a skull
 And bears a skeleton figured on his arms,
 To show that who may slay or scape the three
 Slain by himself shall enter endless night.
 And all these four be fools, but mighty men,



And therefore am I come for Lance-
lot."

Hereat Sir Gareth call'd from where
he rose,
A head with kindling eyes above the
throng,
"A boon, Sir King—this quest!" then
—for he mark'd
Kay near him groaning like a wounded
bull—
"Yea, King, thou knowest thy kitchen-
knave am I,
And mighty thro' thy meats and
drinks am I,
And I can topple over a hundred such.
Thy promise, King," and Arthur glanc-
ing at him,
Brought down a momentary brow,
"Rough, sudden,
And pardonable, worthy to be knight—
Go therefore," and all hearers were
amazed.

But on the damsel's forehead shame,
pride, wrath,
Slew the May-white: she lifted either
arm,
"Fie on thee, King! I ask'd for thy
chief knight,
And thou hast given me but a kitchen-
knave."
Then ere a man in hall could stay her,
turn'd,
Fled down the lane of access to the
King,
Took horse, descended the slope street,
and past
The weird white gate, and paused with-
out, beside
The field of tourney, murmuring
"kitchen-knave."

Now two great entries open'd from
the hall,
At one end one, that gave upon a range
Of level pavement where the King
would pace
At sunrise, gazing over plain and wood.
And down from this a lordly stairway
sloped
Till lost in blowing trees and tops of
towers.
And out by this main doorway past the
King.
But one was counter to the hearth, and
rose
High that the highest-crested helm
could ride
Therethro' nor graze: and by this en-
try fled
The damsel in her wrath, and on to
this
Sir Gareth strode, and saw without the
door
King Arthur's gift, the worth of half a
town,
A warhorse of the best, and near it stood
The two that out of north had follow'd
him:

This bare a maiden shield, a casque;
that held
The horse, the spear; whereat Sir Ga-
reth loosed
A cloak that dropt from collar-bone to
heel,
A cloth of roughest web, and cast it
down,
And from it like a fuel-smother'd fire,
That lookt half-dead, brake bright,
and flash'd as those
Dull-coated things, that making slide
apart
Their dusk-wing cases, all beneath
there burns
A jewel'd harness, ere they pass and
fly.
So Gareth ere he parted flash'd in
arms.
Then while he donn'd the helm, and
took the shield
And mounted horse and graspt a spear,
of grain
Storm-strengthen'd on a windy site,
and tipt
With trenchant steel, around him
slowly prest
The people, and from out of kitchen
came
The thralls in throng, and seeing who
had work'd
Lustier than any, and whom they could
but love,
Monnted in arms, threw up their caps
and cried,
"God bless the King, and all his fel-
lowship!"
And on thro' lanes of shouting Gareth
rode
Down the slope street, and past with-
out the gate.

So Gareth past with joy; but as the
cur
Plucked from the cur he fights with, ere
his cause
Be cool'd by fighting, follows, being
named,
His owner, but remembers all, and
growls
Remembering, so Sir Kay beside the
door
Mutter'd in scorn of Gareth whom he
used
To harry and hustle.

"Bound upon a quest
With horse and arms—the King hath
past his time—
My scullion knave Thralls to your
work again,
For an your fire be low ye kindle mine!
Will there be dawn in West and eve in
East?
Begone!—my knave!—hellike and
like enow
Some old head-blow not heeded in his
youth
So shook his wits they wander in his
prime—



Crazed! How the villain lifted up his voice,
Nor shamed to hawl himself a kitchen-knave,
Tut: he was tame and meek enow with me,
Till peacock'd up with Lancelot's not-tieing.
Well—I will after my loud knave, and learn
Whether he know me for his master yet.
Out of the smoke he came, and so my lance
Hold, by God's grace, he shall into the nire—
Thence, if the King awaken from his craze,
Into the smoke again."

But Lancelot said,
"Kay, wherefore will ye go against the King,
For that did never he whereon ye rail,
But ever meekly served the King in thee?
Abide: take counsel; for this lad is great
And lusty, and knowing both of lance and sword."
"Tut, tell not me," said Kay, "ye are overfine
To mar stout knaves with foolish courtesies."
Then mounted, on thro' silent faces rode
Down the slope city, and out beyond the gate.

But by the field of tourney lingering yet
Mutter'd the damsel, "Wherefore did the King
Scorn me? for, were Sir Lancelot lackt, at least
He might have yielded to me one of those
Who tilt for lady's love and glory here,
Rather than—O sweet heaven? O fie upon him—
His kitchen-knave."

To whom Sir Gareth drew
(And there were none but few goodlier than he)
Shining in arms, "Damsel, the quest is mine.
Lead, and I follow." She thereat, as one
That smells a foul-flesh'd agaric in the holt,
And deems it carrion of some woodland thing,
Or shrew, or weasel, nipt her slender nose
With petulant thumb and finger shrilling, "Hence!
Avoid, thou smelllest all of kitchen-grease.
And look who comes behind," for there was Kay.

"Knowest thou not me? thy master? I am Kay.
We lack thee by the hearth."

And Gareth to him,
"Master no more! too well I know thee, ay—
The most niggente knight in Arthur's hall."
"Have at thee then," said Kay: they shock'd, and Kay
Fell shoulder-slipt, and Gareth cried again,
"Lead, and I follow," and fast away she fled.

But after sod and shingle ceased to fly
Behind her, and the heart of her good horse
Was nigh to hurst with violence of the beat,
Perforce she stay'd, and overtaken spoke.

"What doest thou, scullion, in my fellowship?
Deem'st thou that I accept thee aught the more
Or love thee better, that by some device
Full cowardly, or by mere unhappiness,
Thou hast overthrown and slain thy master—thou!—
Dish-washer and broach-turner, loon!
—tell me
Thou smelllest all of kitchen as before."

"Damsel," Sir Gareth answer'd gently, "say
Whate'er ye will, but whatsoe'er ye say,
I leave not till I finish this fair quest,
Or die therefor."

"Ay, wilt thou finish it?
Sweet lord, how like a noble knight he talks!
The listening rogue hath caught the manner of it.
But, knave, anon thou shalt be met with, knave,
And then by such a one that thou for all
The kitchen brewis that was ever supt
Shall not once dare to look him in the face."

"I shall assay," said Gareth with a smile
That madden'd her, and away she flash'd again
Down the long avenues of a boundless wood,
And Gareth following was again beknaved.

"Sir Kitchen-knave, I have miss'd the only way
Where Arthur's men are set along the wood;



The wood is nigh as full of thieves as leaves :
 If both be slain, I am rid of thee ; but
 yet,
 Sir Scullion, canst thou use that spit of
 thine ?
 Fight, an thou canst : I have miss'd
 the only way."

So till the dusk that follow'd even-
 song
 Rode on the two, reviler and reviled :
 Then after one long slope was mounted,
 saw,
 Bowl-shaped, thro' tops of many thou-
 sand pines
 A gloomy-gladed hollow slowly sink
 To westward—in the deeps whereof a
 mere,
 Round as the red eye of an Eagle-owl,
 Under the half-dead sunset glared ; and
 cries
 Ascended, and there brake a serving-
 man
 Flying from out of the black wood, and
 crying,
 " They have bound my lord to cast him
 in the mere."
 Then Gareth, " Bound am I to right
 the wrong'd,
 But straitlier bound am I to hide with
 thee."
 And when the damsel spake contempt-
 uously,
 " Lead and I follow," Gareth cried
 again,
 " Follow, I lead ! " so down among the
 pines
 He plunged ; and there, blackshadow'd
 nigh the mere,
 And mid-thigh-deep in bulrushes and
 reed,
 Saw six tall men haling a seventh along,
 A stone about his neck, to drown him
 in it.
 Three with good blows he quieted, but
 three
 Fled thro' the pines ; and Gareth loosed
 the stone
 From off his neck, then in the mere
 beside
 Tumbled it ; oilily bubbled up the
 mere.
 Last, Gareth loosed his bonds and on
 free feet
 Set him, a stalwart Baron, Arthur's
 friend.

" Well that ye came, or else these
 caltiff rogues
 Had wreak'd themselves on me ; good
 cause is theirs
 To hate me, for my wont hath ever
 been
 To catch my thief, and then like ver-
 min here
 Drown him, and with a stone about his
 neck ;
 And under this wan water many of
 them

Lie rotting, but at night let go the
 stone,
 And rise, and flickering in a grimly
 light
 Dance on the mere. Good now, ye
 have saved a life
 Worth somewhat as the cleanser of
 this wood.
 And fain would I reward thee worship-
 fully.
 What guerdon will ye ? "

Gareth sharply spake,
 " None ! for the deed's sake have I
 done the deed,
 In nitermost obedience to the King.
 But will ye yield this damsel harbor-
 age ? "

Whereat the Baron saying, " I well
 believe
 Ye be of Arthur's Table," a light laugh
 Broke from Lynette, " Ay, truly of a
 truth,
 And in a sort, being Arthur's kitchen-
 knave !—
 But deem not I accept thee aught the
 more,
 Scullion, for running sharply with thy
 spit
 Down on a ront of craven foresters.
 A thresher with his flail had scatter'd
 them.
 Nay—for thou smellest of the kitchen
 still.
 But an this lord will yield us harbor-
 age,
 Well."

So she spake. A league beyond the
 wood,
 All in a full-fair manor and a rich,
 His towers where that day a feast had
 been
 Held in high hall, and many a viand
 left,
 And many a costly cate, received the
 three.
 And there they placed a peacock in his
 pride
 Before the damsel, and the Baron set
 Gareth beside her, but at once she rose.

" Meseems, that here is much dis-
 courtesy,
 Setting this knave, Lord Baron, at my
 side.
 Hear me—this morn I stood in Ar-
 thur's hall,
 And pray'd the King would grant me
 Lancelot
 To fight the brotherhood of Day and
 Night—
 The last a monster unsubduable
 Of any save of him for whom I call'd—
 Suddenly hawls this frontless kitchen-
 knave,
 ' The quest is mine ; thy kitchen-knave
 am I,
 And mighty thro' thy meats and drinks
 am I."



Then Arthur all at once gone mad replies,
 'Go therefore,' and so gives the quest
 to him—
 Him—here—a villain fitter to stick
 swine
 Than ride abroad redressing women's
 wrong,
 Or sit beside a noble gentlewoman."

Then half-ashamed and part-amazed,
 the lord
 Now look'd at one and now at other,
 left
 The damsel by the peacock in his pride,
 And, seating Gareth at another board,
 Sat down beside him, ate and then began.

"Friend, whether ye be kitchen-
 knave, or not,
 Or whether it be the maiden's fantasy,
 And whether she be mad, or else the
 King,
 Or both or neither, or thyself be mad,
 I ask not: but thou strikest a stroug
 stroke,
 For strong thou art and goodly there-
 withal,
 And savor 'of my life; and therefore
 now,
 For here be mighty men to joust with,
 weigh,
 Whether thou wilt not with thy damsel
 back
 To crave again Sir Lancelot of the
 King.
 Thy pardon; I but speak for thine
 avall,
 The savor of my life."

And Gareth said,
 "Full pardon, but I follow up the
 quest,
 Despite of Day and Night and Death
 and Hell."

So when, next morn, the lord whose
 life he saved
 Had, some brief space, convey'd them
 on their way
 And left them with God-speed, Sir Ga-
 reth spake,
 "Lead and I follow." Haughtily she
 replied,

"I fly no more: I allow thee for an
 hour.
 Lion and stoat have isled together,
 knave,
 In time of flood. Nay, furthermore,
 methinks
 Some ruth is mine for thee. Back wilt
 thou, fool?
 For hard by here is one will over-
 throw
 And slay thee: then will I to court
 again,
 And shame the King for only yielding
 me

My champion from the ashes of his
 hearth."

To whom Sir Gareth answer'd cour-
 teously,
 "Say thou thy say, and I will do my
 deed.
 Allow me for mine hour, and thou
 wilt find
 My fortunes all as fair as hers, who
 lay
 Among the ashes and wedded the
 King's son."

Then to the shore of one of those
 long loops
 Wherethro' the serpent river coil'd,
 they came.
 Rough-thicketed were the banks and
 steep; the stream
 Full, narrow; this a bridge of single
 arc
 Took at a leap; and on the further
 side
 Arose a silk pavilion, gay with gold
 In streaks and rays, and all Lent-lily
 in hue,
 Save that the dome was purple, and
 above,
 Crimson, a slender banneret fluttering.
 And there before the lawless warrior
 paced
 Unarm'd, and calling, "Damsel, is
 this he,
 The champion ye have brought from
 Arthur's hall?
 For whom we let thee pass." "Nay,
 nay," she said,
 "Sir Morning-Star. The King in utter
 scorn
 Of thee and thy much folly hath sent
 thee here
 His kitchen-knave: and look thou to
 thyself:
 See that he fall not on thee suddenly,
 And slay thee unarm'd: he is not
 knight but knave."

Then at his call, "O daughters of
 the Dawn,
 And servants of the Morning-Star, ap-
 proach
 Arm me," from out the silken curtain-
 folds
 Barefooted and bareheaded three fair
 girls
 In gilt and rosy raiment came: their
 feet
 In dewy grasses glisten'd; and the
 hair
 All over glanced with dewdrop or with
 gem
 Like sparkles in the stone Avanturine.
 These arm'd him in blue arms, and
 gave a shield
 Blue also, and thereon the morning
 star.
 And Gareth silent gazed upon the
 knight,
 Who stood a moment, ere his horse
 was brought,



Glorious ; and in the stream beneath
him, shone,
Immingled with Heaven's azure wa-
veringly,
The gay pavilion and the naked feet,
His arms, the rosy raiment, and the
star.

Then she that watch'd him, "Where-
fore stare ye so ?
Thou shakest in thy fear : there yet is
time :
Flee down the valley before he get to
horse.
Who will cry shame ? Thou art not
knight but knave."

Said Gareth, "Damsel, whether
knave or knight,
Far liefer had I fight a score of times
Than hear thee so missay me and re-
vile.
Fair words were hest for him who
fights for thee ;
But truly foul are better, for they send
That strength of anger thro' mine
arms, I know
That I shall overthrow him."

And he that bore
The star, being mounted, cried from
o'er the bridge,
"A kitchen-knave, and sent in scorn
of me !
Such fight not I, but answer scorn with
scorn.
For this were shame to do him further
wrong
Than set him on his feet, and take his
horse
And arms, and so return him to the
King.
Come, therefore, leave thy lady light-
ly, knave.
Avoid : for it beseemeth not a knave
To ride with such a lady."

"Dog, thou liest.
I spring from loftier lineage than thine
own."
He spake ; and all at fiery speed the
two
Shock'd on the central bridge, and
either spear
Bent but not brake, and either knight
at once,
Hurl'd as a stone from out of a cata-
pult
Beyond his horse's crupper and the
bridge,
Fell, as if dead ; but quickly rose and
drew,
And Gareth lash'd so fiercely with his
brand
He drave his enemy backward down
the bridge,
The damsel crying, "Well-stricken,
kitchen-knave !"
Till Gareth's shield was cloven ; but
one stroke

Laid him that clove it grovelling on
the ground.

Then cried the fall'n, "Take not my
life : I yield."
And Gareth, "So this damsel ask it of
me
Good — I accord it easily as a grace."
She reddening, "Insolent scullion : I
of thee ?
I hound to thee for any favor ask'd !"
"Then shall he die." And Gareth
there unlaced
His helmet as to slay him, but she
shriek'd,
"Be not so hardy, scullion, as to slay
One nobler than thyself." "Damsel,
thy charge
Is an abounding pleasure to me.
Knight,
Thy life is thine at her command.
Arise
And quickly pass to Arthur's hall, and
say
His kitchen-knave hath sent thee.
See thou crave
His pardon for thy breaking of his
laws.
Myself, when I return, will plead for
thee.
Thy shield is mine — farewell ; and,
damsel, thou
Lead, and I follow."

And fast away she fled.
Then when he came upon her, spake,
"Methought,
Knave, when I watch'd thee striking
on the bridge
The savor of thy kitchen came upon
me
A little faintlier : but the wind hath
changed :
I scent it twentyfold." And then she
sang,
" 'O morning star ' (not that tall felon
there
Whom thou by sorcery or unhappiness
Or some device, hast foully over-
thrown),
'O morning star that smilest in the
blue,
O star, my morning dream hath proven
true,
Smile sweetly, thou ! my love hath
smiled on me.'

"But thou hegone, take counsel, and
away,
For hard by here is one that guards a
ford —
The second brother in their fool's par-
able —
Will pay thee all thy wages, and to
boot.
Care not for shame : thou art not
knight hut knave."

To whom Sir Gareth answer'd, laugh-
ingly,



"Parables? Hear a parable of the knave.
When I was kitchen-knave among the rest
Fierce was the hearth, and one of my co-mates
Own'd a rough dog, to whom he cast his coat,
'Guard it,' and there was none to meddle with it.
And such a coat art thou, and thee the King
Gave me to guard, and such a dog am I,
To worry, and not to flee— and— knight or knave—
The knave that doth thee service as full knight
Is all as good, meseems, as any knight
Toward thy sister's freeing."

"Ay, Sir Knave!
Ay, knave, because thou strikest as a knight
Being but knave, I hate thee all the more."

"Fair damsel, ye should worship me the more,
That, being but knave, I throw thine enemies."

"Ay, ay," she said, "but thou shalt meet thy match."

So when they touch'd the second river-loop,
Huge on a huge red horse, and all in mail
Burnish'd to blinding, shone the Noon-day Sun
Beyond a faging shallow. As if the flower,
That blows a globe of after arrowlets,
Ten thousand-fold had grown, flash'd the fierce shield,
All sun; and Gareth's eyes had flying blots
Before them when he turn'd from watching him.
He from beyond the roaring shallow roar'd,
"What doest thou, brother, in my marches here?"
And she athwart the shallow shrill'd again,
"Here is a kitchen-knave from Arthur's hall
Hath overthrown thy brother, and hath his arms."
"Ugh!" cried the Sun, and vizoring up a red
And cipher face of rounded foolishness,
Push'd horse across the foamings of the ford,
Whom Gareth met midstream: no room was there
For lance or tourney-skill: four strokes they struck

With sword, and these were mighty: the new knight
Had fear he might be shamed; but as the Sun
Heaved up a ponderous arm to strike the fifth,
The hoof of his horse slipt in the stream, the stream
Descended, and the Sun was wash'd away.

Then Gareth laid his lance athwart the ford;
So drew him home; but he that would not fight,
As being all bone-battered on the rock,
Yielded; and Gareth sent him to the King.

"Myself when I return will plead for thee.

Lead, and I follow." Quietly she led.
"Hath not the good wind, damsel, changed again?"

"Nay, not a point: nor art thou victor here.

There lies a ridge of slate across the ford;
His horse thereon stumbled—ay, for I saw it.

"O Sun' (not this strong fool whom thou, Sir Knave,
Hast overthrown thro' mere unhappiness),

'O Sun, that wakenest all to bliss or pain,
O moon, that layest all to sleep again,
Shine sweetly: twice my love hath smiled on me.'

"What knowest thou of lovesong or of love?"

Nay, nay, God wot, so thou wert nobly born,
Thou hast a pleasant presence. Yea, perchance,—

"O dewy flowers that open to the sun,
O dewy flowers that close when day is done,
Blow sweetly: twice my love hath smiled on me.'

"What knowest thou of flowers, except, helike,
To garnish meats with? hath not our good King

Who lent me thee, the flower of kitchen-
endom,

A foolish love for flowers? what stick ye round

The pasty? wherewithal deck the boar's head?

Flowers? nay, the boar hath rose-marie and bay.

"O birds, that warble to the morning sky,
O birds that warble as the day goes by,
Sing sweetly: twice my love hath smiled on me.'



"What knowest thou of birds, lark,
 mavis, merle,
 Linnet? what dream ye when they
 utter forth
 May-music growing with the growing
 light,
 Their sweet sun-worship? these be for
 the snare
 (So runs thy fancy) these be for the
 split,
 Larding and basting. See thou have
 not now
 Larded thy last, except thou turn and
 fly.
 There stande the third fool of their
 allegory."

For there beyond a bridge of treble
 bow,
 All in a rose-red from the west, and all
 Naked it seem'd, and glowing in the
 broad
 Deep-dimpled current underncath, the
 knight,
 That named himself the Star of Even-
 ning, stood.

And Gareth, "Wherefore waits the
 madmau there
 Naked in open dayshine?" "Nay,"
 she cried,
 "Not naked, only wrapt in harden'd
 skins
 That fit him like his own; and so ye
 cleave
 His armor off him, these will turn the
 blade."

Then the third brother shouted o'er
 the bridge,
 "O brother-star, why shine ye here so
 low?
 Thy ward is higher up: but have ye
 slain
 The damsel's champion?" and the
 damsel cried,

"No star of thine, but shot from Ar-
 thur's heaven
 With all disaster unto thine and thee!
 For both thy younger brethren have
 gone down
 Before this youth; and so wilt thou,
 Sir Star;
 Art thou not old?"

"Old, damsel, old and hard,
 Old, with the might and breath of
 twenty boys."
 Said Gareth, "Old, and over-bold in
 brag!
 But that same strength which threw
 the Morning-Star
 Can throw the Evening."

Then that other blew
 A hard and deadly note upon the horn.
 "Approach and arm me!" With slow
 steps from out
 An old storm-beaten, russet, many-
 stain'd

Pavilion, forth a grizzled damsel came,
 And arm'd him in old arms, and
 brought a helm
 With but a drying evergreen for crest,
 And gave a shield whereon the Star of
 Even
 Half-tarnish'd and half-bright, his em-
 blem, shone.
 But when it glitter'd o'er the saddle-
 bow,
 They madly hurl'd together on the
 bridge,
 And Gareth overthrew him; lighted,
 drew,
 There met him drawn, and overthrew
 him again,
 But up like fire he started: and as oft
 As Gareth brought him grovelling on
 his knees,
 So many a time he vaulted up again;
 Till Gareth panted hard, and his great
 heart,
 Foredooming all his trouble was in
 vain,
 Labor'd within him, for he seem'd as
 one
 That all in later, sadder age begins
 To war against ill uses of a life,
 But these from all his life arise, and
 cry,
 "Thou hast made us lords, and canst
 not put us down!"
 He half despairs; so Gareth seem'd to
 strike
 Vainly, the damsel clamoring all the
 while,
 "Well done, knave-knight, well strick-
 en, O good knight-knave—
 O knave, as noble as any of all the
 knights—
 Shame me not, shame me not. I have
 prophesied—
 Strike, thou art worthy of the Table
 Round—
 His arms are old; he trusts the hard-
 en'd skin—
 Strike—strike—the wind will never
 change again."
 And Gareth hearing ever stronglier
 smote,
 And hew'd great pieces of his armor off
 him,
 But lash'd in vain against the hard-
 en'd skin,
 And could not wholly bring him under,
 more
 Than loud Southwesterns, rolling ridge
 on ridge,
 The hucy that rides at sea, and dips
 and springs
 Forever: till at length Sir Gareth's
 brand
 Clash'd his, and brake it utterly to the
 hilt.
 "I have thee now;" but forth that
 other sprang,
 And, all unknightlike, writhed his
 wiry arms
 Around him, till he felt, despite his
 mail,



Strangled, but straining ev'n hie utter-
most
Cast, and so hurl'd him headlong o'er
the bridge
Down to the river, sink or swim, and
cried,
"Lead, and I follow."

But the damsel said,
"I lead no longer; ride thou at my
side;
Thou art the kingliest of all kitchen-
knaves.

"O trefoil, sparkling on the rainy
plain,
O rainbow with three colors after rain,
Shine sweetly: thrice my love hath
smiled on me."

"Sir,—and, good faith, I fain had
added—Knight,
But that I heard thee call thyself a
knave,—
Shamed am I that I so rebuked, re-
viled,
Misaidd thee: noble I am; and thought
the King
Scorn'd me and mine; and now thy
pardon, friend,
For thou hast ever answer'd courte-
ously,
And wholly bold thou art, and meek
withal
As any of Arthur's best, but, being
knave,
Hast mazed my wit: I marvel what
thou art."

"Damsel," he said, "ye be not all to
blame,
Saying that ye mistrusted our good
King
Would handle scorn, or yield thee,
asking, one
Not fit to cope thy quest. Ye said
your say;
Mine answer was my deed. Good
sooth! I hold
He scarce is knight, yea but half-man,
nor meet
To fight for gentle damsel, he, who
lets
His heart be stirr'd with any foolish
heat
At any gentle damsel's waywardness.
Shamed? care not! thy foul sayings
fought for me:
And seeing now thy words are fair,
methinks,
There rides no knight, not Lancelot,
his great self,
Hath force to quell me."

Nigh upon that hour
When the lone hern forgets his melan-
choly,
Lets down his other leg, and stretch-
ing dreams
Of goodly supper in the distant pool,
Then turn'd the noble damsel smiling
at him,

And told him of a cavern hard athand,
Where bread and baken meats and
good red wine
Of Southland, which the Lady Lyon-
ors
Had sent her coming champion, waited
him.

Anon they past a narrow comb
wherein
Were slabs of rock with figures, knights
on horse
Sculptured, and deckt in slowly wan-
ing hues.

"Sir Knave, my knight, a hermit once
was here,
Whose holy hand hath fashion'd on
the rock
The war of Time against the soul of
man.

And yon four foole have suck'd their
allegory
From these damp walls, and taken
but the form.

Know ye not these?" and Gareth
lookt and read—
In letters like to those the vexillary
Hath left crag-carven o'er the stream-
ing Gelt—

"PHOSPHORUS," then "MERIDIES"—
"HESPERUS"—

"NOX"—"MORS," beneath five fig-
ures, armed men,
Slab after slab, their faces forward all,
And running down the Soul, a Shape
that fled

With broken wings, torn raiment and
loose hair,
For help and shelter to the hermit's
cave.

"Follow the faces, and we find it.
Look,
Who comes behind?"

For one—delay'd at first
Thro' helping back the dislocated Kay
To Camelot, then by what thereafter
chanced,

The damsel's headlong error thro' the
wood—

Sir Lancelot, having swum the river-
loops—

His blue shield-lione cover'd—softly
drew

Behind the twain, and when he saw
the star

Gleam, on Sir Gareth's turning to him,
cried,

"Stay, felon knight, I avenge me for
my friend."

And Gareth crying prick'd against the
cry;

But when they closed—in a moment—
at one touch

Of that skill'd spear, the wonder of
the world—

Went sliding down so easily, and fell,
That when he found the grass within
his hands

He laugh'd; the laughter jarr'd upon
Lynette:



Harshly she ask'd him, "Shamed and
overthrown,
And tumbled back into the kitchen-
knave,
Why laugh ye? that ye blew your
boast in vain?"
"Nay, noble damsel, but that I, the
son
Of old King Lot and good Queen Belli-
cent,
And victor of the bridges and the ford,
And knight of Arthur, here lie thrown
by whom
I know not, all thro' mere unhappi-
ness—
Device and sorcery and unhappiness—
Out, sword; we are thrown!" and
Lancelot answer'd, "Prince,
O Gareth—thro' the mere unhappiness
Of one who came to help thee not to
harm,
Lancelot, and all as glad to find thee
whole,
As on the day when Arthur knighted
him."

Then Gareth, "Thou—Lancelot!—
thine the hand
That threw me? An some chance to
mar the boast
Thy brethren of thee make—which
could not chance—
Had sent thee down before a lesser
spear
Shamed had I been and sad—O Lance-
lot—thou!"

Whereat the maiden, petulant,
"Lancelot,
Why came ye not, when call'd? and
wherefore now
Come ye, not call'd? I gloried in my
knave,
Who being still rebuked, would answer
still
Courteous as any knight—but now, if
knight,
The marvel dies, and leaves me fool'd
and trick'd,
And only wandering wherefore play'd
upon;
And doubtful whether I and mine be
scorn'd.
Where should be truth if not in Ar-
thur's hall,
In Arthur's presence? Knight, knave,
prince and fool,
I hate thee and forever."

And Lancelot said,
"Blessed be thou, Sir Gareth! knight
art thou
To the King's best wish. O damsel,
be ye wise
To call him shamed, who is but over-
thrown?
Thrown have I been, nor once but
many a time.
Victor from vanquish'd issues at the
last.

And overthrower from being over-
thrown.
With sword we have not striven; and
thy good horse
And thou art weary; yet not less I
felt
Thy manhood thro' that wearied lance
of thine.
Well hast thou done; for all the
stream is freed,
And thou hast wreak'd his justice on
his foes,
And when reviled, hast answer'd gra-
ciously,
And makest merry, when overthrown.
Prince Knight,
Hail, Knight and Prince, and of our
Table Round!"

And then when turning to Lynette
he told
The tale of Gareth, petulantly she
said,
"Ay well—ay well—for worse than
being fool'd
Of others, is to fool one's self. A cave,
Sir Lancelot is hard by, with meats
and drinks
And forage for the horse, and flint for
fire.
But all about it flies a honeysuckle.
Seek, till we find." And when they
sought and found,
Sir Gareth drank and ate, and all his
life
Past into sleep; on whom the maiden
gazed.
"Sound sleep be thine! sound cause
to sleep hast thou.
Wake lusty! Seem I not as tender to
him
As any mother? Ay, but such a one
As all day long hath rated at her
child,
And vext his day, but blesses him
asleep—
Good lord, how sweetly smells the
honeysuckle
In the hush'd night, as if the world
were one
Of utter peace, and love, and gentle-
ness!
O Lancelot, Lancelot!"—and she clapt
her hands—
"Full merry am I to find my goodly
knave
Is knight and noble. See now, sworn
have I,
Else yon black felon had not let me
pass,
To bring thee back to do the battle
with him.
Thus an thon goest, he will fight thee
first;
Who doubts thee victor? so will my
knight-knave
Miss the full flower of the accomplish-
ment."
Said Lancelot, "Peradventure he,
ye name,



May know my shield. Let Gareth, an
he will,
Change his for mine, and take my
charger, fresh,
Not to be spurr'd, loving the battle as
well
As he that rides him." "Lancelot-
like," she said,
"Courteous in this, Lord Lancelot, as
in all."

And Gareth, wakening, fiercely
clutch'd the shield;
"Ramp, ye lance-splintering lions, on
whom all spears
Are rotten sticks! ye seem agape' to
roar!
Yea, ramp and roar at leaving of your
lord!
Care not, good beasts, so well I care
for you.
O noble Lancelot, from my hold on
these
Streams virtue—fire—thro' one that
will not shame
Even the shadow of Lancelot under
shield.
Hence: let us go."

Silent the silent field
They traversed. Arthur's harp thro'
summer-wan,
In counter motion to the clouds, al-
lured
The glance of Gareth dreaming on his
liege.
A star shot: "Lo," said Gareth, "the
foe falls!"
An owl whoopt: "Hark the victor
pealing there!"
Suddenly she that rode upon his left
Clung to the shield that Lancelot lent
him, crying,
"Yield, yield him this again: 'tis he
must fight:
I curse the tongue that all thro' yester-
day
Reviled thee, and hath wrought on
Lancelot now
To lend thee horse and shield: won-
ders ye have done;
Miracles ye cannot: here is glory enow
In having flung the three: I see thee
maim'd,
Mangled: I swear thou canst not fling
the fourth."

"And wherefore, damsel? tell me
all ye know.
Ye cannot scare me; nor rough face,
or voice,
Brute bulk of limb, or boundless sav-
agery
Appall me from the quest."

"Nay, Prince," she cried,
"God wot, I never look'd upon the
face,
Seeing he never rides abroad by day;
But watch'd him have I like a phan-
tom pass

Chilling the night: nor have I heard
the voice.
Always he made his mouthpiece of a
page
Who came and went, and still reported
him
As closing in himself the strength of
ten,
And when his anger tare him, maesa-
cring
Man, woman, lad and girl—yea the
soft babe—
Some bold that he hath swallow'd in-
fant flesh,
Monster! O prince, I went for Lancelot first,
The quest is Lancelot's: give him
back the shield."

Said Gareth laughing, "An he fight
for this,
Belike he wins it as the better man:
Thus—and not else?"

But Lancelot on him urged
All the devisings of their chivalry
Where one might meet a mightier
than himself;
How best to manage horse, lance,
sword and shield,
And so fill up the gap where force
might fail
With skill and fineness. Instant were
his words.

Then Gareth, "Here he rules. I
know but one—
To dash against mine enemy and to
win.
Yet have I watch'd thee victor in the
joust,
And seen thy way." "Heaven help
thee," sigh'd Lynette.

Then for a space, and under cloud
that grew
To thunder-gloom paling all stars,
they rode
In converse till she made her palfry
halt,
Lifted an arm, and softly whisper'd,
"There."
And all the three were silent seeing,
pitch'd
Beside the Castle Perilous on flat field,
A huge pavilion like a mountain peak
Sunder the glooming crimson on the
marge,
Black, with black banner, and a long
black horn
Beside it hanging; which Sir Gareth
graspt,
And so, before the two could hinder
him,
Sent all his heart and breath thro' all
the horn.
Echo'd the walls; a light twinkled;
anon
Came lights and lights, and once again
he blew:



Whereon were hollow trappings up
and down
And muffled voices heard, and shadows
past;
Till high above him, circled with her
maids,
The Lady Lyonors at a window stood,
Beautiful among lights, and waving to
him
White hands, and courtesy; but when
the Prince
Three times had blown—after long
hush—at last—
The huge pavilion slowly yielded up,
Thro' those black foldings, that which
housed therein.
High on a nightblack horse, in night-
black arms,
With white breast-bone, and harren
ribs of Death,
And crown'd with fearless laughter—
some ten steps—
In the half-light—thro' the dim dawn
—advanced
The monster, and then paused, and
spake no word.

But Gareth spake and all indignantly,
“Fool, for thou hast, men say, the
strength of ten,
Canst thou not trust the limbs thy God
hath given,
But must, to make the terror of thee
more,
Trick thyself out in ghastly imageries
Of that which Life hath done with, and
the clod,
Less dull than thou, will hide with
mantling flowers
As if for pity?” But he spake no
word;
Which set the horror higher: a maiden
swoon'd;
The Lady Lyonors wrung her hands and
wept,
As doom'd to be the bride of Night and
Death;
Sir Gareth's head prickled beneath his
helm;
And ev'n Sir Lancelot thro' his warm
blood felt
Ice strike, and all that mark'd him were
aghast.

At once Sir Lancelot's charger fierce-
ly neigh'd—
At once the black horse bounded for-
ward with him.
Then those that did not blink the ter-
ror, saw
That Death was cast to ground, and
slowly rose.
But with one stroke Sir Gareth split
the skull.
Half fell to right and half to left and
lay.
Then with a stronger buffet he clove
the helm
As thoroughly as the skull; and out
from this

Issued the bright face of a blooming
boy
Fresh as a flower new-born, and crying,
“Knight,
Slay me not: my three brethren had me
do it,
To make a horror all about the house,
And stay the world from Lady Lyonors.
They never dream'd the passes would
be past.”
Answer'd Sir Gareth graciously to one
Not many a moon his younger, “My
fair child,
What madness made thee challenge the
chief knight
Of Arthur's hall?” “Fair Sir, they
had me do it.
They hate the King, and Lancelot, the
King's friend,
They hoped to slay him somewhere on
the stream,
They never dream'd the passes could
be past.”

Then sprang the happier day from
underground;
And Lady Lyonors and her house, with
dance
And revel and song, made merry over
Death,
As being after all their foolish fears
And horrors only proven a blooming
boy.
So large mirth lived and Gareth won
the quest.

And he that told the tale in older
times
Says that Sir Gareth wedded Lyonors,
But he, that told it later, says Lynette.

 GERAINT AND ENID.

THE brave Geraint, a knight of Ar-
thur's court,
A tributary prince of Devon, one
Of that great order of the Table Round,
Had married Enid, Yniol's only child,
And loved her, as he loved the light of
Heaven.
And as the light of Heaven varies,
now
At sunrise, now at sunset, now by night
With moon and trembling stars, so
loved Geraint
To make her beauty vary day by day,
In crimsons and in purples and in gems,
And Enid, but to please her husband's
eye,
Who first had found and loved her in a
state
Of broken fortunes, daily fronted him
In some fresh splendor; and the Queen
herself,
Grateful to Prince Geraint for service
done,
Loved her, and often with her own
white hands



Array'd and deck'd her, as the loveliest,
 Next after her own self, in all the
 court.
 And Enid loved the Queen, and with
 true heart
 Adored her, as the stateliest and the
 best
 And loveliest of all women upon earth.
 And seeing them so tender and so
 close,
 Long in their common love rejoiced
 Geraint.
 But when a rumor rose about the Queen,
 Touching her guilty love for Lancelot,
 Tho' yet there lived no proof, nor yet
 was heard
 The world's loud whisper breaking
 into storm,
 Not less Geraint believed it; and there
 fell
 A horror on him, lest his gentle wife,
 Thro' that great tenderness for Guin-
 evere,
 Had snuff'd, or should suffer any
 taint
 In nature: wherefore going to the
 king.
 He made this pretext, that his prince-
 dom lay
 Close on the borders of a territory,
 Wherein were handit earls, and cattiff
 knights,
 Assassins, and all fliers from the hand
 Of Justice, and whatever loathes a
 law:
 And therefore, till the king himself
 should please
 To cleanse this common sewer of all
 his realm,
 He craved a fair permission to depart,
 And there defend his marches; and
 the king
 Mused for a little on his plea, but, last,
 Allowing it, the Prince and Enid
 rode,
 And fifty knights rode with them, to
 the shores
 Of Severn, and they past to their own
 land;
 Where, thinking, that if ever yet was
 wife
 True to her lord, mine shall be so to
 me,
 He compass'd her with sweet observ-
 ances
 And worship, never leaving her, and
 grew
 Forgetful of his promise to the king,
 Forgetful of the falcon and the hunt,
 Forgetful of the tilt and tournament,
 Forgetful of his glory and his name,
 Forgetful of his principedom and its
 cares.
 And this forgetfulness was hateful to
 her.
 And by and by the people, when they
 met
 In twos and threes, or fuller companies,
 Began to scoff and jeer and babble of
 him

As of a prince whose manhood was all
 gone,
 And molten down in mere uxorious-
 ness.
 And this she gather'd from the people's
 eyes:
 This too the woman who attired her
 head,
 To please her, dwelling on his boundless
 love,
 Told Enid, and they sadden'd her the
 more:
 And day by day she thought to tell
 Geraint,
 But could not out of bashful delicacy;
 While he that watch'd her sadden, was
 the more
 Suspicious that her nature had a taint.

At last it chanced that on a summer
 morn
 (They sleeping each by either) the new
 sun
 Beat thro' the blindless casement of
 the room,
 And heated the strong warrior in his
 dreams;
 Who, moving, cast the coverlet aside,
 And bared the knotted column of his
 throat,
 The massive square of his heroic
 breast,
 And arms on which the standing mus-
 cle sloped,
 As slopes a wild brook o'er a little
 stone,
 Running too vehemently to break upon
 it.
 And Enid woke and sat beside the
 couch,
 Admiring him, and thought within
 herself,
 Was ever man so grandly made as he?
 Then, like a shadow, past the people's
 talk
 And accusation of uxoriousness
 Across her mind, and bowing over
 him,
 Low to her own heart piteously she
 said:
 "O noble breast and all-puissant
 arms,
 Am I the cause, I the poor cause that
 men
 Reproach you, saying all your force is
 gone?
 I am the cause because I dare not
 speak
 And tell him what I think and what
 they say.
 And yet I hate that he should linger
 here;
 I cannot love my lord and not his
 name.
 Far liever had I gird his harness on
 him,
 And ride with him to battle and stand
 by,
 And watch his mighty hand striking
 great blows



At caiffis and at wrongers of the world.
 Far better were I laid in the dark earth,
 Not hearing any more his noble voice,
 Not to be folded more in these dear arms,
 And darken'd from the high light in his eyes,
 Than that my lord thro' me should suffer shame.
 Am I so bold, and could I so stand by,
 And see my dear lord wounded in the strife,
 Or maybe pierced to death before mine eyes,
 And yet not dare to tell him what I think,
 And how men slur him, saying all his force
 Is melted into mere effeminacy?
 O me, I fear that I am no true wife."

Half inwardly, half audibly she spoks,
 And the strong passion in her made true tears upon his broad and naked breast,
 And these awoke him, and by great mischance
 He heard but fragments of her later words,
 And that she fear'd she was not a true wife.
 And then he thought, "In spite of all my care,
 For all my pains, poor man, for all my pains,
 She is not faithful to me, and I see her Weeping for some gay knight in Arthur's hall."
 Then tho' he loved and revered her too much
 To dream she could be guilty of foul act,
 Right thro' his manful breast darted the pang
 That makes a man, in the sweet face of her
 Whom he loves most, lonely and miserable.
 At this he hurl'd his huge limbs out of bed,
 And shook his drowsy squire awake and cried,
 "My charger and her palfrey," then to her,
 "I will ride forth into the wilderness;
 For tho' it seems my spurs are yet to win,
 I have not fall'n so low as some would wish.
 And you, put on your worst and meanest dress
 And ride with me." And Enid ask'd, amazed,
 "If Enid errs, let Enid learn her fault."
 But he, "I charge you, ask not but obey."

Then she bethought ther of a faded silk,
 A faded mantle and a faded veil,
 And moving toward a cedarn cabinet,
 Wherein she kept them folded reverently
 With sprigs of summer laid between the folds,
 She took them, and array'd herself therein,
 Remembering when first he came on her
 Drest in that dress, and how he loved her in it,
 And all her foolish fears about the dress,
 And all his journey to her, as himself
 Had told her, and their coming to the court.

For Arthur on the Whitsuntide before
 Held court at old Caerleon upon Usk.
 There on a day, he sitting high in hall,
 Before him came a forester of Dean,
 Wet from the woods, with notice of a hart
 Taller than all his fellows, milky-white,
 First seen that day: these things he told the king.
 Then the good king gave order to let blow
 His horns for hunting on the morrow morn.
 And when the Queen petition'd for his leave
 To see the hunt, allow'd it easily.
 So with the morning all the court were gone.
 But Guinevere lay late into the morn,
 Lost in sweet dreams, and dreaming of her love
 For Lancelot, and forgetful of the hunt;
 But rose at last, a single maiden with her,
 Took horse, and forded Usk, and gain'd the wood;
 There, on a little knoll beside it, stay'd
 Waiting to hear the hounds; but heard instead
 A sudden sound of hoofs, for Prince Gerahit,
 Late also, wearing neither hunting-dress
 Nor weapon, save a golden-hilted brand,
 Came quickly flashing thro' the shallow ford
 Behind them, and so gallop'd up the knoll.
 A purple scarf, at either end whereof
 There swung an apple of the purest gold,
 Sway'd round about him, as he gallop'd up
 To join them, glancing like a dragon-fly
 In summer suit and silks of holiday.
 Low bow'd the tributary Prince, and she,



Sweetly and stately, and with all
 grace
 Of womanhood and queenhood, answer'd him :
 "Late, late, Sir Prince," she said,
 "later than we !"
 "Yea, noble Queen," he answer'd,
 "and so late
 That I but come like you to see the
 hunt,
 Not join it." "Therefore wait with
 me," she said ;
 "For on this little knoll, if anywhere,
 There is good chance that we shall
 hear the hounds :
 Here often they break covert at our
 feet."

And while they listen'd for the dis-
 tant hunt,
 And chiefly for the baying of Cavall,
 King Arthur's hound of deepes' month,
 there rode
 Full slowly by a knight, lady, and
 dwarf ;
 Whereof the dwarf lagg'd latest, and
 the knight
 Had visor up, and show'd a youthful
 face,
 Imperious, and of haughtiest line-
 aments.
 And Guinevere, not mindful of his
 face
 In the king's hall, desired his name,
 and sent
 Her maiden to demand it of the dwarf ;
 Who being vicious, old, and irritable,
 And doubling all his master's vice of
 pride,
 Made answer sharply that she should
 not know.
 "Then will I ask it of himself," she
 said.
 "Nay, by my faith, thou shalt not,"
 cried the dwarf ;
 "Thou art not worthy ev'n to speak
 of him ;"
 And when she put her horse toward
 the knight,
 Struck at her with his whip, and she
 return'd
 Indignant to the Queen ; whereat
 Geraint
 Exclaiming, "Surely I will learn the
 name,"
 Made sharply to the dwarf, and ask'd
 it of him,
 Who answer'd as before ; and when
 the Prince
 Had put his horse in motion toward
 the knight,
 Struck at him with his whip, and cut
 his cheek.
 The Prince's blood spirted upon the
 scarf,
 Dyeing it ; and his quick, instinctive
 hand
 Caught at the hilt, as to abolish him :
 But he, from his exceeding manful-
 ness

And pure nobility of temperament,
 Wroth to be wroth at such a worm, re-
 frain'd
 From ev'n a word, and so returning
 said :

"I will avenge this insult, noble
 Queen,
 Done in your maiden's person to your-
 self :
 And I will track this vermin to their
 earths :
 For tho' I ride unarm'd, I do not doubt
 To find, at some place I shall come at,
 arms
 On loan, or else for pledge ; and, being
 found,
 Then will I fight him, and will break
 his pride,
 And on the third day, will again be
 here,
 So that I be not fall'n in fight. Fare-
 well."

"Farewell, fair Prince," answer'd
 the stately Queen.
 "Be prosperous in this journey, as in
 all ;
 And may ye light on all things that ye
 love,
 And live to wed with her whom first ye
 love :
 But ere ye wed with any, bring your
 bride,
 And I, were she the daughter of a king,
 Yea, tho' she were a beggar from the
 hedge,
 Will clothe her for her bridals like the
 sun."

And Prince Geraint, now thinking
 that he heard
 The noble hart at bay, now the far
 born,
 A little vext at losing of the hunt,
 A little at the vile occasion, rode,
 By ups and downs, thro' many a grassy
 glade
 And valley, with fixt eye following the
 three.
 At last they issued from the world of
 wood,
 And climb'd upon a fair and even
 ridge,
 And show'd themselves against the
 sky, and sank.
 And thither came Geraint, and under-
 neath
 Beheld the long street of a little town
 In a long valley, on one side whereof,
 White from the mason's hand, a fort-
 ress rose ;
 And on one side a castle in decay,
 Beyond a bridge that spann'd a dry
 ravine :
 And out of town and valley came a
 noise
 As of a broad brook o'er a shingly bed
 Brawling, or like a clamor of the rocks
 At distance, ere they settle for the
 night.



And onward to the fortress rode the
three,
And enter'd, and were lost behind the
walls.
"So," thought Geraint, "I have
track'd him to his earth."
And down the long street riding wear-
ily,
Found every hostel full, and every-
where
Was hammer laid to hoof, and the hot
hiss
And hustling whistle of the youth who
scour'd
His master's armor; and of such a one
He ask'd, "What means the tumult in
the town?"
Who told him, scouring still "The
sparrow-hawk!"
Then riding close behind an ancient
churl,
Who, smitten by the dusty sloping
beam,
Went sweating underneath a sack of
corn,
Ask'd yet once more what meant the
hubbub here?
Who answer'd gruffly, "Ugh! the spar-
row-hawk."
Then riding further past an armorer's,
Who, with hack turn'd, and how'd above
his work,
Sat riveting a helmet on his knee,
He put the self-same query, but the
man
Not turning round, nor looking at him,
said:
"Friend, he that labors for the spar-
row-hawk
Has little time for idle questioners."
Whereat Geraint flash'd into sudden
spleen:
"A thousand pips eat up your sparrow-
hawk!
Tits, wrens, and all wing'd nothings
peck him dead!
Ye think the rustic cackle of your
bourg
The murmur of the world! What is it
to me?
O wretched set of sparrows, one and
all,
Who pipe of nothing but of sparrow-
hawke!
Speak, if ye be not like the rest, hawk-
mad,
Where can I get me harborage for the
night?
And arms, arms, arms to fight my
enemy? Speak!"
At this the armorer turning all amazed
And seeing one so gay in purple silks,
Came forward with the helmet yet in
hand
And answer'd, "Pardon me, O stran-
ger knight;
We hold a tourney here to-morrow
morn,
And there is scanty time for half the
work.

Arms? truth! I know not: all are
wanted here.
Harborage? truth, good truth, I know
not, save,
It may be, at Earl Yniol's, o'er the
bridge
Yonder." He spoke and fell to work
again.

Then rode Geraint, a little spleenful
yet,
Across the bridge that spann'd the dry
ravine.

There musing sat the hoary-headed
Earl,
(His dress a suit of fray'd magnifi-
cence,
Once fit for feasts of ceremony) and
said:

"Whither, fair son?" to whom Ge-
raint replied,
"O friend, I seek a harborage for the
night."

Then Yniol, "Enter therefore and par-
take

The slender entertainment of a house
Once rich, now poor, but ever open-
door'd."

"Thanks, venerable friend," replied
Geraint;

"So that ye do not serve me sparrow-
hawks

For supper, I will enter, I will eat
With all the passion of a twelve hours'
fast."

Then sigh'd and smiled the hoary-
headed Earl,

And answer'd, "Graver cause than
yours is mine

To curse this hedgerow thief, the spar-
row-hawk:

But in, go in; for save yourself desire
it.

We will not touch upon him ev'n in
jest."

Then rode Geraint into the castle
court,

His charger trampling many a prickly
star

Of sprouted thistle on the broken
stones.

He look'd and saw that all was ruin-
ous.

Here stood a shatter'd archway plumed
with fern;

And here had fall'n a great part of a
tower,

Whole, like a crag that tumbles from
the cliff,

And like a crag was gay with wilding
flowers:

And high above a piece of turret stair,
Worn by the feet that now were silent,
wound

Bare to the sun, and monestrous ivy-
stems

Claspt the gray walls with hairy
fibred arms,

And suck'd the joining of the stones,
and look'd



A knot, beneath, of snakes, aloft, a grove.

And while he waited in the castle court,

The voice of Enid, Yniol's daughter, rang

Clear thro' the open casement of the Hall,

Singing; and as the sweet voice of a bird,

Heard by the lander in a lonely isle, Moves him to think what kind of bird it is

That sings so delicately clear, and make

Conjecture of the plumage and the form;

So the sweet voice of Enid moved Geraint;

And made him like a man abroad at morn

When first the liquid note beloved of men

Comes flying over many a windy wave To Britain, and in April suddenly

Breaks from a coppice gemm'd with green and red,

And he suspends his converse with a friend,

Or it may be the labor of his hands, To think or say, "there is the nightingale;"

So fared it with Geraint, who thought and said,

"Here, by God's grace, is the one voice for me."

It chanced the song that Enid sang was one

Of Fortune and her wheel, and Enid sang:

"Turn, Fortune, turn thy wheel and lower the proud;

Turn thy wild wheel thro' sunshine, storm, and cloud;

Thy wheel and thee we neither love nor hate.

"Turn, Fortune, turn thy wheel with smile or frown;

With that wild wheel we go not up or down;

Our hoard is little, but our hearts are great.

"Smile and we smile, the lords of many lands;

Frown and we smile, the lords of our own hands;

For man is man and master of his fate.

"Turn turn thy wheel above the staring crowd;

Thy wheel and thou are shadows in the cloud;

Thy wheel and thee we neither love nor hate."

"Hark, by the bird's song you may learn the nest"

Said Yniol; "Enter quickly." Entering then,

Right o'er a mount of newly-fallen stones,

The dusky rafter'd many-cobweb'd Hall,

He found an ancient dame in dim brocade;

And near her, like a blossom vermeil-white,

That lightly breaks a faded flower-sheath,

Moved the fair Enid, all in faded silk, Her daughter. In a moment thought

Geraint, "Here by God's rood is the one maid for me."

But none spake word except the hoary Earl:

"Enid, the good knight's horse stands in the court;

Take him to stall, and give him corn, and then

Go to the town and buy us flesh and wine;

And we will make us merry as we may. Our hoard is little, but our hearts are great."

He spake: the Prince, as Enid past him, fain

To follow, strode a stride, but Yniol caught

His purple scarf, and held, and said "Forbear!"

Rest! the good house, tho' ruin'd, O my Son,

Endures not that her guest should serve himself."

And reverencing the custom of the house

Geraint, from utter courtesy, forbore.

So Enid took his charger to the stall;

And after went her way across the bridge,

And reach'd the town, and while the Prince and Earl

Yet spoke together, came again with one,

A youth, that following with a costrel bore

The means of goodly welcome, flesh and wine.

And Enid brought sweet cakes to make them cheer,

And in her veil enfolded, manchet bread.

And then, because their hall must also serve

For kitchen, boil'd the flesh, and spread the board,

And stood behind, and waited on the three.

And seeing her so sweet and serviceable,

Geraint had longing in him evermore To stoop and kiss the tender little thumb,

That crosst the trencher as she laid it down:



But after all had eaten, then Geraint,
For now the wine made summer in his
veins,

Let his eye rove in following, or rest
On Enid at her lowly handmaid-work,
Now here, now there, about the dusky
hall;

Then suddenly address the hoary Earl :

“ Fair Host and Earl, I pray your
courtesy ;

This sparrow-hawk, what is he, tell me
of him.

His name ? but no, good faith, I will
not have it :

For if he be the knight whom late I saw
Ride into that new fortress by your
town,

White from the mason's hand, then
have I sworn

From his own lips to have it—I am
Geraint.

Of Devon—for this morning when the
Queen

Sent her own maiden to demand the
name,

His dwarf, a vicious under-shapen
thing,

Struck at her with his whip, and she
return'd

Indignant to the Queen ; and then I
swore

That I would track this catiff to his
hold,

And fight and break his pride, and have
it of him.

And all unarm'd I rode, and thought
to find

Arms in your town, where all the men
are mad ;

They take the rustic murmur of their
bourg

For the great wave that echoes round
the world ;

They would not hear me speak : but if
ye know

Where I can light on arms, or if your-
self

Should have them, tell me, seeing I
have sworn

That I will break his pride and learn
his name,

Avenging this great insult done the
Queen.”

Then cried Earl Yniol. “ Art thou
he indeed,

Geraint, a name far-sounded among
men

For noble deeds ? and truly I, when
first

I saw you moving by me on the bridge,
Felt you were somewhat, yea and by
your state

And presence might have guess'd you
one of those

That eat in Arthur's hall at Camelot.
Nor speak I now from foolish flattery ;

For this dear child hath often heard
me praise

Your feats of arms, and often when I
paused

Hath ask'd again, and ever loved to
hear ;

So grateful is the noise of noble deeds
To noble hearts who see but acts of

wrong :

O never yet had woman such a pair
Of suitors as this maiden ; first Li-
mours,

A creature wholly given to brawls and
wine,

Drunk even when he woo'd ; and he be
dead

I know not, but he past to the wild
land.

The second was your foe, the sparrow-
hawk,

My curse, my nephew—I will not let
his name

Slip from my lips if I can help it—he,
When I that knew him fierce and tur-
bulent

Refused her to him, then his pride
awoke ;

And since the proud man often is the
mean,

He sow'd a slander in the common ear,
Affirming that his father left him gold,

And in my charge, which was not ren-
der'd to him ;

Bribed with large promises the men
who served

About my person, the more easily
Because my means were somewhat

broken into

Thro' open doors and hospitality ;

Raised my own town against me in the
night

Before my Enid's birthday, sack'd my
house ;

From mine own earldom foully ousted
me ;

Built that new fort to overawe my
friends,

For truly there are those who love me
yet ;

And keeps me in this ruinous castle
here,

Where doubtless he would put me soon
to death,

But that his pride too much despises
me :

And I myself sometimes despise my-
self ;

For I have let men be, and have their
way ;

Am much too gentle, have not used my
power :

Nor know I whether I be very base
Or very manful, whether very wise

Or very foolish ; only this I know,
That whatsoever evil happen to me,

I seem to suffer nothing heart or limb,
But can endure it all most patiently.”

“ Well said, true heart,” replied Ge-
raint, “ but arms :

That if the sparrow-hawk, this nephew,
fight,



In next day's tourney I may break his pride."
 And Yniol answer'd "Arms, indeed, but old
 And rusty, old and rusty, Prince Geraint,
 Are mine, and therefore at your asking, yours.
 But in this tournament can no man tilt,
 Except the lady he loves best be there.
 Two forks are fixt into the meadow ground,
 And over these is laid a silver wand,
 And over that is placed the sparrow-hawk,
 The prize of beauty for the fairest there.
 And this, what knight soever be in field
 Lays claim to for the lady at his side,
 And tilts with my good nephew there-upon,
 Who being apt at arms and big of bone
 Has ever won it for the lady with him,
 And toppling over all antagonism
 Has earn'd himself the name of sparrow-hawk.
 But you, that have no lady, cannot fight."

To whom Geraint with eyes all bright replied,
 Leaning a little toward him, "Your leave!
 Let me lay lance in rest, O noble host,
 For this dear child, because I never saw,
 Tho' having seen all beauties of our time,
 Nor can see elsewhere, anything so fair.
 And if I fall her name will yet remain
 Untarnish'd as before; but if I live,
 So aid me Heaven when at mine uttermost,
 As I will make her truly my true wife."

Then, howsoever patient, Yniol's heart
 Danced in his bosom, seeing better days.
 And looking round he saw not Enid there,
 (Who hearing her own name had slipt away)
 But that old dame, to whom full tenderly
 And fondling all her hand in his he said,
 "Mother, a maiden is a tender thing,
 And best by her that bore her understood.
 Go thou to rest, but ere thou go to rest
 Tell her, and prove her heart toward the Prince."

So spake the kindly-hearted Earl, and she

With frequent smile and nod departing found,
 Half disarray'd as to her rest, the girl;
 Whom first she kiss'd on either cheek, and then
 On either shining shoulder laid a hand,
 And kept her off and gazed upon her face,
 And told her all their converse in the hall,
 Proving her heart: but never light and shade
 Courced one another more on open ground
 Beneath a troubled heaven, than red and pale
 Across the face of Enid hearing her;
 While slowly falling as a scale that falls,
 When weight is added only grain by grain,
 Sank her sweet head upon her gentle breast;
 Nor did she lift an eye nor speak a word,
 Rapt in the fear and in the wonder of it;
 So moving without answer to her rest
 She found no rest, and ever fail'd to draw
 The quiet night into her blood, but lay
 Contemplating her own unworthiness;
 And when the pale and bloodless east began
 To quicken to the sun, arose, and raised
 Her mother too, and hand in hand they moved
 Down to the meadow where the jousts were held,
 And waited there for Yniol and Geraint.

And thither came the twain, and when Geraint
 Beheld her first in field, awaiting him,
 He felt, were she the prize of bodily force,
 Himself beyond the rest pushing could move
 The chair of Idris. Yniol's rusted arms
 Were on his princely person, but thro' these
 Princelike his bearing, shone; and errant knights
 And ladies came, and by and by the town
 Flow'd in, and settling circled all the lists.
 And there they fixt the forks into the ground,
 And over these they placed a silver wand
 And over that a golden sparrow-hawk.
 Then Yniol's nephew, after trumpet blown,
 Spake to the lady with him and proclaim'd,
 "Advance and take as fairest of the fair,



For I these two years past have won it
for thee,
The prize of beauty." Loudly spake
the Prince,
"Forbear: there is a worthier," and
the knight
With some surprise and thrice as much
disdain
Turn'd, and beheld the four, and all
his face
Glow'd like the heart of a great fire at
Yule,
So burnt he was with passion, crying out,
"Do battle for it then," no more; and
thrice
They clash'd together, and thrice they
brake their spears.
Then each, dishors'd and drawing,
lash'd at each
So often and with such blows, that all
the crowd
Wonder'd, and now and then from dis-
tant walls
There came a clapping as of phantom
hands.
So twice they fought, and twice they
breathed, and still
The dew of their great labor, and the
blood
Of their strong bodies, flowing, drain'd
their force.
But either's force was match'd till
Yniol's cry,
"Remember that great insult done the
Queen,"
Increased Geraint's, who heaved his
hiade aloft,
And crack'd the helmet thro', and bit
the bone,
And fell'd him, and set foot upon his
breast,
And said, "Thy name?" To whom the
fallen man
Made answer, groaning, "Edyrn, son
of Nudd!
Ashamed am I that I should tell it
thee.
My pride is broken: men have seen my
fall."
"Then, Edyrn, son of Nudd," replied
Geraint,
"These two things shalt thou do, or
else thou diest.
First, thou thyself, thy lady, and thy
dwarf,
Shalt ride to Arthur's court, and being
there,
Crave pardon for that insult done the
Queen,
And shalt abide her judgment, on it;
next,
Thou shalt give back their earldom to
thy kin.
These two things shalt thou do, or thou
shalt die."
And Edyrn answer'd, "These things
will I do,
For I have never yet been overthrown,
And thou hast overthrown me, and my
pride

Is broken down, for Enid sees my fall!"
And rising up, he rode to Arthur's
court,
And there the Queen forgave him
easily.
And being young, he changed, and
came to loathe
His crime of traitor, slowly drew him-
self
Bright from his old dark life, and fell
at last
In the great battle fighting for the
king.

But when the third day from the
hunting-morn
Made a low splendor in the world, and
wings
Moved in her ivy, Enid, for she lay
With her fair head in the dim-yellow
light,
Among the dancing shadows of the
birds,
Woke and bethought her of her prom-
ise given
No later than last eve to Prince Ge-
raint—
So bent he seem'd on going the third
day,
He would not leave her, till her prom-
ise given—
To ride with him this morning to the
court,
And there be made known to the
stately Queen,
And there be wedded with all cere-
mony.
At this she cast her eyes upon her
dress,
And thought it never yet had look'd
so mean.
For as a leaf in mid-November is
To what it was in mid-October, seem'd
The dress that now she look'd on to
the dress
She look'd on ere the coming of Ge-
raint.
And still she look'd, and still the ter-
ror grew
Of that strange bright and dreadful
thing, a court,
All staring at her in her faded silk:
And softly to her own sweetheart she
said:

"This noble prince who won our
earldom back,
So splendid in his acts and his attire,
Sweet heaven, how much I shall dis-
credit him!
Would he could tarry with us here
awhile!
But being so beholden to the Prince,
It were but little grace in any of us,
Bent as he seem'd on going this third
day.
To seek a second favor at his hands.
Yet if he could but tarry a day or two,
Myself would work eye dim, and fin-
ger lame,



Far liefer than so much discredit
him."

And Enid fell in longing for a dress
All branch'd and flower'd with gold, a
costly gift
Of her good mother, given her on the
night
Before her birthday, three sad years
ago,
That night of fire, when Edyrn sack'd
their house,
And scatter'd all they had to all the
winds:
For while the mother show'd it, and
the two
Were turning and admiring it, the work
To both appear'd so costly, rose a cry
That Edyrn's men were on them, and
they fled.
With little save the jewels they had on,
Which being sold and sold had bought
them bread:
And Edyrn's men had caught them in
their flight,
And placed them in this ruin; and
she wish'd
The Prince had found her in her an-
cient home;
Then let her fancy fit across the past,
And roam the goodly places that she
knew;
And last bethought her how she used
to watch,
Near that old home, a pool of golden
carp;
And one was patch'd and blurr'd and
lustreless
Among his burnish'd brethren of the
pool;
And half asleep she made comparison
Of that and these to her own faded
self
And the gay court, and fell asleep
again;
And dreamt herself was such a faded
form
Among her burnish'd sisters of the
pool;
But this was in the garden of a king;
And tho' she lay dark in the pool, she
knew
That all was bright; that all about
were birds
Of sunny plume in gilded trellis-
work;
That all the turf was rich in plots that
look'd
Each like a garnet or a turkis in it;
And lords and ladies of the high court
went
In silver tissue talking things of state;
And children of the king in cloth of
gold
Glanced at the doors or gambol'd down
the walks;
And while she thought "they will not
see me," came
A stately queen whose name was
Guinevere,

And all the children in their cloth of
gold
Ran to her, crying, "if we have fish at
all
Let them be gold; and charge the gar-
deners now
To pick the faded creature from the
pool,
And cast it on the mixen that it die."
And therewithal one came and seized
on her,
And Enid started wakiug, with her
heart
All overshadow'd by the foolish dream,
And lo! it was her mother grasping
her
To get her well awake; and in her
hand
A suit of bright apparel, which she
laid
Flat on the couch, and spoke exult-
ingly:

"See here, my child, how fresh the
colors look,
How fast they hold like colors of a
shell
That keeps the wear and polish of the
wave.
Why not? it never yet was worn, I
trow:
Look on it, child, and tell me if ye
know it."

And Enid look'd, but all confused at
first,
Could scarce divide it from her foolish
dream:
Then suddenly she knew it and re-
joiced,
And answer'd, "Yea, I know it; your
good gift,
So sadly lost on that unhappy night;
Your own good gift!" "Yea, surely,"
said the dame,
"And gladly given again this happy
morn.
For when the jeusts were ended yes-
terday,
Went Yniol thro' the town, and every-
where
He found the sack and plunder of our
house
All scatter'd thro' the houses of the
town;
And gave command that all which
once was ours,
Should now be ours again: and yester-
eve,
While you were talking sweetly with
your Prince
Came one with this and laid it in my
hand,
For love or fear, or seeking favor of us,
Because we have our earldom back
again.
And yester-eve I would not tell you of
it,
But kept it for a sweet surprise at
morn.



Yea, truly is it not a sweet surprise ?
 For I myself unwillingly have worn
 My faded suit, as you, my child, have
 yours,
 And howsoever patient, Yniol his.
 Ah, dear, he took me from a goodly
 house,
 With store of rich apparel, sumptuous
 fare,
 And page, and maid, and squire, and
 seneschal,
 And pastime both of hawk and hound,
 and all
 That appertains to noble maintenance.
 Yea, and he brought me to a goodly
 house ;
 But since our fortune elipt from sun to
 shade,
 And all thro' that young traitor, cruel
 need
 Constrain'd us, but a better time has
 come ;
 So clothe yourself in this, that better
 fits
 Our mended fortunes and a Prince's
 bride :
 For tho' ye won the prize of fairest
 fair,
 And tho' I heard him call you fairest
 fair,
 Let never maiden think, however fair,
 She is not fairer in new clothes than
 old.
 And should some great court-lady say,
 the Prince
 Hath pick'd a ragged robin from the
 hedge,
 And like a madman brought her to the
 court,
 Then were ye shamed, and, worse,
 might shame the Prince
 To whom we are beholden ; but I
 know,
 When my dear child is set forth at her
 best,
 That neither court nor country, tho'
 they sought
 Thro' all the provinces like those of
 old
 That lighted on Queen Esther, has her
 match."

Here ceased the kindly mother out
 of breath ;
 And Enid listen'd brightening as she
 lay ;
 Then, as the white and glittering star
 of morn
 Parts from a bank of snow, and by and
 by
 Slips into golden cloud, the maiden
 rose,
 And left her maiden couch, and robed
 herself,
 Help'd by the mother's careful hand
 and eye,
 Without a mirror, in the gorgeous
 gown ;
 Who, after, turn'd her daughter round,
 and said,

She never yet had seen her half so
 fair ;
 And call'd her like that maiden in the
 tale,
 Whom Gwydion made by glamour out
 of flowers,
 And sweeter than the bride of Cassi-
 velaun,
 Flur, for whose love the Roman Cæsar
 first
 Invaded Britain, ("but we beat him
 back,
 As this great prince invaded us, and
 we,
 Not beat him back, but welcomed him
 with joy.
 And I can scarcely ride with you to
 court,
 For old am I, and rough the ways and
 wild ;
 But Yniol goes, and I full oft shall
 dream
 I see my princess as I see her now,
 Clothed with my gift, and gay among
 the gay."

But while the women thus rejoiced,
 Geraint
 Woke where he slept in the high hall,
 and call'd
 For Enid, and when Yniol made re-
 port
 Of that good mother making Enid gay
 in such apparel as might well beseeem
 His princess, or indeed the stately
 queen,
 He answer'd ; "Earl, entreat her by
 my love,
 Albeit I give no reason but my wish,
 That she ride with me in her faded
 silk."
 Yniol with that hard message went ; it
 fell,
 Like flaws in summer laying lusty
 corn :
 For Enid all abash'd she knew not
 why,
 Dared not to glance at her good
 mother's face,
 But silently, in all obedience,
 Her mother silent too, nor helping her,
 Laid from her limbs the costly-broi-
 der'd gift,
 And robed them in her ancient suit
 again,
 And so descended. Never man re-
 joiced
 More than Geraint to greet her thus
 attired ;
 And glancing all at once as keenly at
 her,
 As careful robins eye the delver's toil,
 Made her cheek burn and either eye-
 lid fall,
 But rested with her sweet face satis-
 fied ;
 Then seeing cloud upon the mother's
 brow,
 Her by both hands he caught, and
 sweetly said.





"O my new mother, be not wroth or
 grieved
 At your new son, for my petition to
 her.
 When late I left Caerleon, our great
 Queen,
 In words whose echo lasts, they were
 so sweet,
 Made promise, that whatever bride I
 brought,
 Herself would clothe her like the sun
 in Heaven.
 Thereafter, when I reach'd this ruin'd
 hold,
 Beholding one so bright in dark estate,
 I vow'd that could I gain her, our kind
 Queen,
 No hand but hers, should make your
 Enid burst
 Sunlike from cloud — and likewise
 thought perhaps,
 That service done so graciously would
 bind
 The two together; for I wish the two
 To love each other: how should Enid
 find
 A nobler friend? Another thought I
 had;
 I came among you here so suddenly,
 That tho' her gentle presence at the
 lists
 Might well have served for proof that
 I was loved,
 I doubted whether filial tenderness,
 Or easy nature, did not let itself
 Be moulded by your wishes for her
 weal;
 Or whether some false sense in her own
 self
 Of my contrasting brightness, over-
 bore
 Her fancy dwelling in this dusky hall;
 And such a sense might make her long
 for court
 And all its dangerous glories: and I
 thought,
 That could I somehow prove such force
 in her
 Link'd with such love for me, that at
 a word
 (No reason given her) she could cast
 aside
 A splendor dear to women, new to her,
 And therefore dearer; or if not so
 new,
 Yet therefore tenfold dearer by the
 power
 Of intermitted custom; then I felt
 That I could rest, a rock in ebbs and
 flows,
 Fixt on her faith. Now, therefore, I
 do rest,
 A prophet certain of my prophecy,
 That never shadow of mistrust can
 cross
 Between us. Grant me pardon for my
 thoughts:
 And for my strange petition I will
 make
 Amends hereafter by some gaudy-day,

When your fair child shall wear your
 costly gift
 Beside your own warm hearth, with,
 on her knees,
 Who knows? another gift of the high
 God,
 Which, maybe, shall have learn'd to
 kiss you thanks."

He spoke: the mother smiled, but
 half in tears,
 Then brought a mantle down and
 wrapt her in it,
 And clapt and kiss'd her, and they
 rode away.

Now thrice that morning Guinevere
 had climb'd
 The giant tower, from whose high
 crest, they say,
 Men saw the goodly hills of Somerset,
 And white sails flying on the yellow
 sea;
 But not to goodly hill or yellow sea
 Look'd the fair Queen, but up the vale
 of Usk,
 By the flat meadow, till she saw them
 come;
 And then descending met them at the
 gates,
 Embraced her with all welcome as a
 friend,
 And did her honor as the Prince's
 bride,
 And clothed her for her bridals like
 the sun;
 And all that week was old Caerleon
 gay,
 For by the hands of Dubric, the high
 saint,
 They twain were wedded with all cere-
 mony.

And this was on the last year's Whit-
 euntide.
 But Enid ever kept the faded silk,
 Remembering how first he came on
 her,
 Drest in that dress, and how he loved
 her in it,
 And all her foolish fears about the
 dress,
 And all his journey toward her, as
 himself
 Had told her, and their coming to the
 court.

And now this morning when he said
 to her,
 "Put on your worst and meanest
 dress," she found
 And took it, and array'd herself there-
 in.

O purblind race of miserable men,
 How many among us at this very hour
 Do forge a life-long trouble for our-
 selves,
 By taking true for false, or false for
 true;



Here, thro' the feeble twilight of this world
Groping, how many, until we pass and reach
That other, where we see as we are seen!

So fared it with Geraint, who issuing forth
That morning, when they both had got to horse,
Perhaps because he loved her passionately,
And felt that tempest brooding round his heart,
Which, if he spoke at all, would break perforce
Upon a head so dear in thunder, said :
"Not at my side. I charge you ride before,
Ever a good way on before ; and this I charge you, on your duty as a wife,
Whatever happens, not to speak to me,
No, not a word!" and Enid was aghast;
And forth they rode, but scarce three paces on
When crying out "Effeminate as I am, I will not fight my way with gilded arms,
All shall be iron;" he loosed a mighty purse,
Hung at his belt, and hurl'd it toward the squire.
So the last sight that Enid had of home
Was all the marble threshold flashing, strown
With gold and scatter'd coinage, and the squire
Chafing his shoulder : then he cried again,
"To the wilds!" and Enid leading down the tracks
Thro' which he bade her lead him on, they past
The marches, and by bandit-haunted holds,
Gray swamps and pools, waste places of the hern
And wildernesses, perilous paths, they rode :
Round was their pace at first, but slacken'd soon :
A stranger meeting them had surely thought
They rode so slowly and they look'd so pale,
That each had suffer'd some exceeding wrong.
For he was ever saying to himself
"O I that wasted time to tend upon her,
To compass her with sweet observances,
To dress her beautifully and keep her true—"
And there he broke the sentence in his heart
Abruptly, as a man upon his tongue

May break it, when his passion masters him.
And she was ever praying the sweet heavens
To save her dear lord whole from any wound,
And ever in her mind she cast about
For that unnoticed failing in herself,
Which made him look so cloudy and so cold ;
Till the great plover's human whistle amazed
Her heart, and glancing round the waste she fear'd
In every wavering brake an ambuscade.
Then thought again "if there be such in me,
I might amend it by the grace of heaven,
If he would only speak and tell me of it."

But when the fourth part of the day was gone,
Then Enid was aware of three tall knights
On horseback, wholly arm'd, behind a rock
In shadow, waiting for them, caitiffs all ;
And heard one crying to his fellow,
"Look,
Here comes a laggard hanging down his head,
Who seems no bolder than a beaten hound ;
Come, we will slay him and will have his horse
And armor, and his damsel shall be ours."

Then Enid ponder'd in her heart, and said ;
"I will go back a little to my lord,
And I will tell him all their caitiff talk ;
For, he he wroth even to slaying me,
Far liefer by his dear hand had I die,
Than that my lord should suffer loss or shame."
Then she went back some paces of return,
Met his full frown timidly firm, and said :
"My lord, I saw three bandits by the rock
Waiting to fall on you, and heard them boast
That they would slay you, and possess your horse
And armor, and your damsel should be theirs."
He made a wrathful answer. "Did I wish
Your warning or your silence? one command
I laid upon you, not to speak to me,
And thus you keep it! Well when, look—for now,



Whether you wish me victory or defeat,
Long for my life, or hunger for my death,
Yourself shall see my vigor is not lost."

Then Enid waited pale and sorrowful,
And down upon him bare the bandit three.
And at the midmost charging, Prince Geraint
Drove the long spear a cubit thro' his breast
And out beyond; and then against his brace
Of comrades, each of whom had broken on him
A lance that splinter'd like an icicle,
Swung from his brand a windy buffet out
Once, twice, to right, to left, and stunn'd the twain
Or slew them, and dismounting like a man
That skins the wild beast after slaying him,
Strip from the three dead wolves of woman born
The three gay suits of armor which they wore,
And let the bodies lie, but bound the suits
Of armor on their horses, each on each,
And tied the bridle-reins of all the three
Together, and said to her, "Drive them on
Before you;" and she drove them thro' the waste.

He follow'd nearer: ruth began to work
Against his anger in him, while he watch'd
The being he loved best in all the world,
With difficulty in mild obedience
Driving them on: he fain had spoken to her,
And loosed in words of sudden fire the wrath
And smoulder'd wrong that burnt him all within:
But evermore it seem'd an easier thing
At once without remoree, to strike her dead,
Than to cry "Halt," and to her own bright face
Accuse her of the least immodesty:
And thus tongue-tied, it made him wroth the more
That she *could* speak whom his own ear had heard
Call herself false: and suffering thus he made
Minutee an age: but in scarce longer time
Than at Caerleon the full-tided Usk,
Before he turn to fall seaward again,

Pauses, did Enid, keeping watch, behold
In the first shallow shade of a deep wood,
Before a gloom of stubborn-shafted oaks,
Three other horsemen waiting, wholly arm'd,
Whereof one seem'd far larger than her lord,
And shook her pulses, crying, "Look, a prize!
Three horses and three goodly suits of arms,
And all in charge of whom? a girl: set on."
"Nay" said the second, "yonder comes a knight."
The third, "A craven; how he hangs his head."
The giant answer'd merrily, "Yea, but one?
Wait here, and when he passes fall upon him."

And Enid ponder'd in her heart and said,
"I will abide the coming of my lord,
And I will tell him all their villany.
My lord is weary with the fight before,
And they will fall upon him unawares.
I needs must disobey him for his good;
How should I dare obey him to his harm?
Needs must I speak, and tho' he kill me for it,
I save a life dearer to me than mine."

And she abode his coming, and said to him
With timid firmness, "Have I leave to speak?"
He said, "Ye take it, epeaking," and she spoke.

"There lurk three villains yonder in the wood,
And each of them is wholly arm'd, and one
Is larger-limb'd than you are, and they say
That they will fall upon you while you pass."

To which he flung a wrathful answer back:
"And if there were an hundred in the wood,
And every man were larger-limb'd than I,
And all at once should sally out upon me,
I swear it would not ruffle me so much
As you that not obey me. Stand aside,
And if I fall, cleave to the better man."

And Enid stood aside to wait the event,
Not dare to watch the combat, only breathe



Short fits of prayer, at every stroke a
breath.
And he, she dreaded most, bare down
upon him.
Aim'd at the helm, his lance err'd ; but
Geraint's,
A little in the late encounter strain'd,
Struck thro' the bulky bandit's corse-
let home,
And then brake short, and down his
enemy roll'd,
And there lay still ; as he that tells the
tale,
Saw once a great piece of a promon-
tory,
That had a sapling growing on it, slip
From the long shore-cliff's windy walls
to the beach,
And there lie still, and yet the sapling
grew :
So lay the man transfixt. His craven
pair
Of comrades, making slower at the
Prince,
When now they saw their bulwark fall-
en, stood ;
On whom the victor, to confound them
more,
Spurr'd with his terrible war-cry ; for
as one,
That listens near a torrent mountain-
brook,
All thro' the crash of the near cataract
hears
The drumming thunder of the huger
fall
At distance, were the soldiers wont to
hear
His voice in battle, and be kindled by
it,
And foeman scared, like that false pair
who turn'd
Flying, but, overtaken, died the death
Themselves had wrought on many an
innocent.

Thereon Geraint, dismounting, pick'd
the lance
That pleased him best, and drew from
those dead wolves
Their three gay suits of armor, each
from each,
And bound them on their horses, each
on each,
And tied the bridle-reins of all the
three
Together, and said to her, "Drive
them on
Before you," and she drove them thro'
the wood.

He follow'd nearer still : the pain
she had
To keep them in the wild ways of the
wood,
Two sets of three laden with jingling
arms,
Together, served a little to disedge
The sharpness of that pain about her
heart :

And they themselves, like creatures
gently born
But into bad hands fall'n, and now so
long
By bandits groom'd, prick'd their light
ears, and felt
Her low firm voice and tender govern-
ment.

So thro' the green gloom of the wood
they past,
And issuing under open heavens be-
held
A little town with towers, upon a rock,
And close beneath, a meadow gemlike
chased
In the brown wild, and mowers mow-
ing in it :
And down a rocky pathway from the
place
There came a fair-hair'd youth, that in
his hand
Bare victual for the mowers : and
Geraint
Had ruth again on Enid looking pale :
Then, moving downward to the mead-
ow ground,
He, when the fair-hair'd youth came
by him, said,
"Friend, let her eat ; the damsel is so
faint."
"Yea, willingly," replied the youth ;
"and you,
Mylord, eat also, tho' the fare is coarse,
And only meet for mowers ;" then set
down
His basket, and dismounting on the
sward
They let the horses graze, and ate
themselves.
And Enid took a little delicately,
Less having stomach for it than desire
To close with her lord's pleasure ; but
Geraint
Ate all the mowers' victual unawares,
And when found all empty, was amazed ;
And "Boy," said he, "I have eaten
all, but take
A horse and arms for guerdon ; choose
the best."
He, reddening in extremity of delight,
"My lord, you overpay me fifty-fold."
"Ye will be all the wealthier," cried
the Prince.
"I take it as free gift, then," said the
boy,
"Not guerdon ; for myself can easily,
While your good damsel rests, return,
and fetch
Fresh victual for these mowers of our
Earl ;
For these are his, and all the field is
his,
And I myself am his ; and I will tell
him
How great a man you are : he loves to
know
When men of mark are in his terri-
tory : [here,
And he will have you to his palace



And serve you costlier than with mowers' fare."

Then said Geraint, "I wish no better fare :
I never ate with angrier appetite
Than when I left your mowers dinnerless,
And into no Earl's palace will I go.
I know, God knows, too much of palaces !
And if he want me, let him come to me.
But hire us some fair chamber for the night,
And stalling for the horses, and return
With victual for these men, and let us know."

"Yea, my kind lord," said the glad youth, and went,
Held his head high, and thought himself a knight,
And up the rocky pathway disappear'd,
Leading the horse, and they were left alone.

But when the Prince had brought his errant eyes
Home from the rock, sideways he let them glance
At Enid, where she droopt : his own false doom,
That shadow of mistrust should never cross
Betwixt them, came upon him, and he sigh'd ;
Then with another humorous ruth remark'd
The lusty mowers laboring dinnerless,
And watch'd the sun blaze on the turning scythe,
And after nodded sleepily in the heat.
But she, remembering her old ruin'd hall,
And all the windy clamor of the daws
About her hollow turret, pluck'd the grass
There growing longest by the meadow's edge,
And into many a listless annulet,
Now over, now beneath her marriage ring,
Wove and unwove it, till the boy return'd
And told them of a chamber, and they went ;
Where, after saying to her, "If ye will,
Call for the woman of the house," to which
She answer'd, "Thanks, my lord ;" the two remain'd
Apart by all the chamber's width, and mute
As creatures voiceless thro' the fault of birth,
Or two wild men supporters of a shield,
Painted, who stare at open space, nor glance
The one at other, parted by the shield.

On a sudden, many a voice along the street,
And heel against the pavement echoing, burst
Their drowse ; and either started while the door,
Push'd from without, drave backward to the wall,
And midst of a rout of roisterers,
Femininely fair and dissolutely pale,
Her suitor in old years before Geraint,
Enter'd, the wild lord of the place, Limours.
He moving up with pliant courtliness,
Greeted Geraint full face, but stealthily,
In the mid-warmth of welcome and graspt hand,
Found Enid with the corner of his eye,
And knew her sitting sad and solitary.
Then cried Geraint for wine and goodly cheer
To feed the sudden guest, and sumptuously
According to his fashion, bade the host
Call in what men soever were his friends,
And feast with these in honor of their earl ;
"And care not for the cost ; the cost is mine."

And wine and food were brought, and Earl Limours
Drank till he jested with all ease, and told
Free tales, and took the word and play'd upon it,
And made it of two colere ; for his talk,
When wine and free companions kindled him,
Wae went to glance and sparkle like a gem
Of fifty facets ; thus he moved the Prince
To laughter and his comrades to applause,
Then, when the Prince was merry, ask'd Limours,
"Your leave, my lord, to cross the room, and speak
To your good damsel there who sits apart,
And seems so lonely ?" "My free leave" he said ;
"Get her to speak : she does not speak to me."
Then rose Limours and looking at his feet,
Like him who tries the bridge he fears may fail,
Crost and came near, lifted adoring eyes,
Bow'd at her side and utter'd whisperingly :

"Enid, the pilot star of my lone life,
Enid my early and my only love,
Enid the loss of whom has turn'd me wild—



What chance is this? how is it I see you here?
 You are in my power at last, are in my power.
 Yet fear me not: I call mine own self wild,
 But keep a touch of sweet civility
 Here in the heart of waste and wilderness.
 I thought, but that your father came between,
 In former days you saw me favorably.
 And if it were so do not keep it back:
 Make me a little happier: let me know it:
 Owe you me nothing for a life half-lost?
 Yea, yea, the whole dear debt of all you are.
 And, Enid, you and he, I see it with joy—
 You sit apart, you do not speak to him,
 You come with no attendance, page or maid,
 To serve you—does he love you as of old?
 For, call it lovers' quarrels, yet I know
 Tho' men may bicker with the things they love,
 They would not make them laughable in all eyes,
 Not while they loved them; and your wretched insult,
 A wretched insult on you, dumbly speaks
 Your story, that this man loves you no more.
 Your beauty is no beauty to him now:
 A common chance—right well I know it—pall'd—
 For I know men: nor will ye win him back,
 For the man's love once gone never returns.
 But here is one who loves you as of old;
 With more exceeding passion than of old:
 Good, speak the word: my followers ring him round:
 He sits unarm'd; I hold a finger up;
 They understand: no; I do not mean blood:
 Nor need you look so scared at what I say:
 My malice is no deeper than a moat.
 No stronger than a wall: there is the keep;
 He shall not cross us more; speak but the word:
 Or speak it not; but then by Him that made me
 'The one true lover which you ever had,
 I will make use of all the power I have.
 O pardon me! the madness of that hour,
 When first I parted from you, moves me yet."
 At this the tender sound of his own voice

And sweet self-pity, or the fancy of it,
 Made his eye moist; but Enid fear'd his eyes,
 Moist as they were, wine-heated from the feast;
 And answer'd with such craft as women use,
 Guilty or guiltless, to stave off a chance
 That breaks upon them perilously, and said:

"Earl, if you love me as in former years,
 And do not practise on me, come with morn,
 And snatch me from him as by violence;
 Leave me to-night: I am weary to the death."

Low at leave-taking, with his brandish'd plume
 Brushing his instep, bow'd the all-amorous Earl,
 And the stout Prince bade him a loud good-night.
 He moving homeward babbled to his men,
 How Enid never loved a man but him,
 Nor cared a broken egg-shell for her lord.

But Enid left alone with Prince Geraint,
 Debating his command of silence given,
 And that she now perforce must violate it,
 Held commune with herself, and while she held
 He fell asleep, and Enid had no heart
 To wake him, but lung o'er him, wholly pleased
 To find him yet unwounded after fight,
 And hear him breathing low and equally.
 Anon she rose, and stepping lightly, heap'd
 The pieces of his armor in one place,
 All to be there against a sudden need;
 Then dozed awhile herself, but over-toil'd
 By that day's grief and travel, evermore
 Seem'd catching at a rootless thorn,
 and then
 Went slipping down horrible precipices,
 And strongly striking out her limbs awoke;
 Then thought she heard the wild Earl at the door,
 With all his rout of random followers,
 Sound on a dreadful trumpet, summoning her;
 Which was the red cock shouting to the light,
 As the gray dawn stole o'er the dewy world,
 And glimmer'd on his armor in the room.
 And once again she rose to look at it,





But touch'd it unawares : jangling, the
casque
Fell, and he started up and stared at
her.
Then breaking his command of silence
given,
She told him all that Earl Limours had
said,
Except the passage that he loved her
not ;
Nor left untold the craft herself had
used ;
But ended with apology so sweet,
Low-spoken, and of so few words, and
seem'd
So justified by that necessity,
That tho' he thought " was it for him
she wept
In Devon ? " he but gave a wrathful
groan,
Saying " your sweet faces make good
fellows fools
And traitors. Call the host and bid
him bring
Charger and palfrey." So she glided
out
Among the heavy breathings of the
house,
And like a household Spirit at the
walls
Beat, till she woke the sleepers, and
return'd :
Then tending her rough lord, tho' all
unask'd,
In silence, did him service as a squire ;
Till issuing arm'd he found the host
and cried,
" Thy reckoning, friend ? " and ere he
learnt it, " Take
Five horses and their armors ; " and
the host,
Suddenly honest, answer'd in amaze,
" My lord, I scarce have spent the
worth of one ! "
" Ye will be all the wealthier," said
the Prince,
And then to Enid, " Forward ! and to-
day
I charge you, Enid, more especially,
What thing soever ye may hear, or see,
Or fancy (tho' I count it of small use
To charge you) that ye speak not but
obey."

And Enid answer'd, " Yea, my lord,
I know
Your wish, and would obey ; but riding
first,
I hear the violent threats you do not
hear,
I see the danger which you cannot see :
Then not to give you warning, that
seems hard ;
Almost beyond me : yet I would obey."

" Yea so," said he, " do it: be not
too wise ;
Seeing that ye are wedded to a man,
Not quite mismated with a yawning
clown,

But one with arms to guard his head
and yours,
With eyes to find you out however far,
And ears to hear you even in his
dreams."

With that he turn'd and look'd as
keenly at her
As careful robins eye the delver's toil ;
And that within her, which a wanton
fool,
Or hasty judger would have call'd her
guilt,
Made her cheek burn and either eye-
lid fall.
And Geraint look'd and was not satis-
fied.

Then forward by a way which, beaten
broad,
Led from the territory of false Limours
To the waste earldom of another earl,
Doorm, whom his shaking vassals call'd
the Bull,
Went Enid with her sullen follower on.
Once she look'd back, and when she
saw him ride
More near by many a rood than yester-
morn,
It wellnigh made her cheerful ; till Ge-
raint
Waving an angry hand as who should
say
" Ye watch me," sadden'd all her heart
again.
But while the sun yet beat a dewy
blade,
The sound of many a heavily-galloping
hoof
Smote on her ear, and turning round
she saw
Dust, and the points of lances bicker
in it.
Then not to disobey her lord's behest,
And yet to give him warning, for he
rode
As if he heard not, moving back she
held
Her finger up, and pointed to the dust.
At which the warrior in his obstinacy,
Because she kept the letter of his
word
Was in a manner pleased, and turning,
stood.
And in the moment after, wild Li-
mours,
Borne on a black horse, like a thun-
der-clond
Whose skirts are loosen'd by the break-
ing storm,
Half ridden off with by the thing he
rode,
And all in passion uttering a dry
shrick,
Dash'd on Geraint, who closed with
him, and here
Down by the length of lance and arm
beyond
The crupper, and so left him stunn'd
or dead,



And overthrew the next that followed
him,
And blindly rush'd on all the rout be-
hind.
But at the flash and motion of the man
They vanish'd panic-stricken, like a
shoal
Of darting fish, that on a summer morn
A down the crystal dykes at Camelot
Comes slipping o'er their shadows on the
sand,
But if a man who stands upon the brink
But lift a shining hand against the sun,
There is not left the twinkle of a fin
Betwixt the cressy islets white in
flower,
So, scared but at the motion of the
man,
Fled all the boon companions of the
Earl,
And left him lying in the public way;
So vanish friendships only made in
wine.

Then like a stormy sunlight smiled
Geraint,
Who saw the chargers of the two that
fell
Start from their fallen lords, and wild-
ly fly,
Mixt with the fliers. "Horse and
man," he said,
"All of one mind and all right honest
friends!
Not a hoof left: and I methinks till
now
Was honest — paid with horses and
with arms;
I cannot steal or plunder, no nor beg:
And so what say ye, shall we strip him
there
Your lover? has your palfrey heart
enough
To bear his armor? shall we fast or
dine?
No? — then do you, being right hon-
est, pray
That we may meet the horsemen of
Earl Doorm,
I too would still be honest." Thus he
said:
And sadly gazing on her bridle-reins,
And answering not one word, she led
the way.

But as a man to whom a dreadful
loss
Falls in a far land and he knows it not,
But coming back he learns it, and the
loss
So pains him that he sickens nigh to
death;
So fared it with Geraint, who being
prick'd
In combat with the followers of Li-
mours,
Bled underneath his armor secretly,
And so rode on, nor told his gentle wife
What ail'd him, hardly knowing it him-
self,

Till his eye darken'd and his helmet
wagg'd;
And at a sudden swerving of the road,
Tho' happily down on a bank of grass,
The Prince, without a word, from his
horse fell.

And Enid heard the crashing of his
fall,
Suddenly came, and at his side all pale
Dismounting, loosed the fastenings of
his arms,
Nor let her true hand falter, nor blue
eye
Moisten, till she had lighted on his
wound,
And tearing off her veil of faded silk
Had bared her forehead to the blister-
ing sun,
And swathed the hurt that drain'd her
dear lord's life.
Then after all was done that hand could
do,
She rested, and her desolation came
Upon her, and she wept beside the
way.

And many past, but none regarded
her,
For in that realm of lawless turbu-
lence,
A woman weeping for her murder'd
mate
Wae cared as much for as a summer
shower:
One took him for a victim of Earl
Doorm,
Nor dared to waste a perillone pity on
him:
Another hurrying past, a man-at-arms,
Rode on a mission to the bandit Earl;
Half whistling and half singing a
coarse song,
He drove the dust against her veiless
eyes.
Another, flying from the wrath of
Doorm
Before an ever-fancied arrow, made
The long way smoke beneath him in
his fear;
At which her palfrey whinnying lifted
heel,
And scour'd into the coppices and was
lost,
While the great charger stood, grieved
like a man.

But at the point of noon the huge
Earl Doorm,
Broad-faced with under-fringe of rus-
set beard,
Bound on a foray, rolling eyes of prey,
Came riding with a hundred lances up;
But ere he came, like one that hails a
ship,
Cried out with a big voice, "What, is
he dead?"
"No, no, not dead!" she answered in
all haste.
"Would some of your kind people
take him up,



And bear him hence out of this cruel sun :
Most sure am I, quite sure, he is not dead."

Then said Earl Doorm ; " Well if he be not dead,
Why wail ye for him thus ? ye seem a child.

And be he dead, I count you for a fool ;
Your wailing will not quicken him :
dead or not,

Ye mar a comely face with idiot tears.
Yet, since the face is comely—some of you,

Here, take him up, and bear him to our hall :

An if he live, we will have him of our band ;

And if he die, why earth has earth enough

To hide him. See ye take the charger too,

A noble one."

He spake, and past away,
But left two brawny spearmen, who advanced,

Each growling like a dog, when his good bone

Seems to be pluck'd at by the village boys

Who love to vex him eating, and he fears

To lose his bone, and lays his foot upon it,

Gnawing and growling : so the ruffians growl'd,

Fearing to lose, and all for a dead man,
Their chance of booty from the morning's raid ;

Yet raised and laid him on a litter-bier,

Such as they brought upon their forays out

For those that might be wounded ; laid him on it

All in the hollow of his shield, and took

And bore him to the naked hall of Doorm,

(His gentle charger following him unled)

And cast him and the bier in which he lay

Down on an oaken settle in the hall,
And then departed, hot in haste to join

Their luckier mates, but growling as before,

And cursing their lost time, and the dead man,

And their own Earl, and their own souls, and her.

They might as well have blest her : she was deaf

To blessing and to cursing save from one.

So for long hours sat Enid by her lord,

There in the naked hall, propping his head,

And chafing his pale hands, and calling to him.

And at the last he waken'd from his swoon,

And found his own dear bride propping his head,

And chafing his faint hands, and calling to him ;

And felt the warm tears falling on his face ;

And said to his own heart, " she weeps for me : "

And yet lay still, and feign'd himself as dead,

That he might prove her to the uttermost,

And say to his own heart " she weeps for me."

But in the falling afternoon return'd
The huge Earl Doorm with plunder to the hall.

His lusty spearmen follow'd him with noise :

Each hurling down a heap of things that rang

Against the pavement, cast his lance aside,

And doff'd his helm : and then there flutter'd in,

Half-bold, half-frighted, with dilated eyes,

A tribe of women, dress'd in many hues,

And mingled with the spearmen : and Earl Doorm

Struck with a knife's haft hard against the board,

And call'd for flesh and wine to feed his spears.

And men brought in whole hogs and quarter beeves,

And all the hall was dim with steam of flesh :

And none spake word, but all sat down at once,

And ate with tumult in the naked hall,

Feeding like horses when you hear them feed ;

Till Enid shrank far back into herself,
To shun the wild ways of the lawless tribe.

But when Earl Doorm had eaten all he would,

He roll'd his eyes about the hall, and found

A damsel drooping in a corner of it.
Then he remember'd her, and how she wept ;

And out of her there came a power upon him ;

And rising on a sudden, he said, " Eat !
I never yet beheld a thing so pale.

God's curse, it makes me mad to see you weep.

Eat ! Lock yourself. Good luck had your good man,

For were I dead who is it would weep for me ?



Sweet lady, never since I first drew
 breath,
 Have I beheld a lily like yourself.
 And so there lived some color in your
 cheek,
 There is not one among my gentle-
 women
 Were fit to wear your slipper for a
 glove.
 But listen to me, and by me be ruled,
 And I will do the thing I have not
 done,
 For you shall share my earldom with
 me, girl,
 And we will live like two birds in one
 nest,
 And I will fetch you forage from all
 fields,
 For I compel all creatures to my will."

He spoke: the brawny spearman let
 his cheek
 Bulge with the unswallow'd piece, and
 turning stared;
 While some, whose souls the old ser-
 pent long had drawn
 Down, as the worm draws in the
 wither'd leaf,
 And makes it earth, hiss'd each at
 other's ear
 What shall not be recorded — women
 they,
 Women, or what had been those gra-
 cious things,
 But now desired the humbling of their
 best,
 Yea, would have help'd him to it: and
 all at once
 They hated her, who took no thought
 of them,
 * But answer'd in low voice, her meek
 head yet
 Drooping, "I pray you of your cour-
 tesy,
 He being as he is, to let me be."

She spake so low he hardly heard her
 speak,
 But like a mighty patron, satisfied
 With what himself had done so gra-
 ciously,
 Assumed that she had thanked him,
 adding, "yea,
 Eat and be glad, for I account you
 mine."

She answer'd meekly, "How should
 I be glad
 Henceforth in all the world at any-
 thing,
 Until my lord arise and look upon
 me?"

Here the huge Earl cried out upon
 her talk,
 As all but empty heart and weariness
 And sickly nothing; suddenly seized
 on her,
 And bare her by main violence to the
 board,
 And thrust the dish before her, crying,
 "Eat."

"No, no," said Enid, vext, "I will
 not eat,
 Till yonder man upon the bier arise,
 And eat with me." "Drink, then," he
 answer'd. "Here!"
 (And fill'd a horn with wine and held
 it to her,)
 "Lo! I, myself, when flush'd with
 fight, or hot,
 God's curse, with anger—often I my-
 self,
 Before I well have drunken, scarce can
 eat:
 Drink therefore and the wine will
 change your will."

"Not so," she cried, "by Heaven, I
 will not drink,
 Till my dear lord arise and bid me do
 it,
 And drink with me; and if he rise no
 more,
 I will not look at wine until I die."

At this he turn'd all red and paced
 his hall,
 Now gnaw'd his under, now his upper
 lip,
 And coming up close to her, said at
 last;
 "Girl, for I see you scorn my courtes-
 ies,
 Take warning: yonder man is surely
 dead;
 And I compel all creatures to my will.
 Not eat nor drink? And wherefore
 wail for one,
 Who put your beauty to this flout and
 scorn
 By dressing it in rags? Amazed am I,
 Beholding how ye butt against my wish,
 That I forbear you thus: cross me no
 more.
 At least put off to please me this poor
 gown,
 This silken rag, this beggar-woman's
 weed:
 I love that beauty should go beauti-
 fully:
 For see ye not my gentlewomen here,
 How gay, how suited to the house of
 one,
 Who loves that beauty should go beau-
 tifully!
 Rise therefore; robe yourself in this:
 obey."

He spoke, and one among his gentle-
 women
 Display'd a splendid silk of foreign
 loom,
 Where like a shoaling sea the lovely
 blue
 Play'd into green, and thicker down
 the front
 With jewels than the sward with drops
 of dew,
 When all night long a cloud clings to
 the hill,
 And with the dawn ascending lets the
 day



Strike where it clung : so thickly shone
the gems.

But Enid answer'd, harder to be
moved
Than hardest tyrants in their day of
power,
With life-long injuries burning un-
avenged,
And now their hour has come ; and
Enid said :

" In this poor gown my dear lord
found me first,
And loved me serving in my father's
hall :
In this poor gown I rode with him to
court,
And there the Queen array'd me like
the sun :
In this poor gown he bade me clothe
myself,
When now we rode upon this fatal
quest
Of honor, where no honor can be
gain'd :
And this poor gown I will not cast
aside
Until himself arise a living man,
And hid me cast it. I have griefs
enough :
Pray you be gentle, pray you let me be :
I never loved, can never love but him :
Yea, God, I pray you of your gentle-
ness,
He being as he is, to let me be."

Then strode the brute Earl up and
down his hall,
And took his russet beard between his
teeth ;
Last, coming up quite close, and in his
mood
Crying, " I count it of no more avail,
Dame, to be gentle than ungentle with
you ;
Take my salute," unknighly with flat
hand,
However lightly, smote her on the
cheek.

Then Enid, in her utter helpless-
ness,
And since she thought, " he had not
dared to do it,
Except he surely knew my lord was
dead,"
Sent forth a sudden sharp and bitter
cry,
As of a wild thing taken in the trap,
Which sees the trapper coming thro'
the wood.

This heard Geraint, and grasping at
his sword,
(It lay beside him in the hollow shield,
Made but a single bound, and with a
sweep of it
Shore thro' the swarthy neck, and like
a ball
The russet-bearded head roll'd on the
floor.

So died Earl Doorm by him he counted
dead.
And all the men and women in the hall
Rose when they saw the dead man rise,
and fled
Yelling as from a spectre, and the two
Were left alone together, and he said :

" Enid, I have used you worse than
that dead man ;
Done you more wrong : we both have
undergone
That trouble which has left me thrice
your own :
Henceforward I will rather die than
doubt.
And here I lay this penance on myself,
Not, tho' mine own ears heard you
yester-morn—
You thought me sleeping, but I heard
you say,
I heard you say, that you were no true
wife :
I swear I will not ask your meaning in
it :
I do believe yourself against yourself,
And will henceforward rather die than
doubt."

And Enid could not say one tender
word,
She felt so blunt and stupid at the
heart :
She only prayed him, " Fly, they will
return
And slay you : fly, your charger is
without,
My palfry lost." " Then, Enid, shall
you ride
Behind me." " Yea," said Enid, " let
us go."
And moving out they found the stately
horse,
Who now no more a vassal to the thief,
But free to stretch its limbs in lawful
fight,
Neigh'd with all gladness as they came,
and stoop'd
With a low whinny toward the pair :
and she
Kiss'd the white star upon his noble
front,
Glad also ; then Geraint upon the horse
Mounted, and reach'd a hand, and on
his foot
She set her own and climb'd ; he turn'd
his face
And kiss'd her climbing, and she cast
her arms
About him, and at once they rode
away.

And never yet, since high in Para-
dise
O'er the four rivers the first roses blew,
Came purer pleasures unto mortal kind
Than lived thro' her, who in that per-
ilous hour
Put hand to hand beneath her hus-
band's heart,



And felt him hers again : she did not weep,
 But o'er her meek eyes came a happy mist
 Like that which kept the heart of Eden green
 Before the useful trouble of the rain :
 Yet not so misty were her meek blue eyes
 As not to see before them on the path,
 Right in the gateway of the bandit hold,
 A knight of Arthur's court, who laid his lance
 In rest, and made as if to fall upon him.
 Then, fearing for his hurt and loss of blood,
 She, with her mind all full of what had chanced,
 Shriek'd to the stranger, "Slay not a dead man !"
 "The voice of Enid," said the knight;
 but she,
 Beholding it was Edyrn, son of Nudd,
 Was moved so much the more, and shriek'd again,
 "O cousin, slay not him who gave, you life."
 And Edyrn moving frankly forward spake :
 "My lord Geraint, I greet you with all love ;
 I took you for a bandit knight of Doorm ;
 And fear not, Enid, I should fall upon him,
 Who love you, Prince, with something of the love
 Wherewith we love the Heaven that chastens us.
 For once, when I was up so high in pride
 That I was halfway down the slope to Hell,
 By overthrowing me you threw me higher.
 Now, made a knight of Arthur's Table Round,
 And since I knew this Earl, when I myself
 Was half a baudit in my lawless hour,
 I come the mouthpiece of our King to Doorm
 (The King is close behind me) hiding him
 Disband himself, and scatter all his powers,
 Submit, and hear the judgment of the King."

"He hears the judgment of the King of Kings,"
 Cried the wan Prince ; "And lo the powers of Doorm
 Are scatter'd," and he pointed to the field,
 Where, huddled here and there on mound and knoll,
 Were men and women staring and aghast,

While some yet fled ; and then he plainlier told
 How the huge Earl lay slain within his hall.
 But when the knight besought him,
 "Follow me,
 Prince, to the camp, and in the King's own ear
 Speak what has chanced ; ye surely have endured
 Strange chances here alone ;" that other flush'd,
 And hung his head, and halted in reply,
 Fearing the mild face of the blameless King,
 And after madness acted question ask'd :
 Till Edyrn crying, "If ye will not go
 To Arthur, then will Arthur come to you,"
 "Enough," he said, "I follow," and they went,
 But Enid in their going had two fears,
 One from the bandit scatter'd in the field,
 And one from Edyrn. Every now and then,
 When Edyrn rein'd his charger at her side,
 She shrank a little. In a hollow land,
 From which old fires have broken, men may fear
 Fresh fire and ruin. He, perceiving, said :

"Fair and dear cousin, you that most had cause
 To fear me, fear no longer, I am changed.
 Yourself were first the blameless cause to make
 My nature's prideful sparkle in the blood
 Break into furious flame ; being repulsed
 By Yniol and yourself, I schemed and wrought
 Until I overturn'd him ; then set up
 (With one main purpose ever at my heart)
 My haughty jousts, and took a paramour ;
 Did her mock-honor as the fairest fair,
 And, toppling over all antagonism,
 So wax'd in pride, that I believed myself
 Unconquerable, for I was wellnigh mad ;
 And, but for my main purpose in these jousts,
 I should have slain your father, seized yourself.
 I lived in hope that sometime you would come
 To these my lists with him whom best you loved ;
 And there, poor cousin, with your meek blue eyes,



The truest eyes that ever answer'd
 heaven,
 Behold me overturn and trample on
 him.
 Then, had you cried, or knelt, or pray'd
 to me,
 I should not less have kill'd him. And
 you came,—
 But once you came,—and with your
 own true eyes
 Beheld the man you loved (I speak as
 one
 Speaks of a service done him) over-
 throw
 My proud self, and my purpose three
 years old,
 And set his foot upon me, and give me
 life.
 There was I broken down; there was I
 saved;
 Tho' thence I rode all-shamed, hating
 the life
 He gave me, meaning to be rid of it.
 And all the penance the Queen laid
 upon me
 Was but to rest awhile within her
 court;
 Where first as sullen as a beast new-
 caged,
 And waiting to be treated like a wolf,
 Because I knew my deeds were known,
 I found,
 Instead of scornful pity or pure scorn,
 Such fine reserve and noble reticence,
 Manners so kind, yet stately, such a
 grace
 Of tenderest courtesy, that I began
 To glance behind me at my former life,
 And find that it had been the wolf's
 indeed:
 And oft I talk'd with Dubric, the high
 saint,
 Who, with mild heat of holy oratory,
 Subdued me somewhat to that gentle-
 ness,
 Which, when it weds with manhood,
 makes a man.
 And you were often there about the
 Queen,
 But saw me not, or mark'd not if you
 saw;
 Nor did I care or dare to speak with
 you,
 But kept myself aloof till I was
 changed;
 And fear not, cousin; I am changed
 indeed.”

He spoke, and Enid easily believed,
 Like simple noble natures, credulous
 Of what they long for, good in friend
 or foe,
 There most in those who most have
 done them ill.
 And when they reach'd the camp the
 King himself
 Advanced to greet them, and behold-
 ing her
 Tho' pale, yet happy, ask'd her not a
 word,

But went apart with Edyrn, whom he
 held
 In converse for a little, and return'd,
 And, gravely smiling, lifted her from
 horse,
 And kiss'd her with all pureness,
 brother-like,
 And show'd an empty tent allotted
 her,
 And glancing for a minute, till he saw
 her
 Pass into it, turn'd to the Prince, and
 said:

“Prince, when of late ye pray'd me
 for my leave
 To move to your own land and there
 defend
 Your marches, I was prick'd with some
 reproof,
 As one that let foul wrong stagnate
 and be,
 By having look'd too much thro' alien
 eyes,
 And wrought too long with delegated
 hands,
 Not used mine own: but now behold
 me come
 To cleanse this common sewer of all
 my realm,
 With Edyrn and with others: have ye
 look'd
 At Edyrn? have ye seen how nobly
 changed?
 This work of his is great and wonder-
 ful.
 His very face with change of heart is
 changed.
 The world will not believe a man re-
 pents:
 And this wise world of ours is mainly
 right.
 Full seldom *does* a man repent, or use
 Both grace and will to pick the vicious
 quitch
 Of blood and custom wholly out of
 him,
 And make all clean, and plant himself
 afresh.
 Edyrn has done it, weeding all his heart
 As I will weed this land before I go.
 I, therefore, made him of our Table
 Round,
 Not rashly, but have proved him every-
 way
 One of our noblest, our most valorous,
 Sanest and most obedient: and indeed
 This work of Edyrn wrought upon
 himself
 After a life of violence, seems to me
 A thousand-fold more great and won-
 derful
 Then if some knight of mine, risking
 his life,
 My subject with my subjects under
 him,
 Should make an onslaught single on a
 realm
 Of robbers, tho' he slew them one by
 one,



And were himself nigh wounded to the death."

So spake the King; low bow'd the Prince, and felt His work was neither great nor wonderful, And past to Enid's tent; and thither came The King's own leech to look into his hurt; And Enid tended on him there; and there Her constant motion round him, and the breath Of her sweet tendance hovering over him, Fill'd all the genial courses of his blood With deeper and with ever deeper love, As the south-west that blowing Bala lake Fills all the sacred Dee. So past the days.

But while Geraint lay healing of his hurt, The blameless King went forth and cast his eyes On each of all whom Uther left in charge Long since, to guard the justice of the King: He look'd and found them wanting; and as now Men weed the white horse on the Berkshire hills To keep him bright and clean as heretofore, He rooted out the slothful officer Or guilty, which for bribe had wink'd at wrong, And in their chairs set up a stronger race With hearts and hands, and sent a thousand men To till the wastes, and moving everywhere Clear'd the dark places and let in the law, And broke the bandit holds and cleansed the land.

Then, when Geraint was whole again, they past With Arthur to Caerleon upon Usk. There the great Queen once more embraced her friend, And clothed her in apparel like the day. And tho' Geraint could never take again That comfort from their converse which he took Before the Queen's fair name was breathed upon, He rested well content that all was well. Thence after tarrying for a space they rode,

And fifty knights rode with them to the shores Of Severn, and they past to their own land. And there he kept the justice of the King So vigorously yet mildly, that all hearts Applauded, and the spiteful whisper died: And being ever foremost in the chase, And victor at the tilt and tournament, They call'd him the great Prince and man of men. But Enid, whom her ladies loved to call Enid the Fair, a grateful people named Enid the Good; and in their halls arose The cry of children, Enids and Geraints Of times to be; nor did he doubt her more But rested in her fealty, till he crown'd A happy life with a fair death, and fell Against the heathen of the Northern Sea In battle, fighting for the blameless King.

MERLIN AND VIVIEN.

A STORM was coming, but the winds were still, And in the wild woods of Broceliande, Before an oak, so hollow huge and old It look'd a tower of ruin'd masonwork, At Merlin's feet the wily Vivien lay.

The wily Vivien stole from Arthur's court: She hated all the knights, and heard in thought Their lavish comment when her name was named. For once, when Arthur walking all alone, Vext at a rumor rife about the Queen, Had met her, Vivien, being greeted fair, Would fain have wrought upon his cloudy mood With reverent eyes mock-loyal, shaken voice, And flutter'd adoration, and at last With dark sweet hints of some who prized him more Than who should prize him most; at which the King Had gazed upon her blankly and gone by: But one had watch'd, and had not held his peace: It made the laughter of one afternoon That Vivien should attempt the blameless King. And after that, she set herself to gain Him, the most famous man of all those times,



Merlin, who knew the range of all
 their arts,
 Had built the King his havens, ships,
 and halls,
 Was also Bard, and knew the starry
 heavens ;
 The people call'd him Wizard ; whom
 at first
 She play'd about with slight and
 sprightly talk,
 And vivid smiles, and faintly-venom'd
 points
 Of slander, glancing here and gazing
 there ;
 And yielding to his kindlier moods,
 the Seer
 Would watch her ather petulance, and
 play,
 E'en when they seem'd unlovable, and
 laugh
 As those that watch a kitten ; thus he
 grew
 Tolerant of what he half disdain'd, and
 she,
 Perceiving that she was but half dis-
 dain'd,
 Began to break her sports with graver
 fits,
 Turn red or pale, would often when
 they met
 Sigh fully, or all-silent gaze upon him
 With such a fixt devotion, that the old
 man,
 Tho' doubtful, felt the flattery, and at
 times
 Would flatter his own wish in age for
 love,
 And half believe her true : for thus at
 times
 He waver'd ; but that other clung to
 him,
 Fixt in her will, and so the seasons
 went.
 Then fell upon him a great melan-
 choly ;
 And leaving Arthur's court he gain'd
 the beach ;
 There found a little boat, and stept
 into it ;
 And Vivien follow'd, but he mark'd
 her not.
 She took the helm and he the sail ; the
 boat
 Drove with a sudden wind across the
 deeps,
 And touching Breton sands, they disembark'd.
 And then she follow'd Merlin all the
 way,
 Ev'n to the wild woods of Brocelande.
 For Merlin once had told her of a
 charm,
 The which if any wrought on any one
 With woven paces and with waving
 arms,
 The man so wrought on ever seem'd to
 lie
 Closed in the four walls of a hollow
 tower,
 From which was no escape for ever-

And none could find that man for ever-
 more,
 Nor could he see but him who wrought
 the charm
 Coming and going, and he lay as dead
 And lost to life and use and name and
 fame.
 And Vivien ever sought to work the
 charm
 Upon the great Enchanter of the Time,
 As fancying, that her glory would be
 great
 According to his greatness whom she
 quench'd.

There lay she all her length and
 kiss'd his feet,
 As if in deepest reverence and in love.
 A twist of gold was round her hair ; a
 robe
 Of samite without price, that more
 exprest
 Than hid her, clung about her lissome
 limbs,
 In color like the satin-shining palm
 On shallows in the windy gleams of
 March :
 And while she kiss'd them, crying,
 " Trample me,
 Dear feet, that I have follow'd thro'
 the world,
 And I will pay you worship ; tread me
 down
 And I will kiss you for it ; " he was
 mute :
 So dark a forethought roll'd about his
 brain,
 As on a dull day in an Ocean cave
 The blind wave feeling round his long
 sea-hall
 In silence : wherefore, when she lifted
 up
 A face of sad appeal, and spake and
 said,
 " O Merlin, do ye love me ? " and
 again,
 " O Merlin, do ye love me ? " and once
 more,
 " Great Master, do ye love me ? " he
 was mute.
 And lissome Vivien, holding by his
 heel,
 Writhed toward him, slided up his
 knee and sat,
 Behind his ankle twined her hollow
 feet
 Together, curved an arm about his
 neck,
 Clung like a snake, and letting her
 left hand
 Droop from his mighty shoulder, as a
 leaf,
 Made with her right a comb of pearl to
 part
 The lists of such a heard as youth gone
 out
 Had left in ashes : then he spoke and
 said,
 Not looking at her, " who are wise in
 love



Love most, say least," and Vivien answer'd quick,
 " I saw the little elf-god eyeless once
 In Arthur's arras hall at Camelot :
 But neither eyes nor tongue—O stupid child !

Yet you are wise who say it ; let me think

Silence is wisdom : I am silent then
 And ask no kiss ; " then adding all at once,

" And lo, I clothe myself with wisdom," drew

The vast and shaggy mantle of his beard

Across her neck and bosom to her knee,

And call'd herself a gilded summer fly
 Caught in a great old tyrant spider's web,

Who meant to eat her up in that wild wood

Without one word. So Vivien call'd herself,

But rather seem'd a lovely baleful star
 Veil'd in gray vapor ; till he sadly smiled :

" To what request for what strange boon," he said

" Are these your pretty tricks and fooleries,

O Vivien, the preamble ? yet my thanks,
 For these have broken up my melancholy."

And Vivien answer'd smiling saucily,
 " What, O my Master, have ye found your voice ?

I bid the stranger welcome. Thanks at last !

But yesterday you never open'd lip,
 Except, indeed to drink : no cup had we :

In mine own lady palms I cull'd the spring

That gather'd trickling dropwise from the cleft,

And made a pretty cup of both my hands

And offer'd you it kneeling : then ye drank

And knew no more, nor gave me one poor word ;

O no more thanks than might a goat have given

With no more sign of reverence than a beard.

And when we halted at that other well,
 And I was faint to swooning, and ye lay

Foot-gilt with all the blossom-dust of those

Deep meadows we had traversed, did you know

That Vivien bathed your feet before her own ?

And yet no thanks : and all thro' this wild wood

And all this morning when I fondled you :

Boon, yes, there was a boon, one not so strange—

How had I wrong'd you ? surely you are wise,

But such a silence is more wise than kind."

And Merlin lock'd his hand in hers and said ;

" O did you never lie upon the shore,
 And watch the curl'd white of the coming wave

Glass'd in the slippery sand before it breaks ?

Ev'n such a wave, but not so pleasurable,

Dark in the glass of some presageful mood,

Had I for three days seen, ready to fall.

And then I rose and fled from Arthur's court

To break the mood. You follow'd me unask'd ;

And when I look'd, and saw you following still,

My mind involv'd yourself the nearest thing

In that mind-mist : for shall I tell you truth ?

You seem'd that wave about to break upon me

And sweep me from my hold upon the world,

My use and name and fame. Your pardon, child,

Your pretty sports have brighten'd all again.

And ask your boon, for hoon I owe you thrice,

Once for wrong done you by confusion, next

For thanks it seems till now neglected, last

For these your dainty gambols : wherefore ask ;

And take this boon so strange and not so strange."

And Vivien answer'd smiling mournfully ;

" O not so strange as my long asking it,

Nor yet so strange as you yourself are strange,

Nor half so strange as that dark mood of yours.

I ever fear'd ye were not wholly mine ;

And see, yourself have own'd ye did me wrong.

The people call you prophet : let it be
 But not of those that can expound themselves.

Take Vivien for expounder : she will call

That three-day-long presageful gloom of yours

No presage, but the same mistrustful mood

That makes you seem less noble than yourself



Whenever I have ask'd this very boon,
 Now ask'd again : for see you not,
 dear love,
 That such a mood as that, which lately
 gloom'd
 Your fancy when you saw me follow-
 ing you,
 Must make me fear still more you
 are not mine,
 Must make me yearn still more to prove
 you mine,
 And make me wish still more to learn
 this charm
 Of woven paces and of waving hands,
 As proof of trust. O Merlin, teach it
 me.
 The charm so taught will charm us both
 to rest.
 For, grant me some slight power upon
 your fate,
 I, feeling that you felt me worthy
 trust,
 Should rest and let you rest, knowing
 you mine.
 And therefore be as great as you are
 named,
 Not muffled round with selfish reti-
 cence.
 How hard you look and how denyingly!
 O, if you think this wickedness in me,
 That I should prove it on you unawares,
 To make you lose your use and name
 and fame,
 That makes me most indignant : then
 our bond
 Had best be loosed for ever : but think
 or not,
 By Heaven that hears I tell you the
 clean truth,
 As clean as blood of babes, as white as
 milk :
 O Merlin, may this earth, if ever I,
 If these unwitty wandering wits of
 mine,
 Ev'n in the jumbled rubbish of a dream,
 Have tript on such conjectural treach-
 ery—
 May this hard earth cleave to the Nadir
 hell
 Down, down, and close again, and nip
 me flat,
 If I be such a traitress. Yield my
 boon,
 Till which I scarce can yield you all I
 am ;
 And grant my re-iterated wish,
 The great proof of your love : because
 I think,
 However wise, ye hardly know me yet."

And Merlin loosed his hand from
 hers and said,
 " I never was less wise, however wise,
 Too curious Vivien, tho' you talk of
 trust,
 Than when I told you first of such a
 charm.
 Yea, if ye talk of trust I tell you this,
 Too much I trusted, when I told you
 that,

And stirr'd this vice in you which
 ruin'd man
 Thro' woman the first hour ; for how-
 soe'er
 In children a great curiousness be
 well,
 Who have to learn themselves and all
 the world,
 In you, that are no child, for still I find
 Your face is practised, when I spell the
 lines,
 I call it,—well, I will not call it vice :
 But since you name yourself the sum-
 mer fly,
 I well could wish a cobweb for the
 gnat,
 That settles, beaten back, and beaten
 back
 Settles, till one could yield for wear-
 ness :
 But since I will not yield to give you
 power
 Upon my life and use and name and
 fame,
 Why will you never ask some other
 boon ?
 Yea, by God's rood, I trusted you too
 much."

And Vivien, like the tenderest-heart-
 ed maid
 That ever bided tryst at village stile,
 Mado answer, either eyelid wet with
 tears.
 " Nay, master, be not wrathful with
 your maid ;
 Caress her : let her feel herself for-
 given
 Who feels no heart to ask another
 boon.
 I think you hardly know the tender
 rhyme
 Of ' trust me not at all or all in all.'
 I heard the great Sir Lancelot sing it
 once,
 And it shall answer for me. Listen to
 it.

' In Love, if Love be Love, if Love be
 ours,
 Faith and unfaith can ne'er be equal
 powers :
 Unfaith in aught is want of faith in all.
 ' It is the little rift within the lute,
 That by and by will make the music
 mute,
 And ever widening slowly silence all.

' The little rift within the lover's
 lute
 Or little pitted speck in garner'd fruit,
 That rotting inward slowly moulders
 all.

' It is not worth the keeping : let it
 go :
 But shall it ? answer, darling, answer,
 no.
 And trust me not at all or all in all.'
 O master, do ye love my tender
 rhyme ?"



And Merlin look'd and half believed
her true,
So tender was her voice, so fair her
face,
So sweetly gleam'd her eyes behind her
tears
Like sunlight on the plain behind a
shower:
And yet he answer'd half indignantly.

"Far other was the song that once I
heard
By this huge oak, sung nearly where
we sit:
For here we met, some ten or twelve
of us,
To chase a creature that was current
then
In these wild woods, the hart with
golden horns.
It was the time when first the question
rose
About the founding of a Table Round,
That was to be, for love of God and
men
And noble deeds, the flower of all the
world.
And each incited each to noble deeds.
And while we waited one, the youngest
of us,
We could not keep him silent, out he
flash'd,
And into such a song, such fire for
fame,
Such trumpet-blowings in it, coming
down
To such a stern and iron-clashing close,
That when he stopt we long'd to hurl
together,
And should have done it; but the
beauteous beast
Scared by the noise upstart'd at our
feet,
And like a silver shadow slipt away
Thro' the dim land; and all day long
we rode
Thro' the dim land against a rushing
wind,
That glorious roundel echoing in our
ears,
And chased the flashes of his golden
horns
Until they vanish'd by the fairy well
That laughs at iron—as our warriors
did—
Where children cast their pins and
nails, and cry
'Laugh, little well, but touch it with
a sword,
It buzzes wildly round the point; and
there
We lost him: such a noble song was
that.
But, Vivien, when you sang me that
sweet rhyme,
I felt as tho' you knew this cursed
charm,
Were proving it on me, and that I lay
And felt them slowly ebbing, name
and fame."

And Vivien answer'd smiling mourn
fully;
"O mine have ebb'd away for ever-
more,
And all thro' following you to this
wild wood,
Because I saw you sad, to comfort you.
Lo now, what hearts have men! they
never mount
As high as woman in her selfless mood.
And touching fame, howe'er ye scorn
my song,
Take one verse more—the lady speaks
it—this:

'My name, once mine, now thine, is
closelier mine,
For fame, could fame be mine, that
fame were thine,
And shame, could shame be thine, that
shame were mine.
So trust me not at all or all in all.'

"Says she not well? and there is
more—this rhyme
Is like the fair pearl-necklace of the
Queen,
That burst in dancing, and the pearls
were spilt;
Some lost, some stolen, some as relics
kept.
But nevermore the same two sister
pearls
Ran down the silken thread to kiss
each other
On her white neck—so is it with this
rhyme:
It lives dispersedly in many hands,
And every minstrel sings it differ-
ently;
Yet is there one true line, the pearl of
pearls;
'Man dreams of Fame while woman
wakes to love,'
True: Love, tho' Love were of the
grossest, carves
A portion from the solid present, eats
And uses, careless of the rest; but
Fame
The Fame that follows death is nothing
to us;
And what is Fame in life but half-dis-
fame,
And counterchanged with darkness?
you yourself
Know well that Envy calls you Devil's
son,
And since you seem the Master of all
Art,
They fain would make you Master of
all Vice."

And Merlin lock'd his hand in hers
and said,
"I once was looking for a magic weed,
And found a fair young squire who sat
alone,
Had carved himself a knightly shield
of wood,
And then was painting on it fancied
arms,



Azure, an Eagle rising or, the Sun
 In dexter chief; the scroll 'I follow
 fame.'
 And speaking not, but leaning over
 him,
 I took his brush and blotted out the
 bird,
 And made a Gardener putting in a
 graff,
 With this for motto, 'Rather use than
 fame.'
 You should have seen him blush; but
 afterwards
 He made a stalwart knight. O Vivien,
 For you, methinks you think you love
 me well;
 For me, I love you somewhat; rest:
 and Love
 Should have some rest and pleasure in
 himself,
 Not ever be too curious for a boon,
 To prurient for a proof against the
 grain
 Of him you say you love: but, Fame
 with men,
 Being but ampler means to serve man-
 kind,
 Should have small rest or pleasure in
 herself,
 But work as vassal to the larger love,
 That dwarfs the petty love of one to
 one.
 Use gave me Fame. at first, and Fame
 again
 Increasing gave me use. Lo, there my
 boon!
 What other? for men sought to prove
 me vile,
 Because I wish'd to give them greater
 minds:
 And then did Envy call me Devil's son:
 The sick weak beast seeking to help
 herself
 By striking at her better, miss'd, and
 brought
 Her own claw hack, and wounded her
 own heart.
 Sweet were the days when I was all un-
 known,
 But when my name was lifted up, the
 storm
 Broke on the mountain and I cared
 not for it.
 Right well know I that Fame is half-
 disfame,
 Yet needs must work my work. That
 other fame,
 To one at least, who hath not children,
 vague,
 The cackle of the unborn about the
 grave,
 I cared not for it: a single misty star,
 Which is the second in a line of stars
 That seem a sword beneath a belt of
 three,
 I never gazed upon it but I dreamt,
 Of some vast charm concluded in that
 star
 To make fame nothing. Wherefore, if
 I fear,

Giving you power upon me thro' this
 charm,
 That you might play me falsely, having
 power,
 However well you think you love me
 now
 (As sons of kings loving in pupillage
 Have turn'd to tyrants when they came
 to power)
 I rather dread the loss of use than
 fame;
 If you—and not so much from wicked-
 ness,
 As some wild turn of anger, or a mood
 Of overstrain'd affection, it may be,
 To keep me all to your own self, or
 else
 A sudden spurt of woman's jealousy,—
 Should try this charm on whom you
 say you love."

And Vivien answer'd smiling as in
 wrath.
 "Have I not sworn? I am not trusted.
 Good!
 Well, hide it, hide it; I shall find it
 out;
 And being found take heed of Vivien.
 A woman and not trusted, doubtless I
 Might feel some sudden turn of anger
 born
 Of your misfaith; and your fine
 epithet
 Is accurate too, for this full love of
 mine
 Without the full heart back may merit
 well
 Your term of overstrain'd. So used
 as I,
 My daily wonder is, I love at all.
 And as to woman's jealousy, O why
 not?
 O to what end, except a jealous one,
 And one to make me jealous if I love,
 Was this fair charm invented by your-
 self?
 I well believe that all about this world
 Ye cage a buxom captive here and
 there,
 Closed in the four walls of a hollow
 tower
 From which is no escape for ever-
 more."

Then the great Master merrily an-
 swer'd her.
 "Full many a love in loving youth was
 mine,
 I needed then no charm to keep them
 mine
 But youth and love; and that full
 heart of yours
 Whereof you prattle, may now assure
 you mine;
 So live uncharm'd. For those who
 wrought it first,
 The wrist is parted from the hand that
 waved,
 The feet unmortised from their ankle-
 bones



Who paced it ages, back : but will ye
hear
The legend as in guerdon for your
rhyme?

“There lived a king in the most
Eastern East,
Less old than I, yet older, for my blood
Hath earnest in it of far springs to be.
A tawny pirate anchor'd in his port,
Whose bark had plunder'd twenty
nameless isles;
And passing one, at the high peep of
dawn,
He saw two cities in a thousand boats
All fighting for a woman on the sea.
And pushing his black craft among
them all,
He lightly scatter'd theirs and brought
her off,
With loss of half his people arrow-
slain;
A maid so smooth, so white, so wonder-
ful,
They said a light came from her when
she moved:
And since the pirate would not yield
her up,
The King impaled him for his piracy;
Then made her Queen: but those iele-
nurtd eyes
Waged such unwilling tho' successful
war
On all the youth, they sicken'd; coun-
cils thinn'd,
And armlee waned, for magnet-like
she drew
The rustiest iron of old fighters' hearts;
And beaets themselves would worship;
camels knelt
Unbidden, and the brutes of mountain
back
That carry kings in castles, how'd
black knees
Of homage, ringing with their serpent
hands,
To make her smile, her golden'ankle-
bells.
What wonder, being jealous, that he
sent
His horns of proclamation out thro' all
The hundred under-kingdoms that he
sway'd
To find a wizard who might teach the
King
Some charm, which being wrought
upon the Queen
Might keep her all his own: to such a
one
He promised more than ever king has
given,
A league of mountain full of golden
mines,
A province with a hundred miles of
coast,
A palace and a princess, all for him;
But on all those who tried and fail'd,
the King
Pronounced a dismal sentence, mean-
ing by it

To keep the list low and pretenders
back,
Or like a king, not to be trifled with—
Their heads should moulder on the
city gates.
And many tried and fail'd, because the
charm
Of nature in her overbore their own:
And many a wizard brow bleach'd on
the walls:
And many weeks a troop of carrion
crows
Hung like a cloud above the gateway
towers.”

And Vivien breaking in upon him
said:
“I sit and gather honey; yet, me-
thinks,
Your tongue has tript a little: ask
yourself.
The lady never made *unwilling* war
With those fine eyes: she had her
pleasure in it,
And made her good man jealous with
good cause.
And lived there neither dame nor dam-
sel then
Wroth at a lover's loss? were all as
tame,
I mean, as noble, as their Queen was
fair?
Not one to flirt a venom at her eyes,
Or pinch a murderous dust into her
drink,
Or make her paler with a poison'd
rose?
Well, those were not our days: but did
they find
A wizard? Tell me, was he like to
thee?”

She ceased, and made her lithe arm
round his neck
Tighten, and then drew back, and let
her eyes
Speak for her, glowing on him, like a
bride's
On her new lord, her own, the first of
men.

He answer'd laughing, “Nay, not
like to me.
At last they found—his foragers for
charms—
A little glassy-headed hairless man,
Who lived alone in a great wild on
grass;
Read but one book, and ever reading
grew
So grated down and filed away with
thought,
So lean his eyes were monestrous; while
the skin
Clung but to crate and basket, ribs
and spine.
And since he kept his mind on one
sole aim,
Nor ever touch'd fierce wine, nor tasted
flesh.





Nor own'd a sensual wish, to him the
 wall
 That sunders ghosts and shadow-cast-
 ing men
 Became a crystal, and he saw them
 thro' it,
 And heard their voices talk behind the
 wall,
 And learnt their elemental secrets,
 powers
 And forcea; often o'er the sun's bright
 eye
 Drew the vast eyelid of an inky cloud,
 And lash'd it at the base with slanting
 storm;
 Or in the noon of mist and driving
 rain,
 When the lake whiten'd and the pine-
 wood roar'd,
 And the cairn'd mountain was a
 shadow, sunn'd
 The world to peace again: here was
 the man.
 And so by force they dragg'd him to
 the King.
 And then he taught the King to charm
 the Queen
 In such-wise, that no man could see
 her more,
 Nor saw she save the King, who
 wrought the charm,
 Coming and going, and she lay as
 dead.
 And lost all use of life: but when the
 King
 Made proffer of the league of golden
 mines,
 The province with a hundred miles of
 coast,
 The palace and the princess, that old
 man
 Went back to his old wild, and lived
 on grass,
 And vanish'd, and his book came down
 to me."

And Vivien answer'd smiling saucily;
 "You have the book: the charm is
 written in it:
 Good: take my counsel: let me know
 it at once:
 For keep it like a puzzle chest in chest,
 With each chest lock'd and padlock'd
 thirty-fold,
 And whelm all this beneath as vast a
 mound
 As after furious battle turfs the slain
 On some wild down above the windy
 deep,
 I yet should strike upon a sudden
 meane
 To dig, pick, open, find and read the
 charm:
 Then, if I tried it, who should blame
 me then?"

And smiling as a Master smiles at
 one
 That is not of his school, nor any
 school

But that where blind and naked Ignor-
 ance
 Delivers brawling judgments, un-
 ashamed,
 On all things all day long; he answer'd
 her.

"You read the book, my pretty Viv-
 ien!
 O ay, it is but twenty pages long,
 But every page having an ample
 marge,
 And every marge enclosing in the
 midst
 A square of text that looks a little
 blot,
 The text no larger than the limbs of
 fleas:
 And every square of text an awful
 charm,
 Write in a language that has long gone
 by.
 So long, that mountains have arisen
 since
 With cities on their flanks—you read
 the book!
 And every margin scribbled, crost, and
 cramm'd
 With comment, densest condensation,
 hard
 To mind and eye; but the long sleep-
 less nights
 Of my long life have made it easy to
 me.
 And none can read the text, not even
 I;
 And none can read the comment but
 myself;
 And in the comment did I find the
 charm.
 O, the results are simple; a mere child
 Might use it to the harm of any one,
 And never could undo it: ask no more:
 For tho' you should not prove it upon
 me,
 But keep, that oath you swore, you
 might, perchance,
 Assay it on some one of the Table
 Round,
 And all because you dream they babble
 of you."

And Vivien, frowning in true anger,
 said:
 "What dare the full-fed liars say of
 me?
They ride abroad redressing human
 wrongs!
 They sit with knife in meat and wine
 in horn.
They bound to holy vows of chastity!
 Were I not woman, I could tell a tale.
 But you are man, you well can under-
 stand
 The shame that cannot be explain'd
 for shame.
 Not one of all the drove should touch
 me: swine!"

Then answer'd Merlin careless of her
 words.



"Ye breathe but accusation vast and
vague,
Spleen-born, I think, and proofless. If
ye know,
Set up the charge ye know, to stand or
fall."

And Vivien answer'd frowning
wrathfully.

"O ay, what say ye to Sir Valence, him
Whose kinsman left him watcher o'er
his wife

And two fair babes, and went to dis-
tant lands;

Was one year gone, and on returning
found

Not two but three: there lay the reck-
ling, one

But one hour old! What said the
happy sire?

A seven months' babe had been a truer
gift.

Those twelve sweet moons confused
his fatherhood."

Then answer'd Merlin "Nay, I know
the tale.

Sir Valence wedded with an outland
dame:

Some cause had kept him sunder'd
from his wife:

One child they had: it lived with her:
she died:

His kinsman travelling on his own
affair

Was charged by Valence to bring home
the child.

He brought, not found it therefore:
take the truth."

"O ay," said Vivien, "overtrue a tale.
What say ye then to sweet Sir Sagra-
more,

That ardent man? 'to pluck the flower
in season;'

So says the song, 'I trow it is no trea-
son.'

O Master, shall we call him overquick
To crop his own sweet rose before the
hour?"

And Merlin answer'd "Overquick
are you

To catch a lothly plume fall'n from the
wing

Of that foul bird of rapine whose whole
prey

Is man's good name: he never wrong'd
his bride.

I know the tale. An angry gust of
wind

Puff'd out his torch among the myriad
room'd

And many-corridor'd complexities
Of Arthur's palace: then he found a
door

And darkling felt the sculptured orna-
ment

That wreathen round it made it seem
his own;

And wearied out made for the couch
and slept,

A stainless man besides a stainless
maid;

And either slept, nor knew of other
there;

Till the high dawn piercing the royal
rose

In Arthur's casement glimmer'd
chastely down,

Blushing upon them blushing, and at
once

He rose without a word and parted
from her:

But when the thing was blazed about
the court,

The brutes world howling forced them
into bonds,

And as it chanced they are happy,
being pure."

"O ay," said Vivien, "that were like-
ly too.

What say ye then to fair Sir Percivale
And of the horrid foulness that he
wrought,

The saintly youth, the spotless lamb
of Christ;

Or some black wether of St. Satan's
fold.

What, in the precincts of the chapel-
yard,

Among the knightly brasses of the
graves,

And by the cold Hic Jacets of the
dead!"

And Merlin answer'd careless of her
charge,

"A sober man is Percivale and pure;
But once in life was fluster'd with new
wine,

Then paced for coolness in the chapel-
yard;

Where one of Satan's shepherdesses
caught

And meant to stamp him with her
master's mark;

And that he sinn'd, is not believable;
For, look upon his face!—but if he
sinn'd,

The sin that practice burns into the
blood,

And not the one dark hour which
brings remorse,

Will brand us, after, of whose fold we
be:

Or else were he, the holy king, whose
hymns

Are chanted in the minster, worse than
all.

But is your spleen froth'd out, or have
ye more?"

And Vivien answer'd frowning yet
in wrath;

"O ay; what say ye to Sir Lancelot,
friend?

Traitor or true? that commerce with
the Queen,



I ask you, is it clamor'd by the child,
Or whisper'd in the corner? do you
know it?"

To which he answer'd sadly, "Yea, I
know it.
Sir Lancelot went ambassador, at first,
To fetch her, and she took him for the
King;
So fixt her fancy on him: let him be.
But have you no one word of loyal
praise
For Arthur, blameless King and stain-
less man?"

She answer'd with a low and chuck-
ling laugh;
"Him? is he man at all, who knows
and winks?
Sees what his fair' bride is and does,
and winks?
By which the good king means to
blind himself,
And blinds himself and all the Table
Round
To all the foulness that they work.
Myself
Could call him (were it not for woman-
hood)
The pretty, popular name such man-
hood earns,
Could call him the main cause of all
their crime;
Yea, were he not crown'd king, coward,
and fool."

Then Merlin to his own heart, loath-
ing, said;
"O true, and tender! O my liege and
king!
O selfless man and stainless gentleman,
Who wouldst against thine own eye-
witness fain
Have all men true and leal, all women
pure;
How, in the mouths of base interpre-
ters,
From over-fineness not intelligible
To things with every sense as false and
foul
As the poach'd filth that floods the
middle street,
Is thy white blamelessness accounted
blame!"

But Vivien deeming Merlin over-
borne
By instance, recommenced, and let
her tongue
Rage like a fire among the noblest
names,
Polluting, and imputing her whole
self,
Defaming and defacing, till she left
Not even Lancelot brave, nor Galahad
clean.

Her words had issue other than she
will'd.
He dragg'd his eyebrow bushes down,
and made

A snowy penthouse for his hollow eyes.
And mutter'd in himself, "tell her the
charm!

So, if she had it, would she rail on me
To snare the next, and if she have it
not,
So will she rail. What did the wan-
ton say?

'Not mount as high;' we scarce can
sink as low:
For men at most differ as Heaven and
earth,

But women, worst and best, as Heaven
and Hell.

I know the Table Round, my friends
of old;

All brave, and many generous, and
some chaste.

I think she cloaks the wounds of loss
with lies;

I do believe she tempted them and
fail'd,

She is so bitter: for fine plots may fail,
Tho' harlots paint their talk as well
as face

With colors of the heart that are not
theirs.

I will not let her know: nine tithes
of times

Face-flatterers and backbiters are the
same.

And they, sweet soul, that most im-
pute a crime

Are pronest to it, and impute them-
selves,

Wanting the mental range; or low
desire

Not to feel lowest makes them level
all;

Yea, they would pare the mountain to
the plain,

To leave an equal baseness; and in this
Are harlots like the crowd, that if they
find

Some stain or blemish in a name of
note,

Not grieving that their greatest are so
small,

Inflate themselves with some insane
delight,

And judge all nature from her feet of
clay,

Without the will to lift their eyes, and
see

Her godlike head crown'd with spirit-
ual fire,

And touch'ing other worlds. I am
weary of her."

He spoke in words part heard, in
whispers part,
Half-suffocated in the hoary fell
And many-winter'd fleece of throat and
chin.

But Vivien, gathering somewhat of his
mood,

And hearing "harlot" mutter'd twice
or thrice,

Leapt from her session on his lap, and
stood



Stiff as a viper frozen; loathsome
sight,
How from the rosy lips of life and love,
Flash'd the bare-grinning skeleton of
death!

White was her cheek; sharp breaths
of anger puff'd
Her fairy nostril out; her hand half-
clench'd

Went faltering sideways downward to
her belt,
And feeling; had she found a dagger
there

(For in a wink the false love turns to
hate)

She would have stabb'd him; but she
found it not:
His eye was calm, and suddenly she
took

To bitter weeping like a beaten child,
A long, long weeping, not consolable.
Then her false voice made way broken
with sobs

"O crueller than was ever told in
tale,

Or sung in song! O vainly lavish'd
love!

O cruel, there was nothing wild or
strange,
Or seeming shameful, for what shame
in love

So love be true, and not as yours is—
nothing
Poor Vivien had not done to win his
trust

Who call'd her what he call'd her—all
her crime,
All—all—the wish to prove him
wholly hers,"

She mused a little, and then clapt
her hands
Together with a wailing shriek, and
said:

"Stabb'd through the heart's affec-
tions to the heart!
Seethed like the kid in its own mother's
milk!

Kill'd with a word worse than a life of
blows!

I thought that he was gentle, being
great:

O God, that I had loved a smaller man!
I should have found in him a greater
heart.

O, I, that flattering my true passion,
saw

The knights, the court, the king, dark
in your light,

Who love to make men darker than
they are,

Because of that high pleasure which I
had

To seat you sole upon my pedestal
Of worship—I am answer'd, and hence-
forth

The course of life that seem'd so
flowery to me

With you for guide and master, only
you,

Becomes the sea-cliff pathway broken
short,

And ending in a ruin—nothing left,
But into some low cave to crawl, and
there,

If the wolf spare me, weep my life
away,

Kill'd with inutterable unkindliness."

She paused, she turn'd away, she
hung her head,

The snake of gold slid from her hair,
the braid

Slipt and uncoil'd itself, she wept
afresh,

And the dark wood grew darker
toward the storm

In silence, while his anger slowly died
Within him, till he let his wisdom go
For ease of heart, and half believed her
true:

Call'd her to shelter in the hollow oak,
"Come from the storm" and having
no reply,

Gazed at the heaving shoulder, and
the face

Hand-hidden, as for utmost grief or
shame;

Then thrice essay'd, by tenderest-
touching terms

To seek her ruffled peace of mind, in
vain.

At last she let herself be conquer'd by
him,

And as the cageling newly flown re-
turns,

The seeming-injured simple-hearted
thing

Came to her old perch back, and
settled there.

There while she sat, half-falling from
his knees,

Half-nestled at his heart, and since he
saw

The slow tear creep from her closed
eyelid yet,

About her, more in kindness than in
love,

The gentle wizard cast a shielding arm.
But she dislink'd herself at once and
rose

Her arms upon her breast across, and
stood

A virtuous gentlewoman deeply
wrong'd,

Upright and flush'd before him: then
she said:

"There must be now no passages of
love

Betwixt us twain henceforward ever-
more.

Since, if I be what I am grossly call'd,
What should be granted which your
own gross heart

Would reckon worth the taking? I
will go.

In truth, but one thing now—better
have died

Thrice than have ask'd it once—could
make me stay—



That proof of trust—so often asked in vain !
 How justly, after that vile term of yours,
 I find with grief ! I might believe you then,
 Who knows ? once more. O, what was once to me
 Mere matter of the fancy, now has grown
 The vast necessity of heart and life.
 Farewell ; think kindly of me, for I fear
 My fate or fault, omitting gayer youth
 For one so old, must be to love you still.
 But ere I leave you let me swear once more
 That if I schemed against your peace in this,
 May you just heaven, that darkens o'er me, send
 One flash, that, missing all things else, may make
 My scheming brain a cinder, if I lie."

Scarce had she ceased, when out of heaven a bolt
 (For now the storm was close above them) struck,
 Furrowing a giant oak, and javelining
 With darted spikes and splinters of the wood
 The dark earth round. He raised his eyes and saw
 The tree that shone white-listed thro' the gloom.
 But Vivien, fearing heaven had heard her oath,
 And dazzled by the livid flickering fork,
 And deafen'd with the stammering cracks and claps
 That follow'd, flying back and crying out,
 "O Merlin, tho' you do not love me, save,
 Yet save me !" clung to him and hugg'd him close ;
 And call'd him dear protector in her fright,
 Nor yet forgot her practice in her fright,
 But wrought upon his mood and hugg'd him close.
 The pale blood of the wizard at her touch
 Took gayer colors, like an opal warm'd. She blamed herself for telling hearsay tales :
 She shook from fear, and for her fault she wept
 Of petulancy ; she call'd him lord and liege,
 Her seer, her bard, her silver star of eve,
 Her God, her Merlin, the one passionate love
 Of her whole life ; and ever overhead
 Bellow'd the tempest, and the rotten branch

Snap in the rushing of the river rain
 Above them ; and in change of glare and gloom
 Her eyes and neck glittering went and came ;
 Till now the storm, its burst of passion spent,
 Moaning and calling out of other lands,
 Had left the ravaged woodland yet once more
 To peace ; and what should not have been had been,
 For Merlin, overtalk'd and overworn,
 Had yielded, told her all the charm, and slept.

Then, in one moment, she put forth the charm
 Of woven paces and of waving hands,
 And in the hollow oak he lay as dead,
 And lost to life and use and name and fame.

Then crying "I have made his glory mine,"
 And shrieking out "O fool !" the harlot leapt
 Adown the forest, and the thicket closed
 Behind her, and the forest echo'd "fool."

LANCELOT AND ELAINE.

ELAINE the fair, Elaine the lovable,
 Elaine, the lily maid of Astolat,
 High in her chamber up a tower to the east
 Guarded the sacred shield of Lancelot ;
 Which first she placed where morning's earliest ray
 Might strike it, and awake her with the gleam ;
 Then fearing rust or soilure fashion'd for it
 A case of silk, and braided thereupon
 All the devices blazon'd on the shield
 In their own tinct, and added, of her wit,
 A border fantasy of branch and flower,
 And yellow-throated nestling in the nest.
 Nor rested thus content, hut day by day
 Leaving her household and good father climb'd
 That eastern tower, and entering barr'd her door,
 Stript off the case, and read the naked shield,
 Now guess'd a hidden meaning in his arms,
 Now made a pretty history to herself
 Of every dint a sword had beaten in it,
 And every scratch a lance had made upon it,
 Conjecturing when and where : this out is fresh ;



That ten years back ; this dealt him at
Caerlyle ;
That at Caerleon ; this at Camelot :
And ah God's mercy what a stroke was
there !
And here a thrust that might have
kill'd, but God
Broke the strong lance, and roll'd his
enemy down,
And saved him : so she lived in fan-
tasy.

How came the lily maid by that good
shield
Of Lancelot, she that knew not ev'n
his name ?
He left it with her, when he rode to
tilt
For the great diamond in the diamond
jousts,
Which Arthur had ordain'd, and by
that name
Had named them, since a diamond was
the prize.

For Arthur long before they crown'd
him king,
Roving the trackless realms of Lyon-
nesse,
Had found a glen, gray houlder and
black tarn.
A horror lived about the tarn, and
clave
Like its own mists to all the mountain
side :
For here two brothers, one a king, had
met
And fought together ; hut their names
were lost.
And each had slain his brother at a
blow,
And down they fell and made the glen
abhorr'd :
And there they lay till all their hones
were bleach'd,
And lichen'd into color with the crags :
And he, that once was king, had on a
crown
Of diamonds, one in front, and four
aside.
And Arthur came, and laboring up the
pass
All in a misty moonshine, unawares
Had trodden that crown'd skeleton,
and the skull
Brake from the nape, and from the
skull the crown
Roll'd into light, and turning on its
rims
Fled like a glittering rivulet to the
tarn :
And down the shingly scaur he
plunged, and caught,
And set it on his head, and in his heart
Heard murmurs "lo, thou likewise
shalt be king."

Thereafter, when a king, he had the
gems
Pluck'd from the crown, and show'd
them to his knights,

Saying "these jewels, whereupon I
chanced
Divinely, are the kingdom's not the
king's—
For public use : henceforward let there
be,
Once every year, a joust for one of
these :
For so hy nine years' proof we needs
must learn
Which is our mightiest, and ourselves
shall grow
In use of arms and manhood, till we
drive
The Heathen, who, some say, shall
rule the land
Hereafter, which God hinder." Thus
he spoke :
And eight years past, eight jousts had
been, and still
Had Lancelot won the diamond of the
year,
With purpose to present them to the
Queen,
When all were won ; hut meaning all
at once
To snare her royal fancy with a boon
Worth half her realm, had never
spoken word.

Now for the central diamond and
the last
And largest, Arthur, holding then his
court
Hard on the river nigh the place which
now
Is this world's hugest, let proclaim a
joust
At Camelot, and when the time drew
nigh
Spake (for she had been sick) to Guine-
vere
"Are you so sick, my Queen, you can
not move
To these fair jousts?" "Yea, lord,"
she said, "ye know it."
"Then will ye miss," he answer'd,
"the great deeds
Of Lancelot, and his prowess in the
lists,
A sight ye love to look on." And the
Queen
Lifted her eyes, and they dwelt lan-
guidly
On Lancelot, where he stood beside
the King.
He thinking that he read her meaning
there,
"Stay with me, I am sick ; my love is
more
Than many diamonds," yielded, and a
heart,
Love-loyal to the least wish of the
Queen
(However much he yearn'd to make
complete
The tale of diamonds for his destined
boon)
Urged him to speak against the truth,
and say,



"Sir King, mine ancient wound is hardly whole, And lets me from the saddle;" and the King Glanced first at him, then her, and went his way. No sooner gone than suddenly she began.

"To blame, my lord Sir Lancelot, much to blame. Why go ye not to these fair jousts? the knights Are half of them our enemies, and the crowd Will murmur, lo the shameless ones, who take Their pastime now the trustful king is gone!" Then Lancelot vext at having lied in vain:

"Are ye so wise? ye were not once so wise, My Queen, that summer, when ye loved me first. Then of the crowd ye took no more account Than of the myriad cricket of the mead, When its own voice clings to each blade of grass, And every voice is nothing. As to knights, Them surely can I silence with all ease. But now my loyal worship is allow'd Of all men: many a bard, without offence, Has link'd our names together in his lay, Lancelot, the flower of bravery, Guinevere, The pearl of beauty: and our knights have pledged us in this union, while the king Would listen smiling. How then? is there more? Has Arthur spoken aught? or would yourself, Now weary of my service and devoir, Henceforth be truer to your faultless lord?"

She broke into a little scornful laugh. "Arthur, my lord, Arthur, the faultless King. That passionate perfection, my good lord— But who can gaze upon the Sun in heaven? He never spake word of reproach to me, He never had a glimpse of mine untruth, He cares not for me: only here to-day There gleam'd a vague suspicion in his eyes: Some meddling rogue has tamper'd with him—else

Rapt in this fancy of his Table Round, And swearing men to vows impossible, To make them like himself: but, friend, to me He is all fault who hath no fault at all: For who loves me must have a touch of earth; The low sun makes the color: I am yours, Not Arthur's, as ye know eave by the bound. And therefore hear my words: go to the jousts: The tiny-trumpeting gnat can break our dream When sweetest; and the vermin voices here May buzz so loud—we scorn them, but they sting."

Then answer'd Lancelot, the chief of knights. "And with what face, after my pretext made, Shall I appear, O Queen, at Camelot, I Before a king who honors his own word, As if it were his God's?"

"Yea," said the Queen, "A moral child without the craft to rule, Else had he not lost me: but listen to me, If I must find you wit: we hear it said That men go down before your spear at a touch But knowing you are Lancelot; your great name, This conquers; hide it therefore; go unknown: Win! by this kiss you will: and our true king Will then allow your pretext, O my knight, As all for glory; for to speak him true, Ye know right well, how meek soe'er he seem, No keener hunter after glory breathes. He loves it in his knights more than himself: They prove to him his work: win and return."

Then got Sir Lancelot suddenly to horse, Wroth at himself: not willing to be known, He left the barren-beaten thoroughfare, Chose the green path that show'd the rarer foot, And there among the solitary downs, Full often lost in fancy, lost his way; Till as he traced a faintly-shadow'd track, That all in loops and links among the dales



Ran to the Castle of Astolat, he saw
Fired from the west, far on a hill, the
towers.

Thither he made and wound the gate-
way horn.

Then came an old, dumb, myriad-
wrinkled man,
Who let him into lodging and dis-
arm'd.

And Lancelot marvell'd at the word-
less man ;

And issuing found the Lord of Astolat
With two strong sons, Sir Torre and
Sir Lavaine,

Moving to meet him in the castle
court ;

And close behind them stept the lily
maid

Elaine, his daughter : mother of the
house

There was not : some light jest among
them rose

With laughter dying down as the great
knight

Approach'd them : then the Lord of
Astolat.

" Whence comest thou, my gûest, and
by what name

Livest between the lips? for by thy
state

And presence I might guess thee chief
of those,

After the king, who eat in Arthur's
halls.

Him have I seen : the rest, his Table
Round,

Known as they are, to me they are un-
known."

Then answer'd Lancelot, the chief of
knights.

" Known am I, and of Arthur's hall,
and known,

What I by mere mischance have
brought, my shield.

But since I go to joust as one unknown
At Camelot for the diamond, ask me
not,

Hereafter you shall know me—and the
shield—

I pray you lend me one, if such you
have,

Blank, or at least with some device not
mine."

Then said the Lord of Astolat, " Here
is Torre's :

Hurt in his first tilt was my son, Sir
Torre.

And so, God wot, his shield is blank
enough.

His ye can have." Then added plain
Sir Torre,

" Yea since I cannot use it, ye may
have it."

Here laugh'd the father saying " Fie,
Sir Churl,

Is that an answer for a noble knight?
Allow him : but Lavaine, my younger
here,

He is so full of lusthood, he will ride
Joust for it, and win, and bring it in an
hour
And set it in this damsel's golden hair,
To make her thrice as wilful as be-
fore."

" Nay, father, nay good father, e shame
me not

Before this noble knight " said young
Lavaine

" For nothing. Surely I but play'd on
Torre :

He seem'd so sullen, vext he could not
go :

A jest, no more : for, knight, the maid-
en dream,

That some one put this diamond in her
hand,

And that it was too slippery to be held,
And slipt and fell into some pool or
stream,

The castle-well, belike ; and then I said
That if I went and if I fought and won
it

(But all was jest and joke among our-
selves)

Then must she keep it as fefeller. All was
jest.

But father give me leave, and if he will,
To ride to Camelot with this noble
knight :

Win shall I not, but do my best to win:
Young as I am, yet would I do my
best."

" So ye will grace me," answer'd
Lancelot,

Smiling a moment, " with your fellow-
ship

O'er these waste downs whereon I lost
myself,

Then were I glad of you as guide and
friend ;

And you shall win this diamond—as I
hear,

It is a fair large diamond,—if ye may ;
And yield it to this maiden, if ye will."

" A fair large diamond," added plain
Sir Torre,

" Such be for Queens and not for sim-
ple maids."

Then she, who held her eyes upon the
ground,

Elaine, and heard her name so tost
about,

Flush'd slightly at the slight disparage-
ment

Before the stranger knight, who, look-
ing at her,

Full courtly, yet not falsely, thus re-
turn'd.

" If what is fair be but for what is fair,
And only Queens are to be counted so,
Rash were my judgment then, who
deem this maid

Might wear as fair a jewel as is on
earth,

Not violating the bond of like to like.



He spoke and ceased : the lily maid Elaine,
 Won by the mellow voice before she look'd,
 Lifted her eyes, and read his lineaments.
 The great and guilty love he bare the Queen,
 In battle with the love he bare his lord,
 Had marr'd his face, and mark'd it ere his time.
 Another sinning on such heights with one,
 The flower of all the west and all the world,
 Had been the sleeker of it : but in him
 His mood was often like a fiend, and rose
 And drove him into wastes and solitudes
 For agony, who was yet a living soul.
 Marr'd as he was, he seem'd the goodliest man,
 That ever among ladies ate in Hall,
 And noblest, when she lifted up her eyes.
 However marr'd, of more than twice her years,
 Seam'd with an ancient swordcut on the cheek,
 And bruised and bronzed, she lifted up her eyes
 And loved him, with that love which was her doom.

Then the great knight, the darling of the court,
 Loved of the loveliest, into that rude hall
 Stept with all grace, and not with half disdain
 Hid under grace, as in a smaller time,
 But kindly man moving among his kind :
 Whom they with meats and vintage of their best
 And talk and minstrel melody entertain'd.
 And much they ask'd of court and Table Round,
 And ever well and readily answer'd he :
 But Lancelot, when they glanced at Guinevere,
 Suddenly speaking of the wordless man,
 Heard from the Baron that, ten years before,
 The heathen caught and reft him of his tongue.
 "He learnt and warn'd me of their fierce design
 Against my house, and him they caught and maim'd ;
 But I my sons and little daughter fled
 From bonds of death, and dwelt among the woods
 By the great river in a boatman's hut.
 Dull days were those, till our good Arthur broke
 The Pagan yet once more on Badon hill."

"O there, great Lord, doubtless," Lavaine said, rapt
 By all the sweet and sudden passion of youth.
 Toward greatness in its elder, "you have fought.
 O tell us—for we live apart—you know
 Of Arthur's glorious wars." And Lancelot spoke
 And answer'd him at full, as having been
 With Arthur in the fight which all day long
 Rang by the white mouth of the violent Glem ;
 And in the four wild battles by the shore
 Of Duglas ; that on Bassa ; then the war
 That thunder'd in and out the gloomy skirts
 Of Celidon the forest ; and again
 By castle Gurnion where the glorious King
 Had on his cuirass worn our Lady's Head,
 Carved on one emerald, center'd in a sun
 Of silver rays, that lighten'd as he breathed ;
 And at Caerloon had he help'd his lord,
 When the strong neighings of the wild white Horse
 Set every gilded parapet shuddering ;
 And up in Agned Cathregonic too,
 And down the waste sand-shores of Trath Trerwit,
 Where many a heathen fell ; "and on the mount
 Of Badon I myself beheld the King
 Charge at the head of all his Table Round,
 And all his legions crying Christ and him,
 And break them ; and I saw him, after, stand
 High on a heap of slain, from spur to plume
 Red as the rising sun with heathen blood,
 And seeing me, with a great voice he cried
 'They are broken, they are broken; for the King,
 However mild he seems at home, nor cares
 For triumph in our mimic wars, the jousts—
 For if his own knight cast him down, he laughs
 Saying, his knights are better men than he—
 Yet in this heathen war the fire of God
 Fills him : I never saw his like : there lives
 No greater leader.'" While he utter'd this,
 Low to her own heart said the lily maid
 "Save your great self, fair lord;" and when he fell



From talk of war to traits of pleasantry—
 Being mirthful he but in a stately kind—
 She still took note that when the living smile
 Died from his lips, across him came a cloud
 Of melancholy severe, from which again,
 Whenever in her hovering to and fro
 The lily maid had striven to make him cheer,
 There brake a sudden-beaming tenderness
 Of manners and of nature, and she thought
 That all was nature, all, perchance, for her.
 And all that night long his face before her lived,
 As when a painter, poring on a face,
 Divinely thro' all hindrance finds the man
 Behind it, and so paints him that his face,
 The shape and color of a mind and life,
 Lives for his children, ever at its best
 And fullest; so the face before her lived,
 Dark-splendid, speaking in the silence, full
 Of noble things, and held her from her sleep.
 Till rathe she rose, half-cheated in the thought
 She needs must bid farewell to sweet Lavaine.
 First as in fear, step after step, she stole
 Down the long tower-stairs, hesitating:
 Anon, she heard Sir Lancelot cry in the court,
 "This shield, my friend, where is it?"
 and Lavaine
 Past inward, as she came from ont the tower.
 There to his prond horse Lancelot turn'd, and smooth'd
 The glossy shoulder, humming to himself.
 Half-envious of the flattering hand, she drew
 Nearer and stood. He look'd, and more amazed
 Then if seven men had set upon him, saw
 The maiden standing in the dewy light.
 He had not dreamed she was so beautiful.
 Then came on him a sort of sacred fear,
 For silent, tho' he greeted her, she stood
 Rapt on his face as if it were a God's.
 Suddenly flash'd on her a wild desire,
 That he should wear her favor at the tilt.
 She braved a riotous heart in asking for it.
 "Fair lord, whose name I know not—
 noble it is,

I well believe, the noblest—will you wear
 My favor at this tourney?" "Nay,"
 said he,
 "Fair lady, since I never yet have worn
 Favor of any lady in the lists.
 Such is my wont, as those, who know
 me, know."
 "Yea, so," she answer'd; "then in wearing mine
 Needs must be lesser likelihood, noble
 lord,
 That those who know should know
 you." And he turn'd
 Her counsel up and down within his
 mind,
 And found it true, and answer'd, "true,
 my child,
 Well, I will wear it: fetch it out to me:
 What is it?" and she told him "a red
 sleeve
 Broider'd with pearls," and brought it:
 then he bound
 Her token on his helmet, with a smile
 Saying, "I never yet have done so much
 For any maiden living," and the blood
 Sprang to her face and fill'd her with
 delight;
 But left her all the paler, when Lavaine
 Returning brought the yet-unblazon'd
 shield,
 His brother's; which he gave to Lancelot,
 Who parted with his own to fair Elaine;
 "Do me this grace, my child, to have
 my shield
 In keeping till I come." "A grace to
 me,"
 She answer'd, "twice to-day. I am your
 Squire."
 Whereat Lavaine said, laughing, "Lily
 maid,
 For fear our people call you lily maid
 In earnest, let be bring your color back;
 Once, twice, and thrice: now get you
 hence to bed."
 So kiss'd her, and Sir Lancelot his own
 hand,
 And thus they moved away; she stay'd
 a minute,
 Then made a sudden step to the gate,
 and there—
 Her bright hair blown about the serious
 face
 Yet rosy-kindled with her brother's
 kiss—
 Paused in the gateway, standing by the
 shield
 In silence, while she watch'd their arms
 far-off
 Sparkle, until they dipt below the
 downs.
 Then to her tower she climb'd, and took
 the shield,
 There kept it, and so lived in fantasy.

Meanwhile the two companions past
 away [downs,
 Far o'er the long backs of the bushless





To where Sir Lancelot knew there lived
a knight
Not far from Camelot, now for forty
years
A hermit, who had pray'd, labor'd and
pray'd
And ever laboring had scoop'd himself
In the white rock a chapel and a hall
On massive columns, like a shorecliff
cave,
And cells and chambers : all were fair
and dry ;
The green light from the meadows un-
derneath
Struck up and lived along the milky
roofs ;
And in the meadows tremulous aspen-
trees
And poplars made a noise of falling
showers.
And thither wending there that night
they bode.

But when the next day broke from
undergrown,
And shot red fire and shadows thro' the
cave,
They rose, heard mass, broke fast, and
rode away :
Then Lancelot saying, "hear, but hold
my name
Hidden, you ride with Lancelot of the
Lake,"
Abash'd Lavaine, whose instant rever-
ence,
Dearer to true young hearts than their
own praise,
But left him leave to stammer, "is it
indeed?"
And after muttering "the great Lance-
lot"
At last he got his breath and answer'd
"One,
One have I seen -- that other, our liege
lord,
The dread Pendragon, Britain's king
of kings,
Of whom the people talk mysteriously,
He will be there--then were I stricken
blind
That minute, I might say that I had
seen."

So spake Lavaine, and when they
reach'd the lists
By Camelot in the meadow, let his eyes
Run thro' the peopled gallery which
half round
Lay like a rainbow fall'n upon the
grass,
Until they found the clear-faced King,
who sat
Robed in red samite, easily to be
known,
Since to his crown the golden dragon
clung,
And down his robe the dragon writhed
in gold,
And from the carven-work behind him,
crept

Two dragons gilded, sloping down to
make
Arms for his chair, while all the rest
of them
Thro' knots and loops and folds innum-
erable
Fled ever thro' the woodwork, till they
found
The new design wherein they lost them-
selves,
Yet with all ease, so tender was the
work :
And, in the costly canopy o'er him set,
Blazed the last diamond of the name-
less king.
Then Lancelot answer'd young Lavaine
and said,
"Me you call great : mine is the firmer
seat,
The truer lance : but there is many a
youth
Now crescent, who will come to all I
am
And overcome it ; and in me there
dwells
No greatness, save it be some far-off
touch
Of greatness to know well I am not
great :
There is the man." And Lavaine gaped
upon him
As on a thing miraculous, and anon
The trumpets blew ; and then did either
side,
They that assail'd, and they that held
the lists,
Set lance in rest, strike spur, suddenly
move,
Meet in the midst, and there so furi-
ously
Shock, that a man far-off might well
perceive,
If any man that day were left afield,
The hard earth shake, and a low thun-
der of arms.
And Lancelot bode a little, till he saw
Which were the weaker ; then he hurl'd
into it
Against the stronger : little need to
speak
Of Lancelot in his glory : King, duke,
earl,
Count, baron -- whom he smote, he
overthrew.

But in the field were Lancelot's kith
and kin,
Ranged with the Table Round that held
the lists,
Strong men, and wrathful that a stran-
ger knight
Should do and almost overdo the deeds
Of Lancelot ; and one said to the other
"Lo !
What is he ? I do not mean the force
alone,
The grace and versatility of the man --
Is it not Lancelot !" "When has Lan-
celot woru
Favor of any lady in the lists ?



Not such his wont, as we, who know
 him, know."
 "How then? who then?" a fury seized
 on them,
 A fiery family passion for the name
 Of Lancelot, and a glory one with
 theirs.
 They couch'd their spears and prick'd
 their steeds and thus,
 Their plumes driv'n backward by the
 wind they made
 In moving, all together down upon
 him
 Bare, as a wild wave in the wide North-
 sea,
 Green-glimmering toward the summit,
 bears, with all
 Its stormy crests that smoke against
 the skies,
 Down on a bark, and overbears the
 bark,
 And him that helms it, so they over-
 bore
 Sir Lancelot and his charger, and a
 spear
 Down-glancing, lamed the charger, and
 a spear
 Prick'd sharply his own cuirass, and
 the head
 Pierced thro' his side, and there enapt,
 and remain'd.

Then Sir Lavaine did well and wor-
 shipfully;
 He bore a knight of old repute to the
 earth,
 And brought his horse to Lancelot
 where he lay.
 He up the side, sweating with agony,
 got,
 But thought to do while he might yet
 endure,
 And being lustily holpen by the rest,
 His party,— tho' it seemed half-mir-
 acle
 To those he fought with—drave his
 kith and kin,
 And all the Table Round that held the
 lists,
 Back to the barrier; then the heralde
 blew
 Proclaiming his the prize, who wore
 the sleeve
 Of scarlet, and the pearls; and all the
 knights,
 His party, cried "Advance, and take
 your prize
 The diamond;" but he answer'd,
 "diamond me
 No diamonds! for God's love, a little
 air!
 Prize me no prizes, for my prize is
 death!
 Hence will I and I charge you, follow
 me not."

He epoke, and vanish'd suddenly
 from the field
 With young Lavaine into the poplar
 grove.

There from his charger down he slid,
 and sat,
 Gasping to Sir Lavaine, "draw the
 lance-head:"
 "Ah my sweet lord Sir Lancelot," said
 Lavaine,
 "I dread me, if I draw it, ye shall
 die."
 But he "I die already with it: draw—
 Draw,"—and Lavaine drew, and that
 other gave
 A marvellous great shriek and ghastly
 groan,
 And half his blood burst forth, and
 down he sank
 For the pure pain, and wholly swoon'd
 away.
 Then came the hermit out and bare
 him in,
 There stanch'd his wound; and there,
 in daily doubt
 Whether to live or die, for many a
 week
 Hid from the wide world's rumor by
 the grove
 Of poplars with their noise of falling
 showers,
 And ever-tremulous aspen-trees, he
 lay.

But on that day when Lancelot fled
 the-lists,
 His party, knights of utmost North and
 West,
 Lords of waste marches, kings of deso-
 late isles,
 Came round their great Pendragon,
 saying to him
 "Lo. Site, our knight thro' whom we
 won the day
 Hath gone sore wounded, and hath left
 his prize
 Untaken, crying that his prize is
 death."
 "Heaven hinder," said the King,
 "that such an one,
 So great a knight as we have seen to-
 day—
 He seem'd to me another Lancelot—
 Yea, twenty times I thought him Lance-
 lot—
 He must not pass uncared for. Where-
 fore rise,
 O Gawain, and ride forth and find the
 knight.
 Wounded and wearied needs must he
 be near.
 I charge you that you get at once to
 horse.
 And, knights and kings, there breathes
 not one of you
 Will deem this prize of ours is rashly
 given:
 His prowess was too wondrous. We
 will do him
 No customary honor: since the knight
 Came not to us, of us to claim the
 prize,
 Ourselves will send it after. Rise and
 take



This diamond, and deliver it, and return,
And bring us where he is and how he fares,
And cease not from your quest, until you find."

So saying from the carven flower above,
To which it made a restless heart, he took;
And gave, the diamond: then from where he sat
At Arthur's right, with smiling face arose,
With smiling face and frowning heart, a Prince
In the mid might and flourish of his May,
Gawain, surnamed The Courteous, fair and strong,
And after Lancelot, Tristram, and Geraint
And Lamorack, a good knight, but therewithal
Sir Modred's brother, of a crafty house,
Nor often loyal to his word, and now
Wroth that the king's command to sally forth
In quest of whom he knew not, made him leave
The banquet, and concourse of knights and kings.

So all in wrath he got to horse and went;
While Arthur to the banquet, dark in mood,
Past, thinking "is it Lancelot who has come
Despite the wound he spake of, all for gain
Of glory, and has added wound to wound,
And ridd'n away to die?" So fear'd the King,
And, after two days' tarrance there, return'd.
Then when he saw the Queen, embracing, ask'd,
"Love, are you yet so sick?" "Nay, lord," she said.
"And where is Lancelot?" Then the Queen amazed
"Was he not with you? won he not your prize?"
"Nay, but one like him." "Why that like was he."
And when the King demanded how she knew,
Said "Lord, no sooner had ye parted from us,
Than Lancelot told me of a common talk
That men went down before his spear at a touch,
But knowing he was Lancelot; his great name
Conquer'd; and therefore would he hide his name

From all men, ev'n the king, and to this end
Had made the pretext of a hindering wound,
That he might joust unknown of all, and learn
If his old prowess was in aught decay'd:
And added, 'our true Arthur, when he learns,
Will well allow my pretext, as for gain of purer glory.'"

Then replied the King:
"Far lovelier in our Lancelot had it been,
In lieu of idly dallying with the truth,
To have trusted me as he has trusted you.
Surely his king and most familiar friend
Might well have kept his secret. True, indeed,
Albeit I know my knights fantastical,
So fine a fear in our large Lancelot
Must needs have moved my laughter: now remains
But little cause for laughter: his own kin—
Ill news, my Queen, for all who love him, these!
His kith and kin, not knowing, set upon him;
So that he went sore wounded from the field:
Yet good news too: for goodly hopes are mine
That Lancelot is no more a lonely heart.
He wore, against his wont, upon his helm
A sleeve of scarlet, broidered with great pearls,
Some gentle maiden's gift."

"Yea, lord," she said,
"Your hopes are mine," and saying that she choked,
And sharply turn'd about to hide her face,
Past to her chamber, and there flung herself
Down on the great King's couch, and writhed upon it,
And clenched her fingers till they bit the palm,
And shriek'd out "traitor" to the unhearing wall,
Then flash'd into wild tears, and rose again,
And moved about her palace, proud and pale.

Gawain the while thro' all the region round
Rode with his diamond, wearied of the quest,
Touch'd at all points, except the poplar grove,
And came at last, tho' late, to Astolat:



Whom glittering in enamell'd arms
 the maid
 Glanced at, and cried "What news
 from Camelot, lord?
 What of the knight with the red
 sleeve?" "He won."
 "I knew it," she said. "But parted
 from the jousts
 Hurt in the side," whereat she caught
 her breath;
 Thro' her own side she felt the sharp
 lance go;
 Thereon she smote her hand: well-
 nigh she swoon'd;
 And, while he gazed wonderingly at
 her, came
 The lord of Astolat out, to whom the
 Prince
 Reported who he was, and on what
 quest
 Sent, that he bore the prize and could
 not find
 The victor, but had ridden wildly
 round
 To seek him, and was wearied of the
 search.
 To whom the lord of Astolat "Bide
 with us,
 And ride no longer wildly, noble
 Prince!
 Here was the knight, and here he left
 a shield;
 This will he send or come for: further-
 more
 Our son is with him: we shall hear
 anon,
 Needs must we hear." To this the
 courteous Prince
 Accorded with his wonted courtesy,
 Courtesy with a touch of traitor in it,
 And stay'd; and cast his eyes on fair
 Elaine:
 Where could he found face daintier?
 then her shape
 From forehead down to foot perfect—
 again
 From foot to forehead exquisitely
 turn'd:
 "Well—if I hide, lo! this wild flower
 for me!"
 And oft they met among the garden
 yews,
 And there he set himself to play upon
 her
 With sallying wit, free flashes from a
 height
 Above her, graces of the court, and
 songs,
 Sighs, and slow smiles, and golden
 eloquence
 And amorous adulation, till the maid
 Rebel'd against it, saying to him,
 "Prince,
 O loyal nephew of our noble King,
 Why ask you not to see the shield he left,
 Whence you might learn his name?
 Why slight your King,
 And lose the quest he sent you on,
 and prove
 No surer than our falcon yesterday,

Who lost the hern we slipt him at,
 and went
 To all the winds?" "Nay, by mine
 head," said he,
 "I lose it, as we lose the lark in heaven,
 O damsel, in the light of your blue
 eyes:
 But an ye will it let me see the shield."
 And when the shield was brought, and
 Gawain saw
 Sir Lancelot's azure lions, crown'd
 with gold,
 Ramp in the field, he smote his thigh,
 and mock'd;
 "Right was the King! our Lancelot!
 that true man!"
 "And right was I," she answer'd mer-
 rily, "I,
 Who dream'd my knight the greatest
 knight of all."
 "And if I dream'd," said Gawain,
 "that you love
 This greatest knight, your pardon!
 lo, you know it!
 Speak therefore: shall I waste myself
 in vain?"
 Full simple was her answer "What
 know I?
 My brethren have been all my fellow-
 ship,
 And I, when often they have talk'd of
 love,
 Wish'd it had been my mother, for
 they talk'd,
 Meseem'd, of what they knew not; so
 myself—
 I know not if I know what true love is,
 But if I know, then, if I love not him,
 Methinks there is none other I can
 love."
 "Yea, by God's death," said he, "ye
 love him well,
 But would not, knew ye what all
 others know,
 And whom he loves." "So he it,"
 cried Elaine,
 And lifted her fair face and moved
 away:
 But he pursued her calling "Stay a
 little!
 One golden minute's grace: he wore
 your sleeve:
 Would he break faith with one I may
 not name?
 Must our true man change like a leaf
 at last?
 Nay—like enough: why then, far be it
 from me
 To cross our mighty Lancelot in his
 loves!
 And, damsel, for I deem you know full
 well
 Where your great knight is hidden, let
 me leave
 My quest with you; the diamond also:
 here!
 For if you love, it will be sweet to give
 it;
 And if he love, it will be sweet to
 have it



From your own hand; and whether he
love or not,
A diamond is a diamond. Fare you
well
A thousand times!—a thousand times
farewell!
Yet, if he love, and his love hold, we
two
May meet at court hereafter: there, I
think,
So you will learn the courtesies of the
court,
We two shall know each other.”

Then he gave,
And slightly kiss'd the hand to which
he gave,
The diamond, and all wearied of the
quest
Leapt on his horse, and carolling as he
went
A true-love ballad, lightly rode away.

Thence to the court he past; there
told the King
What the King knew “Sir Lancelot is
the knight.”
And added “Sire, my liege, so much I
learnt;
But fail'd to find him tho' I rode all
round
The region: but I lighted on the maid,
Whose sleeve he wore; she loves him;
and to her,
Deeming our courtesy is the truest
law,
I gave the diamond: she will render
it;
For by mine head she knows his hid-
ing-place.”

The seldom-frowning King frown'd,
and replied,
“Too courteous truly! ye shall go no
more
On quest of mine, seeing that ye for-
get
Obedience is the courtesy due to
kings.”

He spake and parted. Wroth but
all in awe,
For twenty strokes of the blood, with-
out a word,
Linger'd that other, staring after him;
Then shook his hair, strode off, and
buzz'd abroad
About the maid of Astolat, and her
love.
All ears were prick'd at once, all
tongues were loosed:
“The maid of Astolat loves Sir Lance-
lot,
Sir Lancelot loves the maid of Asto-
lat.”
Some read the King's face, some the
Queen's, and all
Had marvel what the maid might be,
but most
Predoom'd her as unworthy. One old
dame

Came suddenly on the Queen with the
sharp news.
She, that had heard the noise of it be-
fore,
But sorrowing Lancelot should have
stoop'd so low,
Marr'd her friend's point with pale
tranquillity.
So ran the tale like fire about the
court,
Fire in dry stable a nine days' won-
der flared:
Till ev'n the knights at banquet twice
or thrice
Forgot to drink to Lancelot and the
Queen,
And pledging Lancelot and the lily
maid
Smiled at each other, while the Queen
who sat
With lips severely placid felt the knot
Climb in her throat, and with her feet
unseen
Crush'd the wild passion out against
the floor
Beneath the banquet, where the meats
became
As wormwood, and she hated all who
pledged.

But far away the maid in Astolat,
Her guiltless rival, she that ever kept
The one-day-seen Sir Lancelot in her
heart,
Crept to her father, while he mused
alone,
Sat on his knee, stroked his gray face
and said,
“Father, you call me wilful, and the
fault
Is yours who let me have my will, and
now,
Sweet father, will you let me lose my
wits?”
“Nay,” said he, “surely.” “Where-
fore, let me hence,”
She answer'd, “and find out our dear
Lavaine.”
“Ye will not lose your wits for dear
Lavaine;
Bide,” answer'd he: “we needs must
hear anon
Of him, and of that other.” “Ay,”
she said,
“And of that other, for I needs must
hence
And find that other, wheresoe'er he
be,
And with mine own hand give his dia-
mond to him,
Lest I be found as faithless in the
quest
As yon proud Prince who left the
quest to me.
Sweet father, I behold him in my
dreams
Gaunt as it were the skeleton of him-
self,
Death-pale, for lack of gentle maiden's
aid.



The gentler-born the maiden, the more
 bound,
 My father, to be sweet and serviceable
 To noble knights in sickness, as ye
 know,
 When these have worn their tokens
 let me hence
 I pray you." Then her father nod-
 ding said,
 "Ay, ay, the diamond: wit you well,
 my child,
 Right fain were I to learn this knight
 were whole,
 Being our greatest; yea, and you must
 give it—
 And sure I think this fruit is hung too
 high
 For any mouth to gape for save a
 Queen's—
 Nay, I mean nothing: so then, get
 you gone,
 Being so very wilful you must go."

Lightly, her suit allow'd, she slipt
 away,
 And while she made her ready for her
 ride,
 Her father's latest word humm'd in
 her ear,
 "Being so very wilful you must go,"
 And changed itself and echoed in her
 heart,
 "Being so very wilful you must die."
 But she was happy enough and shook
 it off,
 As we shake off the bee that buzzes at
 us;
 And in her heart she answer'd it and
 said,
 "What matter, so I help him back to
 life?"
 Then far away with good Sir Torre for
 guide
 Rode o'er the long backs of the bush-
 less downs
 To Camelot, and before the city-gates
 Came on her brother with a happy
 face
 Making a roan horse caper and curvet
 For pleasure all about a field of
 flowers:
 Whom when she saw, "Lavaine," she
 cried, "Lavaine,
 How fares my lord Sir Lancelot?"
 He amazed,
 "Torre and Elaine! why here? Sir
 Lancelot!
 How know ye my lord's name is Lan-
 celot?"
 But when the maid had told him all
 her tale,
 Then turn'd Sir Torre, and being in
 his moods
 Left them, and under the strange-
 statued gate,
 Where Arthur's wars were render'd
 mystically,
 Past up the still rich city to his kin,
 His own far blood, which dwelt at
 Camelot;

And her, Lavine across the poplar
 grove
 Led to the caves: there first she saw
 the casque
 Of Lancelot on the wall: her scarlet
 sleeve,
 Tho' carved and cut, and half the
 pearls away,
 Stream'd from it still; and in her
 heart she laugh'd,
 Because he had not loosed it from his
 helm,
 But meant once more perchance to
 tourney in it.
 And when they gain'd the cell in
 which he slept,
 His battle-writhen arms and mighty
 hands
 Lay naked on the wolfskin, and a
 dream
 Of dragging down his enemy made
 them move.
 Then she that saw him lying unsleek,
 unshorn,
 Gaunt as it were the skeleton of him-
 self.
 Uttered a little tender dolorous cry.
 The sound not wouted in a place so still
 Woke the sick knight, and while he
 roll'd his eyes
 Yet blank from sleep, she started to
 him, saying
 "Your prize the diamond sent you by
 the King;"
 His eyes glisken'd: she fancied "is it
 for me?"
 And when the maid had told him all
 the tale
 Of King and Prince, the diamond
 sent, the quest
 Assign'd to her not worthy of it, she
 knelt
 Full lowly by the corners of his bed,
 And laid the diamond in his open
 hand.
 Her face was near, and as we kiss the
 child
 That does the task assign'd, he kiss'd
 her face.
 At once she slipt like water to the
 floor.
 "Alas," he said, "your ride has
 wearied you.
 Rest must you have." "No rest for
 me," she said;
 "Nay, for near you, fair lord, I am at
 rest."
 What might she mean by that? his
 large black eyes,
 Yet larger thro' his leanness, dwelt
 upon her,
 Till all her heart's sad secret blazed
 itself
 In the heart's colors on her simple
 face;
 And Lancelot look'd and was perplex't
 in mind,
 And being weak in body said no more;
 But did not love the color; woman's
 love,



Save one, he not regarded, and so
turn'd
Sighing, and feign'd a sleep until he
slept.

Then rose Elaine and glided thro'
the fields,
And past beneath the wildly-sculp-
tured gates
Far up the dim rich city to her kin ;
There bode the night : but woke with
dawn, and past
Down thro' the dim rich city to the
fields,
Thence to the cave : so day by day she
past
In either twilight ghost-like to and fro
Gliding, and every day she tended
him,
And likewise many a night : and Lan-
celot
Would, tho' he call'd his wound a
little hurt
Whereof he should be quickly whole,
at times
Brain-feverous in his heat and agony,
seem
Uncourteous, even he : but the meek
maid
Sweetly forebore him ever, being to
him
Meeker than any child to a rough
nurse
Milder than any mother to a sick
child,
And never woman yet, since man's
first fall,
Did kindlier unto man, but her deep
love
Upbore her ; till the hermit, skill'd in
all
The simples and the science of that
time,
Told him that her fine care had saved
his life.
And the sick man forgot her simple
blush,
Would call her friend and sister, sweet
Elaine,
Would listen for her coming and regret
Her parting step, and held her ten-
derly,
And loved her with all love except the
love
Of man and woman when they love
their best
Closest and sweetest, and had died the
death
In any knightly fashion for her sake.
And peradventure had he seen her
first
She might have made this and that
other world
Another world for the sick man ; but
now
The shackles of an old love straiten'd
him,
His honor rooted in dishonor stood,
And faith unfaithful kept him falsely
true.

Yet the great knight in his mid-
sickness made
Full many a holy vow and pure re-
solve.
These, as hut born of sickness, could
not live :
For when the blood ran lustier in him
again,
Full often the sweet image of one
face,
Making a treacherous quiet in his
heart,
Dispersed his resolution like a cloud.
Then if the maiden, while that ghostly
grace
Beam'd on his fancy, spoke, he an-
swer'd not,
Or short and coldly, and she knew
right well
What the rough sickness meant, but
what this meant
She knew not, and the sorrow dimm'd
her sight,
And drove her ere her time across the
fields
Far into the rich city, where alone
She murmur'd "vain, in vain: it can-
not be
He will not love me : how then ? must
I die."
Then as a little helpless innocent bird,
That has but one plain passage of few
notes,
Will sing the simple passage o'er and
o'er
For all an April morning, till the ear
Wearies to hear it, so the simple maid
Went half the night repeating, "must
I die?"
And now to right she turn'd, and now
to left,
And found no ease in turning or in
rest ;
And "him or death" she mutter'd,
"death or him,"
Again and like a burthen, "him or
death."

But when Sir Lancelot's deadly hurt
was whole,
To Astolat returning rode the three.
There morn by morn, arraying her
sweet self
In that wherein she deem'd she look'd
her best,
She came before Sir Lancelot, for she
thought
"If I be loved, these are my festal
robes,
If not, the victim's flowers before he
fall."
And Lancelot ever prest upon the maid
That she should ask some goodly gift
of him
For her own self or hers ; "and do not
shun
To speak the wish most dear to your
true heart ;
Such service have ye done me, that I
make



My will of yours, and Prince and Lord
 am I
 In mine own land, and what I will I
 can."
 Then like a ghost she lifted up her face,
 But like a ghost without the power to
 speak.
 And Lancelot saw that she withheld
 her wish,
 And bode among them yet a little
 space
 Till he should learn it; and one morn
 it chanced
 He found her in among the garden
 yews,
 And said, "Delay no longer, speak
 your wish,
 Seeing I must go to-day:" then out
 she brake;
 "Going? and we shall never see you
 more.
 And I must die for want of one bold
 word."
 "Speak: that I live to hear," he said,
 "is yours."
 Then suddenly and passionately she
 spoke:
 "I have gone mad. I love you: let me
 die."
 "Ah, sister," answer'd Lancelot,
 "what is this?"
 And innocently extending her white
 arms,
 "Your love," she said, "your love—
 to be your wife."
 And Lancelot answer'd, "Had I chos'n
 to wed,
 I had been wedded earlier, sweet
 Elaine:
 But now there never will be wife of
 mine."
 "No, no," she cried, "I care not to be
 wife,
 But to be with you still, to see your
 face,
 To serve you, and to follow you thro'
 the world."
 And Lancelot answer'd, "Nay, the
 world, the world,
 All ear and eye, with such a stupid
 heart
 To interpret ear and eye, and such a
 tongue
 To blare its own interpretation—nay,
 Full ill then should I quit your bro-
 ther's love,
 And your good father's kindness."
 And she said
 "Not to be with you, not to see your
 face—
 Alas for me then, my good days are
 done."
 "Nay, noble maid," he answer'd, "ten
 times nay!
 This is not love: but love's first flash
 in youth,
 Most common: yea I know it of mine
 own self:
 And you yourself will smile at your
 own self

Hereafter, when you yield your flower
 of life
 To one more fitly yours, not thrice
 your age:
 And then will I, for true you are and
 sweet
 Beyond mine old belief in womanhood,
 More specially should your good
 knight be peer,
 Endow you with broad land and ter-
 ritory
 Even to the half my realm beyond the
 seas,
 So that would make you happy: fur-
 thermore,
 Ev'n to the death, as tho' ye were my
 blood,
 In all your quarrels will I be your
 knight.
 This will I do, dear damsel, for your
 sake,
 And more than this I cannot."
 While he spoke
 She neither blush'd nor shook, but
 deathly-pale
 Stood grasping what was nearest, then
 replied;
 "Of all this will I nothing;" and so
 fell,
 And thus they bore her swooning to
 her tower.

Then spake, to whom thro' those
 black walls of yew
 Their talk had pierced, her father.
 "Ay, a flash,
 I fear me, that will strike my blossom
 dead.
 Too courteous are you, fair Lord
 Lancelot.
 I pray you, use some rough discourtesy
 To blunt or break her passion."
 Lancelot said,
 "That were against me: what I can I
 will;"
 And there that day remain'd, and
 toward even
 Sent for his shield: full meekly rose
 the maid,
 Stript off the case, and gave the naked
 shield;
 Then, when she heard his horse upon
 the stones,
 Unclassing flung the casement back,
 and look'd
 Down on his helm, from which her
 sleeve had gone.
 And Lancelot knew the little clinking
 sound;
 And she by tact of love was well aware
 That Lancelot knew that she was look-
 ing at him.
 And yet he glanced not up, nor waved
 his hand,
 Nor bade farewell, but sadly rode away.
 This was the one discourtesy that he
 used.

So in her tower alone the maiden
 sat:



His very shield was gone; only the
 case,
 Her own poor work, her empty labor,
 left.
 But still she heard him, still his pic-
 ture form'd
 And grew between her and the pic-
 tured wall.
 Then came her father, saying in low
 tones
 "Have comfort," whom she greeted
 quietly.
 Then came her brethren saying, "Peace
 to thee
 Sweet sister," whom she answer'd with
 all calm.
 But when they left her to herself again,
 Death, like a friend's voice from a die-
 tant field
 Approaching thro' the darkness, call'd;
 the owls
 Wailing had power upon her, and she
 mixt
 Her fancies with the swallow-rifted
 glooms
 Of evening, and the moanings of the
 wind.

And in those days she made a little
 song,
 And call'd her song "The song of Love
 and Death."
 And sang it: sweetly could she make
 and sing.

"Sweet is true love tho' given in vain,
 in vain;
 And sweet is death who puts an end to
 pain:
 I know not which is sweeter, no, not I.

"Love, art thou sweet? then bitter
 death must be:
 Love, thou art bitter; sweet is death to
 me.
 O Love, if death be sweeter, let me die.

"Sweet love, that seems not made to
 fade away,
 Sweet death, that seems to make us
 loveless clay,
 I know not which is sweeter, no, not I.

"I fain would follow love, if that
 could be;
 I needs must follow death, who calls
 for me;
 Call and I follow, I follow! let me
 die."

High with the last line scaled her
 voice, and this,
 All in a fiery dawning wild with wind
 That shook her tower, the brothers
 heard, and thought
 With shuddering "Hark the Phantom
 of the house
 That ever shrieks before a death," and
 call'd
 The father, and all three in hurry and
 fear

Ran to her, and lo! the blood-red light
 of dawn
 Flared on her face, she shrilling "Let
 me die!"

As when we dwell upon a word we
 know
 Repeating, till the word we know so
 well
 Becomes a wonder and we know not
 why,
 So dwelt the father on her face and
 thought
 "Is this Elaine?" till back the maiden
 fell,
 Then gave a languid hand to each, and
 lay,
 Speaking a still good-morrow with her
 eyes.

At last she said "Sweet brothers,
 yester night
 I seem'd a curious little maid again,
 As happy as when we dwelt among the
 woods,
 And when ye used to take me with the
 flood
 Up the great river in the boatman's
 boat.
 Only ye would not pass beyond the
 cape
 That has the poplar on it: there ye
 fixt
 Your limit, oft returning with the tide.
 And yet I cried because ye would not
 pass

Beyond it, and far up the shining flood
 Until we found the palace of the king.
 And yet ye would not; but this night
 I dream'd
 That I was all alone upon the flood,
 And then I said "Now shall I have my
 will:"

And there I woke, but still the wish
 remain'd.
 So let me hence that I may pass at
 last

Beyond the poplar and far up the flood,
 Until I find the palace of the king.
 There will I enter in among them all,
 And no man there will dare to mock at
 me;

But there the fine Gawain will wonder
 at me,

And there the great Sir Lancelot muse
 at me;

Gawain, who hade a thousand fare-
 wells to me,
 Lancelot, who coldly went nor hade me
 one:

And there the King will know me and
 my love,

And there the Queen herself will pity
 me,

And all the gentle court will welcome
 me,

And after my long voyage I shall
 rest!"

"Peace," said her father, "O my
 child, ye seem



Light-headed, for what force is yours
to go,
So far, being sick? and wherefore
would ye look
On this proud fellow again, who scorns
us all?"

Then the rough Torre began to heave
and move,
And bluster into stormy sobs and say
"I never loved him: an I meet with
him,
I care not howsoever great he be,
Then will I strike at him and strike
him down,
Give me good fortune, I will strike him
dead,
For this discomfort he hath done the
house."

To which the gentle sister made
reply,
"Fret not yourself, dear brother, nor
be wroth,
Seeing it is no more Sir Lancelot's
fault
Not to love me, than it is mine to love
Him of all men who seems to me the
highest."
"Highest?" the Father answer'd,
echoing "highest?"
(He meant to break the passion in her)
"nay,
Daughter, I know not what you call
the highest;
But this I know, for all the people
know it,
He loves the Queen, and in an open
shame:
And she returns his love in open shame.
If this be high, what is it to be low?"

Then spake the lily maid of Astolat;
"Sweet father, all too faint and sick
am I
For anger: these are slanders: never
yet
Was noble man but made ignoble talk.
He makes no friend who never made a
foe.
But now it is my glory to have loved
One peerless, without stain: so let me
pass,
My father, howsoe'er I seem to you,
Not all unhappy, having loved God's
best
And greatest, tho' my love had no
return:
Yet, seeing ye desire your child to live,
Thanks, but ye work against your own
desire;
For if I could believe the things ye say
I should but die the sooner; where-
fore cease
Sweet father, and bid call the ghostly
man
Hither, and let me shrive me clean,
and die."
So when the ghostly man had come
and gone,

She with a face, bright as for sin for-
given,
Besought Lavaine to write as she
devised
A letter, word for word; and when he
ask'd
"Is it for Lancelot, is it for my dear
lord?
Then will I bear it gladly," she replied,
"For Lancelot and the Queen and all
the world,
But I myself must bear it." Then he
wrote
The letter she devised; which being
writ
And folded, "O sweet father, tender
and true,
Deny me not," she said—"ye never
yet
Denied my fancies—this, however
strange,
My latest: lay the letter in my hand
A little ere I die, and close the hand
Upon it; I shall guard it even in death.
And when the heat is gone from out
my heart,
Then take the little bed on which I
died
For Lancelot's love, and deck it like
the Queen's
For richness, and me also like the
Queen
In all I have of rich, and lay me on it.
And let there be prepared a chariot-
hier
To take me to the river, and a barge
Be ready on the river, clothed in black.
I go in state to court, to meet the
Queen.
There surely I shall speak for mine
own self,
And none of you can speak for me so
well.
And therefore let our dumb old man
alone
Go with me, he can steer and row, and
he
Will guide me to that palace, to the
doors."

She ceased: her father promised;
whereupon
She grew so cheerful that they deem'd
her death
Was rather in the fantasy than the
blood.
But ten slow mornings past, and on
the eleventh
Her father laid the letter in her hand,
And closed the hand upon it, and she
died.
So that day there was dole in Astolat.

But when the next sun brake from
underground,
Then, those two brethren slowly with
hent brows
Accompanying the sad chariot-hier
Past like a shadow thro' the field, that
shone



Full-summer, to that stream whereon
the barge,
Pall'd all its length in blackest samite,
lay.
There sat the lifelong creature of the
house,
Loyal, the dumb old servitor, on deck,
Winking his eyes, and twisted all his
face.
So those two brethren from the chariot
took
And on the black decks laid her in her
bed,
Set in her hand a lily, o'er her hung
The silken case with braided blazonings,
And kiss'd her quiet brows, and saying
to her
"Sister, farewell for ever," and again
"Farewell, sweet sister," parted all in
tears.
Then rose the dumb old servitor, and
the dead
Steer'd by the dumb went upward with
the flood—
In her right hand the lily, in her left
The letter—all her bright hair stream-
ing down—
And all the coverlid was cloth of gold
Drawn to her waist, and she herself in
white
All but her face, and that clear-fca-
tured face
Was lovely, for she did not seem as
dead
But fast asleep, and lay as tho' she
smiled.

That day Sir Lancelot at the palace
craved
Audience of Gninevere, to give at last
The price of half a realm, his costly
gift,
Hard-won and hardly won with bruise
and blow,
With deaths of others, and almost his
own,
The nine-years-fought-for diamonds :
for he saw
One of her house, and sent him to the
Queen
Bearing his wish, whereto the Queen
agreed
With such and so unmoved a majesty
She might have seem'd her statue, but
that he,
Low-drooping till he wellnigh kiss'd
her feet
For loyal awe, saw with a sidelong eye
The shadow of a piece of pointed lace,
In the Queen's shadow, vibrate on the
walls,
And parted, laughing in his courtly
heart.

All in an oriel on the summer side,
Vine-clad, of Arthur's palace toward
the stream,
They met, and Lancelot kneeling ut-
ter'd, "Queen,
Lady, my liege, in whom I have my
joy,

Take, what I had not won except for
you,
These jewels, and make me happy,
making them
An armlet for the roundest arm on
earth,
Or necklace for a neck to which the
swan's
Is tawnier than her cygnet's: these
are words :
Your beauty is your beauty, and I sin
In speaking, yet O grant my worship
of it
Words, as we grant grief tears. Such
sin in words
Perchance, we both can pardon: hut,
my Queen,
I hear of rumors flying thro' your
court.
Our bond, as not the bond of man and
wife,
Should have in it an absolute trust
To make up that defect: let rumors
be :
When did not rumors fly? these, as I
trust
That you trust me in your own noble-
ness,
I may not well believe that you be-
lieve."

While thus he spoke, half turn'd
away, the Queen
Brake from the vast oriel-embowering
vine
Leaf after leaf, and tore, and cast
them off,
Till all the place whereon she stood
was green ;
Then, when he ceased, in one cold
passive hand
Received at once and laid aside the
gems
There on a table near her, and re-
plied.

"It may be, I am quicker of helief
Than you believe me, Lancelot of the
Lake
Our bond is not the bond of man and
wife.
This good is in it, whatsoever of ill,
It can be broken easier. I for you
This many a year have done despite
and wrong
To one whom ever in my heart of
hearts
I did acknowledge nobler. What are
these?
Diamonds for me? they had been
thrice their worth
Being your gift, had you not lost your
own.
To loyal hearts the value of all gifts
Must vary as the giver's. Not for me!
For her! for your new fancy. Only
this
Grant me, I pray you: have your joys
apart.
I doubt not that however changed, you
keep



So much of what is graceful : and myself
 Would shun to break those bounds of courtesy
 In which as Arthur's queen I move
 and rule :
 So cannot speak my mind. An end to this !
 A strange one ! yet I take it with Amen.
 So pray you, add my diamonds to her pearls ;
 Deck her with these ; tell her she shines me down :
 An armlet for an arm to which the Queen's
 Is haggard, or a necklace for a neck
 O as much fairer — as a faith once fair
 Was richer than these diamonds — hers not mine —
 Nay, by the mother of our Lord himself,
 Or hers or mine, mine now to work my will —
 She shall not have them."

Saying which she seized,
 And, thro' the casement standing wide
 for heat,
 Flung them, and down they flash'd,
 and smote the stream.
 Then from the smitten surface flash'd,
 as it were,
 Diamonds to meet them, and they past away.
 Then while Sir Lancelot leant, in half disgust
 At love, life, all things, on the window ledge,
 Close underneath his eyes, and right across
 Where these had fallen, slowly past the barge
 Whereon the lily maid of Astolat
 Lay smiling, like a star in blackest night.

But the wild Queen, who saw not,
 burst away
 To weep and wail in secret ; and the barge,
 On to the palace-doorway sliding,
 paused.
 There two stood arm'd, and kept the door ; to whom,
 All up the marble stair, tier over tier,
 Were added mouths that gaped, and eyes that ask'd
 "What is it?" but that oarsman's haggard face,
 As hard and still as is the face that men
 Shape to their fancy's eye from broken rocks
 On some cliff-side, appall'd them, and they said,
 "He is enchanted, cannot speak — and she,
 Look how she sleeps — the Fairy Queen,
 so fair !

Yea, but how pale ! what are they ?
 flesh and blood ?
 Or come to take the King to fairy land ?
 For some do hold our Arthur cannot die,
 But that he passes into fairy land."

While thus they babbled of the King, the King
 Came girt with knights : then turn'd the tongueless man
 From the half-face to the full eye, and rose
 And pointed to the damsel, and the doors.
 So Arthur bade the meek Sir Percival
 And pure Sir Galahad to uplift the maid ;
 And reverently they bore her into hall.
 Then came the fine Gawain and wonder'd at her,
 And Lancelot later came and mused at her,
 And last the Queen herself and pitied her :
 But Arthur spied the letter in her hand,
 Stoop'd, took, brake seal, and read it ;
 this was all.

"Most noble lord, Sir Lancelot of the Lake,
 I, sometime call'd the maid of Astolat,
 Come, for you left me taking no farewell,
 Hither, to take my last farewell of you.
 I loved you, and my love had no return,
 And therefore my true love has been my death.
 And therefore to our lady Guinevere,
 And to all other ladies, I make moan.
 Pray for my soul, and yield me burial.
 Pray for my soul thou too, Sir Lancelot,
 As thou art a knight peerless."

Thus he read,
 And ever in the reading, lords and dames
 Wept, looking often from his face who read
 To hers which lay so silent, and at times,
 So touch'd were they, half-thinking that her lips,
 Who had devised the letter, moved again.

Then freely spoke Sir Lancelot to them all ;
 "My lord liege Arthur, and all ye that hear,
 Know that for this most gentle maiden's death
 Nigh heavy am I ; for good she was
 and true,



But loved me with a love beyond all
love
In women, whomsoever I have known.
Yet to be loved makes not to love
again ;
Not at my years, however it hold in
youth.
I swear by truth and knighthood that
I gave
No cause, not willingly, for such a
love :
To this I call my friends in testimony,
Her brethren, and her father, who
himself
Besought me to be plain and blunt,
and use,
To break her passion, some discourtesy
Against my nature : what I could, I
did.
I left her and I bade her no farewell.
Tho', had I dreamt the damsel would
have died,
I might have put my wits to some
rough use,
And help'd her from herself."

Then said the Queen
(Sea was her wrath, yet working after
storm)
"Ye might at least have done her so
much grace,
Fair lord, as would have help'd her
from her death."
He raised his head, their eyes met and
hers fell,
He adding,
"Queen, she would not be content
Save that I wedded her, which could
not be.
Then might she follow me thro' the
world, she ask'd ;
It could not be. I told her that her
love
Was but the flash of youth, would
darken down
To rise hereafter in a stiller flame
Toward one more worthy of her—then
would I,
More specially were he, she wedded,
poor,
Estate them with large land and terri-
tory
In mine own realm beyond the narrow
seas,
To keep them in all joyance : more
than this
I could not ; this she would not, and
she died."

He pausing, Arthur answer'd, "O
my knight,
It will be to thy worship, as my knight,
And mine, as head of all our Table
Round,
To see that she be buried worship-
fully."

So toward that shrine which then in
all the realm

Was richest, Arthur leading, slowly
went
The marshall'd order of their Table
Round,
And Lancelot sad beyond his wont, to
see
The maiden buried, not as one un-
known,
Nor meanly, but with gorgeous obse-
quies,
And mass, and rolling music, like a
Queen.
And when the knights had laid her
comely head
Low in the dust of half-forgotten kings,
Then Arthur spake among them,
"Let her tomb
Be costly, and her image thereupon.
And let the shield of Lancelot at her
feet
Be carven, and her lily in her hand.
And let the story of her dolorous voy-
age
For all true hearts be blazon'd on her
tomb
In letters gold and azure!" which
was wrought
Thereafter ; but when now the lords
and dames
And people, from the high doorstream-
ing, brake
Disorderly, as homeward each, the
Queen,
Who mark'd Sir Lancelot where he
moved apart,
Drew near, and sigh'd in passing
"Lancelot,
Forgive me ; mine was jealousy in
love."
He answer'd with his eyes upon the
ground,
"That is love's curse ; pass on, my
Queen, forgiven."
But Arthur who beheld his cloudy
brows
Approach'd him, and with full affec-
tion flung
One arm about his neck, and spake
and said.

"Lancelot, my Lancelot, thou in
whom I have
Most love and most affianced, for I
know
What thou hast been in battle by my
side,
And many a time have watched thee
at the tilt
Strike down the lusty and long-prac-
tised knight,
And let the younger and unskill'd go
by
To win his honor and to make his
name,
And loved thy courtesies and thee, a
man
Made to be loved ; but now I would
to God,
For the wild people say wild things of
thee,



Thou couldst have loved this maiden,
 shaped, it seems,
 By God for thee alone, and from her
 face,
 If one may judge the living by the
 dead,
 Delicately pure and marvellously fair,
 Who might have brought thee, now a
 lonely man
 Wifeless and heirless, noble issue, sons
 Born to the glory of thy name and
 fame,
 My knight, the great Sir Lancelot of
 the Lake."

Then answer'd Lancelot. "Fair she
 was, my King,
 Pure, as you ever wish your knights to
 be.
 To doubt her fairness were to want an
 eye,
 To doubt her pureness were to want a
 heart—
 Yea, to be loved, if what is worthy love
 Could bind him, but free love will not
 be bound."

"Free love, so bound, were freest,"
 said the King.
 "Let love be free; free love is for the
 best:
 And, after heaven, on our dull side of
 death,
 What should he best, if not so pure a
 love
 Clothed in so pure a loveliness? yet
 thee
 She fail'd to hind, tho' heing, as I
 think,
 Unbound as yet, and gentle, as I
 know."

And Lancelot answer'd nothing, but
 he went,
 And at the inrunning of a little brook
 Sat by the river in a cove, and watch'd
 The high reed wave, and lifted up his
 eyes
 And saw the barge that brought her
 moving down,
 Far-off, a blot upon the stream, and
 said
 Low in himself "Ah simple heart and
 sweet,
 Ye loved me, damsel, surely with a
 love
 Far tenderer than my Queen's. Pray
 for thy soul?
 Ay, that will I. Farewell too—now at
 last—
 Farewell, fair lily. 'Jealousy in love?'
 Not rather dead love's harsh heir,
 jealous pride?
 Queen, if I grant the jealousy as of
 love,
 May not your crescent fear for name
 and fame
 Speak, as it waxes, of a love that
 wanes?
 Why did the King dwell on my name
 to me?

Mine own name shames me, seeming a
 reproach,
 Lancelot, whom the Lady of the Lake
 Stole from his mother—as the story
 runs—
 She chanted snatches of mysterious
 song
 Heard on the winding waters, eve and
 morn
 She kiss'd me saying thou art fair, my
 child,
 As a king's son, and often in her arms
 She hare me, pacing on the dusky
 mere.
 Would she had drown'd me in it,
 where'er it be!
 For what am I? what profits me my
 name
 Of greatest knight? I fought for it,
 and have it:
 Pleasure to have it, none; to lose it,
 pain;
 Now grown a part of me: but what
 use in it?
 To make men worse by making my sin
 known?
 Or sin seem less, the sinner seeming
 great?
 Alas for Arthur's greatest knight, a
 man
 Not after Arthur's heart! I needs
 must break
 These bonds that so defame me: not
 without
 She wills it: would I, if she will'd it?
 nay,
 Who knows? but if I would not, then
 may God,
 I pray him, send a sudden Angel down
 To seize me by the hair and bear me
 far,
 And fling me deep in that forgotten
 mere,
 Among the tumbled fragments of the
 hills."

So groan'd Sir Lancelot in remorse-
 ful pain,
 Not knowing he should die a holy man.

THE HOLY GRAIL.

FROM noiseful arms, and acts of prow-
 ess done
 In tournament or tilt, Sir Percivale,
 Whom Arthur and his knighthood
 call'd The Pure,
 Had pass'd into the silent life of
 prayer,
 Praise, fast, and alms; and leaving
 for the cowl
 The helmet in an abbey far away
 From Camelot, there, and not long
 after, died.
 And one, a fellow-monk among the
 rest,
 Ambrosius, loved him much beyond
 the rest,



And honor'd him, and wrought into
his heart
A way by love that waken'd love with-
in,
To answer that which came: and as
they sat
Beneath a world-old yew-tree, darken-
ing half
The cloisters, on a gustful April morn
That puff'd the swaying branches into
smoke
Above them, ere the summer when he
died,
The monk Ambrosius question'd Perci-
vale:

“O brother, I have seen this yew-
tree smoke,
Spring after spring, for half a hundred
years:
For never have I known the world
without,
Nor ever stray'd beyond the pale: but
thee,
When first thou camest—such a cour-
tesy
Spake thro' the limbs and in the
voice—I knew
For one of those who eat in Arthur's
hall;
For good ye are and bad, and like to
coins,
Some true, some light, but every one
of you
Stamp'd with the image of the King;
and now
Tell me, what drove thee from the
Table Round,
My brother? was it earthly passion
crost?”

“Nay,” said the knight; “for no
such passion mine.
But the sweet vision of the Holy Grail
Drove me from all vainglories, rival-
ries,
And earthly heats that spring and
sparkle out
Among us in the jousts, while women
watch
Who wins, who falls; and waste the
spiritual strength
Within us, better offer'd up to Hea-
ven.”

To whom the monk: “The Holy
Grail!—I trust
We are green in Heaven's eyes; but
here too much
We moulder—as to things without I
mean—
Yet one of your own knights, a guest
of ours,
Told us of this in our refectory,
But spake with such a sadness and so
low
We heard not half of what he said.
What is it?
The phantom of a cup that comes and
goes?”

“Nay, monk! what phantom?” an-
swer'd Percivale.
“The cup, the cup itself, from which
our Lord
Drank at the last sad supper with his
own.
This, from the blessed land of Aromat—
After the day of darkness, when the
dead
Went wandering o'er Moriah—the
good saint,
Arimathæan Joseph, journeying
brought
To Glastonbury, where the winter
thorn
Blossoms at Christmas, mindful of our
Lord.
And there awhile it bode; and if a
man
Could touch or see it, he was heal'd at
once,
By faith, of all his ills. But then the
times
Grew to such evil that the holy cup
Was caught away to Heaven, and dis-
appear'd.”

To whom the monk: “From our old
books I know
That Joseph came of old to Glaston-
bury,
And there the heathen Prince, Arvira-
gus,
Gave him an isle of marsh whereon to
build;
And there he built with wattles from
the marsh
A little lonely church in days of yore,
For so they say, these books of ours,
but seem
Mute of this miracle, far as I have
read.
But who first saw the holy thing to-
day?”

“A woman,” answer'd Percivale,
“a nun,
And one no further off in blood from
me
Than sister; and if ever holy maid
With knees of adoration wore the
stone,
A holy maid; tho' never maiden glow'd,
But that was in her earlier maiden-
hood,
With such a fervent flame of human
love,
Which being rudely blunted, glanced
and shot
Only to holy things; to prayer and
praise
She gave herself, to fast and alms.
And yet,
Nun as she was, the scandal of the
Court,
Sin against Arthur and the Table
Round,
And the strange sound of an adulter-
ous race,
Across the iron grating of her cell



Beat, and she pray'd and fasted all the more.

"And he to whom she told her sins, or what Her all but niter whiteness held for sin,

A man wellnigh a hundred winters old, Spake often with her of the Holy Grail, A legend handed down thro' five or six, And each of these a hundred winters old,

From our Lord's time. And when King Arthur made His Table Round, and all men's hearts became

Clean for a season, surely he had thought That now the Holy Grail would come again;

But sin broke out. Ah, Christ, that it would come, And heal the world of all their wickedness!

'O Father!' asked the maiden, 'might it come To me by prayer and fasting?' 'Nay,' said he, 'I know not, for thy heart is pure as snow.'

And so she pray'd and fasted, till the sun Shone, and the wind blew, thro' her, and I thought She might have risen and floated when I saw her.

"For on a day she sent to speak with me. And when she came to speak, behold her eyes Beyond my knowing of them, beautiful, Beyond all knowing of them, wonderful, Beautiful in the light of holiness. And 'O my brother, Percivale,' she said,

'Sweet brother, I have seen the Holy Grail: For, waked at dead of night, I heard a sound

As of a silver horn from o'er the hills Blown, and I thought, "It is not Arthur's use To hunt by moonlight;" and the slender sound

As from a distance beyond distance grew, Coming upon me—O never harp nor horn,

Nor aught we blow with breath, or touch with hand, Was like that music as it came; and then

Stream'd thro' my cell a cold and silver beam, And down the long beam stole the Holy Grail, Rose-red with beatings in it, as if alive,

Till all the white walls of my cell were dyed

With rosy colors leaping on the wall; And then the music faded, and the

Grail Pass'd, and the beam decay'd, and from the walls

The rosy quiverings died into the night.

So now the Holy Thing is here again Among us, brother, fast thou too and pray,

And tell thy brother knights to fast and pray,

That so perchance the vision may be seen

By thee and those, all the world be heal'd.

"Then leaving the pale nun, I spake of this

To all men; and myself fasted and pray'd

Always, and many among us many a week

Fasted and pray'd even to the uttermost,

Expectant of the wonder that would be.

"And one there was among us, ever moved

Among us in white armor, Galahad, 'God make thee good as thou art beautiful,'

Said Arthur, when he dubb'd him knight; and none,

In so young youth, was ever made a knight

Till Galahad; and this Galahad, when he heard

Mysister's vision, fill'd me with amaze; His eyes became so like her own, they seem'd

Hers, and himself her brother more than I.

"Sister or brother none had he; but some

Call'd him a son of Lancelot, and some said

Begotten by enchantment—chatterers they,

Like birds of passage piping up and down,

That gape for flies—we know not whence they come;

For when was Lancelot wanderingly lewd?

"But she, the wan sweet maiden shore away

Clean from her forehead all that wealth of hair

Which made a silken mat-work for her feet;

And out of this she plaited broad and long

A strong sword-belt, and wove with silver thread



And crimson in the belt a strange
device,
A crimson grail within a silver beam;
And saw the bright boy-knight, and
bound it on him,
Saying, 'My knight, my love, my
knight of heaven,
O thou, my love, whose love is one
with mine,
I, maiden, round thee, maiden, bind my
belt.
Go forth, for thou shalt see what I
have seen,
And break thro' all, till one will crown
thee king
Far in the spiritual city: ' and as she
spake
She sent the deathless passion in her
eyes
Thro' him, and made him hers, and
laid her mind
On him, and he believed in her belief.

"Then came a year of miracle: O
brother,
In our great hall there stood a vacant
chair,
Fashion'd by Merlin ere he past away,
And carven with strange figures; and
in and out
The figures, like a serpent, ran a scroll
Of letters in a tongue no man could
read.
And Merlin call'd it 'The Siege peril-
ous,'
Perilous for good and ill; 'for there,'
he said,
'No man could sit but he should lose
himself: '
And once by misadventence Merlin sat
In his own chair, and so was lost; but
he,
Galahad, when he heard of Merlin's
doom,
Cried, 'If I lose myself I save my-
self!'

"Then on a summer night it came
to pass,
While the great banquet lay along the
hall,
That Galahad would sit down in Mer-
lin's chair.

"And all at once, as there we sat,
we heard
A cracking and a riving of the roofs,
And rending, and a blast, and over-
head
Thunder, and in the thunder was a
cry.
And in the blast there smote along the
hall
A beam of light seven times more clear
than day:
And down the long beam stole the
Holy Grail
All over cover'd with a luminous
cloud,
And none might see who bare it, and
it past.

But every knight beheld his fellow's
face
As in a glory, and all the knights
arose,
And staring each at other like dumb
men
Stood, till I found a voice and sware a
vow.

"I sware a vow before them all, that
I,
Because I had not seen the Grail,
would ride
A twelvemonth and a day in quest of
it,
Until I found and saw it, as the nun
My sister saw it; and Galahad sware
the vow,
And good Sir Bors, our Lancelot's
cousin, sware,
And Lancelot sware, and many among
the knights,
And Gawain sware, and louder than
the rest."

Then spake the monk Ambrosius,
asking him,
"What said the King? Did Arthur
take the vow?"

"Nay, for my lord," said Percivale,
"the king,
Was not in hall: for early that same
day,
Scaped thro' a cavern from a bandit
hold,
An outraged maiden sprang into the
hall
Crying on help: for all her shining
hair
Was smear'd with earth, and either
milky ann
Red-rent with books of bramble, and
all she wore
Torn as a sail that leaves the rope is
torn
In tempest: so the king arose and
went
To smock the scandalous hive of those
wild bees
That made such honey in his realm.
Howbeit
Some little of this marvel he too saw,
Returning o'er the plain that then
began
To darken under Camelot; whence the
king
Look'd up, calling aloud, 'Lo there!
the roofs
Of our great hall are rolled in thunder-
smoke!
Pray Heaven, they be not smitten by
the bolt.'
For dear to Arthur was that hall of
ours,
As having there so oft with all his
knights
Feasted, and as the stateliest under
heaven.



"O brother, had you known our mighty hall,
Which Merlin built for Arthur long ago!
For all the sacred mount of Camelot,
And all the dim rich city, roof by roof,
Tower after tower, spire beyond spire,
By grove, and garden-lawn, and rushing brook,
Climbs to the mighty hall that Merlin built.
And four great zones of sculpture, set betwixt
With many a mystic symbol, gird the hall:
And in the lowest beasts are slaying men,
And in the second men are slaying beasts,
And on the third are warriors, perfect men,
And on the fourth are men with growing wings,
And over all one statue in the mould
Of Arthur, made by Merlin, with a crown,
And peak'd wings pointed to the Northern Star.
And eastward fronts the statue, and the crown
And both the wings are made of gold, and flame
At sunrise till the people in far fields,
Wasted so often by the heathen hordes,
Behold it, crying, 'We have still a king.'

"And, brother, had you known our hall within,
Broader and higher than any in all the lands!
Where twelve great windows blazon Arthur's war.
And all the light that falls upon the board
Streams thro' the twelve great battles of our King.
Nay, one there is, and at the eastern end,
Wealthy with wandering lines of mount and mere,
Where Arthur finds the brand, Excalibur.
And also one to the west, and counter to it,
And blank: and who shall blazon it? when and how?—
O there perchance, when all our wars are done,
The brand Excalibur will be cast away.

"So to this hall full quickly rode the King,
In horror lest the work by Merlin wrought,
Dreamlike, should on the sudden vanish, wrapt
In unremorseful folds of rolling fire.
And in he rode, and up I glanced, and saw

The golden dragon sparkling over all:
And many of those who burnt the hold,
their arms
Hack'd, and their foreheads grimed
with smoke, and sear'd,
Follow'd, and in among bright faces,
ours,
Full of the vision, prest: and then the King
Spake to me, being nearest, 'Percivale,'
(Because the hall was all in tumult—
some
Vowing, and some protesting), 'what is this?'

"O brother, when I told him what had chanced,
My sister's vision, and the rest, his face
Darken'd, as I have seen it more than once,
When some brave deed seem'd to be done in vain,
Darken; and 'Woe is me, my knights,' he cried,
'Had I been here, ye had not sworn the vow.'
Bold was mine answer, 'Had thyself been here,
My King, thou wouldst have sworn.'
'Yea, yea,' said he,
'Art thou so bold and hast not seen the Grail?'

"Nay, Lord, I heard the sound, I saw the light,
But since I did not see the Holy Thing,
I swear a vow to follow it till I saw.'
'Then when he asked us, knight by knight, if any
Had seen it, all their answers were as one:
'Nay, Lord, and therefore have we sworn our vows.'

"Lo, now," said Arthur, 'have ye seen a cloud?
What go ye into the wilderness to see?'

"Then Galahad on the sudden, and in a voice
Shrilling along the hall to Arthur, call'd,
'But I, Sir Arthur, saw the Holy Grail,
I saw the Holy Grail and heard a cry—
O Galahad, and O Galahad, follow me.'

"Ah, Galahad, Galahad," said the King, 'for such
As thou art is the vision, not for these.
Thy holy nun and thou have seen a sign—
Holier is none, my Percivale, than she—
A sign to maim this Order which I made.
But you, that follow but the leader's bell'



(Brother, the King was hard upon his knights)
 'Taliessin is our fullest throat of song,
 And one hath sung and all the dumb will sing.
 Lancelot is Lancelot, and hath overborne
 Five knights at once, and every younger knight,
 Unproven, holds himself as Lancelot,
 Till overborne by one, he learns—and ye,
 What are ye? Galahads?—no, nor Percivales'
 (For thus it pleased the King to range me close
 After Sir Galahad); 'nay,' said he, 'hut men
 With strength and will to right the wrong'd, of power
 To lay the sudden heads of violence flat,
 Knights that in twelve great battles splash'd and dyed
 The strong White Horse in his own heathen blood—
 But one hath seen, and all the blind will see.
 Go, since your vows are sacred, being made:
 Yet—for ye know the cries of all my realm
 Pass thro' this hall—how often, O my knights,
 Your places being vacant at my side,
 This chance of noble deeds will come and go
 Unchallenged, while you follow wandering fires
 Lost in the quagmire? Many of you, yea most,
 Return no more: ye think I show myself
 Too dark a prophet: come now, let us meet
 The morrow morn once more in one full field
 Of gracious pastime, that once more the King,
 Before you leave him for this Quest, may count
 The yet-unbroken strength of all his knights,
 Rejoicing in that Order which he made.'

"So when the sun broke next from under ground,
 All the great table of our Arthur closed
 And clash'd in such a tourney and so full,
 So many lances broken—never yet
 Had Camelot seen the like, since Arthur came.
 And I myself and Galahad, for a strength
 Was in us from the vision, overthrew
 So many knights that all the people cried,
 And almost burst the barriers in their heat,
 Shouting 'Sir Galahad and Sir Percivale!'

"But when the next day brake from under ground—
 O brother, had you known our Camelot,
 Built by old kings, age after age, so old
 The King himself had fears that it would fall,
 So strange, and rich, and dim; for where the roofs
 Totter'd toward each other in the sky,
 Met foreheads all along the street of those
 Who watch'd us pass; and lower, and where the long
 Rich galleries, lady-laden, weigh'd the necks
 Of dragons clinging to the crazy walls,
 Thicker than drops from thunder, showers of flowers
 Fell as we past; and men and boys astride
 On wyvern, lion, dragon, griffin, swan,
 At all the corners, named us each by name,
 Calling 'God speed!' but in the street below
 The knights and ladies wept, and rich and poor
 Wept, and the King himself could hardly speak
 For grief, and in the middle street the Queen,
 Who rode by Lancelot, wail'd and shriek'd aloud,
 'This madness has come on us for our sins.'
 And then we reach'd the weirdly-sculptured gate,
 Where Arthur's wars were render'd mystically,
 And thence departed every one his way.

"And I was lifted up in heart, and thought
 Of all my late-shown prowess in the lists,
 How my strong lance had beaten down the knights,
 So many and famous names; and never yet
 Had heaven appear'd so blue, nor earth so green,
 For all my blood danced in me, and I knew
 That I should light upon the Holy Grail.

"Thereafter, the dark warning of our King,
 That most of us would follow wandering fires,
 Came like a driving gloom across my mind.
 Then every evil word I had spoken once,
 And every evil thought I had thought of old,
 And every evil deed I ever did,
 Awoke and cried, 'This Quest is not for thee.'



And lifting up mine eyes, I found myself

Alone, and in a land of sand and thorns,
And I was thirsty even unto death ;
And I, too, cried, ' This Quest is not for thee.'

" And on I rode, and when I thought my thirst

Would slay me, saw deep lawns, and then a brook,

With one sharp rapid, where the crisping white

Play'd ever back upon the sloping wave,

And took both ear and eye ; and o'er the brook

Were apple-trees, and apples by the brook

Fallen, and on the lawns. ' I will rest here,'

I said, ' I am not worthy of the Quest ; ' But even while I drank the brook, and ate

The goodly apples, all these things at once

Fell into dust, and I was left alone,

And thirsting, in a land of sand and thorns.

" And then behold a woman at a door Spinning ; and fair the house whereby

she sat,

And kind the woman's eyes and innocent,

And all her hearing gracious ; and she rose

Opening her arms to meet me, as who should say,

' Rest here ; ' but when I touched her, lo ! she, too,

Fell into dust, and nothing, and the house

Became no better than a broken shed, And in it a dead babe ; and also this

Fell into dust, and I was left alone

" And on I rode, and greater was my thirst.

Then flash'd a yellow gleam across the world,

And where it smote the ploughshare in the field,

The ploughman left his ploughing, and fell down

Before it ; where it glitter'd on her pail,

The milkmaid left her milking, and fell down

Before it, and I knew not why, but thought

' The sun is rising, ' tho' the sun had risen.

Then was I ware of one that on me moved

In golden armor with a crown of gold About a casque all jewels ; and his

horse

In golden armor jewell'd everywhere : And on the splendor came, flashing me blind ;

And seem'd to me the Lord of all the world,

Being so huge. But when I thought he meant

To crush me, moving on me, lo ! he, too,

Opened his arms to embrace me as he came,

And up I went and touch'd him, and he, too,

Fell into dust, and I was left alone

And wearying in a land of sand and thorns.

" And I rode on and found a mighty hill,

And on the top, a city wall'd : the spires Prick'd with incredible pinnacles into

heaven.

' And by the gateway stirr'd a crowd ; and these

Cried to me climbing, ' Welcome, Percivale !

Thou mightiest and thou purest among men !'

And glad was I and clomb, but found at top

No man, nor any voice. And thence I past

Far thro' a ruinous city, and I saw

That man had once dwelt there ; but there I found

Only one man of an exceeding age.

' Where is that goodly company,' said I,

' That so cried out upon me ?' and he had

Scarce any voice to answer, and yet gasp'd

' Whence and what art thou !' and even as he spoke

Fell into dust, and disappear'd, and I

Was left alone once more, and cried in grief,

' Lo, if I find the Holy Grail itself

And touch it, it will crumble into dust.'

" And thence I dropt into a holy vale,

Low as the hill was high, and where the vale

Was lowest, found a chapel and thereby

A holy hermit in a hermitage,

To whom I told my phantoms, and he said :

" ' O son, thou hast not true humility,

The highest virtue, mother of them all ;

For when the Lord of all things made Himself

Naked of glory for His mortal change,

" Take thou my robe," she said, " for all is thine,"

And all her form shone forth with sudden light

So that the angels were amazed, and she

Follow'd him down, and like a flying star

Led on the gray-hair'd wisdom of the east ;

But her thou hast not known : for what is this



Thou thoughtest of thy prowess and thy
sins?
Thou hast not loat thyself to save thy-
self
As Galahad.' When the hermit made
an end,
In silver armor suddenly Galahad
shone
Before us, and against the chapel door
Laid lance, and enter'd, and we knelt
in prayer.
And there the hermit slaked my burn-
ing thirst
And at the sacring of the mass I saw
The holy elements alone; but he:
'Saw ye no more? I, Galahad, saw the
Grail,
The Holy Grail, descend upon the
shrine:
I saw the fiery face as of a child
That smote itself into the bread, and
went;
And hither am I come; and never yet
Hath what thy sister taught me first to
see,
This Holy Thing, fail'd from my side,
nor come
Cover'd, but moving with me night and
day,
Fainter by day, but always in the night
Blood-red, and sliding down the black-
en'd marsh
Blood-red, and on the naked mountain
top
Blood-red, and in the sleeping mere be-
low
Blood-red. And in the strength of this
I rode,
Shattering all evil customs everywhere,
And past thro' Pagan realms, and made
them mine,
And clash'd with Pagan hordes, and
bore them down,
And brake thro' all, and in the strength
of this
Come victor. But my time is hard at
hand,
And hence I go; and one will crown me
king
Far in the spiritual city, and come thou,
too,
For thou shalt see the vision when I go.'

"While thus he spake, his eye, dwell-
ing on mine,
Drew me, with power upon me, till I
grew
One with him, to believe as he believ'd.
Then, when the day began to wane, we
went.

"There rose a hill that none but man
could climb,
Scarr'd with a hundred wintry water-
courses—
Storm at the top, and when we gain'd
it, storm
Round us and death; for every moment
glanced
His silver arms and gloom'd: so quick
and thick

The lightnings here and there to left
and right
Struck, till the dry old trunks about us,
dead,
Yea, rotten with a hundred years of
death,
Sprang into fire: and at the base we
found
On either hand, as far as eye could see,
A great black swamp and of an evil
smell,
Part black, part whiten'd with the bones
of men,
Not to be crost, save that some ancient
king
Had built a way, where, link'd with
many a bridge,
A thousand piers ran into the great sea.
And Galahad fled along them bridge by
bridge,
And every bridge as quickly as he crost
Sprang into fire and vanish'd, tho' I
yearn'd
To follow; and thrice above him all
the heavens
Open'd and blazed with thunder such
as seem'd
Shoutings of all the sons of God: and
first
At once I saw him far on the great sea,
In silver-shining armor starry-clear;
And o'er his head the holy vessel hung.
Clothed in white samite or a luminous
cloud.
And with exceeding awiftness ran the
boat
If boat it were—I saw not whence it
came.
And when the heavens open'd and
blazed again
Roaring, I saw him like a silver star—
And had he set the sail, or had the boat
Become a living creature clad with
wings?
And o'er his head the holy vessel hung
Redder than any rose, a joy to me,
For now I knew the veil had been with-
drawn.
Then in a moment when they blazed
again
Opening, I saw the least of little stars
Down on the waste, and straight beyond
the star
I saw the spiritual city and all her spires
And gateways in a glory like one pearl—
No larger, tho' the goal of all the saints—
Strike from the sea; and from the star
there shot
A rose-red sparkle to the city, and there
Dwelt, and I knew it was the Holy Grail,
Which never eyes on earth again shall
see.
Then fell the floods of heaven drown-
ing the deep.
And how my feet recross'd the death-
ful ridge
No memory in me lives; but that I
touch'd
The chapel-doors at dawn I know; and
thence



Taking my war-horse from the holy
man,
Glad that no phantom vext me more,
return'd
To whence I came, the gate of Arthur's
wars."

"O brother," ask'd Ambrosius,—
"for in sooth
These ancient books—and they would
win thee—teem,
Only I find not there this Holy Grail,
With miracles and marvels like to
these,
Not all unlike; which oftentime I read,
Who read but on my hreviary with ease,
Till my head swims; and then go forth
and pass
Down to the little thorpe that lies so
close,
And almost plaster'd like a martin's
nest
To these old walls—and mingle with
our folk;
And knowing every honest face of
theirs,
As well as ever shepherd knew his
sheep,
And every homely secret in their
hearts,
Delight myself with gossip and old
wives,
And ills and aches, and teething, ly-
ings-in,
And mirthful sayings, children of the
place,
That have no meaning half a league
away:
Or lulling random squabbles when they
rise,
Chafferings and chatterings at the mar-
ket-cross,
Rejoice, small man, in this small world
of mine,
Yea, even in their hens and in their
eggs—
O brother, saving this Sir Galahad
Came ye on none but phantoms in your
quest,
No man, no woman?"

Then, Sir Percivale:
"All men, to one so bound by such a
vow,
And women were as phantoms. O, my
brother,
Why wilt thou shame me to confess to
thee
How far I falter'd from my quest and
vow?
For after I had lain so many nights
A bedmate of the snail and eft and
snake,
In grass and burdock, I was changed to
wan
And meagre, and the vision had not
come,
And then I chanced upon a goodly town
With one great dwelling in the middle
of it;

Thither I made, and there was I dis-
arm'd
By maidens each as fair as any flower:
But when they led me into hall, behold
The Princess of that castle was the one,
Brother, and that one only, who had
ever
Made my heart leap; for when I moved
of old
A slender page about her father's hall.
And she a slender maiden, all my heart
Went after her with longing: yet we
twain
Had never kiss'd a kiss, or vow'd a
vow.
And now I came upon her once again,
And one had wedded her, and he was
dead,
And all his land and wealth and state
were hers.
And while I tarried, every day she set
A banquet richer than the day before
By me; for all her longing and her
will
Was toward me as of old; till one fair
morn,
I walking to and fro beside a stream
That flash'd across her orchard under-
neath
Her castle-walls, she stole upon my
walk,
And calling me the greatest of all
knights,
Embraced me, and so kiss'd me the
first time,
And gave herself and all her wealth to
me.
Then I remember'd Arthur's warning
word,
That most of us would follow wander-
ing fires,
And the Quest faded in my heart.
Anon,
The heads of all her people drew to
me,
With supplication both of knees and
tongue:
'We have heard of thee: thou art our
greatest knight,
Our Lady says it, and we well believe:
Wed thou our Lady, and rule over us,
And thou shalt be as Arthur in our
land.'
O me, my brother! but one night my
vow
Burnt me within, so that I rose and
fled,
But wail'd and wept, and hated mine
own self,
And ev'n the Holy Quest, and all but
her;
Then after I was join'd with Galahad
Cared not for her, nor anything upon
earth."

Then said the monk, "Poor men,
when yule is cold,
Must be content to sit by little fires.
And this am I, so that ye care for me
Ever so little; yea, and hlest be Heaven



That brought thee here to this poor
house of ours,
Where all the brethren are so hard, to
warm
My cold heart with a friend : but O the
pity
To find thine own first love once more
—to hold,
Hold her a wealthy bride within thine
arms,
Or all but hold, and then—cast her
aside,
Foregoing all her sweetness, like a
weed.
For we that want the warmth of double
life,
We that are plagued with dreams of
something sweet
Beyond all sweetness in a life so rich,—
Ah, blessed Lord, I speak too earthly-
wise,
Seeing I never stray'd beyond the cell,
But live like an old badger in his earth,
With earth about him everywhere, de-
spite
All fast and penance. Saw ye none
beside,
None of your knights?"

"Yea so," said Percivale :
"One night my pathway swerving east,
I saw
The pelican on the casque of our Sir
Bors
All in the middle of the rising moon :
And toward him spurr'd and hail'd
him, and he me,
And each made joy of either ; then he
ask'd,
'Where is he? hast thou seen him—
Lancelot?' 'Once,'
Said good Sir Bors, 'he dash'd across
me—mad,
And maddening what he rode : and
when I cried,
'Ridest thou then so hotly on a quest
So hotly?' Lancelot shouted, "Stay
me not!
I have been the sluggard, and I ride
apace,
For now there is a lion in the way."
So vanish'd.'

"Then Sir Bors had ridden on
Softly, and sorrowing for our Lancelot,
Because his former madness, once the
talk
And scandal of our table, had re-
turn'd ;
For Lancelot's kith and kin so worship
him
That ill to him is ill to them ; to Bors
Beyond the rest : he well had been
content
Not to have seen, so Lancelot might
have seen,
The Holy Cup of healing ; and, indeed,
Being so clouded with his grief and
love,
Small heart was his after the Holy
Quest :

If God would send the vision, well : if
not,
The Quest and he were in the hands of
heaven.

"And then, with small adventure
met, Sir Bors
Rode to the lonest tract of all the
realm,
And found a people there among their
crag,
Our race and blood, a remnant that
were left
Paynim amid their circles, and the
stones
They pitch up straight to heaven ; and
their wise men
Were strong in that old magic which
can trace
The wandering of the stars, and scoff'd
at him
At this high Quest as at a simple
thing :
Told him he follow'd—almost Arthur's
words—
A mocking fire : 'what other fire than
he,
Whereby the blood beats, and the
blossom blows,
And the sea rolls, and all the world is
warm'd?'
And when his answer chafed them, the
rough crowd,
Hearing he had a difference with their
priests,
Seized him, and bound and plunged
him into a cell
Of great piled stones ; and lying
bounden there
In darkness thro' innumerable hours
He heard the hollow-ringing heavens
sweep
Over him, till by miracle—what else?—
Heavy as it was, a great stone slipt and
fell,
Such as no wind could move : and
thro' the gap
Glimmer'd the streaming scud : then
came a night
Still as the day was loud ; and thro'
the gap
The seven clear stars of Arthur's Table
Round—
For, brother, so one night, because
they roll
Thro' such around in heaven, we named
the stars,
Rejoicing in ourselves and in our king—
And these, like bright eyes of familiar
friends,
In on him shone, 'And then to me, to
me,'
Said good Sir Bors, 'beyond all hopes
of mine,
Who scarce had pray'd or ask'd it for
myself—
Across the seven clear stars—O grace
to me—
In color like the fingers of a hand
Before a burning taper, the sweet Grail



Glided and past, and close upon it
 peal'd
 A sharp quick thunder.' Afterwards
 a maid,
 Who kept our holy faith among her kin
 In secret, entering, loosed and let him
 go."

To whom the monk: "And I remem-
 ber now
 That pelican on the casque. Sir Bors
 it was
 Who spake so low and sadly at our
 board;
 And mighty reverent at our grace was
 he:
 A square-set man and honest; and his
 eyes,
 An out-door sign of all the warmth
 within.
 Smiled with his lips—a smile beneath
 a cloud,
 But heaven had meant it for a sunny
 one:
 Ay, ay, Sir Bors, who else? But when
 ye reach'd
 The city, found ye all your knights re-
 turn'd,
 Or was there sooth in Arthur's pro-
 phecy,
 Tell me, and what said each, and what
 the King?"

Then answer'd Percivale: "And
 that can I,
 Brother, and truly; since the living
 words
 Of so great men as Lancelot and our
 King
 Pass not from door to door and out
 again,
 But sit within the house. O, when we
 reach'd
 The city, our horses stumbling as they
 trode
 On heaps of ruin, hornless unicorns,
 Crack'd basliisks, and splinter'd cock-
 atrices,
 And shatter'd talbots, which had left
 the stones
 Raw, that they fell from, brought us to
 the hall.

"And there sat Arthur on the daife-
 throne,
 And those that had gone out upon the
 Quest,
 Wasted and worn, and but a tithe of
 them,
 And those that had not, stood before
 the King.
 Who, when he saw me, rose, and bade
 me hail,
 Saying, 'A welfare in thine eye re-
 proves
 Our fear of some disastrous chance for
 thee
 On hill, or plain, at sea, or flooding
 ford.
 So fierce a gale made havoc here of
 late

Among the strange devices of our
 kings;
 Yea, shook this newer, stronger hall of
 ours,
 And from the statue Merlin moulded
 for us
 Half-wrench'd a golden wing; but now
 —the quest,
 This vision—hast thou seen the Holy
 Cup,
 That Joseph brought of old to Glaston-
 hury?"

"So when I told him all thyself hast
 heard,
 Ambrosius, and my fresh but fixt re-
 solve
 To pass away into the quiet life,
 He answer'd not, but, sharply turning,
 ask'd
 Of Gawain, 'Gawain, was this Quest
 for thee?'

"Nay, lord," said Gawain, 'not for
 such as I.
 Therefore I communed with a saintly
 man,
 Who made me sure the Quest was not
 for me;
 For I was much aweard of the
 Quest:
 But found a silk pavilion in a field,
 And merry maidens in it; and then
 this gale
 Tore my pavilion from the tenting-pin,
 And blew my merry maidens all about
 With all discomfort; yea, and but for
 this,
 My twelvemonth and a day were pleas-
 ant to me.'

"He ceased; and Arthur turn'd to
 whom at first
 He saw not, for Sir Bors, on entering,
 push'd
 Athwart the throng to Lancelot, caught
 his hand,
 Held it, and there, half-hidden by him,
 stood,
 Until the King espied him, saying to
 him,
 'Hail, Bors! if ever loyal man and
 true
 Could see it, thou hast seen the Grail;'
 and Bors,
 'Ask me not, for I may not speak of it,
 I saw it: and the tears were in his
 eyes."

"Then there remain'd but Lancelot,
 for the rest
 Spake hut of sundry perils in the
 storm;
 Perhaps, like him of Cana in Holy
 Writ,
 Our Arthur kept his best until the last;
 'Thou, too, my Lancelot,' ask'd the
 King, 'my friend,
 Our mightiest, hath this Quest avail'd
 for thee?'



"Our mightiest," answer'd Lance-
 lot, with a groan;
 O King!—and when he paused, methought I spied
 A dying fire of madness in his eyes—
 'O King, my friend, if friend of thine
 I be,
 Happier are those that welter in their
 sin,
 Swine in the mud, that cannot see for
 slime,
 Slime of the ditch : but in me lived a
 sin
 So strange, of such a kind, that all of
 pure,
 Noble, and knightly in me twined and
 clung
 Round that one sin, until the whole-
 some flower
 And poisonous grew together, each as
 each,
 Not to be pluck'd asunder; and when
 thy knights
 Swore, I swore with them only in the
 hope
 That could I touch or see the Holy
 Grail
 They might be pluck'd asunder. Then
 I spake
 To one most holy saint, who wept and
 said,
 That save they could be pluck'd asun-
 der, all
 My quest were but in vain; to whom I
 vow'd
 That I would work according as he
 will'd.
 And forth I went, and while I yearn'd
 and strove
 To tear the twain asunder in my heart,
 My madness came upon me as of old,
 And whipt me into waste fields far
 away;
 There was I beaten down by little men,
 Mean knights, to whom the moving of
 my sword
 And shadow of my spear had been enow
 To scare them from me on; and then
 I came
 All in my folly to the naked shore,
 Wide flats, where nothing but coarse
 grasses grew;
 But such a blast, my King, began to
 blow,
 So loud a blast along the shore and
 sea,
 Ye could not hear the waters for the
 blast,
 Tho' heapt in mounds and ridges all
 the sea
 Drove like a cataract, and all the sand
 Swept like a river, and the clouded
 heavens
 Were shaken with the motion and the
 sound.
 And blackening in the sea-foam sway'd
 a boat,
 Half-swallow'd in it, anchor'd with a
 chain:
 And in my madness to myself I said

"I will embark and I will lose myself
 And in the great sea wash away my sin.
 I burst the chain, I sprang into the
 boat.
 Seven days I drove along the dreary
 deep,
 And with me drove the moon and all
 the stars;
 And the wind fell, and on the seventh
 night
 I heard the shingle grinding in the
 surge,
 And felt the hoat shock earth, and
 looking up,
 Behold, the enchanted towers of Car-
 bonek,
 A castle like a rock upon a rock,
 With chasm-like portals open to the
 sea,
 And steps that met the breaker! there
 was none
 Stood near it but a lion on each side
 That kept the entry, and the moon was
 full.
 Then from the boat I leapt, and up the
 stairs.
 There drew my sword. With sudden-
 flaring manes
 Those two great beasts rose upright
 like a man,
 Each gript a shoulder, and I stood be-
 tween;
 And, when I would have smitten them,
 heard a voice,
 "Doubt not, go forward; if thou
 doubt, the beasts
 Will tear thee piecemeal." Then with
 violence
 The sword was dash'd from out my
 hand, and fell.
 And up into the sounding hall I past;
 But nothing in the sounding hall I saw
 No bench nor table, painting on the
 wall
 Or shield of knight; only the rounded
 moon
 Thro' the tall oriel on the rolling sea.
 But always in the quiet house I heard,
 Clear as a lark, high o'er me as a lark,
 A sweet voice singing in the topmost
 tower
 To the eastward: up I climb'd a thou-
 sand steps
 With pain: as in dream I seem'd to
 climb
 For ever: at the last I reach'd a door,
 A light was in the crannies, and I
 heard,
 "Glory and joy and honor to our Lord
 And to the Holy Vessel of the Grail."
 Then in my madness I essay'd the
 door:
 It gave; and thro' a stormy glare, a
 heat
 As from a seventimes-heated furnace,
 I,
 Blasted and burnt, and blinded as I
 was,
 With such a fierceness that I swoon'd
 away—



O, yet methought I saw the Holy Grail,
 All pall'd in crimson samite, and
 around
 Great angels, awful shapes, and wings
 and eyes.
 And but for all my madness and my
 sin,
 And then my swooning, I had sworn I
 saw
 That which I saw; but what I saw was
 veil'd
 And cover'd; and this quest was not
 for me.'

"So speaking, and here ceasing,
 Lancelot left
 The hall long silent, till Sir Gawain—
 nay,
 Brother, I need not tell thee foolish
 words,—
 A reckless and irreverent knight was
 he,
 Now bolden'd by the silence of his
 King,—
 Well, I will tell thee: 'O king, my
 liege,' he said,
 'Hath Gawain fail'd in any quest of
 thine?
 When have I stinted stroke in foughten
 field?
 But as for thine, my good friend, Per-
 civalo,
 Thy holy nun and thou have driven
 men mad,
 Yea, made our mightiest madder than
 our least.
 But by mine eyes and by mine ears I
 swear,
 I will be deafer than the blue-eyed cat,
 And thrice as blind as any noonday
 owl,
 The holy virgins in their ecstasies,
 Henceforward.'

"'Deafer,' said the blameless King,
 'Gawain, and blinder unto holy things
 Hope not to make thyself by idle vows,
 Being too blind to have desire to see.
 But if indeed there came a sign from
 heaven,
 Blessed are Bors, Lancelot, and Perci-
 valo,
 For these have seen according to their
 sight.
 For every fiery prophet in old times,
 And all the sacred madness of the
 bard,
 When God made music thro' them,
 could but speak
 His music by the framework and the
 chord;
 And as ye saw it ye have spoken truth.

"'Nay—but thou errest, Lancelot:
 never yet
 Could all of true and noble in knight
 and man
 Twine round one sin, whatever it might
 be,
 With such a closeness, but apart there
 grew.

Save that he were the swine thou
 spakest of,
 Some root of knighthood and pure
 nobleness:
 Whereto see thou, that it may bear its
 flower.

"'And spake I not too truly, O my
 knights?
 Was I too dark a prophet when I said
 To those who went upon the Holy
 Quest,
 That most of them would follow wan-
 dering fires,
 Lost in the quagmire?—lost to me and
 gone,
 And left me gazing at a barren board,
 And a lean Order—scarce return'd a
 tithe—
 And out of those to whom the vision
 came
 My greatest hardly will believe he
 saw;
 Another hath beheld it afar off,
 And leaving human wrongs to right
 themselves,
 Cares but to pass into the silent life.
 And one hath had the vision face to
 face,
 And now his chair desires him here in
 vain,
 However they may crown him other-
 where.

"And some among you held, that if
 the King
 Had seen the sight he would have
 sworn the vow:
 Not easily, seeing that the King must
 guard
 That which he rules, and is but as the
 hind
 To whom a space of land is given to
 plough,
 Who may not wander from the allotted
 field,
 Before his work be done; but, being
 done,
 Let visions of the night or of the day
 Come, as they will; and many a time
 they come,
 Until this earth he walks on seems
 not earth,
 This light that strikes his eyeball is
 not light,
 This air that smites his forehead is
 not air
 But vision—yea, his very hand and
 foot—
 In moments when he feels he cannot
 die,
 And knows himself no vision to him-
 self,
 Nor the high God a vision, nor that
 One
 Who rose again; ye have seen what ye
 have seen.'

"So spake the king: I knew not all
 he meant."



PELLEAS AND ETTARRE.

KING ARTHUR made new knights to
fill the gap
Left by the Holy Quest; and as he sat
In hall at old Caerleon, the high doors
Were softly sunder'd, and thro' these
a youth,
Pelleas, and the sweet smell of the
fields
Past, and the sunshine came along
with him.

"Make me thy knight, because I
know, Sir King,
All that belongs to knighthood, and I
love,"
Such was his cry; for having heard
the King
Had let proclaim a tournament—the
prize
A golden circlet and a knightly sword,
Full fain had Pelleas for his lady won
The golden circlet, for himself the
sword:
And there were those who knew him
near the King
And promised for him: and Arthur
made him knight.

And this new knight, Sir Pelleas of
the isles—
But lately come to his inheritance,
And lord of many a barren isle was
he—
Riding at noon, a day or twain before,
Across the forest call'd of Dean, to
find
Caerleon and the King, had felt the
sun
Beat like a strong knight on his helm,
and reel'd
Almost to falling from his horse; but
saw
Near him a mound of even-sloping
side,
Whereon a hundred stately beeches
grew,
And here and there great hollies under
them.
But for a mile all round was open
space,
And fern and heath: and slowly Pel-
leas drew
To that dim day, then binding his
good horse
To a tree, cast himself down; and as
he lay
At random looking over the brown
earth
Thro' that green-glooming twilight of
the grove,
It seem'd to Pelleas that the fern
without
Burnt as a living fire of emeralds,
So that his eyes were dazzled looking
at it.
Then o'er it crost the dimness of a
cloud

Floating, and once the shadow of a
bird
Flying, and then a fawn; and his eyes
closed.
And since he loved all maidens, but
no maid
In special, half-awake he whisper'd,
"Where?
O where? I love thee, tho' I know
thee not,
For fair thou art and pure as Guine-
vere,
And I will make thee with my spear
and sword
As famous—O my queen, my Guine-
vere,
For I will be thine Arthur when we
meet."

Suddenly waken'd with a sound of
talk
And laughter at the limit of the wood,
And glancing thro' the hoary holes, he
saw,
Strange as to some old prophet might
have seem'd
A vision hovering on a sea of fire,
Damsels in divers colors like the cloud
Of sunset and sunrise, and all of them
On horses, and the horses richly trapt
Breast-high in that bright line of
bracken stood:
And all the damsels talk'd confusedly,
And one was pointing this way, and
one that,
Because the way was lost.

And Pelleas rose,
And loosed his horse, and led him to
the light.
There she that seem'd the chief among
them said,
"In happy time behold our pilot-star!
Youth, we are damsels-errant, and we
ride,
Arm'd as ye see, to tilt against the
knights
There at Caerleon, but have lost our
way:
To right? to left? straightforward?
back again?
Which? tell us quickly."
And Pelleas gazing thought,
"Is Guinevere herself so beautiful?"
For large her violet eyes look'd, and
her bloom
A rosy dawn kindled in stainless
heavens,
And round her limbs, mature in
womanhood,
And slender was her hand and small
her shape,
And but for those large eyes, the
haunts of scorn,
She might have seem'd a toy to trifle
with,
And pass and care no more. But
while he gazed
The beauty of her flesh abash'd the
boy,



As tho' it were the beauty of her soul :
 For as the base man, judging of the
 good,
 Puts his own baseness in him by default
 Of will and nature, so did Pelleas lend
 All the young beauty of his own soul
 to hers,
 Believing her ; and when she spake to
 him,
 Stammer'd, and could not make her a
 reply.
 For out of the waste islands had he
 come,
 Where saving his own sisters he had
 known
 Scarce any but the women of his isles,
 Sough wives, that laugh'd and
 scream'd against the gulls,
 Makers of nets, and living from the
 sea.

Then with a slow smile turn'd the
 lady round
 And look'd upon her people ; and as
 when
 A stone is flung into some sleeping
 tarn,
 The circle widens till it lip the marge,
 Spread the slow smile thro' all her
 company.
 Three knights were thereamong ; and
 they too smiled,
 Scorning him ; for the lady was Et-
 tarre,
 And she was a great lady in her land.

Again she said, "O wild and of the
 woods,
 Knowest thou not the fashion of our
 speech ?
 Or have the Heavens but given thee a
 fair face,
 Lacking a tongue ?"

"O damsel," answer'd he,
 "I woke from dreams ; and coming
 out of gloom
 Was dazzled by the sudden light, and
 crave
 Pardon : but will ye to Caerleon ? I
 Go likewise : shall I lead you to the
 King ?"

"Lead then," she said ; and thro'
 the woods they went.
 And while they rode, the meaning in
 his eyes,
 His tenderness of manner, and chaste
 awe,
 His broken utterance and bashfulness,
 Were all a burthen to her, and in her
 heart
 She mutter'd, "I have lighted on a
 fool,
 Raw, yet so stale !" But since her
 mind was bent
 On hearing, after trumpet blown, her
 name
 And title, "Queen of Beauty," in the
 lists

Cried—and beholding him so strong,
 she thought
 That peradventure he will fight for
 me,
 And win the circlet : therefore flatter'd
 him,
 Being so gracious, that he wellnigh
 deem'd
 His wish by hers was echo'd ; and her
 knights
 And all her damsels too were gracious
 to him,
 For she was a great lady.

And when they reach'd
 Caerleon, ere they past to lodging,
 she,
 Taking his hand, "O the strong hand,"
 she said,
 "See ! look at mine ! but wilt thou
 fight for me,
 And win me this fine circlet, Pelleas,
 That I may love thee ?"

Then his helpless heart
 Leapt, and he cried "Ay ! wilt thou if
 I win ?"
 "Ay, that will I," she answer'd, and
 she laugh'd,
 And straitly nipt the hand, and flung
 it from her ;
 Then glanced askew at those three
 knights of hers,
 Till all her ladies laugh'd along with
 her.

"O happy world," thought Pelleas,
 "all, meseems,
 Are happy ; I the happiest of them
 all,"
 Nor slept that night for pleasure in
 his blood,
 And green wood-ways, and eyes among
 the leaves ;
 Then being on the morrow knighted,
 sware
 To love one only. And as he came
 away,
 The men who met him rounded on
 their heels
 And wonder'd after him, because his
 face
 Shone like the countenance of a priest
 of old
 Against the flame about a sacrifice
 Kindled by fire from heaven : so glad
 was he

Then Arthur made vast banquets,
 and strange knights
 From the four winds came in : and
 each one sat,
 Tho' served with choice from air, land,
 stream, and sea,
 Oft in mid-banquet measuring with
 his eyes
 His neighbor's make and might : and
 Pelleas look'd
 Noble among the noble, for he
 dream'd



His lady loved him, and he knew
himself
Loved of the King : and him his new-
made knight
Worshipt, whose lightest whisper
moved him more
Than all the ranged reasons of the
world.

Then blush'd and brake the morning
of the jousts,
And this was call'd "The Tournament
of Youth :"
For Arthur, loving his young knight,
withheld
His older and his mightier from the
lists,
That Pelleas might obtain his lady's
love,
According to her promise, and remain
Lord of the tourney. And Arthur
had the jousts
Down in the flat field by the shore of
Usk
Holden: the gilded parapets were
crown'd
With faces, and the great tower fill'd
with eyes
Up to the summit, and the trumpets
blew.
There all day long Sir Pelleas kept the
field
With honor : so by that strong hand
of his
The sword and golden circlet were
achieved.

Then rang the shout his lady loved :
the heat
Of pride and glory fired her face ; her
eye
Sparkled ; she caught the circlet from
his lance,
And there before the people crown'd
herself.
So for the last time she was gracious
to him.

Then at Caerleon for a space—her
look
Bright for all others, cloudier on her
knight—
Linger'd Ettarre : and seeing Pelleas
droop,
Said Guinevere, "We marvel at thee
much,
O damsel, wearing this unsunny face
To him who won thee glory !" And
she said,
"Had ye not held your Lancelot in
your bower,
My Queen, he had not won." Whereat
the Queen,
As one whose foot is bitten by an ant,
Glanced down upon her, turn'd and
went her way.

But after, when her damsels, and
herself,
And those three knights all set their
faces home,

Sir Pelleas follow'd. She that saw
him cried,
"Damsels—and yet I should be shamed
to say it—
I cannot bide Sir Baby. Keep him
back
Among yourselves. Would rather that
we had
Some rough old knight who knew the
worldly way,
Albeit grizzlier than a bear, to ride
And jest with : take him to you, keep
him off,
And pamper him with papmeat, if ye
will,
Old milky fables of the wolf and sheep,
Such as the wholesome mothers tell
their boys.
Nay should ye try him with a merry
one
To find his mettle, good : and if he fy
us,
Small matter ! let him." This her
damsels heard,
And mindful of her small and cruel
hand,
They, closing round him thro' the
journey home,
Acted her hest, and always from her
side
Restrain'd him with all manner of
device,
So that he could not come to speech
with her.
And when she gain'd her castle, up-
sprang the bridge,
Down rang the grate of iron thro' the
groove,
And he was left alone in open field.

"These be the ways of ladies," Pel-
leas thought,
"To those who love them, trials of
our faith.
Yea, let her prove me to the utter-
most,
For loyal to the uttermost am I."
So made his moan ; and, darkness fall-
ing, sought
A priory not far off, there lodged, but
rose
With morning every day, and, moist
or dry,
Full-arm'd upon his charger all day
long
Sat by the walls, and no one open'd to
him.

And this persistence turn'd her scorn
to wrath.
Then calling her three knights, she
charged them, "Out !
And drive him from the walls." And
out they came,
But Pelleas overthrew them as they
dash'd
Against him one by one ; and these
return'd,
But still he kept his watch beneath
the wall.



Thereon her wrath became a hate ;
 and once,
 A week beyond, while walking on the
 walls
 With her three knights, she pointed
 downward, "Look,
 He haunts me—I cannot breathe—be-
 seiges me ;
 Down ! strike him ! put my hats into
 your strokes,
 And drive him from my walls." And
 down they went,
 And Pelleas overthrew them one by
 one ;
 And from the tower above him cried
 Ettarre,
 " Bind him and bring him in."

He heard her voice ;
 Then let the strong hand, which had
 overthrown
 Her minion-knights, by those he over-
 threw
 Be bounden straight, and so they
 brought him in.

Then when he came before Ettarre,
 the sight
 Of her rich beauty made him at one
 glance
 More bondsman in his heart than in
 his bonds.
 Yet with good cheer he spake, " Be-
 hold me Lady,
 A prisoner and the vassal of thy will ;
 And if thou keep me in thy donjon
 here,
 Content am I so that I see thy face
 But once a day : for I have sworn my
 vows,
 And thou hast given thy promise, and
 I know
 That all these pains are trials of my
 faith,
 And that thyself when thou hast seen
 me strain'd
 And sifted to the utmost, wilt at
 length
 Yield me thy love and know me for
 thy knight."

Then she began to rail so bitterly,
 With all her damsels, he was stricken
 mute ;
 But when she mock'd his vows and the
 great King,
 Lighted on words : " For pity of thine
 own self,
 Peace, Lady, peace : is he not thine
 and mine ?"
 " Thou fool," she said, " I never heard
 his voice
 But long'd to break away. Unbind
 him now,
 And thrust him out of doors ; for save
 he be
 Fool to the midmost marrow of his
 bones,
 He will return no more." And those,
 her three,

Laugh'd, and unbound, and thrust
 him from the gate.

And after this, a week beyond, again
 She call'd them, saying, " There he
 watches yet,
 There like a dog before his master's
 door !
 Kick'd, he returns : do ye not hate
 him, ye ?
 Ye know yourselves : how can ye bide
 at peace,
 Affronted with his fulsome innocence?
 Are ye but creatures of the board and
 bed,
 No men to strike ? Fall on him all at
 once,
 And if ye slay him I reckon not : if ye
 fail,
 Give ye the slave mine order to be
 bound,
 Bind him as heretofore, and bring him
 in :
 It may be ye shall slay him in his
 bonds."

She spake ; and at her will they
 couch'd their spears,
 Threes against one : and Gawain pass-
 ing by,
 Bound upon solitary adventure, saw
 Low down beneath the shadow of
 those towers
 A villany, three to one : and thro' his
 heart
 The fire of honor and all noble deeds
 Flash'd, and he call'd, " I strike upon
 thy side—
 The catiffs !" " Nay," said Pelleas,
 " but forbear ;
 He needs no aid who doth his lady's
 will."

So Gawain, looking at the villany
 done,
 Forebore, but in his heat and eagerness
 Trembled and quiver'd, as the dog,
 withheld
 A moment from the vermin that he
 sees
 Before him, shivers, ere he springs
 and kills.

And Pelleas overthrew them, one to
 three ;
 And they rose up, and bound, and
 brought him in.
 Then first her anger, leaving Pelleas,
 burn'd
 Full on her knights in many an evil
 name
 Of craven, weakling, and thrice-beat-
 en hound :
 " Yet, take him, ye that scarce are fit
 to touch,
 Far less to bind, your victor, and
 thrust him out,
 And let who will release him from his
 bonds.
 And if he comes again"—there she
 brake short ;



And Pelleas answer'd, "Lady, for indeed
I loved you and I deem'd you beautiful,
I cannot brook to see your beauty marr'd
Thro' evil spite : and if ye love me not,
I cannot bear to dream you so forsworn :
I had liefer ye were worthy of my love,
Than to be loved again of you—farewell ;
And tho' ye kill my hope, not yet my love,
Vex not yourself : ye will not see me more."

While thus he spake, she gazed upon the man
Of princely bearing, tho' in bonds, and thought,
"Why have I push'd him from me ? this man loves,
If love there be : yet him I loved not.
Why ?
I deem'd him fool ? yea, so ? or that in him
A something—was it nobler than myself ?—
Seem'd my reproach ? He is not of my kind.
He could not love me, did he know me well.
Nay, let him go—and quickly." And her knights
Laugh'd not, but thrust him bounden out of door.

Forth sprang Gawain, and loosed him from his bonds,
And flung them o'er the walls ; and afterward,
Shaking his hands, as from a lazar's rag,
"Faith of my body," he said, "and art thou not—
Yea thou art he, whom late our Arthur made
Knight of his table ; yea and he that won
The circlet ? wherefore hast thou so defamed
Thy brotherhood in me and all the rest,
As let these catiffs on thee work their will ?"

And Pelleas answer'd, "O, their wills are hers
For whom I won the circlet ; and mine, hers,
Thus to be bounden, so to see her face,
Marr'd tho' it be with spite and mockery now,
Other than when I found her in the woods ;
And tho' she hath me bounden but in spite,
And all to flout me, when they bring me, in,

Let me be bounden, I shall see her face ;
Else must I die thro' mine unhappiness."

And Gawain answer'd kindly tho' in scorn,
"Why, let my lady bind me if she will,
And let my lady beat me if she will :
But an she send her delegate to thrall
These fighting hands of mine—Christ kill me then
But I will slice him handleless by the wrist,
And let my lady sear the stump for him,
Howl as he may. But hold me for your friend :
Come, ye know nothing : here I pledge my troth,
Yea, by the honor of the Table Round,
I will be leal to thee and work thy work,
And tame thy jailing princess to thine hand.
Lend me thine horse and arms, and I will say
That I have slain thee. She will let me in
To hear the manner of thy fight and fall ;
Then, when I come within her counsels, then
From prime to vespers will I chant thy praise
As prowtest knight and truest lover, more
Than any have sung the living, till she long
To have thee back in lusty life again,
Not to be bound, save by white bonds and warm,
Dearer than freedom. Wherefore now thy horse
And armor : let me go : be comforted :
Give me three days to melt her fancy, and hope
The third night hence will bring thee news of gold."

The Pelleas lent his horse and all his arms,
Saving the goodly sword, his prize, and took
Gawain's, and said, "Betray me not but help—
Art thou not he whom men call light-of-love ?"

"Ay," said Gawain, "for women be so light."
Then bounded forward to the castle walls,
And raised a bugle hanging from his neck,
And winded it, and that so musically
That all the old echoes hidden in the wall
Rang out like hollow woods at hunting-tide.



Up ran a score of dameels to the tower ;
 "Avaunt," they cried, "our lady loves thee not."
 But Gawain lifting up his visor said,
 Gawain am I, Gawain of Arthur's court,
 And I have slain this Pelleas whom ye hate ;
 Behold his horse and armor. Open gate,
 And I will make you merry."

And down they ran,
 Her damsels, crying to their lady,
 "Lo !
 Pelleas is dead — he told us — he hath
 His horse and armor : will ye let him in ?
 He slew him ! Gawain, Gawain of the court,
 Sir Gawain — there he waits below the wall,
 Blowing his bugle as who should say
 him nay."

And so, leave given, straight on thro' open door
 Rode Gawain, whom she greeted courteously.
 "Dead, is it so?" she ask'd. "Ay, ay,"
 said he,
 "And off in dying cried upon your name."
 "Pity on him," she answer'd, "a good knight,
 But never let me hide one hour at peace."
 "Ay," thought Gawain, "and ye be fair enow :
 But I to your dead man have given my troth,
 That whom ye loathe him will I make you love."

So those three days, aimless about the land,
 Lost in a doubt, Pelleas wandering
 Waited, until the third night brought a noon
 With promise of large light on woods and ways.

The night was hot : he could not rest, but rode
 Ere midnight to her walls, and bound his horse
 Hard by the gates. Wide open were the gates,
 And no watch kept ; and in thro' these he past,
 And heard but his own steps, and his own heart
 Beating, for nothing moved but his own self,
 And his own shadow. Then he crost the court,
 And saw the postern portal also wide
 Yawning ; and up a slope of garden, all

Of roses white and red, and wild ones
 mixt
 And overgrowing them, went on, and found,
 Here too, all hush'd below the mellow moon,
 Save that one rivulet from a tiny cave
 Came lightening downward, and so spilt itself
 Among the roses, and was lost again.

Then was he ware that white pavilions rose,
 Three from the bushes, gilden-peakt :
 in one,
 Red after revel, droned her lurdane knights
 Slumbering, and their three squires across their feet :
 In one, their malice on the placid lip
 Froz'n by sweet sleep, four of her damsels lay :
 And in the third, the circlet of the jousts
 Bound on her brow, were Gawain and Ettarre.

Back, as a hand that pushes thro' the leaf
 To find a nest and feels a snake, he drew :
 Back, as a coward slinks from what he fears
 To cope with, or a traitor proven, or hound
 Beaten, did Pelleas in an utter shame
 Creep with his shadow thro' the court again,
 Fingering at his sword-handle until he stood
 There on the castle-bridge once more, and thought,
 "I will go back, and slay them where they lie."

And so went back and seeing them yet in sleep
 Said, "Ye, that so dishallow the holy sleep,
 Your sleep is death," and drew the sword, and thought,
 "What ! slay a sleeping knight ? the King hath bound
 And sworn me to this brotherhood ;" again,
 "Alas that ever a knight should be so false."
 Then turn'd ; and so return'd, and groaning laid
 The naked sword athwart their naked throats,
 There left it, and them sleeping ; and she lay,
 The circlet of the tourney round her brows,
 And the sword of the tourney across her throat.

And forth he past, and mounting on his horse



Stared at her towers that, larger than
themselves
In their own darkness, throng'd into
the moon.
Then crush'd the saddle with his
thighs, and clench'd
His hands, and madden'd with himself
and moan'd :

“ Would they have risen against me
in their blood
At the last day ? I might have an-
swer'd them
Even before high God. O towers so
strong,
Huge, solid, would that even while I
gaze
The crack of earthquake shivering to
your base
Split you, and Hell burst up your
harlot roofs
Bellowing, and charr'd you thro' and
thro' within,
Black as the harlot's heart—hollow as
a skull !
Let the fierce east scream thro' your
eyelet-holes,
And whirl the dust of harlots round
and round
In dung and nettles ! hiss, snake— I
saw him there—
Let the fox bark, let the wolf yell.
Who yells
Here in the still sweet summer night,
but I—
I, the poor Pelleas whom she call'd her
fool ?
Fool, beast—he, she, or I ? myself
most fool ;
Beast too, as lacking human wit—dis-
graced,
Dishonor'd all for trial of true love—
Love ?— we he all alike : only the
king
Hath made us fools and liars. O noble
vows !
O great and sane and simple races of
brutes
That own no lust because they have no
law !
For why should I have loved her to
my shame ?
I loathe her, as I loved her to my
shame.
I never loved her, I but lusted for her
—Away—”

He dash'd the rowel into his horse,
And bounded forth and vanish'd thro'
the night.

Then she, that felt the cold touch on
her throat,
Awaking knew the sword, and turn'd
herself
To Gawain : “ Liar, for thou hast not
slain
This Pelleas ! here he stood and might
have slain
Me and thyself.” And he that tells
the tale

Says that her ever-veering fancy turn'd
To Pelleas, as the one true knight on
earth,
And only lover ; and thro' her love her
life
Wasted and pined, desiring him in
vain.

But he by wild and way, for half the
night,
And over hard and soft, striking the
sod
From out the soft, the spark from off
the hard,
Rode till the star above the wakening
sun,
Beside that tower where Percivale was
cowl'd,
Glanced from the rosy forehead of the
dawn.
For so the words were flash'd into his
heart
He knew not whence or wherefore :
“ O sweet star,
Pure on the virgin forehead of the
dawn.”
And there he would have wept, but
felt his eyes
Harder and drier than a fountain bed
In summer : thither came the village
girls
And linger'd talking, and they come
no more
Till the sweet heavens have fill'd it
from the heights
Again with living waters in the change
Of seasons : hard his eyes ; harder his
heart
Seem'd ; but so weary were his limbs,
that he,
Gasping, “ Of Arthur's hall am I, but
here,
Here let me rest and die,” cast himself
down,
And gulph'd his griefs in inmost sleep ;
so lay,
Till shaken by a dream, that Gawain
fired
The hall of Merlin, and the morning
star
Reel'd in the smoke, brake into flame,
and fell.

He woke, and being ware of some
one nigh,
Sent hands upon him, as to tear him,
crying
“ False ! and I held thee pure as Guin-
evere.”

But Percivale stood near him and
replied,
“ Am I but false as Guinevere is pure ?
Or art thou mazed with dreams ? or
being one
Of our free-spoken Table hast not
heard
That Lancelot”—there he check'd
himself and paused.

Then fared it with Sir Pelleas as
with one



Who gets a wound in battle, and the sword
That made it plunges thro' the wound
again,
And pricks it deeper : and he shrank
and wall'd,
"Is the Queen false?" and Percivale
was mute.
"Have any of our Round Table held
their vows?"
And Percivale made answer not a word.
"Is the king true?" "The King!"
said Percivale.
"Why then let men couple at once with
wives.
What! art thou mad?"

But Pelleas, leaping up,
Ran thro' the doors and vaulted on his
horse
And fled : small pity upon his horse
had he,
Or on himself, or any, and when he met
A cripple, one that held a hand for
alms—
Hunch'd as he was, and like an old
dwarf-elm
That turns its back on the salt blast,
the boy,
Paused not but overrode him, shouting
"False,
And false with Gawain!" and so left
him bruised
And batter'd, and fled on, and hill and
wood
Went ever streaming by him till the
gloom,
That follows on the turning of the
world,
Darken'd the common path: he twitch'd
the reins,
And made his beast that better knew
it, swerve
Now off it and now on; but when he saw
High up in heaven the hall that Merlin
built,
Blackening against the dead-green
stripes of even,
"Black nest of rats," he groan'd, "ye
build too high."

Not long thereafter from the city
gates
Issued Sir Lancelot riding airily,
Warm with a gracious parting from the
Queen,
Peace at his heart, and gazing at a star
And marvelling what it was : on whom
the boy,
Across the silent seeded meadow-grass
Borne, clash'd : and Lancelot, saying,
"What name hast thou
That ridest here so blindly and so
hard?"
"I have no name," he shouted, "a
scourge am I,
To lash the treasons of the Table
Round."
"Yea, but thy name?" "I have many
names," he cried :

"I am wrath and shame and hate and
evil fama,
And like a poisonous wind I pass to
blast
And blaze the crime of Lancelot and
the Queen."
"First over me," said Lancelot, "shalt
thou pass."
"Fight therefore," yell'd the other,
and either knight
Drew back a space, and when they
closed, at once
The weary steed of Pelleas floundering
fung
His rider, who called out from the dark
field,
"Thou art false as Hell : slay me : I
have no sword."
Then Lancelot, "Yea, between thy lips
—and sharp ;
But here will I disedge it by thy death."
"Slay then," he shriek'd, "my will is
to be slain."
And Lancelot, with his heel upon the
fall'n,
Rolling his eyes, a moment stood, then
spoke :
"Rise, weakling ; I am Lancelot ; say
thy say."

And Lancelot slowly rode his war-
horse back
To Camelot, and Sir Pelleas in brief
while
Caught his unbroken limbs from the
dark field,
And follow'd to the city. It chanced
that both
Brake into hall together, worn and pale.
There with her knights and dames was
Guinevere,
Full wonderingly she gazed on Lance-
lot
So soon return'd, and then on Pelleas,
him
Who had not greeted her, but cast him-
self
Down on a bench, hard-breathing.
"Have ye fought?"
She ask'd of Lancelot. "Ay, my
Queen," he said.
"And thou hast overthrown him?"
"Ay, my Queen."
Then she, turning to Pelleas, "O young
knight,
Hath the great heart of knight hood in
thee fail'd
So far thou canst not bide, unfrowardly,
A fall from him?" Then, for he an-
swer'd not,
"Or hast thou other griefs? If I, the
Queen,
May help them, loose thy tongue, and
let me know."
But Pelleas lifted up an eye so fierce
She quail'd ; and he, hissing "I have
no sword,"
Sprang from the door into the dark.
The Queen
Look'd hard upon her lover, he on her ;



And each foresaw the dolorous day to
 he :
 And all talk died, as in a grove all song
 Beneath the shadow of some bird of
 prey,
 Then a long silence came upon the hall,
 And Modred thought, "The time is
 hard at hand."

THE LAST TOURNAMENT.

DAGONET, the fool, whom Gawain in
 his moods
 Had made mock-knight of Arthur's Ta-
 ble Round,
 At Camelot, high above the yellowing
 woods,
 Danced like a wither'd leaf before the
 Hall.
 And toward him from the Hall, with
 harp in hand,
 And from the crown thereof a carca-
 net
 Of ruby swaying to and fro, the prize
 Of Tristram in the jousts of yesterday,
 Came Tristram, saying, "Why skip ye
 so, Sir Fool?"

For Arthur and Sir Lancelot riding
 once
 Far down beneath a winding wall of
 rock
 Heard a child wail. A stump of oak
 half-dead,
 From roots like some black coil of
 carven snakes
 Clutch'd at the crag, and started thro'
 mid-air

Bearing an eagle's nest : and thro' the
 tree
 Rush'd ever a rainy wind, and thro' the
 wind
 Pierced ever a child's cry : and crag
 and tree
 Sealing, Sir Lancelot from the peril-
 ous nest,
 This ruby necklace thrice around her
 neck,
 And all unscarr'd from beak or talon,
 brought
 A maiden habe; which Arthur pity-
 ing took,
 Then gave it to his Queen to rear; the
 Queen
 But coldly acquiescing, in her white
 arms
 Received, and after loved it tenderly,
 And named it Nestling; so forgot her-
 self
 A moment, and her cares; till that
 young life
 Being smitten in mid-heaven with
 mortal cold
 Past from her; and in time the carca-
 net
 Vext her with plaintive memories of
 the child :

So she, delivering it to Arthur, said,

"Take thou the jewels of this dead
 innocence,
 And make them, an thou wilt, a tour-
 ney prize."

To whom the King, "Peace to
 thine eagle-borne
 Dead nestling, and this honor after
 death,
 Following thy will ! but, O my Queen,
 I muse
 Why ye not wear on arm, or neck, or
 zone,
 Those diamonds that I rescued from
 the tarn,
 And Lancelot won, methought, for thee
 to wear."

"Would rather ye had let them
 fall," she cried,
 Plunge and he lost — ill-fated as they
 were,
 A bitterness to me ! — ye look amazed,
 Not knowing they were lost as soon as
 given —
 Slid from my hands, when I was lean-
 ing out
 Above the river — that unhappy child
 Past in her barge : but rosier luck will
 go
 With these rich jewels, seeing that
 they came
 Not from the skeleton of a brother-
 slayer,
 But the sweet body of a maiden habe.
 Perchance — who knows ? — the purest
 of thy knights
 May win them for the purest of my
 maids."

She ended, and the cry of a great
 jousts
 With trumpet-blowings ran on all the
 ways
 From Camelot in among the faded
 fields
 To furthest towers; and everywhere
 the knights
 Arm'd for a day of glory before the
 King.

But on the hither side of that loud
 morn
 Into the hall stagger'd, his visage
 ribb'd
 From ear to ear with dogwhip-weals,
 his nose
 Bridge-broken, one eye out, and one
 hand off,
 And one with shatter'd fingers dang-
 ling lame,
 A churl, to whom indignantly the
 King,
 "My churl, for whom Christ died,
 what evil beast
 Hath drawn his claws athwart thy
 face ? or fiend ?
 Man was it who marr'd Heaven's im-
 age in thee thus ?"



65 Then, sputtering thro' the hedge of
splinter'd teeth,
Yet strangers to the tongue, and with
blunt stump
Pitch-blacken'd sawing the air, said the
maim'd churl,
"He took them and he drave them
to his tower—
Some hold he was a table-knight of
thine—
70 A hundred goodly ones—the Red
Knight he—
Lord, I was tending swine, and the
Red Knight
Brake in upon me and drave them to
his tower;
And when I called upon thy name as
one
That doest right by gentle and by
churl,
71 Maim'd me and mau'd, and would
outright have slain,
Save that he sware me to a message,
saying—
'Tell thou the King and all his liars,
that I
Have founded my Round Table in the
North,
And whatsoever his own knights have
sworn
80 My knights have sworn the counter to
it—and say
My tower is full of harlots, like his
court,
But mine are worthier, seeing they
profess
To be none other than themselves—
and say
My knights are all adulterers like his
own,
9 But mine are truer, seeing they pro-
fess
To be none other; and say his hour is
come,
The heathen are upon him, his long
lance
Broken, and his Excalibur a straw.'"
Then Arthur turn'd to Kay the sen-
eschal,
90 "Take thou my churl, and tend him
curiously
Like a king's heir, till all his hurts be
whole.
The heathen—but that ever-climbing
wave,
Hurl'd back again so often in empty
foam
Hath lain for years at rest—and rene-
gades,
10 Thieves, bandits, leavings of confusion,
whom
The wholesome realm is purged of
otherwise,—
Friends, thro' your manhood and your
fealty,—now
Make their last head like Satan in the
North.
My younger knights, new-made, in
whom your flower

10
Waits to be solid fruit of golden deeds,
Move with me toward their quelling,
which achieved,
The loneliest ways are safe from shore
to shore.
But thou, Sir Lancelot, sitting in my
place
Enchair'd to-morrow, arbitrate the
field;
For wherefore shouldst thou care to
10 mingle with it,
Only to yield my Queen her own
again?
Speak, Lancelot, thou art silent: is it
well?"

There to Sir Lancelot answer'd, "It
is well:
Yet better if the King abide, and leave
The leading of his younger knights to
10 me.
Else, for the King has will'd it, it is
well."

Then Arthur rose and Lancelot fol-
low'd him,
And while they stood without the
doors, the King
Turn'd to him saying, "Is it then so
well?
Or mine the blame that oft I seem as
10 he
Of whom was written, 'a sound is in his
ears'—
The foot that loiters, bidden go,—the
glance
That only seems half-loyal to com-
mand,—
A manner somewhat fall'n from rever-
ence—
Or have I dream'd the bearing of our
10 knights
Tells of a manhood ever less and low-
er?
Or whence the fear lest this my realm,
uprear'd,
By noble deeds at one with noble vows,
From flat confusion and brute vio-
lences,
Reel back into the beast, and he no
more?"

He spoke, and taking all his younger
knights,
Down the slope city rode, and sharply
turn'd
North by the gate. In her high bower
the Queen,
Working a tapestry, lifted up her head,
Watch'd her lord pass, and knew not
10 that she sigh'd.
Then ran across her memory the
strange rhyme
Of bygone Merlin, "Where is he who
knows?
From the great deep to the great deep
he goes."

But when the morning of a tourna-
ment,



By these in earnest, those in mockery,
 call'd
 The Tournament of the Dead Inno-
 cence,
 Brake with a wet wind blowing, Lance-
 lot,
 Round whose sick head all night, like
 birds of prey,
 The words of Arthur flying shriek'd,
 arose,
 And down a streetway hung with folds
 of pure
 White samite, and by fountains run-
 ning wine,
 Where children sat in white with cups
 of gold,
 Moved to the lists, and there, with
 slow sad steps
 Ascending, fill'd his double-dragon'd
 chair.

He glanced and saw the stately gal-
 leries,
 Dame, damsel, each thro' worship of
 their Queen
 White-robed in honor of the stainless
 child,
 And some with scatter'd jewels, like a
 bank
 Of maiden snow mingled with sparks
 of fire.
 He lookt but once, and veil'd his eyes
 again.

The sudden trumpet sounded as in a
 dream
 To ears but half-awaked, then one low
 roll
 Of Autumn thunder, and the jousts
 began:
 And ever the wind blew, and yellow-
 ing leaf
 And gloom and gleam, and shower and
 shorn plume
 Went down it. Sighing wearily, as
 one
 Who sits and gazes on a faded fire,
 When all the goodlier guests are past
 away,
 Sat their great umpire, looking o'er
 the lists.
 He saw the laws that ruled the tourna-
 ment
 Broken, but spake not; once, a knight
 cast down
 Before his throne of arbitration cursed
 The dead babe and the follies of the
 King;
 And once the laces of a helmet crack'd,
 And show'd him, like a vermin in its
 hole,
 Modred, a narrow face: anon he heard
 The voice that billow'd round the bar-
 riers roar
 An ocean-sounding welcome to one
 knight.
 But newly-enter'd, taller than the rest,
 And armor'd all in forest green,
 whereon
 There tript a hundred tiny silver deer,

And wearing but a holly-spray for
 crest,
 With ever-scattering berries, and on
 shield
 A spear, a harp, a bugle—Tristram—
 late
 From overseas in Britany return'd,
 And marriage with a princess of that
 realm.
 Isolt the White—Sir Tristram of the
 Woods—
 Whom Lancelot knew, had held some-
 time with pain
 His own against him, and now yearn'd
 to shake
 The burthen off his heart in one full
 shock
 With Tristram ev'n to death: his
 strong hands gript
 And dinted the gilt dragons right and
 left,
 Until he groan'd for wrath—so many
 of those,
 That ware their ladies' colors on the
 casque,
 Drew from before Sir Tristram to the
 bounds,
 And there with gibes and flickering
 mockeries
 Stood, while he mutter'd, "Cravep
 crests! O shame!
 What faith have these in whom they
 aware to love?
 The glory of our Round Table is no
 more."

So Tristram won, and Lancelot gave,
 the gems,
 Not speaking other word than "Hast
 thou won?
 Art thou the purest, brother? See, the
 hand
 Wherewith thou takest this is red!"
 to whom
 Tristram, half plagued by Lancelot's
 languorous mood,
 Made answer, "Ay, but wherefore toss
 me this
 Like a dry bone cast to some hungry
 hound?
 Let be thy fair Queen's fantasy.
 Strength of heart
 And might of limb, but mainly use and
 skill,
 Are winners in this pastime of our
 King.
 My hand—belike the lance hath dript
 upon it—
 No blood of mine, I trow; but O chief
 knight,
 Right arm of Arthur in the battle-
 field,
 Great brother, thou nor I have made
 the world;
 Be happy in thy fair Queen as I in
 mine."

And Tristram round the gallery
 made his horse
 Caracole; then bow'd his homage,
 bluntly saying,



- "Fair damsels, each to him who worships each
Sole Queen of Beauty and of love, behold
This day my Queen of Beauty is not here."
210 Then most of these were mute, some anger'd, one
Murmuring "All courtesy is dead,"
and one,
"The glory of our Round Table is no more."
Then fell thick rain, plume droopt
and mantle clung,
And pettish cries awoke, and the wan
day
215 Went glooming down in wet and weariness:
But under her black brows a swarthy
dame
Laught shrilly, crying "Praise the patient
saints,
Our one white day of Innocence hath
past,
Tho' somewhat draggled at the skirt.
So be it.
220 The snowdrop only, flow'ring thro' the year,
Would make the world as blank as wintertide.
Come—let us comfort their sad eyes,
our Queen's
And Lancelot's, at this night's solemnity
With all the kindlier colors of the
field."
225 So dame and damsel glitter'd at the feast
Variously gay: for he that tells the tale
Likened them, saying "as when an hour of cold
Falls on the mountain in midsummer
snows,
And all the purple slopes of mountain
flowers
330 Pass under white, till the warm hour returns
With veer of wind, and all are flowers
again;"
So dame and damsel cast the simple
white,
And glowing in all colors, the live
grass,
Rose-campion, bluebell, kingcup, poppy,
glanced
235 About the revels, and with mirth so loud
Beyond all use, that, half-amazed, the
Queen,
And wroth at Tristram and the lawless
jousts,
Brake up their sports, then slowly to
her bower
Parted, and in her bosom pain was
lord.
40 And little Dagonet on the morrow
morn,
- High over all the yellowing Autumn-tide,
Danced like a wither'd leaf before the
hall.
Then Tristram saying, "Why skip ye
so, Sir Fool?"
Wheel'd round on either heel, Dagonet
replied,
"Belike for lack of wiser company; 24
Or being fool, and seeing too much wit
Makes the world rotten, why, belike I
skip
To know myself the wisest knight of
all."
"Ay, fool," said Tristram, "but 'tis
eating dry
To dance without a catch, a roundelay
To dance to." Then he twangled on
his harp,
And while he twangled little Dagonet
stood
Quiet as any water-sodden log
Stay'd in the wandering warble of a
brook;
But when the twangling ended, skipt 25
again:
Then being ask'd, "Why skipt ye not,
Sir fool?"
Made answer, "I had liefer twenty
years
Skip to the broken music of my brains
Than any broken music ye can make."
Then Tristram, waiting for the quip
to come,
"Good now, what music have I broken,
fool?"
And little Dagonet, skipping, "Arthur,
the king's;
For when thou playest that air with
Queen Isolt.
Thou makest broken music with thy
bride,
Her daintier namesake down in Brit- 26
tany—
And so thou breakest Arthur's music
too."
"Save for that broken music in thy
brains,
Sir Fool," said Tristram, "I would
break thy head.
Fool, I came late, the heathen wars
were o'er,
The life had flown, we sware but by
the shell— 27
I am but a fool to reason with a fool.
Come, thou art crabb'd and sour: but
loan me down,
Sir Dagonet, one of thy long asses' ears,
And hearken if my music be not true.
"Free love—free field—we love but 27:
while we may:
The woods are hush'd, their music is
no more:
The leaf is dead, the yearning past
away;
New leaf, new life—the days of frost
are o'er:
New life, new love to suit the newer
day:



80 New loves are sweet as those that went before :
Free love—free field—we love but while we may.'

"Ye might have moved slow-measure to my tune,
Not stood stockstill. I made it in the woods,
And found it ring as true as tested gold."

85 But Dagonet with one foot poised in his hand,
"Friend, did ye mark that fountain yesterday
Made to run wine?—but this had run itself
All out like a long life to a sour end—
And them that round it sat with golden cups

70 To hand the wine to whomsoever came—
The twelve small damocels white as Innocence,
In honor of poor Innocence the babe,
Who left the gems which Innocence the Queen
Lent to the King, and Innocence the King

5 Gave for a prize—and one of those white slips
Handed her cup and piped, the pretty one,
'Drink, drink, Sir Fool,' and there-upon I drank,
Spat—pish—the cup was gold, the draught was mud."

And Tristram, "Was it muddier than thy gibes ?

00 Is all the laughter gone dead out of thee?—
Not marking how the knighthood mock thee, fool—
'Fear God ; honor the king—his one true knight—
Sole follower of the vows'—for here be they

Who knew thee swine enow before I came,

75 Smuttier than blasted grain : but when the King
Had made thee fool, thy vanity so shot up
It frightened all free fool from out thy heart ;

Which left thee less than fool, and less than swine,
A naked aught—yet swine I hold thee still,

10 For I have flung thee pearls, and find thee swine."

And little Dagonet mincing with his feet,

"Knight, an ye fling those rubies round my neck
In lieu of hers, I'll hold thou hast some touch

Of music, since I care not for thy pearls.

Swine ? I have wallow'd, I have wash'd —the world

Is flesh and shadow—I have had my day.

The dirty nurse, Experience, in her kind

Hath foul'd me—an I wallow'd, then I wash'd—

I have had my day and my philosophies—

And thank the Lord I am King Arthur's fool.

Swine, say ye ? swine, goats, asses, rams, and geese

Troop'd round a Paynim harper oace, who thrumm'd

On such a wire as musically as thou
Some such fine song—but never a king's fool."

And Tristram, "Then were swine, goats, asses, geese

The wiser fools, seeing thy Paynim bard

Had such a mastery of his mystery
That he could harp his wife up out of Hell."

Then Dagonet, turning on the ball of his foot,

"And whither harp'st thou thine ? down ! and thyself

Down ! and two more : a helpful harper thou,

That harpest downward ! Dost thou know the star

We call the harp of Arthur up in heaven ?"

And Tristram, "Ay, Sir Fool, for when our King

Was victor wellnigh day by day, the knights,

Glorying in each new glory, set his name

High on all hills, and in the signs of heaven."

And Dagonet answer'd, "Ay, and when the land

Was freed, and the Queen false, ye set yourself

To babble about him, all to show your wit—

And whether he were king by courtesy, Or king by right—and so went harping

down
The black king's highway, got so far, and grew

So witty, that ye play'd at ducks and drakes

With Arthur's vows on the great lake of fire.

Tuwhoo ! do ye see it ? do ye see the star ?"

"Nay, fool," said Tristram, "not in open day."

And Dagonet, "Nay, nor will I see it and hear.



350 It makes a silent music up in heaven,
 And I, and Arthur and the angels
 hear,
 And then we skip," "Lo, fool," he
 said, "ye talk
 Fool's treason: is the king thy brother
 fool?"
 Then little Dagonet clapt his hands
 and shrill'd,
 "Ay, ay, my brother fool, the king of
 fools!"
 355 Conceits himself as God that he can
 make
 Figs out of thistles, silk from bristles,
 milk
 From burning spurge, honey from
 hornet-combs,
 And men from beasts. Long live the
 king of fools!"
 And down the city Dagonet danced
 away.
 360 But thro' the slowly-mellowing ave-
 nues
 And solitary passes of the wood
 Rode Tristram toward Lyonesse and
 the west.
 Before him fled the face of Queen Isolt
 With ruby-circled neck, but evermore
 Past, as a rustle or twitter in the wood
 Made dull his inner, keen his outer eye
 For all that walk'd, or crept, or
 perched, or flew.
 Anon the face, as, when a gust hath
 blown,
 Unruffling waters re-collect the shape
 Of one that in them sees himself, re-
 turn'd;
 But at the slot or fewmets of a deer,
 Or ev'n a fall'n feather, vanish'd again.
 So on for all that day from lawn to
 lawn
 Thro' many a league-long hower he
 rode. At length
 375 A lodge of intertwisted beechen-
 boughs
 Furze-cramm'd, and hracken-rooft, the
 which himself
 Built for a summer day with Queen
 Isolt
 Against a shower, dark in the golden
 grove
 Appearing, sent his fancy back to
 where
 380 She lived a moon in that low lodge
 with him;
 Till Mark her lord had past, the
 Cornish king,
 With six or seven, when Tristram was
 away,
 And snatch'd her thence; yet dreading
 worse than shame
 Her warrior Tristram, spake not any
 word,
 385 But bode his hour, devising wretched-
 ness.
 And now that desert lodge to Trist-
 ram lookt

So sweet, that, halting, in he past, and
 sauk
 Down on a drift of foliage random-
 blown:
 But could not rest for musing how to
 smooth
 And sleek his marriage over to the ³⁹
 Queen.
 Perchance in lone Tintagil far from
 all
 The tonguesters of the court she had
 not heard.
 But then what folly had sent him over-
 seas
 After she left him lonely here? a
 name?
 Was it the name of one in Brittany, ³⁹⁵
 Isolt, the daughter of the King?
 "Isolt
 Of the white hands" they call'd her:
 the sweet name
 Allured him first, and then the maid
 herself,
 Who served him well with those white
 hands of hers,
 And loved him well, until himself had ⁴⁰
 thought
 He loved her also, wedded easily,
 But left her all as easily, and return'd.
 The black-blue Irish hair and Irish
 eyes
 Had drawn him home — what marvel?
 then he laid
 His brows upon the drifted leaf and ⁴⁰
 dream'd.

He seem'd to pace the strand of Brit-
 tany
 Between Isolt of Britain and his
 bride,
 And show'd them both the ruby-chain,
 and both
 Began to struggle for it, till his Queen
 Graspt it so hard, that all her hand was ⁴¹⁰
 red.
 Then cried the Breton, "Look, her
 hand is red!
 These be no rubics, this is frozen blood,
 And melts within her hand — her hand
 is hot
 With ill desires, but this I gave thee,
 look,
 Is all as cool and white as any flower." ⁴¹⁵
 Follow'd a rush of eagle's wings and
 then
 A whimpering of the spirit of the
 child,
 Because the twain had spoil'd her car-
 canet.

He dream'd; but Arthur with a hun-
 dred spears
 Rode far, till o'er the illimitable reed, ⁴²
 And many a glancing plash and sal-
 lowy isle,
 The wide-wing'd sunset of the misty
 marsh
 Glared on a huge machicolated tower
 That stood with open doors, whereout
 was roll'd



15 A roar of riot, as from men secure
Amid their marshes, ruffians at their
ease
Among their harlot-brides, an evil
song,
"Lo there," said one of Arthur's youth,
for there,
High on a grim dead tree before the
tower,
170 A goodly brother of The Table Round
Swung by the neck : and on the boughs
a shield
Showing a shower of blood in a field
noir,
And there beside a horn, inflamed the
knights
At that dishonor done the gilded spur,
135 Till each would clash the shield, and
blow the horn.
But Arthur waved them back : alone
he rode.
Then at the dry harsh roar of the
great horn,
That sent the face of all the marsh
aloft
An ever upward-rushing storm and
cloud
740 Of shriek and plume, the Red Knight
heard, and all,
Even to tipmost lance and topmost
helm,
In blood-red armor sallying, how'd to
the King,
"The teeth of Hell flay bare and
gnash thee flat ! --
Lo ! art thou not that eunuch-hearted
King
145 Who fain had clipt free manhood from
the world--
The woman-worshipper ? Yea, God's
curse, and I !
Slain was the brother of my paramour
By a knight of thine, and I that heard
her whine
And snivel, being eunuch-hearted too,
150 Sware by the scorpion-worm that twists
in hell,
And stings itself to everlasting death,
To hang whatever knight of thine I
fought
And tumbled. Art thou King ? -- Look
to thy life !"

He ended : Arthur knew the voice ;
155 Wellnigh was helmet-hidden. and the
name
Went wandering somewhere darkling
in his mind.
And Arthur deign'd not use of word or
sword,
But let the drunkard, as he stretch'd
from horse
To strike him, overbalancing his bulk,
60 Down from the causeway heavily to
the swamp
Fall, as the crest of some slow-arching
wave
Besard in dead night along that table-
shore

Drops flat, and after the great waters
break
Whitening for half a league, and thin
themselves
Far over sands marbled with moon and 465
cloud,
From less and less to nothing ; thus he
fell
Head-heavy, while the knights, who
watch'd him, roar'd
And shouted and leapt down upon the
fall'n ;
There trampled out his face from being
know'n,
And sank his head in mire, and slid 470
themselves :
Nor heard the King for their own cries,
but sprang
Thro' open doors, and swording right
and left
Men, women, on their sodden faces,
hur'd
The tables over and the wines, and
slew
Till all the rafters rang with woman- 475
yells,
And all the pavement stream'd with
massacre :
Then, yell with yell echoing, they fired
the tower,
Which half that autumn night, like the
five North,
Red-pulsing up thro' Alioth and Alcor,
Made all above it, and a hundred meres 480
About it, as the water Moab saw
Come round by the East, and out be-
yond them flush'd
The long low dupe, and lazy-plunging
sea.

So all the ways were safe from shore
to shore,
But in the heart of Arthur pain was 485
lord.
Then out of Tristram waking the red
dream
Fled with a shout, and that low lodge
return'd,
Mid-forest, and the wind among the
houghs.
He whistled his good warhorse left to
graze
Among the forest greens, vaulted upon 490
him,
And rode beneath an ever-showering
leaf,
Till one lone woman, weeping near a
cross,
Stay'd him, " Why weep ye ? " " Lord,"
she said, " my man
Hath left me or is dead " ; whereon he
thought--
" What an she hate me now ? I would 495
not this.
What an she love me still ? I would
not that.
I know not what I would " -- but said
to her, --
" Yet weep not thou, lest, if thy mate
return



He find thy favor changed and love thee not" —

Then pressing day by day thro' Lyon-
esse

Last in a roky hollow, belling, heard
The hounds of Mark, and felt the good-
ly houuds

Yelp at his heart, but, turning, past and
gaiu'd

Tintagil, half in sea, and high on land,
A crown of towers.

Down in a casement sat,
A low sea-sunset glorying round her
hair

And glossy-throated grace, Isolt the
Queen.

And when she heard the feet of Tris-
tram grind

The spring stone that scaled about
her tower,

Flush'd, started, met him at the doors,
and there

Belted his body with her white em-
brace.

Crying aloud, "Not Mark — not Mark,
my soul!

The footstep flutter'd me at first: not
he:

Catlike thro' his own castle steals my
Mark,

But warrior-wise thou stridest through
his halls

Who hates thee, as I him — ev'n to the
death.

My soul, I felt my hatred for my
Mark

Quickeu within me, and knew that
thou wert igh."

To whom Sir Tristram smiling, "I am
here.

Let be thy Mark, seeing he is not thine."

And drawing somewhat backward
she replied,

"Can he be wrong'd who is not ev'n his
own,

But save for dread of thee had heaten
me,

Scratch'd, hitten, blinded, marr'd me
somehow — Mark?

What rights are his that dare not
strike for them?

Not lift a hand — not, tho' he found
me thus!

But hearken, have ye met him? hence
he went

To-day for three days' hunting — as he
said —

And so returns belike within an hour.
Mark's way, my soul! — but eat not

thou with him,
Because he hates thee even more than
fears;

Nor drink: and when thou passest any
wood

Close visor, lest an arrow from the
hush

Should leave me all alone with Mark
and hell.

My God, the measure of my hate for
Mark

Is as the measure of my love for thee."

So, pluck'd one way by hate and one
by love,

Drain'd of her force, again she sat, and
spake

To Tristram, as he knelt before her,
saying,

"O hunter, and O blower of the horn,
Harper, and thou hast been a rover
too,

For, ere I mated with my shambling
king,

Ye twain had fallen out about the
bride

Of one — his name is out of me — the
prize,

If prize she were — (what marvel —
she could see) —

Thine, friend; and ever since my
craven seeks

To wreck thee villainously: hut, O Sir
Knight,

What dame or damsel have ye kneeled
to last?"

And Tristram, "Last to my Queen
Paramount,

Here now to my Queen Paramount of
love,

And loveliness, ay, lovelier than when
first

Her light feet fell on our rough
Lyonesse,

Sailing from Ireland."

Softly laugh'd Isolt,
"Flatter me not, for hath not our great
Queen

My dote of beauty trebled?" and he
said,

"Her beauty is her beauty, and thine
thine

And thine is more to me — soft, gra-
cious, kind —

Save when thy Mark is kindled on thy
lips

Most gracious; but she, haughty, ev'n
to him,

Lancelot: for I have seen him wan
enow

To make one doubt if ever the great
Queen

Have yielded him her love."

To whom Isolt,
"Ah then, false hunter and false har-
per, thou

Who brakest thro' the scruple of my
bond,

Calling me thy white hind, and saying
to me

That Guinevere had sinned against the
highest,

And I — misyoked with such a want of
man —

That I could hardly sin against the
lowest."



He answered, "O my soul, be comforted!
 770 If this be sweet, to sin in leading-strings,
 If here be comfort, and if ours be sin,
 Crown'd warrant had we for the crowning sin
 That made us happy: but how ye greet me — fear
 And fault and doubt — no word of that fond tale —
 785 Thy deep heart-yearnings, thy sweet memories
 Of Tristram in that year he was away."

And, saddening on the sudden, spake Isolt,
 "I had forgotten all in my strong joy
 To see thee — yearnings? — ay! for, hour by hour,
 580 Here in the never-ended afternoon,
 O sweeter than all memories of thee,
 Deeper than any yearnings after thee
 Seem'd those far-rolling, westward-smiling seas,
 Watched from this tower. Isolt of Britain dash'd
 585 Before Isolt of Brittany on the strand,
 Would that have chill'd her bride-kiss? Wedded her?
 Fought in her father's battles? wounded there?
 The King was all fulfill'd with gratefulness,
 And she, my namesake of the hands, that heal'd
 590 Thy hurt and heart with unguent and caress —
 Well — can I wish her any huger wrong
 Than having known thee? her too hast thou left
 To pine and waste in those sweet memories?
 O were I not my Mark's, by whom all men
 595 Are noble, I should hate thee more than love."

And Tristram, fondling her light hands, replied,
 "Grace, Queen, for being loved: she loved me well.
 Did I love her? the name at least I loved.
 Isolt? — I fought his battles, for Isolt!
 600 The night was dark; the true star set. Isolt!
 The name was ruler of the dark — Isolt?
 Care not for her! patient, and prayerful, meek,
 Pale-blooded, she will yield herself to God."

And Isolt answer'd, "Yea, and why not I?
 605 Mine is the larger need, who am not meek,
 Pale-blooded, prayerful. Let me tell the new

Here one black, mute midsummer night
 I sat
 Lonely, but musing on thee, wondering where,
 Murmuring a light song I had heard thee sing,
 And once or twice I spake thy name aloud
 610 Then flash'd a levin-brand; and near me stood,
 In fuming sulphur blue and green, a fiend —
 Mark's way to steal behind one in the dark —
 For there was Mark: 'He has wedded her,' he said,
 Not said, but hissed it: then this crown
 615 of towers
 So shook to such a roar of all the sky,
 That here in utter dark I swoon'd away,
 And woke again in utter dark, and cried,
 'I will flee hence and give myself to God' —
 And thou wert lying in thy new leman's
 620 arms."

Then Tristram, ever dallying with her hand,
 "May God be with thee, sweet, when old and gray,
 And past desire!" a saying that anger'd her.
 "May God be with thee, sweet, when thou art old,
 And sweet no more to me!" I need
 625 Him now.
 For when had Lancelot utter'd aught so gross
 Ev'n to the swineherd's malkin in the mast?
 The greater man, the greater courtesy. But thou, thro' ever harrying thy wild beasts —
 Save that to touch a harp, tilt with a lance
 Becomes thee well — art grown wild beast thyself.
 How darest thou, if lover, push me even
 In fancy from thy side, and set me far
 In the gray distance, half a life away,
 Here to be loved no more? Unsay it,
 630 unswear!
 Flatter me rather, seeing me so weak,
 Broken with Mark and hate and solitude,
 Thy marriage and mine own, that I should suck
 Lies like sweet wines: lie to me: I believe.
 Will ye not lie? not swear, as there ye
 635 kneel,
 And solemnly as when ye sware to him,
 The man of men, our King — My God, the power
 Was once in vows when men believed the King!
 They lied not then, who sware, and thro' their vows



645 The King prevailing made his realm :—
I say,
Swear to me thou wilt love me ev'n
when old,
Gray-haired, and past desire, and in
despair."

Then Tristram, pacing moodily up
and down,
"Vows! did ye keep the vow ye made
to Mark
650 More than I mine? Lied, say ye?
Nay, but learnt,
The vow that binds too strictly snaps
itself—
My knighthood taught me this—ay,
being snapt—
We run more counter to the soul there-
of
Than had we never sworn. I swear no
more.
655 I swore to the great King, and am for-
sworn.
For once—ev'n to the height—I hon-
or'd him.
'Man, is he man at all?' methought,
when first
I rode from our rough Lyonesse, and
beheld
That victor of the Pagan throned in
hall—
660 His hair, a sun that ray'd from off a
brow
Like hillsnow high in heaven, the steel-
blue eyes,
The golden beard that clothed his lips
with light—
Moreover, that weird legend of his
birth,
With Merlin's mystic babble about his
end,
665 Amazed me; then, his foot was on a
stool
Shaped as a dragon; he seem'd to me
no man,
But Michaël trampling Satan; so I
sware,
Being amazed: but this went by—the
vows!
O ay—the wholesome madness of an
hour
680 They served their use, their time; for
every knight
Believed himself a greater than himself
And every follower eyed him as a God;
Till he, being lifted up beyond himself,
Did mightier deeds than elsewise he
had done,
And so the realm was made; but then
their vows—
First mainly thro' that sullyng of our
Queen—
Began to gall the knighthood, asking
whence
Had Arthur right to bind them to him-
self?
Dropt down from heaven? wash'd up
from out the deep?
685 They fail'd to trace him thro' the flesh
and blood

Of our old Kings: whence then? a
doubtful lord
To bind them by inviolable vows,
Which flesh and blood perforce would
violate:
For feel this arm of mine—the tide
within
Red with free chase and heather-
scented air,
Pulsing full man; can Arthur make 691
me pure
As any maiden child? Lock up my
tongue
From uttering freely what I freely
hear?
Bind me to one? The great world
laughs at it.
And worldling of the world am I, and
know
The ptarmigan that whitens ere his 701
hour
Woes his own end; we are not angels
here
Nor shall he: vows—I am woodman of
the woods,
And hear the garnet-headed yaffingale
Mock them: my soul, we love but while
we may;
And therefore is my love so large for 705
thee,
Seeing it is not bounded save by love."

Here ending, he moved toward her,
and she said,
"Good: an I turn'd away my love for
thee
To some one thrice as courteous as thy-
self—
For courtesy wins woman all as well 710
As valor may—but he that closes both
Is perfect, he is Lancelot—taller in-
deed,
Rosier, and comelier, thou—but say I
loved
This knightliest of all knights, and
cast thee back
Thine own small saw 'We love but 715
while we may,'
Well then, what answer?"

He that while she spake,
Mindful of what he brought to adorn
her with,
The jewels, had let one finger lightly
touch
The warm white apple of her throat,
replied,
"Press this a little closer, sweet, un- 720
til—
Coms, I am hunger'd and half-anger'd
—meat,
Wine, wine—and I will love thee to the
death,
And out beyond into the dream to
come."

So then, when both were brought to
full accord,
She rose, and set before him all he 725
will'd;



And after these had comforted the
blood
With meats and wines, and satiated
their hearts—
Now talking of their woodland para-
dise,
The deer, the dews, the fern, the
founts, the lawns;
738 Now mocking at the much ungainli-
ness,
And craven shifts, and long crane legs
of Mark—
Then Tristram laughing caught the
harp, and sang :

“Ay, ay, O ay—the winds that bend
the brier !
A star in heaven, a star within the
mere !

35- Ay, ay, O ay—a star was my desire,
And one was far apart, and one was
near :

Ay, ay, O ay—the winds that bow the
grass !
And one was water and one star was
fire,
And one will ever shine and one will
pass.

740 Ay, ay, O ay—the winds that move the
mere.”

Then in the light's last glimmer Tris-
tram show'd
And swung the ruby carcanet. She
cried,

“The collar of some order, which our
King
Hath newly founded, all for thee, my
soul,

45 For thee, to yield thee grace beyond
thy peers.”

“Not so, my Queen,” he said, “but
the red fruit
Grown on a magic oak-tree in mid-
heaven,
And won by Tristram as a tourney-
prize,
And hither brought by Tristram for his
last

350 Love-offering and peace-offering unto
thee.”

He rose, he turn'd, and flinging round
her neck,
Claspt it ; but while he bow'd himself
to lay
Warm kisses in the hollow of her
throat,
Out of the dark, just as the lips had
touch'd,

75 Behind him rose a shadow and a shriek—
“Mark's way,” said Mark, and clove
him thro' the brain.

That night came Arthur home, and
while he climb'd,
All in a death-dumb autumn-dripping
gloom,
The stairway to the hall, and look'd
and saw

The great Queen's bower was dark,—760
about his feet
A voice clung sobbing till he question'd
it,
“What art thou ?” and the voice about
his feet
Sent up an answer, sobbing, “I am thy
fool,
And I shall never make thee smile 764
again.”

GUINEVERE.

QUEEN GUINEVERE had fled the court,
and sat
There in the holy house at Almesbury
Weeping, none with her save a little
maid,
A novice : one low light betwixt them
burn'd
Blurr'd by the creeping mist, for all
abroad,
Beneath a moon unseen albeit at full,
The white mist, like a face-cloth to the
face,
Clung to the dead earth, and the land
was still.

For hither had she fled, her cause of
flight
Sir Modred ; he that like a subtle beast
Lay couchant with his eyes upon the
throne,
Ready to spring, waiting a chance : for
this,
He chill'd the popular praises of the
King
With silent smiles of slow disparage-
ment ;
And tamper'd with the Lords of the
White Horse,
Heathen, the brood by Hengist left ;
and sought
To make disruption in the Table
Round
Of Arthur and to splinter it into feuds
Serving his traitorous end ; and all his
aims
Were sharpen'd by strong hate for v
Lancelot.

For thus it chanced one morn when
all the court,
Green-suited, but with plumes that
mock'd the may,
Had been, their wont, a-maying and
return'd,
That Modred still in green, all ear and
eye,
Climb'd to the high top of the garden-
wall
To spy some secret scandal if he might,
And saw the Queen who sat betwixt
her best
Enid, and lissome Vivien, of her court
The wilkest and the worst ; and more
than this
He saw not, for Sir Lancelot passing
by



Spied where he couch'd, and as the
gardener's hand
Picks from the colewort a green cater-
pillar,
So from the high wall and the flowering
grove
Of grasses Lancelot pluck'd him by the
heel,
And cast him as a worm upon the way;
But when he knew the Prince tho'
marr'd with dust,
He, reverencing king's blood in a bad
man,
Made such excuses as he might, and
these
Full knightly without scorn; for in
those days
No knight of Arthur's noblest dealt in
scorn;
But, if a man were halt or hunch'd, in
him
By those whom God had made full-
limb'd and tall,
Scorn was allow'd as part of his defect,
And he was answer'd softly by the
King
And all his Table. So Sir Lancelot help
To raise the Prince, who rising twice
or thrice
Full sharply smote his knees, and
smiled, and went:
But, ever after, the small violence
done
Rankled in him and ruffled all his
heart,
As the sharp wind that ruffles all day
long
A little bitter pool about a stone
On the bare coast.

But when Sir Lancelot told
This matter to the Queen, at first she
laugh'd
Lightly, to think of Modred's dusty
fall,
Then shudder'd, as the village wife
who cries
"I shudder, some one steps across my
grave;"
Then laugh'd again, but faintlier, for
indeed
She half-foresaw that he, the subtle
beast,
Would track her guilt until he found,
and hers
Would be for evermore a name of
scorn.
Henceforward rarely could she front
in Hall,
Or elsewhere, Modred's narrow foxy
face,
Heart-hiding smile, and gray persis-
tent eye:
Henceforward too, the Powers that
tend the soul,
To help it from the death that cannot
die,
And save it even in extremes, began
To vex and plague her. Many a time
for hours,

Beside the placid breatnings of the
King,
In the dead night, grim faces came and
went
Before her, or a vague spiritual fear—
Like to some doubtful noise of creaking
doors,
Heard by the watcher in a haunted
house,
That keeps the rust of murder on the
walls—
Held her awake: or if she slept, she
dream'd
An awful dream; for then she seem'd
to stand
On some vast plain before a setting
sun,
And from the sun there swiftly made at
her
A ghastly something, and its shadow
flew
Before it, till it touch'd her, and she
turn'd—
When lo! her own, that broadening
from her feet,
And blackening, swallow'd all the land,
and in it
Far cities burnt, and with a cry she
woke.
And all this trouble did not pass but
grew;
Till ev'n the clear face of the guileless
King,
And trustful courtesies of household
life,
Became her bane; and at the last she
said,
"O Lancelot, get thee hence to thine
own land,
For if thou tarry we shall meet again,
And if we meet again, some evil
chance
Will make the smouldering scandal
break and blaze
Before the people, and our lord the
King."
And Lancelot ever promised, but re-
main'd,
And still they met and met. Again she
said,
"O Lancelot, if thou love me get thee
hence."
And then they were agreed upon a
night
(When the good King should not be
there) to meet
And part for ever. Passion-pale they
met
And greeted: hands in hands, and eye
to eye,
Low on the border of her couch they
sat
Stammering and staring: it was their
last hour,
A madness of farewells. And Modred
brought
His creatures to the basement of the
tower
For testimony; and crying with full
voice



"Traitor, come out, ye are trapt at last," aroused

Lancelot, who rushing outward lion-like

Leapt on him, and hurl'd him headlong, and he fell

Stunn'd, and his creatures took and bare him off

And all was still : then she, " the end is come

And I am shamed for ever ;" and he said

" Mine be the shame ; mine was the sin : but rise,

And fly to my strong castle overseas : There will I hide thee, till my life shall end,

There hold thee with my life against the world."

She answer'd " Lancelot, wilt thou hold me so ?

Nay friend, for we have taken our farewells.

Would God, that thou couldst hide me from myself !

Mine is the shame, for I was wife, and thou

Unwedded ; yet rise now, and let us fly.

For I will draw me into sanctuary, And hide my doom." So Lancelot got

her horse, Set her thereon, and mounted on his own,

And then they rode to the divided way, There kiss'd, and parted weeping : for he past,

Love-loyal to the least wish of the Queen,

Back to his land ; but she to Almesbury

Fled all night long by glimmering waste and weald,

And heard the Spirits of the waste and weald

Moan as she fled, or thought she heard them moan :

And in herself she moaned " too late, too late !"

Till in the cold wind that foreruns the morn,

A blot in heaven, the Raven, flying high,

Croak'd, and she thought " he spies a field of death ;

For now the Heathen of the Northern Sea,

Lured by the crimes and frailties of the court,

Begin to slay the folk, and spoil the land."

And when she came to Almesbury she spake

There to the nuns, and said, mine enemies

Pursue me, but, O peaceful Sisterhood,

Receive, and yield me sanctuary, nor ask

Her name, to whom ye yield it, till her time

To tell you : " and her beauty, grace, and power

Wrought as a charm upon them, and they spared

To ask it. So the stately Queen abode

For many a week, unknown, among the nuns ;

Nor with them mix'd, nor told her name, nor sought,

Wrapt in her grief, for housel or for shrift,

But communed only with the little maid,

Who pleased her with a babbling heedlessness

Which often lured her from herself ; but now,

This night, a rumor wildly blown about Came, that Sir Modred had usurped

the realm, And leagued him with the heathen,

while the King Was waging war on Lancelot : then she thought,

" With what a hate the people and the King

Must hate me," and bow'd down upon her hands

Silent, until the little maid, who brook'd

No silence, brake it, uttering " late ! so late !

What hour, I wonder, now ?" and when she drew

No answer, by and by began to hum

An air the nuns had taught her ; " late, so late !"

Which when she heard, the Queen look'd up, and said,

" O maiden, if indeed ye list to sing, Sing, and unbind my heart that I may weep."

Whereat full willingly sang the little maid.

" Late, late so late ! and dark th. night and chill !

Late, late, so late ! but we can enter still.

Too late, too late ! ye cannot enter now.

" No light had we : for that we do repent ;

And learning this, the bridegroom will relent.

Too late, too late ! ye cannot enter now.

" No light ; so late : and dark and chill the night !

O let us in, that we may find the light ! Too late, too late : ye cannot enter now.

Have we not heard the bridegrooms is so sweet ?



O let us in, tho' late, to kiss his feet!
No, no, too late! ye cannot enter
now."

So sang the novice, while full passionately,
Her head upon her hands, remembering
Her thought when first she came, wept
the sad Queen.
Then said the little novice prattling to
her.

"O pray you, noble lady, weep no
more:
But let my words, the words of one so
small,
Who knowing nothing knows but to
obey,
And if I do not there is penance given—
Comfort your sorrows; for they do not
flow
From evil done; right sure am I of
that,
Who see your tender grace and statel-
iness.
But weigh your sorrows with our lord
the King's,
And weighing find them less; for gone
is he
To wage grim war against Sir Lancelot
there,
Round that strong castle where he holds
the Queen;
And Modred whom he left in charge of
all,
The traitor—Ah sweet lady, the King's
grief
For his own self, and his own Queen,
and realm,
Must needs be thrice as great as any of
ours.
For me, I thank the saints, I am not
great.
For if there ever come a grief to me
I cry my cry in silence, and have done:
None knows it and my tears have
brought me good:
But even were the griefs of little ones
As great as those of great ones, yet this
grief
Is added to the griefs the great must
bear,
That howsoever much they may desire
Silence, they cannot weep behind a
cloud:
As even here they talk at Almesbury
About the good King and his wicked
Queen,
And were I such a King with such a
Queen,
Well might I wish to veil her wicked-
ness,
But were I such a King, it could not
be."

Then to her own sad heart mutter'd
the Queen.
"Will the child kill me with her inno-
cent talk?"
But openly she answer'd "must not I,

If this false traitor have displaced his
lord,
Grieve with the common grief of all
the realm?"

"Yea," said the maid, "this is all
woman's grief,
That *she* is woman, whose disloyal life
Hath wrought confusion in the Table
Round
Which good King Arthur founded,
years ago,
With signs and miracles and wonders,
there
At Camelot, ere the coming of the
Queen."

Then thought the Queen within her-
self again:
"Will the child kill me with her fool-
ish prate?"
But openly she spake and said to her;
"O little maid, shut in by nunnery
walls,
What canst thou know of Kings and
Tables Round,
Or what of signs and wonders, but the
signs
And simple miracles of thy nunnery?"

To whom the little novice garrulous-
ly,
"Yea, but I know: the land was full
of signs
And wonders ere the coming of the
Queen,
So said my father, and himself was
knight
Of the great Table—at the founding
of it;
And rode thereto from Lyonesse, and
he said
That as he rode, an hour or maybe
twain
After the sunset, down the coast, he
heard
Strange music, and he paused and
turning—there,
All down the lonely coast of Lyon-
nesse,
Each with a beacon-star upon his head,
And with a wild sea-light about his
feet,
He saw them—headland after head-
land flame
Far on into the rich heart of the west:
And in the light the white mermaid's
swam,
And strong man-breasted things stood
from the sea,
And sent a deep sea-voice thro' all the
land,
To which the little elves of chasm and
cleft
Made answer, sounding like a distant
horn.
So said my father—yea, and further-
more,
Next morning, while he past the dim-
lit woods,



Himself beheld three spirits mad with
 joy
 Come dashing down on a tall wayside
 flower,
 That shook beneath them, as the thistle
 shakes
 When three gray linnets wrangle for
 the seed:
 And still at evenings on before his
 horse
 The flickering fairy-circle wheel'd and
 broke
 Flying, and link'd again, and wheel'd
 and broke
 Flying, for all the land was full of life.
 And when at last he came to Camelot,
 A wreath of airy dancers hand-in-hand
 Swung round the lighted lantern of the
 hall;
 And in the hall itself was such a feast
 As never man had dream'd; for every
 knight
 Had whatsoever meat he long'd for
 served
 By hands unseen; and even as he said
 Down in the cellars merry bloated
 things
 Shoulder'd the spigot, straddling on
 the butts
 While the wine ran: so glad were
 spirits and men
 Before the coming of the sinful Queen."

Then spake the Queen and somewhat
 bitterly.

"Were they so glad? ill prophets
 were they all,
 Spirits and men: could none of them
 foresee,
 Not even thy wise father with his signs
 And wonders, what has fall'n upon the
 realm?"

To whom the novice garrulously
 again.

"Yea, one, a bard; of whom my father
 said,
 Full many a noble war-song had he
 sung,
 Ev'n in the presence of an enemy's
 fleet,
 Between the steep cliff and the coming
 wave;
 And many a mystic lay of life and
 death
 Had chanted on the smoky mountain-
 tops,
 When round him bent the spirits of the
 hills
 With all their dewy hair blown back
 like flame:
 So said my father—and that night the
 bard
 Sang Arthur's glorious wars, and sang
 the King
 As wellnigh more than man, and rail'd
 at those
 Who call'd him the false son of Gor-
 lois:
 For there was no man knew from
 whence he came;

But after tempest, when the long wave
 broke
 All down the thundering shores of
 Bude and Bos,
 There came a day as still as heaven,
 and then
 They found a naked child upon the
 sands
 Of dark Tintagil by the Cornish sea;
 And that was Arthur; and they fos-
 ter'd him
 Till he by miracle was approv'd king:
 And that his grave should be a mystery
 From all men, like his birth; and
 could he find
 A woman in her womanhood as great
 As he was in his manhood, then, he
 sang,
 The twain together well might change
 the world.
 But even in the middle of his song
 He falter'd, and his hand fell from the
 harp,
 And pale he turn'd, and reel'd, and
 would have fall'n,
 But that they stay'd him up; nor would
 he tell
 His vision; but what doubt that he fore-
 saw
 This evil work of Lancelot and the
 Queen?"

Then thought the Queen "lo! they
 have set her on,
 Our simple-seeming Abbess and her
 nuns,
 To play upon me," and bow'd her head
 nor spake.
 Whereat the novice crying, with clasp'd
 hands,
 Shame on her own garrulity garrulous-
 ly,
 Said the good nuns would check her
 gadding tongue
 Full often, "and, sweet lady, if I seem
 To vex an ear too sad to listen to me,
 Unmannerly, with prattling and the
 tales
 Which my good father told, check me
 too:
 Nor let me shame my father's memory,
 one
 Of noblest manners, tho' himself would
 say
 Sir Lancelot had the noblest; and he
 died,
 Kill'd in a tilt, come next, five sum-
 mers back,
 And left me; but of others who remain,
 And of the two first-famed for court-
 esy—
 And pray you check me if I ask amiss—
 But pray you, which had noblest, while
 you moved
 Among them, Lancelot or our lord the
 King?"

Then the pale Queen look'd up and
 answer'd her.
 "Sir Lancelot, as became a noble
 knight,



Was gracious to all ladies, and the same
 In open battle or the tilting-field
 Forbore his own advantage, and the
 King
 In open battle or the tilting-field
 Forbore his own advantage, and these
 two
 Were the most nobly-mannered men of
 all ;
 For manners are not idle, but the fruit
 Of loyal nature, and of noble mind."

"Yea," said the maid, "be manners
 such fair fruit ?
 Then Lancelot's needs must be a thou-
 sand-fold
 Less noble, being, as all rumor runs,
 The most disloyal friend in all the
 world."

To which a mournful answer made
 the Queen.
 "O closed about by narrowing nunnery-
 walls,
 What knowest thou of the world, and
 all its lights
 And shadows, all the wealth and all the
 woe ?
 If ever Lancelot, that most noble
 knight,
 Were for one hour less noble than him-
 self,
 Pray for him that he scape the doom of
 fire,
 And weep for her, who drew him to his
 doom."

"Yea," said the little novice, "I pray
 for both ;
 But I should all as soon believe that his,
 Sir Lancelot's, were as noble as the
 King's,
 As I could think, sweet lady, yours
 would be
 Such as they are, were you the sinful
 Queen."

So she, like many another babbler,
 hurt
 Whom she would soothe, and harm'd
 where she would heal ;
 For hers a sudden flush of wrathful
 heat
 Fired all the pale face of the Queen,
 who cried,
 "Such as thou art be never maiden
 more
 For ever ! thou their tool, set on to
 plague
 And play upon, and harry me, petty spy
 And traitress." When that storm of
 anger brake
 From Guinevere, aghast the maiden
 rose,
 White as her veil, and stood before the
 Queen
 As tremulously as foam upon the beach
 Stands in a wind, ready to break and
 fly,
 And when the Queen had added "get
 thee hence"

Fled frightened. Then that other left
 alone
 Sigh'd, and began to gather heart again,
 Saying in herself "the simple, fearful
 child
 Meant nothing, but my own too-fearful
 guilt
 Simpler than any child, betrays itself.
 But help me, heaven, for surely I re-
 pent.
 For what is true repentance but in
 thought—
 Not ev'n in inmost thought to think
 again
 The sins that made the past so pleasant
 to us :
 And I have sworn never to see him
 more,
 To see him more."

And ev'n in saying this,
 Her memory from old habits of the
 mind
 Went slipping back upon the golden
 days
 In which she saw him first, when Lance-
 lot came,
 Reputed the best knight and goodliest
 man,
 Ambassador, to lead her to his lord
 Arthur, and led her forth, and far
 ahead
 Of his and her retinue moving, they,
 Rapt in sweet talk or lively, all on love
 And sport and tilts and pleasure, (for
 the time
 Was maytime, and as yet no sin was
 dream'd,)
 Rode under groves that look'd a para-
 dise
 Of blossom, over sheets of hyacinth
 That seem'd the heavens upbreking
 thro' the earth,
 And on from hill to hill, and every day
 Beheld at noon in some delicious dale
 The silk pavilions of King Arthur
 raised
 For brief repast or afternoon repose
 By couriers gone before ; and on again,
 Till yet once more ere set of sun they
 saw
 The Dragon of the great Pendragon-
 ship,
 That crown'd the state pavilion of the
 King,
 Blazes by the rushing brook or silent
 well.

But when the Queen immersed in
 such a trance,
 And moving through the past uncon-
 ciously,
 Came to that point where first she saw
 the King
 Ride toward her from the city, sigh'd to
 find
 Her journey done, glanced at him,
 thought him cold,
 High, self-contain'd, and passionless,
 not like him,



“Not like my Lancelot”—while she
brooded thus
And grew half-guilty in her thoughts
again,
There rode an armed warrior to the
doors.
A murmuring whisper thro’ the nun-
nery ran,
Then on a sudden a cry, “the King.”
She sat
Stiff-stricken, listening; but when
armed feet
Thro’ the long gallery from the outer
doors
Rang coming, prone from off her seat
she fell,
And grovell’d with her face against the
floor:
There with her milkwhite arms and
shadowy hair
She made her face a darkness from the
King:
And in the darkness heard his armed
feet
Pause by her; then came silence, then
a voice,
Monotonous and hollow like a Ghost’s
Denouncing judgment, but tho’
changed the King’s.

“Liest thou here so low, the child of
one
I honor’d, happy, dead before thy
shame?
Well is it that no child is born of thee.
The children born of thee are sword
and fire,
Red ruin, and the breaking up of laws,
The craft of kindred and the Godless
hosts
Of heathen swarming o’er the North-
ern Sea.
Whom I, while yet Sir Lancelot, my
right arm,
The mightiest of my knights, abode
with me,
Have everywhere about this land of
Christ
In twelve great battles ruining over-
thrown.
And knowest thou now from whence I
come—from him,
From waging bitter war with him:
and he,
That did not shun to smite me in
worse way,
Had yet that grace of courtesy in him
left,
He spared to lift his hand against the
King
Who made him knight: but many a
knight was slain;
And many more, and all his kith and
kin
Clave to him, and abode in his own
land.
And many more when Modred raised
revolt,
Forgetful of their troth and fealty,
clave

To Modred, and a remnant stays with
me.
And of this remnant will I leave a
part,
Trus men who love me still, for whom
I live,
To guard thee in the wild hour coming
on,
Lest but a hair of this low head be
harm’d,
Fear not: thou shalt be guarded till
my death.
Howbeit I know, if ancient prophecies
Have err’d not, that I march to meet
my doom.
Thou hast not made my life so sweet
to me,
That I the King should greatly care to
live;
For thou hast spoilt the purpose of my
life.
Bear with me for the last time while I
show,
Ev’n for thy sake, the sin which thou
hast sinn’d.
For when the Roman left us, and their
law
Relax’d its hold upon us, and the ways
Were fill’d with rapine, here and there
a deed
Of prowess done redress’d a random
wrong.
But I was first of all the kings who
drew
The knighthood-errant of this realm
and all
The realms together under me, their
Head,
In that fair order of my Table Round,
A glorious company, the flower of
men,
To serve as model for the mighty
world,
And be the fair beginning of a time.
I made them lay their hands in mine
and swear
To reverence the King, as if he were
Their conscience, and their conscience
as their King,
To break the heathen and uphold the
Christ,
To ride abroad redressing human
wrongs,
To speak no slander, no, nor listen to
it,
To lead sweet lives in purest chastity,
To love one maiden only, cleave to
her,
And worship her by years of noble
deeds,
Until they won her; for indeed I
knew
Of no more subtle master under heaven
Than is the maiden passion for a maid,
Not only to keep down the base in
man,
But teach high thought, and amiable
words
And courtliness, and the desire of
fame,



And love of truth, and all that makes
a man.
And all this throve until I wedded
thee!
Believing, 'lo mine helpmate, one to
feel
My purpose and rejoicing in my joy.
Then came thy shameful sin with
Lancelot;
Then came the sin of Tristram and
Isolt;
Then others, following these my might-
est knights,
And drawing foul ensample from fair
names,
Sinn'd also, till the loathsome opposite
Of all my heart had destined did ob-
tain,
And all thro' thee! so that this life of
mine
I guard as God's high gift from scathe
and wrong,
Not greatly care to lose; but rather
think
How sad it were for Arthur, should he
live,
To sit once more within his lonely
hall,
And miss the wented number of my
knights,
And miss to hear high talk of noble
deeds
As in the golden days before thy sin.
For which of us, who might be left,
could speak
Of the pure heart, nor seem to glance
at thee?
And in thy bowers of Camelot or of
Usk
Thy shadow still would glide from
room to room,
And I should evermore be vext with
thee
In hanging robe or vacant ornament
Or ghostly footfall echoing on the
stair.
For think not, tho' thou wouldst not
love thy lord,
Thy lord has wholly lost his love for
thee.
I am not made of so slight elements.
Yet must I leave thee, woman, to thy
shame.
I hold that man the worst of public
foes
Who either for his own or children's
sake,
To save his blood from scandal, lets
the wife
Whom he knows false, abide and rule
the house:
For being thro' his cowardice allow'd
Her station, taken everywhere for
pure,
She like a new disease, unknown to
men,
Creeps, no precaution used, among the
crowd,
Makes wicked lightnings of her eyes,
and saps

The fealty of our friends, and stirs the
pulse
With devil's leaps, and poisons half
the young.
Worst of the worst were that man he
that reigns!
Better the King's waste hearth and
aching heart
Than thou reseated in thy place of
light,
The mockery of my people, and their
bane."
He paused, and in the pause she
crept an inch
Nearer, and laid her hands about his
feet.
Far off a solitary trumpet blew.
Then waiting by the doors the war-
horse neigh'd
As at a friend's voice, and he spake
again.

"Yet think not that I come to urge
thy crimes,
I did not come to curse thee, Guine-
vere,
I, whose vast pity almost makes me
die
To see thee, laying there thy golden
head,
My pride in happier summers, at my
feet.
The wrath which forced my thoughts
on that fierce law,
The doom of treason and the flaming
death,
(When first I learnt thee hidden here)
is past.
The pang—which while I weigh'd thy
heart with one
Too wholly true to dream untruth in
thee,
Made my tears burn—is also past, in
part.
And all is past, the sin is sinn'd, and I,
Lo! I forgive thee, as Eternal God
Forgives: do thou for thine own soul
the rest.
But how to take last leave of all I
loved?
O golden hair, with which I used to
play
Not knowing! O imperial-moulded
form,
And beauty such as never woman
wore,
Until it came a kingdom's curse with
thee—
I cannot touch thy lips, they are not
mine,
But Lancelot's: nay, they never were
the King's.
I cannot take thy hand; that too is
flesh,
And in the flesh thou hast sinn'd; and
mine own flesh,
Here looking down on thine polluted,
cries
'I loathe thee: ' yet not less, O Guine-
vere,



For I was ever virgin save for thee,
 My love thro' flesh hath wrought into
 my life
 So far, that my doom is, I love thee
 still.
 Let no man dream but that I love thee
 still,
 Perchance, and so thou purify thy
 soul,
 And so thou lean on our fair father
 Christ,
 Hereafter in that world where all are
 pure
 We two may meet before high God,
 and thou
 Wilt spring to me, and claim me thine,
 and know
 I am thine husband — not a smaller
 soul,
 Nor Lancelot, nor another. Leave me
 that,
 I charge thee, my last hope. Now must
 I hence.
 Thro' the thick night I hear the trump-
 et blow :
 They summon me their King to lead
 mine hosts
 Far down to that great battle in the
 west,
 Where I must strike against the man
 they call
 My sifter's son — no kin of mine, who
 leagues
 With lords of the White Horse, hea-
 then, and knights —
 Traitors — and strike him dead, and
 meet myself
 Death, or I know not what mysterious
 doom.
 And thou remaining here wilt learn
 the event :
 But hither shall I never come again,
 Never lie by thy side, see thee no more,
 Farewell !”

And while she grovell'd at his feet,
 She felt the King's breath wander o'er
 her neck,
 And in the darkness o'er her fallen
 head,
 Perceived the waving of his hands that
 blest.

Then, listening till those armed steps
 were gone,
 Rose the pale Queen, and in her an-
 guish found
 The casement : “ peradventure ” so she
 thought,
 “ If I might see his face, and not be
 seen.”
 And lo, he sat on horseback at the
 door !
 And near him the sad nuns with each
 a light
 Stood, and he gave them charge about
 the Queen,
 To guard and foster her for evermore.
 And while he spake to these his helm
 was lower'd,

To which for crest the golden dragon
 clung
 Of Britain ; so she did not see the face,
 Which then was as an angel's, but she
 saw,
 Wet with the mists and smitten by the
 lights,
 The Dragon of the great Pendragon-
 ship
 Blaze, making all the night a steam of
 fire.
 And even then he turn'd ; and more
 and more
 The moony vapor rolling round the
 King,
 Who seem'd the phantom of a Giant
 in it,
 Enwound him fold by fold, and made
 him gray
 And grayer, till himself became as
 mist
 Before her, moving ghostlike to his
 doom.

Then she stretch'd out her arms and
 cried aloud
 “ O Arthur ! ” there her voice brake
 suddenly,
 Then — as a stream that spouting from
 a cliff
 Falls in mid air, but gathering at the
 base
 Re-makes itself, and flashes down the
 vale —
 Went on in passionate utterance.

“ Gone — my lord !
 Gone thro' my sin to slay and to be
 slain !
 And he forgave me, and I could not
 speak.
 Farewell ? I should have answer'd his
 farewell.
 His mercy choked me. Gone, my lord
 the King,
 My own true lord ! how dare I call him
 mine ?
 The shadow of another cleaves to me,
 And makes me one pollution : he, the
 King,
 Call'd me polluted : shall I kill myself ?
 What help in that ? I cannot kill my
 sin,
 If soul be soul ; nor can I kill my
 shame ;
 No, nor by living can I live it down.
 The days will grow to weeks, the weeks
 to months,
 The months will add themselves and
 make the years,
 The years will roll into the centuries,
 And mine will ever be a name of scorn.
 I must not dwell on that defeat of
 fame.
 Let the world be ; that is but of the
 world.
 What else ? what hope ? I think there
 was a hope,
 Except he mock'd me when he spake
 of hope ;



His hope he call'd it; but he never
 mocks,
 For mockery is the fume of little
 hearts.
 And blessed be the King, who hath
 forgiven
 My wickedness to him, and left me
 hope
 That in mine own heart I can live down
 sin
 And be his mate hereafter in the
 heavens
 Before high God. Ah great and gentle
 lord,
 Who wast, as is the conscience of a
 saint
 Among his warring senses, to thy
 knights—
 To whom my false voluptuous pride,
 that took
 Full easily all impressions from below,
 Would not look up, or half-despised
 the height
 To which I would not or I could not
 climb—
 I thought I could not breathe in that
 fine air
 That pure severity of perfect light—
 I wanted warmth and color which I
 found
 In Lancelot—now I see thee what
 thou art,
 Thou art the highest and most human
 too,
 Not Lancelot, nor another. Is there
 none
 Will tell the King I love him tho' so
 late?
 Now—ere he goes to the great Battle?
 none:
 Myself must tell him in that purer life,
 But now it were too daring. Ah my
 God,
 What might I not have made of thy
 fair world,
 Had I but loved thy highest creature
 here?
 It was my duty to have loved the high-
 est;
 It surely was my profit had I known;
 It would have been my pleasure had I
 seen.
 We needs must love the highest when
 we see it,
 Not Lancelot, nor another."

Here her hand
 Grasp'd, made her veil her eyes: she
 look'd and saw
 The novice, weeping, suppliant, and
 said to her
 "Yea, little maid, for am I not
 forgiven?"
 Then glancing up beheld the holy nuns
 All round her, weeping; and her heart
 was loosed
 Within her, and she wept with these
 and said.

"Ye know me then, that wicked one,
 who broke

The vast design and purpose of the
 King.
 O shut me round with narrowing nun-
 nery-walls,
 Meek maidens, from the voices crying
 'shame.'
 I must not scorn myself: he loves me
 still.
 Let no one dream but that he loves me
 still.
 So let me, if you do not shudder at me
 Nor shun to call me sister, dwell with
 you;
 Wear black and white, and be a nun
 like you;
 Fast with your fasts, not feasting with
 your feasts;
 Grieve with your griefs, not grieving at
 your joys,
 But not rejoicing; mingle with your
 rites;
 Pray and be pray'd for; lie before your
 shrines;
 Do each low office of your holy house;
 Walk your dim cloister, and distribute
 dole
 To poor sick people, richer in his eyes
 Who ransom'd us, and haler too than I;
 And treat their loathsome hurts and
 heal mine own;
 And so wear out in almsdeed and in
 prayer
 The sombre close of that voluptuous
 day,
 Which wrought the ruin of my lord the
 King."

She said: they took her to them-
 selves; and she
 Still hoping, fearing "is it yet too
 late?"
 Dwelt with them, till in time their Ab-
 bess died.
 Then she, for her good deeds and her
 pure life,
 And for the power of ministration in
 her,
 And likewise for the high rank she had
 borne,
 Was chosen Abbess, there, an Abbess,
 lived
 For three brief years, and there, an
 Abbess, past
 To where beyond these voices there is
 peace.

THE PASSING OF ARTHUR.

That story which the bold Sir Bedi-
 vere,
 First made and latest left of all the
 knights,
 Told, when the man was no more than
 a voice
 In the white winter of his age, to those
 With whom he dwelt, new faces, other
 minds.



Before that last weird battle in the
 west
 There came on Arthur sleeping, Gawain
 kill'd
 In Lancelot's war, the ghost of Gawain
 blown
 Along a wandering wind, and past his
 ear
 Went shrilling "Hollow, hollow all de-
 light!
 Hail, king! to-morrow thou shalt pass
 away.
 Farewell! there is an isle of rest for
 thee.
 And I am blown along a wandering
 wind,
 And hollow, hollow, hollow all de-
 light."
 And fainter onward, like wild birds
 that change
 Their season in the night and wail their
 way
 From cloud to cloud, down the long
 wind the dream
 Shri'll'd; but in going mingled with dim
 cries
 Far in the moonlit haze among the hills,
 As of some lonely city sack'd by night,
 When all is lost, and wife and child
 with wail
 Pass to new lords; and Arthur woke
 and call'd,
 "Who spake? A dream. O light upon
 the wind.
 Thine, Gawain, was the voice—are
 these dim cries
 Thine? or doth all that haunts the
 waste and wild
 Mourn, knowing it will go along with
 me?"

Thus heard the bold Sir Bedivere and
 spake:
 "O me, my king, let pass whatever will,
 Elves, and the harmless glamour of the
 field;
 But in their stead thy name and glory
 cling
 To all high places like a golden cloud
 For ever; but as yet thou shalt not pass.
 Light was Gawain in life, and light in
 death
 Is Gawain, for the ghost is as the man;
 And care not thou for dreams from
 him, but rise—
 I hear the steps of Modred in the west,
 And with him many of thy people and
 knights
 Once thine, whom thou hast loved, but
 grosser grown
 Than heathen, spitting at their vows
 and thee.
 Right well in heart they know thee for
 the king.
 Arise, go forth and conquer as of old."

Then spake King Arthur to Sir Bedi-
 vere:
 "Far other is this battle in the west
 Whereto we move, than when we strove
 in youth,

And thrust the heathen from the Roman
 wall,
 And shook him thro' the north. Ill
 doom is mine
 To war against my people and my
 knights.
 The king who fights his people fights
 himself.
 And they my knights, who loved me
 once, the stroke
 That strikes them dead is as my death
 to me.
 Yet let us hence, and find or feel a way
 Thro' this blind haze, which ever since
 I saw
 One lying in the dust at Almesbury,
 Hath folded in the passes of the world."

Then rose the king and moved his
 host by night,
 And ever push'd Sir Modred, league by
 league,
 Back to the sunset bound of Lyon-
 nesse—
 A land of old upheaven from the abyss
 By fire, to sink into the abyss again;
 Where fragments of forgotten peoples
 dwelt,
 And the long mountains ended in a
 coast
 Of ever-shifting sand, and far away
 The phantom circle of a moaning sea.
 There the pursuer could pursue no
 more,
 And he that fled no further fly the
 king;
 And there, that day when the great
 light of heaven
 Burn'd at his lowest in the rolling year,
 On the waste sand by the waste sea
 they closed.
 Nor ever yet had Arthur fought a fight
 Like this last, dim, weird battle of the
 west.
 A death white mist slept over sand and
 sea:
 Whereof the chill, to him who breathed
 it, drew
 Down with his blood, till all his heart
 was cold
 With formless fear: and ev'n on Arthur
 fell
 Confusion, since he saw not whom he
 fought,
 For friend and foe were shadows in the
 mist,
 And friend slew friend not knowing
 whom he slew;
 And some had visions out of golden
 youth,
 And some beheld the faces of old ghosts
 Look in upon the battle; and in the mist
 Was many a noble deed, many a base,
 And chance and craft and strength in
 single fights,
 And ever and anon with host to host
 Shocks, and the splintering spear, the
 hard mail hewn,
 Shield-breakings, and the clash of
 brands, the crash



Of battle-axes on shatter'd helms, and shrieks
 After the Christ, of those who falling down
 Looked up for heaven, and only saw the mist;
 And shouts of heathen and the traitor knights,
 Oaths, insult, filth, and monstrous blasphemies,
 Sweat, writhings, anguish, laboring of the lungs
 In that close mist, and cryings for the light,
 Moans of the dying, and voices of the dead.

Last, as by some one death-bed after wail
 Of suffering, silence follows, or thro' death
 Or deathlike swoon, thus over all that shore,
 Save for some whisper of the seething seas,
 A dead hush fell; but when the dolorous day
 Grew drearier toward twilight falling, came
 A bitter wind, clear from the North, and blew
 The mist aside, and with that wind the tide
 Rose, and the pale king glanced across the field
 Of battle: but no man was moving there;
 Nor any cry of Christian heard thereon,
 Nor yet of heathen; only the wan wave
 Brake in among dead faces, to and fro
 Swaying the helpless hands, and up and down
 Tumbling the hollow helmets, of the fallen,
 And shiver'd brands that once had fought with Rome,
 And rolling far along the gloomy shores
 The voice of days of old and days to be

Then spake King Arthur to Sir Bedivere,
 And whiter than the mist that all day long
 Had held the field of battle was the King:

"Hearest thou this great voice that shakes the world,
 And wastes the narrow realm whereon we move,
 And beats upon the faces of the dead,
 My dead, as tho' they had not died for me?"

O Bedivere, for on my heart hath fall'n
 Confusion, till I know not what I am,
 Nor whence I am, nor whether I be king.
 Behold, I seem but king among the dead."

Then spake the bold Sir Bedivere:
 "My King,

King everywhere! and so the dead have kings,
 There also will I worship thee as king,
 Yet still thy life is whole, and still I live
 Who love thee; but who hates thee, he that brought
 The heathen back among us, yonder stands,
 Modred, unharm'd, the traitor of thine house."

Then spake the King: "My house hath been my doom.
 But call not thou this traitor of my house
 Who hath but dwelt beneath one roof with me.
 My house are rather they who swear my vows,
 Yea, even while they brake them, own'd me king.
 And well for thee, saying in my dark hour,
 When all the purport of my throne hath fail'd,
 That quick or dead thou holdest me for king.
 King am I, whatsoever be their cry;
 And one last act of kinghood shalt thou see
 Yet, ere I pass." And uttering this the king
 Made at the man: then Modred smote his liege
 Hard on that helm which many a heathen sword
 Had beaten thin; while Arthur at one blow,
 Striking the last stroke with Excalibur,
 Slew him, and all but slain himself, he fell.

So all day long the noise of battle roll'd
 Among the mountains by the winter sea;
 Until King Arthur's Table, man by man,
 Hall fall'n in Lyonnesse about their lord,
 King Arthur. Then, because his wound was deep,
 The bold Sir Bedivere uplifted him,
 And bore him to a chapel nigh the field,
 A broken chancel with a broken cross,
 That stood on a dark strait of barren land:
 On one side lay the Ocean, and on one
 Lay a great water, and the moon was full.

Then spake King Arthur to Sir Bedivere:
 "The sequel of to-day unsolders all
 The goodliest fellowship of famous knights
 Wherof this world holds record. Such a sleep



They sleep—the me I loved. I think
that we
Shall never more, at any future time,
Delight our souls with talk of knightly
deeds,
Walking about the gardens and the
halls
Of Camelot, as in the days that were.
I perish by this people which I made,—
Tho' Merlin sware that I should come
again
To rule once more; but let what will
be, be.
I am so deeply smitten thro' the helm
That without help I cannot last till
morn.
Thou therefore take my brand Excali-
bur,
Which was my pride: for thou remem-
berest how
In those old days, one summer noon,
an arm
Rose up from out the bosom of the lake,
Clothed in white samite, mystic, won-
ful,
Holding the sword—and how I row'd
across
And took it, and have worn it, like a
king;
And, wheresoever I am sung or told
In aftertime, this also shall be known:
But now delay not: take Excalibur,
And fling him far into the middle
mere:
Watch what thou seest, and lightly
bring me word."

To him replied the bold Sir Bedi-
vere:
"It is not meet, Sir King, to leave thee
thus,
Aidless, alone, and smitten thro' the
helm—
A little thing may harm a wounded
man;
Yet I thy hest will all perform at full,
Watch what I see, and lightly bring
thee word."

So saying from the ruin'd shrine he
stept,
And in the moon athwart the place of
tombs,
Where lay the mighty bones of ancient
men,
Old knights, and over them the sea-
windsang
Shrill, chill with flakes of foam. He,
stepping down
By zigzag paths, and juts of pointed
rock,
Came on the shining levels of the lake.

There drew he forth the brand Ex-
calibur,
And o'er him, drawing it, the winter
moon,
Brightening the skirts of a long cloud,
ran forth
And sparkled keen with frost against
the hilt:

For all the haft twinkled with diamond
sparks,
Myriads of topaz-lights, and jacinth-
work
Of subtlest jewelry. He gazed so long
That both his eyes were dazzled as he
stood,
This way and that dividing the swift
mind,
In act to throw: but at the last it
seem'd
Better to leave Excalibur concea'd
There in the many-knotted waterflags,
That whistled stiff and dry about the
marge.
So strode he back slow to the wounded
King.

Then spake King Arthur to Sir Bedi-
vere:
"Hast thou perform'd my mission
which I gave?
What is it thou has seen? or what hast
heard?"

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

To whom replied King Arthur, faint
and pale:
"Thou hast betray'd thy nature and
thy name,
Not rendering true answer, as be-
seem'd
Thy fealty, nor like a noble knight:
For surer sign had follow'd, either
hand,
Or voice, or else a motion of the mere.
This is a shameful thing for men to
lie.
Yet now, I charge thee, quickly go
again,
As thou art lief and dear, and do the
thing
I bade thee, watch, and lightly bring
me word."

Then went Sir Bedivere the second
time
Across the ridge, and paced beside the
mere,
Counting the dewy pebbles, fix'd in
thought;
But when he saw the wonder of the
hilt,
How curiously and strangely chased,
he smote
His palms together, and he cried
aloud:

"And if indeed I cast the brand
away,
Surely a precious thing, one worthy
note,
Should thus be lost for ever from the
earth,



Which might have pleased the eyes of many men.

What good should follow this, if this were done?

What harm, undone? Deep harm to disobey,

Seeing obedience is the bond of rule.

Were it well to obey then, if a king demand

An act unprofitable, against himself? The King is sick, and knows not what he does.

What record, or what relic of my lord Should be to aftertime, but empty breath

And rumors of a doubt? But were this kept,

Stored in some treasure-house of mighty kings,

Some one might show it at a joust of arms,

Saying, 'King Arthur's sword, Excalibur,

Wrought by the lonely maiden of the Lake.

Nine years she wrought it, sitting in the deeps

Upon the hidden bases of the hills.' So might some old man speak in the aftertime

To all the people, winning reverence. But now much honor and much fame were lost."

So spake he, clouded with his own conceit,

And hid Excalibur the second time, And so strode back slow to the wounded King.

Then spoke King Arthur, breathing heavily :

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

And answer made the bold Sir Bedivere :

"I heard the water lapping on the crag,

And the long ripple washing in the reeds."

To whom replied King Arthur, much in wrath :

"Ah, miserable and unkind, untrue, Unknightly, traitor-hearted! Woe is me!

Authority forgets a dying king, Laid widow'd of the power in his eye

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

For thou, the latest-left of all my knights

In whom should meet the offices of all, Thou wouldst betray me for the precious hilt ;

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

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

But, if thou spare to fling Excalibur,

I will arise and slay thee with my hands."

Then quickly rose Sir Bedivere, and ran,

And leaping down the ridges lightly, plunged

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

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

Made lightnings in the splendor of the moon,

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

Shot like a streamer of the northern morn,

Seen where the moving isles of winter shock

By night, with noises of the northern sea.

So flash'd and fell the brand Excalibur: But ere he dipt the surface, rose an arm

Clothed in white samite, mystic, wonderful,

And caught him by the hilt, and brandish'd him

Three times, and drew him under in the mere

And lightly went the other to the King.

Then spoke King Arthur, drawing thicker breath :

"Now see I by thine eyes that this is done.

Speak out : what is it thou hast heard, or seen?"

And answer made the bold Sir Bedivere :

"Sir King, I closed mine eyelids, lest the gems

Should blind my purpose, for I never saw,

Nor shall see, here or elsewhere, till I die,

Not tho' I live three lives of mortal men,

So great a miracle as yonder hilt. Then with both hands I flung him,

wheeling him ; But when I look'd again, behold an arm,

Clothed in white samite, mystic, wonderful,

That caught him by the hilt, and brandish'd him

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

And answer made King Arthur, breathing hard :

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

Make broad thy shoulders to receive my weight.

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





So saying, from the pavement he
half rose.
Slowly, with pain, reclining on his arm,
And looking wistfully with wide blue
eyes
As in a picture. Him Sir Bedivere
Remorsefully regarded thro' his tears,
And would have spoken, but he found
not words ;
Then took with care, and kneeling on
one knee,
O'er both his shoulders drew the lan-
guid hands,
And rising bore him thro' the place of
tombs.

But, as he walk'd, King Arthur panted
hard,
Like one that feels a nightmare on his
bed
When all the house is mute. So sigh'd
the King,
Muttering and murmuring at his ear
" Quick, quick !
I fear it is too late, and I shall die."
But the other swiftly strode from ridge
to ridge,
Cloth'd with his breath, and looking, as
he walk'd,
Larger than human on the frozen hills.
He heard the deep behind him, and a
cry
Before. His own thought drove him
like a goad.
Dry clash'd his harness in the icy
caves
And barren chasms, and all to left and
right
The bare black cliff clang'd round him,
as he based
His feet on juts of slippery crag that
rang
Sharp-smitten with the dint of armed
heels—
And on a sudden, lo ! the level lake,
And the long glories of the winter
moon.

Then saw they how there hove a
dusky barge,
Dark as a funeral scarf from stem to
stern,
Beneath them; and descending they
were ware
That all the decks were dense with
stately forms,
Black-stoled, black-hooded, like a
dream—by these
Three Queens with crowns of gold :
and from them rose
A cry that shiver'd to the tingling stars,
And, as it were one voice, and agony
Of lamentation, like a wind that shrills
All night in a waste land, where no
one comes,
Or hath come; since the making of the
world.

Then murmur'd Arthur, " Place me
in the barge ; "

So to the barge they came. There
those three Queens
Put forth their hands, and took the
King, and wept.
But she, that rose the tallest of them
all
And fairest, laid his head upon her lap,
And loosed the shatter'd casque, and
chafed his hands,
And call'd him by his name, complain-
ing loud,
And dropping bitter tears against his
brow
Striped with dark blood : for all his
face was white
And colorless, and like the wither'd
moon
Smote by the fresh beam of the spring-
ing east :
And all his greaves and cuisses dash'd
with drops
Of onset ; and the light and lustrous
curls—
That made his forehead like a rising
sun
High from the dais-throne—were
parch'd with dust ;
Or, cleft into points and hanging
loose,
Mix'd with the knightly growth that
fringed his lips.
So like a shatter'd column lay the
King ;
Not like that Arthur who, with lance
in rest,
From spur to plume a star of tourna-
ment,
Shot thro' the lists at Camelot, and
charged
Before the eyes of ladies and of kings.

Then loudly cried the bold Sir Bedi-
vere :
" Ah ! my Lord Arthur, whither shall
I go ?
Where shall I hide my forehead and
my eyes ?
For now I see the true old times are
dead,
When every morning brought a noble
chance,
And every chance brought out a noble
knight.
Such times have been not since the
light that led
The holy Elders with the gift of myrrh.
But now the whole Round Table is dis-
solved
Which was an image of the mighty
world ;
And I, the last, go forth companionless,
And the days darken round me, and
the years,
Among new men, strange faces, other
minds."

And slowly answered Arthur from
the barge :
" The old order changeth, yielding
place to new,



And God fulfils himself in many ways,
 Least one good custom should corrupt
 the world.

Comfort thyself : what comfort is in
 me ?

I have lived my wife, and that which
 I have done

May He within himself make pure !
 but thou,

If thou shouldst never see my face
 again,

Pray for my soul. More things are
 wrought by prayer

Than this world dreams of. Where-
 fore, let thy voice

Rise like a fountain for me night and
 day.

For what are men better than sheep or
 goats

That nourish a blind life within the
 brain,

If, knowing God, they lift not hands
 of prayer

Both for themselves and those who
 call them friend ?

For so the whole round earth is every
 way

Bound by gold chains about the feet
 of God.

But now farewell. I am going a long-
 way

With these thou seest—if indeed I go
 (For all my mind is clouded with a
 doubt) —

To the island-valley of Avilion ;
 Where falls not hail, or rain, or any
 snow,

Nor ever wind blows loudly ; but it
 lies

Deep-meadow'd, happy, fair with
 orchard lawns

And bowery hollows crown'd with
 summer sea,

Where I will heal me of my grievous
 wound."

So said he, and the barge with oar
 and sail

Moved from the brink, like some full-
 breasted swan

That, fluting a wild carol ere her
 death,

Ruffles her pure cold plume, and takes
 the flood

With swarthy webs. Long stood Sir
 Bedivere

Revolving many memories, till the hull
 Look'd one black dot against the verge
 of dawn,

And on the mere the wailing died
 away.

At length he groan'd, and turning
 slowly clomb

The last hardfootstep of that iron crag
 Thence mark'd the black hull moving
 yet and cried,

"He passes to be king among the dead
 And after healing of his grievous
 wound

He comes again ; but—if he come no
 more—

O me, be you dark Queens in yon black
 boat,

Who shriek'd and wail'd, the three
 whereat we gazed

On that high day, when, clothed with
 living light,

They stood before his throne in silence,
 friends

Of Arthur, who should help him at his
 need ?"

Then from the dawn it seem'd there
 came, but faint

As from beyond the limit of the world,
 Like the last echo born of a great cry,

Sounds, as if some fair city were one
 voice

Around a king returning from his
 wars.

Thereat once more he moved about,
 and clomb

E'en to the highest he could climb, and
 saw,

Straining his eyes beneath an arch of
 hand,

Or thought he saw, the speck that bare
 the king,

Down that long water opening on the
 deep

Somewhere far off, pass on, and on,
 and go

From less to less and vanish into light.
 And the new sun rose bringing the
 new year.

IN THE GARDEN AT SWAINSTON.

NIGHTINGALES warbled without,
 Within was weeping for thee :

Shadows of three dead men
 Walk'd in the walks with me,

Shadows of three dead men, and thou
 wast one of the three.

Nightingales sang in his woods :
 The Master was far away :

Nightingales warbled and sang
 Of a passion that lasts but a day :

Still in the house in his coffin the Prince
 of courtesy lay.

Two dead men have I known
 In courtesy like to thee :

Two dead men have I loved
 With a love that ever will be :

Three dead men have I loved, and thou
 art last of the three.

THE VOICE AND THE PEAK.

THE voice and the Peak
 Far over summit and lawn,

The lone glow and long roar
 Green-rushing from the rosy thrones of
 dawn !



All night have I heard the voice
Rave over the rocky bar,
But thou wert silent in heaven,
Above thee glided the star.

Hast thou no voice, O Peak,
That standest high above all ?
" I am the voice of the Peak,
I roar and rave for I fall.

" A thousand voices go
To North, South, East and West,
They leave the heights and are trou-
bled,
And moan and sink to their rest.

" The fields are fair beside them,
The chestnut towers in his bloom ;
But they—they feel the desire of the
deep—
Fall, and follow their doom.

" The deep has power on the height,
And the height has power on the deep ;
They are raised for ever and ever,
And sink again into sleep."

Not raised for ever and ever,
But when their cycle is o'er,
The valley, the voice, the peak, the
star,
Pass, and are found no more.

The Peak is high and flush'd
At his highest with sunrise fire ;
The peak is high, and the stars are high,
And the thought of a man is higher.

A voice below the voice,
And a height beyond the height
Our hearing is not hearing,
And our seeing is not sight.

The voice and the Peak
Far into heaven withdrawn,
The lone glow and the long roar
Green-rushing from the rosy thrones
of dawn !

TO THE QUEEN.

EPILOGUE TO THE IDYLS.

O LOYAL to the royal in thyself,
And loyal to thy land, as this to thee—
Bear witness, that rememberable day,
When, pale as yet, and fever-worn, the
Prince
Who scarce had pluck'd his flickering
life again
From half-way down the shadow of the
grave,
Past with thee thro' thy people and
their love,
And London roll'd one tide of joy thro'
all
Her trebled millions, and loud leagues
of man

And welcome ! witness, too, the silen-
cry,
The prayer of many a race and creed,
and clime—
Thunderless lightnings striking under
sea
From sunset and sunrise of all thy
realm,
And that true North, whereof we late-
ly heard
A strain to shame us " keep you to
yourselves :
So loyal is too costly ! friends—your
love
Is but a burden ; loose the bond, and
go."
Is this the tone of empire ? here the
faith
That made us rulers ? this, indeed, her
voice
And meaning, whom the roar of Hou-
goumont
Left mightiest of all peoples under
heaven ?
What shock has fool'd her since, that
she should speak
So feebly ? wealthier—wealthier—hour
by hour !
The voice of Britain, or a sinking land,
Some third-rate isle half-lost among
her seas ?
There rang her voice, when the full
city peal'd
Thee and thy Prince ! The loyal to their
crown
Are loyal to their own far sons, who
love
Our ocean-empire with her boundless
homes
For ever-broadening England, and her
throne
In our vast Orient, and one isle, one isle,
That knows not her own greatness : if
she knows
And dreads it we are fall'n.—But
thou, my Queen,
Not for itself, but thro' thy living love
For one to whom I made it o'er his
grave
Sacred, accept this old imperfect tale,
New-old, and shadowing Sense at war
with Soul
Rather than that gray king, whose
name, a ghost
Streams like a cloud, man-shaped, from
mountain peak,
And cleaves to cairn and cromlech
still : or him
Of Geoffrey's book, or him of Malleor's,
one
Touch'd by the adulterous finger of a
time
That hover'd between war and wanton-
ness,
And crownings and dethronements :
take withal
The poet's blessing, and his trust that
Heaven
Will blow the tempest in the distance
back



358 A WELCOME TO THE DUKE OF EDINBURGH.

From thine and ours : for some are sac-
 ered, who mark,
 Or wisely or unwisely, signs of storm,
 Waverings of every vane with every
 wind,
 And wordy trucklings to the transient
 hour,
 And fierce or careless looseners of the
 faith,
 And Softness breeding scorn of simple
 life,
 Or Cowardice, the child of lust for
 gold,
 Or Labor, with a groan and not a voice,
 Or Art, with poisonous honey stol'n
 from France,
 And that which knows, but careful for
 itself,
 And that which knows not, ruling that
 which knows
 To its own harm: the goal of this great
 world
 Lies beyond sight : yet—if our slowly-
 grown
 And crown'd Republic's crowning com-
 mon-sense,
 That saved her many times, not fail—
 their fears
 Are morning shadows huger than the
 shapess
 That cast them, not those gloomier
 which forego
 The darkness of that battle in the West,
 Where all of high and holy dies away.

A WELCOME TO THE DUKE AND
 DUCHESS OF EDINBURGH.

March, 1874.

I.

THE Son of him with whom we strove
 for power—
 Whose will is lord thro' all his world-
 domain—
 Who made the serf a man, and burst
 his chain—
 Has given our Prince his own Imperial
 Flower,
 Alexandrovna,
 And welcome, Russian flower, a peo-
 ple's pride,
 To Britain, when her flowers begin
 to blow !
 From love to love, from home to home
 you go,
 From mother unto mother, stately
 bride,
 Marie-Alexandrovna.

II.

The golden news along the steppes is
 blown,
 And at thy name the Tartar tents
 are stirred :
 Elburz and all the Caucasus have
 heard ;

And all the sultry palms of India
 known,
 Alexandrovna,
 The voice of our universal sea,
 On capes of Afric as on cliffs of
 Kent,
 The Maoris and that Isle of Conti-
 nent,
 And loyal pines of Canada murmur
 thee,
 Marie-Alexandrovna.

III.

Fair empires branching, both, in lusty
 life !—
 Yet Harold's England fell to Norman
 swords :
 Yet thine own land has bow'd to
 Tartar hordes
 Since English Harold gave its throne a
 wife,
 Alexandrovna.
 For thrones and peoples are as waifs
 that swing,
 And float or fall, in endless ebb and
 flow ;
 But who love best have best the
 grace to know
 That Love by right divine is, deathless
 king,
 Marie-Alexandrovna !

IV.

And Love has led thee to the stranger
 land,
 Where men are bold and strongly
 say their say :—
 See, empire upon empire smiles to-
 day,
 As thou with thy young lover hand in
 hand,
 Alexandrovna !
 So now thy fuller life is in the West,
 Whose hand at home was gracious to
 thy poor :
 Thy name was blest within the nar-
 row door ;
 Here, also, Marie, shall thy name be
 blest,
 Marie-Alexandrovna !

V.

Shall fears and jealous hatreds flame
 again?
 Or at thy coming, Princess, every-
 where,
 The blue heaven break, and some
 diviner air
 Breathe thro' the world and change
 the hearts of men,
 Alexandrovna ?
 But hearts that change not, love that
 cannot cease,
 And peace be yours, the peace of soul
 in soul !
 And howsoever this wide world may
 roll,
 Between your peoples truth and man-
 ful peace,
 Alfred—Alexandrovna !



QUEEN MARY.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

Queen Mary.
 Philip, *King of Naples and Sicily, afterwards King of Spain.*
 The Princess Elizabeth.
 Reginald Pole, *Cardinal and Papal Legate.*
 Simon Renard, *Spanish Ambassador.*
 Le Sieur de Noailles, *French Ambassador.*
 Thomas Cranmer, *Archbishop of Canterbury.*
 Sir Nicholas Heath, *Archbishop of York; Lord Chancellor after Gardiner.*
 Edward Courtenay, *Earl of Devon.*
 Lord William Howard, *afterwards Lord Howard and Lord High Admiral.*
 Lord Williams of Thame.
 Lord Paget.
 Lord Petre.
 Stephen Gardiner, *Bishop of Winchester and Lord Chancellor.*
 Edmund Bonner, *Bishop of London.*
 Thomas Thirlby, *Bishop of Ely.*
 Sir Thomas Wyatt, } *Insurrectionary*
 Sir Thomas Stafford } *leaders.*
 Sir Ralph Bagenhall.
 Sir Robert Southwell.
 Sir Henry Redingfield.
 Sir William Cecil.

Sir Thomas White, *Lord Mayor of London.*
 The Duke of Alva, } *Attending on*
 The Count de Feria, } *Philip.*
 Peter Martyr.
 Father Cole.
 Father Bourne.
 Villa Garcia.
 Soto.
 Captain Brett, } *Adherents of Wyatt,*
 Antony Knyvett, } *Gentleman of Lord Howard.*
 Peters, } *Servant to Noailles.*
 Roger, } *Servant to Wyatt.*
 William, } *Steward of Household to the Princess*
 Old Nokes and Nokes. (Elizabeth.
 Marchioness of Exeter, *Mother of*
 Courtenay.
 Lady Clarence, } *Ladies in*
 Lady Magdalen Dacres, } *waiting to*
 Alice, } *the Queen*
 Maid of Honor to the Princess Elizabeth.
 Tib, } *Two Country Wives.* [beth.
 Lords and other Attendants, Members of the Privy Council, Members of Parliament, two Gentlemen, Aldermen, Citizens, Peasants, Ushers, Messengers, Guards, Pages, &c.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—Aldgate richly decorated.
 Crowd. Marshalmen.

Marshalman. Stand back, keep a clear lane. When will her Majesty pass, sayst thou? why now, even now; wherefore draw back your heads and your horns before I break them, and make what noise you will with your tongues, so it be not treason. Long live Queen Mary, the lawful and legitimate daughter of Harry the Eighth. Shout, knaves!

Citizens. Long live Queen Mary!

1 *Cit.* That's a hard word, legitimate; what does it mean?

2 *Cit.* It means a bastard.

3 *Cit.* Nay, it means true-born.

1 *Cit.* Why, didn't the Parliament make her a bastard? [beth.

2 *Cit.* No; it was the lady Eliza-

3 *Cit.* That was after, man; that was after.

1 *Cit.* Then which is the bastard?

2 *Cit.* Troth, they be both bastards by Act of Parliament and Council.

3 *Cit.* Ay, the Parliament can make every true-born man of us a bastard. Old Nokes, can't it make thee a bastard? thou shouldst know, for thou art as white as three Christmasses.

O. Nokes (dreamily). Who's a-passing? King Edward or King Richard?

3 *Cit.* No, old Nokes.

O. Nokes. It's Harry!

3 *Cit.* It's Queen Mary.

O. Nokes. The blessed Mary's a-passing! [Falls on his knees.

Nokes. Let father alone, my masters! he's past your questioning.

3 *Cit.* Answer thou for him, then! thou art no such cockerel thyself, for



thou was born i' the tail end of old Harry the Seventh.

Nokes. Eh! that was before bastard-making began. I was born true man at five in the forenoon i' the tail of old Harry, and so they can't make me a bastard.

3 Cit. But if Parliament can make the Queen a bastard, why, it follows all the more that they can make thee one, who are fray'd i' the knees, and out at elbows, and bald o' the back, and bursten at the toes, and down at heels.

Nokes. I was born of a true man and a ring'd wife, and I can't argue upon it; but I and my old woman 'ud burn upon it, that would we.

Marshalman. What are you cackling of bastardy under the Queen's own nose? I'll have you flogg'd and burnt too, by the Rood I will.

1 Cit. He swears by the Rood. Whew!

2 Cit. Hark! the trumpets.

[The procession passes, Mary and Elizabeth riding side by side, and disappears under the gate.]

Citizens. Long live Queen Mary! down with all traitors! God save Her Grace; and death to Northumberland!

[Exeunt.]

Manent Two Gentlemen.

1 Gent. By God's light a noble creature, right royal.

2 Gent. She looks comelier than ordinary to-day; but to my mind the Lady Elizabeth is the more noble and royal.

1 G. nt. I mean the lady Elizabeth. Did you hear (I have a daughter in her service who reported it) that she met the Queen at Wanstead with five hundred horse, and the Queen (tho' some say they be much divided) took her hand, call'd her sweet sister, and kiss'd not her alone, but all the ladies of her following.

2 Gent. Ay, that was in her hour of joy, there will be plenty to sunder and unsister them again; this Gardiner for one, who is to be made Lord Chancellor, and will pounce like a wild beast out of his cage to worry Cranmer.

1 Gent. And furthermore, my daughter said that when there rose a talk of the late rebellion, she spoke even of Northumberland pitifully, and of the good Lady Jane as a poor innocent child who had but obeyed her father; and furthermore, she said that no one in her time should be burnt for heresy.

2 Gent. Well, sir, I look for happy times.

1 Gent. There is but one thing against them. I know not if you know.

2 Gent. I suppose you touch upon the rumor that Charles, the master of the world, has offer'd her his son Phil-

ip, the Pope and the Devil. I trust it is but a rumor.

1 Gent. She is going now to the Tower to loose the prisoners there, and among them Courtenay, to be made Earl of Devon, of royal blood, of splendid feature, whom the council and all her people wish her to marry. May it be so, for we are many of us Catholics, but few Papists, and the Hot Gospel lers will go mad upon it.

2 Gent. Was she not betroth'd in her babyhood to the Great Emperor himself.

1 Gent. Ay but he's too old.

2 Gent. And again to her cousin Reginald Pole, now Cardinal, but I hear that he too is full of aches and broken before his day.

1 Gent. O, the Pope could dispense with his Cardinalate, and his achage, and his breakage, if that were all: but will you not follow the procession?

2 Gent. No; I have seen enough for this day.

1 Gent. Well. I shall follow; if I can get near enough I shall judge with my own eyes whether Her Grace incline to this splendid scion of Plantagenet. *[Exeunt.]*

SCENE II.—*A room in Lambeth Palace.*

Cran. To Strasburg, Antwerp, Frankfort, Zurich, Worms, Geneva, Basle—our Bishops from their sees

Or fled, they say, or flying—Poinet, Barlow.

Bale, Scory, Coverdale; besides the Deans *[Wells—*

Of Christchurch, Durham, Exeter and Ailmer and Bullingham, and hundreds more;

So thy report: I shall be left alone.

No; Hooper, Ridley, Latimer will not fly.

Enter Peter Martyr.

Mart. Fly Cranmer! were there nothing else, your name

Stands first of those who signed the Letters Patent *[Jane.]*

That gave her royal crown to Lady Cran. Stand first it may, but it was written last: *[Cil, sign'd]*

Those that are now her Privy Coun- Before me: nay, the judges had pronounced

That our young Edward might be- queath the crown *[will.]*

Of England, putting by his father's Yet I stood out, till Edward sent for me. *[eyes]*

The wan boy-king, with his fast-fading Fixt hard on mine, his frail, transpa- rent hand, *[gripping mine,*

Damp with the sweat of death, and Whisper'd me, if I loved him not to yield *[wolf]*

His Church of England to the Papal And Mary; then I could no more—I sign'd.



Nay, for bare shame of inconsistency,
She cannot pass her traitor council by,
To make me headless.

Mart. That might be forgiven.
I tell you, fly, my Lord. You do not
own

The bodily presence in the Eucharist.
Their wafer and perpetual sacrifice
Your creed will be your death.

Cran. Step after step,
Thro' many voices crying right and
left, [church,
Have I climb'd back into the primal
And stand within the porch, and Christ
with me: [faith.

My flight were such a scandal to the
The downfall of so many simple souls,
I dare not leave my post.

Mart. But you divorced
Queen Catharine and her father; hence,
her hate

Will burn till you are burn'd.
Cran. I cannot help it.
The Canonists and Schoolmen were
with me.

"Thou shalt not wed thy brother's
wife."—'Tis written,
"They shall be childless." True, Mary
was born, [a bride

But France would not accept her for
As being born from incest; and this
wrought [you know,

Upon the king; and child by child,
Were momentary sparkles out as
quick [his doubts

Almost as kindled; and he brought
And fears to me. Peter, I'll swear for
him

He *did* believe the bond incestuous.
But wherefore am I trenching on the
time [steps a mile

That should already have seen your
From me and Lambeth? God be with
you! Go

Mart. Ah, but how fierce a letter
you wrote against [you
Their superstition when they slander'd
For setting up a mass at Canterbury.
To please the Queen.

Cran. It was a wheedling monk
Set up the mass.

Mart. I know it, my good Lord.
But you so bubbled over with hot
terms

Of Satan, liars, blasphemy, Antichrist,
She never will forgive you. Fly my
Lord, fly! [power to burn!

Cran. I wrote it, and God grant me
Mart. They have given me a safe
conduct: for all that

I dare not stay, I fear, I fear, I see you,
Dear friend, for the last time; fare-
well, and fly.

Cran. Fly and farewell, and let me
die the death. [*Ex.* Peter Martyr.
Enter Old Servant.

O. Serv. O, kind and gentle master,
the Queen's Officers
Are here in force to take you to the
Tower.

Cran. Ay, gentle friend, admit
them. I will go.
I thank my God it is too late to fly.

[*Exeunt.*
SCENE III.—St. Paul's Cross.
Father Bourne in the Pulpit. A crowd,
Marchioness of Exeter, Courtenay,
The Sieur de Noailles and his man
Roger in front of the stage. Hubbub.
Noail. Hast thou let fall those pa-
pers in the palace?

Rog. Ay, sir.
Noail. "There will be no peace for
Mary till Elizabeth lose her head."
Rog. Ay, sir.

Noail. And the other. "Long live
Elizabeth the Queen."
Rog. Ay, sir; she needs must tread
upon them.

Noail. Well.
These beastly swine make such a
grunting here, [saying.
I cannot catch what father Bourne is
Rog. Quiet a moment, my masters; I
hear what the shaveling has to say
for himself.

Crowd. Hush—hear.
Bourne.—and so this unhappy land,
long divided in itself, and sever'd from
the faith, will return into the one true
fold, seeing that our gracious Virgin
Queen hath—

Crowd. No pope! no pope!
Rog. (to those about him, mimicking
Bourne).—hath sent for the holy
legate of the holy father the Pope,
Cardinal Pole, to give us all that holy
absolution which—

1 *Cit.* Old Bourne to the life!
4 *Cit.* Holy absolution! holy In-
quisition!

3 *Cit.* Down with the Papist.
[*Hubbub.*
Bourne.—and now that your good
bishop, Bonner, who hath lain so long
under bonds for the faith— [Hubbub.

Noail. Friend Roger, steal thou in
among the crowd,
And get the swine to shout Elizabeth.
Yon gray old Gospeller, sour as mid-
winter,

Begin with him.
Rog. (goes.) By the mass, old friend,
we'll have no pope here while the Lady
Elizabeth lives.

Gospeller. Art thou of the true faith
fellow, that swearest by the mass?
Rog. Ay, that am I, new converted,
but the old leaven sticks to my tongue
yet.

1 *Cit.* He says right; by the mass
we'll have no mass here.
Voices of the Crowd. Peace! hear
him; let his own words damn the
Papist. From thine own mouth I
judge thee—tear him down.

Bourne.—and since our Gracious
Queen, let me call her our second Vir-
gin Mary, hath begun, to re-edify the
true temple—



1 *Cit.* Virgin Mary! we'll have no virgins here—we'll have the Lady Elizabeth!

[*Swords are drawn, a knife is hurled, and sticks in the pulpit. The mob throng to the pulpit stairs.*]

M. of Ex. Son Courtenay, wilt thou see the holy father Murder'd before thy face? up, son, and save him!

They love thes, and thou canst not come to harm.

Court. (in the pulpit). Shame, shame, my masters! are you English-born, And set yourselves by hundreds against one?

Crowd. A Courtenay! a Courtenay! [*A train of Spanish servants crosses at the back of the stage.*]

Noail. These birds of passage come before their time: [there.]

Stave off the crowd upon the Spaniard

Rog. My masters, yonder's fatter game for you [you there—

Than this old gaping gurgyle: look The Prince of Spain coming to wed our Queen? [the city.]

After him, boys! and pelt him from [*They seize stones and follow the Spaniards. Exeunt on the other side Marchioness of Exeter and Attendants.*]

Noail. (to Roger). Stand from me. If Elizabeth lose her head— That makes for France.

And if her people, anger'd thereupon, Arise against her and dethrons the Queen—

That makes for France.

And if I breed confusion anyway— That makes for France.

Good day, my Lord of Devon; A bold heart yours to beard that raging mob!

Court. My mother said, Go up; and up I went. [wrong.]

I knew they would not do me any For I am mighty popular with them, Noailles.

Noail. You look'd a king.

Court. Why not? I am king's blood.

Noail. And in the world of change may come to be one.

Court. Ah!

Noail. But does your gracious Queen entreat you king-like?

Court. 'Fors God, I think she entreats me like a child.

Noail. You've but a dull life in this maiden court,

I fear, my Lord.

Court. A life of nods and yawns.

Noail. So you would honor my poor house to-night.

We might enliven you. Divers honest fellows,

The Duke of Suffolk lately freed from prison,

Sir Peter Carew and Sir Thomas Wyatt,

Sir Thomas Stafford, and some more—we play.

Court. At what?

Noail. The Game of Chess.

Court. The Game of Chess! I can play well, and I shall beat you there.

Noail. Ay, but we play with Henry, King of France,

And certain of his court.

His Highness makes his moves across the channel, [are messengers

We answer him with ours, and there That go between us.

Court. Why, such a game, sir, were whole years a playing.

Noail. Nay; not so long I trust. That all depends [players.]

Upon the skill and swiftness of the *Court.* The King is skilful at it?

Noail. Very, my Lord.

Court. And the stakes high?

Noail. But not beyond your means.

Court. Well, I'm the first of players. I shall win. [company.]

Noail. With our advice and in our And so you well attend to the king's I think you may. [moves,

Court. When do you meet?

Noail. To-night.

Court. (aside). I will be thers; the fellow's at his tricks—

Deep—I shall fathom him. [*Aloud.*] Good morning, Noailles.

[*Exit Courtenay.*]

Noail. Good-day, my Lord. Strange game of chess! a King

That with her own pawns plays against a Queen, [King

Whose play is all to find herself a Ay; but this fine blue-blooded Court-enay seems [Knight,

Too princely for a pawn. Call him a That, with an ass's not a horse's head,

Skips every way, from levity or from fear.

Well, we shall use him somehow, so that Gardinar [game

And Simon Renard spy not out our Too early. Roger, thinkest thou that any one

Suspected thee to be my man?

Rog. Not one, sir.

Noail. No! the disguise was perfect. Let's away! [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE IV.—London. *A Room in the Palace.* Elizabeth. *Enter Court-enay.*

Court. So yet am I, [me,

Unless my friends and mirrors lie to A godlier-looking fellow than this Philip.

Fah! [traitor?]

The Queen is ill advised: shall I turn They've almost talk'd me into: yet the word

Affrights me somewhat; to be such a one,

As Harry Bolingbroke hath a lure in it.



Good now, my Lady Queen, tho' by your age,
And by your looks you are not worth the having,
Yet by your crown you are.

[Seeing Elizabeth.

The Princess there?

If I tried her and la—she's amorous.
Have we not heard of her in Edward's time,

[Lord Admiral?
Her freaks and frolics with the late I do believe she'd yield. I should be still

[knows—
A party in the state; and then, who Eliz. What are you musing on, my Lord of Devon?

Court. Has not the Queen—

Eliz. Done what, Sir?

Court. —Made you follow The Lady Suffolk and the Lady Len-You,

[noX.
The hair presumptive.

[it.
Eliz. Why do you ask? you know

Court. You needs must bear it hard-ly.

Eliz. No, indeed!

I am utterly submissive to the Queen.

Court. Well, I was musing upon that; the Queen [be friends.

Is both my foe and yours; we should Eliz. My Lord, the hatred of another to us

Is no true bond of friendship.

Court. Might it not

Be the rough preface of some closer bond?

Eliz. My Lord, you late were loosed from out the Tower,

Where, like a butterfly in a chrysalis, You spent your life; that broken, out you flutter

[would settle
Thro' the new world, go zigzag, now Upon this flower, now that; but all things here

[ed
At court are known; you have solicited The Queen, and been rejected.

Court. Flower, she!

Half faded! but you, cousin, are fresh and sweet

[tried.
As the first flower no bee has ever Eliz. Are you the bee to try me? why, but now

I called you butterfly.

Court. You did me wrong, I love not to be called a butterfly: Why do you call me butterfly?

Eliz. Why do you go so gay then?

Court. Velvet and gold. This dress was made me as the Earl of Devon

To take my seat in: looks it not right royal?

Eliz. So royal that the Queen forbade your wearing it.

Court. I wear it then to spite her.

Eliz. My Lord, my Lord; I see you in the Tower again. Her majesty

Hears you affect the Prince—prelates kneel to you,—

Court. I am the noblest blood in Europe, Madam.
A Courtenay of Devon, and her cousin.

Eliz. She hears you make you boasts that after all

She means to wed you. Folly, my good Lord.

[the state
Court. How folly? a great party in Will's me to wed her.

Eliz. Failing her, my Lord, Doth not as great a party in the state Will you to wed me?

Court. Even so, fair lady.

Eliz. You know to flatter ladies.

Court. Nay, I meant

True matters of the heart.

Eliz. My heart, my Lord,

Is no great party in the state as yet.

Court. Great, said you? nay, you shall be great. I love you,

Lay my life in your hands. Can you be close?

Eliz. Can you, my Lord?

Court. Close as a miser's casket.

Listen: [bassador,

The King of France, Noailles the Am-

The Duke of Suffolk and Sir Peter Carew.

[others,
Sir Thomas Wyatt, I myself, some Have sworn this Spanish marriage

shall not be.

[lecture—
If Mary will not hear us—well—con- Were I in Devon with my wedded

bride,

[ear;
The people there so worship me—Your you shall be Queen.

Eliz. You speak too low, my Lord;

I cannot hear you.

Court. I'll repeat it.

Eliz. No!

Stand farther off, or you may lose your head.

[sweet sake.
Court. I have a head to lose for your

Eliz. Have you, my Lord? Best keep it for your own.

Nay, pout not, cousin.

[indeed
Not many friends are mine, except Among the many. I believe you mine;

[well,
And so you may continue mine, fare- And that at once.

Enter Mary behind.

Mary. Whispering—leagued together

To bar me from my Philip.

Court. Pray—consider—

Eliz. (seeing the Queen). Well, that's a noble horse of yours, my Lord.

[day,
I trust that he will carry you well to- And heal your headache.

Court. You are wild; what headache?

Heartache, perchance; not headache.

Eliz. (aside to Courtenay). Are you blind?

[Courtenay sees the Queen and exit. Exit Mary.

Enter Lord William Howard.



How. Was that my Lord of Devon?
do not you [Devon].
Be seen in corners with my Lord of
He hath fallen out of favor with the
Queen. [and him]
She fears the Lords may side with you
Against her marriage; therefore is
he dangerous, [come]
And if this Prince of fluff and feather
To woo you, niece, he is dangerous
every way.

Eliz. Not very dangerous that way,
my good uncle. [danger here.]

How. But your state is full of
The disaffected, heretics, reformers,
Look to you as the one to crown their
ends. [you ;]

Mix not yourself with any plot I pray
Nay, if by chance you hear of any
such,

Speak not thereof—no, not to your
best friend, [it. Still—]
Lest you should be confounded with
Periude ac cadaver—as the priest says,
[dead body.]

You know your Latin—quiet as a
What was my Lord of Devon telling
you? [or not.]

Eliz. Whether he told me any thing
I follow your good counsel, gracious
uncle.

Quiet as a dead body.

How. You do right well.
I do not care to know; but this I
charge you. [Chaucellor]

Tell Courtenay nothing. The Lord
(I count it as a kind of virtue in him,
He hath not many), as a mastiff dog
May love a puppy cur for no more
reason [up together.]

Than that the twain have been tied
Thus Gardiner—for the two were fel-
low-prisoners

So many years in yon accursed Tower—
[to it, niece.]

Hath taken to this Courtenay. Look
He hath no fence when Gardiner ques-
tions him; [know him]

All oozes out; yet him—because they
The last White Rose, the last Planta-
genet [people]

(Nay, there is Cardinal Pole, too), the
Claim as their natural leader—ay, some
say, [King belike.]

That you shall marry him, make him
Eliz. Do they say so, good uncle?

How. Ay, good niece!
You should be plain and open with me,
niece.

You should not play upon me.
Eliz. No, good uncle.

Enter Gard. The Queen would see
your Grace upon the moment.

Eliz. Why, my lord Bishop?
Gard. I think she means to counsel
your withdrawing [house.]

To Ashridge, or some other country
Eliz. Why, my lord Bishop?
Gard. I do but bring the message,
know no more.

Your Grace will hear her reasons from
herself. [before the word]

Eliz. 'Tis mine own wish full'd
Was spoken, for in truth I had meant
to crave,

Permission of her Highness to retire
To Ashridge, and pursue my studies
there. [before the word]

Gard. Madam, to have the wish
Is man's good Fairy—and the Queen is
yours.

I left her with rich jewels in her hand,
Whereof 'tis like enough she means to
make

A farewell present to your Grace.
Eliz. My Lord,
I have the jewel of a loyal heart.

Gard. I doubt it not, Madam, most
loyal. [Bows low and exit.]

How. See,
This comes of parleying with my Lord
of Devon. [self]

Well, well, you must obey; and I my-
Believe it will be better for your wel-
Your time will come. [fare.]

Eliz. I think my time will come.
Uncle,

I am of sovereign nature, that I know.
Not to be quell'd; and I have felt
within me. [God's just hour]

Stirrings of some great doom when
Peals—but this fierce old Gardiner—
his big baldness,

That irritable forelock which he rubs,
His buzzard beak and deep-incavern'd
Half fright me. [eyes]

How. You've a bold heart; keep it
so. [turn traitor]

He cannot touch you save that you
And so take heed I pray you—you are
one [you, niece.]

Who love that men should smile upon
They'd smile you into treason—some of
them. [smiling sea.]

Eliz. I spy the rock beneath the
But if this Philip, the proud Catholic
prince, [hates me, seek]

And this bald priest, and she that
In that loue house, to practise on my
By poison, fire, shot, stab— [life.]

How. They will not, niece.
Mine is the fleet and all the power at
sea—

Or will be in a moment. If they dared
To harm you, I would blow this Philip
and all [devil.]

Your trouble to the dogstar and the
Eliz. To the Pleiads, uncle; they
have lost a sister.

How. But why say that? what have
you done to lose her? [Queen.]

Come, come, I will go with you to the
[Exit.]

SCENE V.—*A Room in the Palace. Mary
with Philip's miniature. Alice.*

Mary (kissing the miniature). Most
goodly, kinglike, and an emperor's
son,

A king to be,—is he not noble, girl?



Alice. Goodly enough, your Grace, and yet, methinks, I have seen goodlier.

Mary. Ay; some waxen doll Thy baby eyes have rested on; belike; All red and white, the fashion of our land.

But my good mother came (God rest Of Spain, and I am Spanish in myself, And in my likings.

Alice. By your Grace's leave Your royal mother came of Spain, but took

To the English red and white. Your (For so they say) was all pure lily and In his youth, and like a lady.

Mary. O, just God! Sweet mother, you had time and cause enough

To sicken of his lilies and his roses. Cast off, betray'd, defamed, divorced, forlorn!

And then the king—that traitor past The false archbishop fawning on him, married

The mother of Elizabeth—a heretic Ev'n as she is; but God hath sent me here

To take such order with all heretics That it shall be, before I die, as tho' My father and my brother had not lived.

What wast thou saying of this Lady Now in the Tower?

Alice. Why, Madam, she was passing

Some chapel down in Essex, and with Lady Anne Wharton, and the Lady Anne

Bow'd to the Pyx; but Lady Jane Stiff as the very backbone of heresy.

And wherefore bow ye not, says Lady Anne

To him within there who made Heaven I can not, and I dare not, tell your

What Lady Jane replied.

Mary. But I will have it.

Alice. She said—pray pardon me, and pity her—

She hath harken'd evil counsel—ah! The baker made him.

Mary. Monstrous! blasphemous! She ought to burn. Hence, thou

(*exit Alice*). No—heing traitor [a child Her head will fall: shall it? she is but We do not kill the child for doing that His father whipt him into doing—a head

So full of grace and beauty! would Were half as gracious! O, My lord to be,

My love, for thy sake only. I am eleven years older than he is.

But will he care for that? No, by the holy Virgin, being noble,

But love me only: then the bastard sprout,

My sister, is far fairer than myself. Will he be drawn to her?

No, being of the true faith with myself.

Paget is for him—for to wed with Spain

Would treble England—Gardiner is The Council, people, Parliament

against him; My brother rather hated me than loved;

My sister covers and hates me. Holy Plead with thy blessed Son; grant me my prayer;

Give me my Philip; and we two will The living waters of the Faith again

Back thro' their widow'd channel here, and watch

The parch'd banks rolling incense, as To heaven, and kindled with the palms of Christ!

Enter Usher.

Who waits, sir?

Usher. Madam, the Lord Chancellor

Mary. Bid him come in (*Enter Gardiner*). Good-morning, my good Lord.

Gard. That every morning of your Majesty

May be most good, is every morning's prayer

Of your most loyal subject, Stephen *Mary.* Come you to tell me this, my Lord?

Gard. And more. Your people have begun to learn your worth.

Your pious wish to pay King Edward's Your lavish household curb'd, and the remission

Of half that subsidy levied on the Make all tongues praise and all hearts beat for you.

I'd have you yet more loved: the realm is poor,

The exchequer at neap-ebb: we might Part of our garrison at Calais.

Mary. Calais!

Our one point on the main, the gate of France!

I am Queen of England; take mine eyes, mine heart,

But do not lose me Calais.

Gard. Do not fear it. Of that hereafter. I say your Grace is loved.

That I may keep you thus, who am And ever faithful counsellor, might I speak?

Mary. I can forespeak your speaking. Would I marry Prince Philip, if all England hate him?

That is Your question, and I front it with Is it England, or a party? Now, your answer

Gard. My answer is, I wear beneath A shirt of mail: my house hath been assaulted,

And when I walk abroad, the popu- With fingers pointed like so many dag- gers,

Stab me in fancy, hissing Spain and



And when I sleep, a hundred men-at-arms

Guard my poor dreams for England.

Men would murder me,
Because they think me favorer of this marriage.

Mary. And that were hard upon you, my Lord Chancellor. [von—

Gard. But our young Earl of De-

Mary. Earl of Devon?

I freed him from the tower, placed

him at Court; [fool—

I made him Earl of Devon, and—the

He wrecks his health and wealth on

courtesans, [dog.

And rolls himself in carrion like a

Card. More like a school-boy that

hath broken bounds,

Sickening himself with sweets.

Mary. I will not hear of him.

Good, then, they will revolt; but I

And shall control them. [am Tudor,

Gard. I will help you, Madam,

Even to the utmost. All the church

is grateful. [pulpited

You have ousted the mock priest, re-

The shepherd of St. Peter, raised the

rood again,

And brought us back the mass. I am

all thanks [well,

To God and to your Grace: yet I know

Your people, and I go with them so

far, [here to play

Will brook nor Pope nor Spaniard

The tyrant, or in commonwealth or

church.

Mary (showing the picture). Is this

the face of one who plays the

tyrant? [gentle?

Peruse it; it is not goodly, ay, and

Gard. Madam, methinks a cold

face and a haughty.

And when your Highness talks of

Courtenay— [life

Ay, true—a goodly one. I would his

Were half as goodly (aside).

Mary. What is that you mutter?

Gard. Oh, Madam, take it bluntly;

mary Philip,

And be stepmother of a score of sons!

The prince is known in Spain, in

Flanders, ha!

For Philip—

Mary. You offend us; you

may leave us.

You see thro' warping glasses.

Gard. If your Majesty—

Mary. I have sworn upon the body

and blood of Christ

I'll none but Philip.

Gard. Hath your Grace so sworn?

Mary. Ay, Simon Renard knows it.

Gard. News to me!

It then remains for your poor Gard-

diner, [what less

So you still care to trust him some-

Than Simon Renard, to compose the

event

In some such form as least may harm

your Grace.

Mary. I'll have the scandal sound-
ed to the mud.

I know it a scandal.

Gard. All my hope is now

It may be found a scandal.

Mary. You offend us.

Gard. (aside). These princes are

like children, must be physick'd,

The bitter in the sweet. I have lost

mine office, [fool.

It may be, thro' mine honesty, like a

[Exit.

Enter Usher.

Mary. Who waits?

Usher. The Ambassador from

France, your Grace.

Mary. Bid him come in. Good

morning, Sir de Noailles.

[Exit Usher.

Noail (entering). A happy morning

to your majesty.

Mary. And I should some time

have a happy morning;

I have had none yet. What says the

King your master?

Noail. Madam, my master hears

with much alarm, [Spain—

That you may marry Philip, Prince of

Foreseeing, with whate'er unwilling-

ness,

That if this Philip be the titular king

Of England, and at war with him,

your Grace [war,

And kingdom will be suck'd into the

Ay, tho' you long for peace; where-

fore, my master, [will,

If but to prove your Majesty's good

Would fain have some fresh treaty

drawn between you.

Mary. Why some fresh treaty?

wherefore should I do it?

Sir, if we marry, we shall still main-

tain

All former treaties with his Majesty.

Our royal word for that! and your

good master, [break them,

Pray God he do not be the first to

Must be content with that; and so,

farewell.

Noail (going, returns). I would

your answer had been other, Madam,

For I foresee dark days.

Mary. And so do I, sir;

Your master works against me in the

dark.

I do believe he help Northumberland

Against me. [Grace.

Noail. Nay, pure fantasy, your

Why should he move against you?

Mary. Will you hear why?

Mary. Scotland,—for I have not

own'd

My sister, and I will not,—after me

Is heir of England; and my royal

father, [with ours,

To make the crown of Scotland one

Had mark'd her for my brother Ed-

ward's bride; [from Scotland

Ay, but your king stole her a habe



In order to betroth her to your Dauphin.

See then: [Dauphin, Mary of Scotland, married to your Would make our England, France; Mary of England, joining hands with Spain,

Would be too strong for France. Yea, were there issue born to her, Spain and we, One crown, might rule the world. There lies your fear.

That is your drift. You play at hide and seek.

Show me your faces! Noail. Madam, I am amazed: French, I must needs wish all good things for France [protest That must be pardon'd me; but I Your Grace's policy hath a farther flight [seek Than mine into the future. We but Some settled ground for peace to stand upon.

Mary. Well, we will leave all this, sir, to our council. Have you seen Philip ever?

Noail. Only once. Mary. Is this like Philip?

Noail. Ay, but nobler-looking. Mary. Hath he the large ability of the Emperor?

Noail. No, surely [thee, Mary. I can make allowance for

Thou speakest of the enemy of thy king. [naked truth. Noail. Make no allowance for

He is every way a lesser man than Charles; [ing in him. Stone-hard, ice-cold—no dash of dar-

Mary. If cold, his life is pure. Noail. Why [smiling, no, indeed.

Mary. Sayst thou? [smiling. Noail. A very wanton life indeed

Mary. Your audience is concluded, sir. [Exit Noailles. You cannot

Learn a man's nature from his natural foe.

Enter Usher. Who waits?

Usher. The ambassador of Spain, your Grace. [Exit.

Enter Simon Renard. Mary. Thou art ever welcome,

Simon Renard. Hast thou Brought me the letter which thine Emperor promised

Long since, a formal offer of the hand of Philip? [reach'd me.

Ren. Nay, your Grace, it hath not I know not wherefore—some mischance of flood,

And broken bridge, or spavin'd horse, or wave [have written.

And wind at their old battle; he must Mary. But Philip never writes me one poor word. [wealth.

Which in his absence had been all my

Strange in a wooer!

Ren. Yet I know the Prince, So your king-parliament suffer him to land, [shore.

Yeans to set foot upon your island Mary. God change the pebble which his kingly foot [stone

First presses into some more costly Than ever blinded eye. I'll have one mark it [firelike;

And bring it me. I'll have it burnish'd I'll set it round with gold, with pearl, with diamond.

Let the great angel of the church come with him;

Stand on the deck and spread his wings for sail!

God lay the waves and strew the storms at sea, [O Renard,

And here at land among the people. I am much beset, I am almost in despair [ours;

Paget is ours. Gardiner perchance is But for our heretic Parliament—

Ren. O Madam, You fly your thoughts like kites. My Master, Charles, [here,

Bade you go softly with your heretics Until your throne had ceased to tremble. Then [Besides,

Spit them like larks for aught I care. When Henry broke the carcass of your church [among you

To pieces, there were many wolves Who dragg'd the scatter'd limbs into their den. [render these;

The Pope would have you make them So would your cousin, Cardinal Pole; ill counsel! [not yet

These let them keep at present; stir This matter of the church lands. At his coming

Your star will rise. Mary. My star! a haleful one.

I see but the black night, and hear the wolf.

What star? Ren. Your star will be your princely son, [lands!

Heir of this England and the Nether- And if your wolf the while should howl for more. [gold.

We'll dust him from a bag of Spanish I do believe, I have dusted some already, [ours.

That, soon or late, your parliament is Mary. Why do they talk so foully of your Prince,

Renard? Ren. The lot of princes. To sit Is to be lied about. [high

Mary. They call him cold, Haughty, ay, worse.

Ren. Why, doubtless, Philip shows Some of the bearing of your blue blood—still

All within measure—nay, it well becomes him.

Mary. Hath he the large ability of his father?



Ren. Nay, some believe that he will go beyond him.

Mary. Is this like him?

Ren. Ay, somewhat; but your Philip
Is the most princelike Prince beneath
This is a daub to Philip.

Mary. Of a pure life?
Ren. As an angel among angels.

Yea, by Heaven, ["Whosoever
The text—Your Highness knows it,
Looketh after a woman," would not
graze [in him there.
The Prince of Spain. You are happy
Chaste as your grace!

Mary. I am happy in him there.

Ren. And would be altogether happy, madam, [closer.
So that your sister were but look'd to
You have sent her from the court, but
then she goes,
I warrant, not to hear the nightingales,
But hatch you some new treason in
the woods.

Mary. We have our spies abroad to catch her tripping,
And then if caught, to the Tower.

Ren. The Tower! the block.
The word has turn'd your Highness
pale; the thing [er's time.
Was no such scarecrow in your fath-
I have heard, the tongue yet quiver'd
with the jest.
When the head leapt—so common! I
do think

To save your crown that it must come to this. [people love her,

Mary. I love her not, but all the
And would not have her even to the
Tower.

Ren. Not yet; but your old Traitors
of the Tower—

Why, when you put Northumberland
to death, [them all,
The sentence having passed upon
Spared you the Duke of Suffolk, Guil-
ford Dudley,
Ev'n that young girl who dared to wear
your crown?

Mary. Dared, no, not that; the
child obey'd her father
Spite of her tears her father forced it
on her.

Ren. Good Madam, when the Roman
wish'd to reign,
He slew not him alone who wore the
purple,
But his assessor in the throne, per-
chance

A child more innocent than Lady
Jane. [Roman Emperor.

Mary. I am English Queen, not

Ren. Yet too much mercy is a want
of mercy, [fire, or this
And wastes more life. Stamp out the
Will smoulder and re-flame, and burn
the throne [will not come
Where you should sit with Philip: he
Till she be gone.

Mary. Indeed, if that were true—

But I must say farewell. I am some-
what faint [not Queen

With our long talk. Tho' Queen, I am
Of mine own heart, which every now
and then golden chain—
Beats me half dead: yet stay, this
My father on a birthday gave it me,
And I have broken with my father—
take

And wear it as memorial of a morning
Which found me full of foolish doubts,
and leaves me

As hopeful. [all follies

Ren. (*aside.*) Whew—the folly of
Is to be love-sick for a shadow.

(*Aloud*) Madam, [with gold,
This chains me to your service, not
But dearest links of love. Farewell,
and trust me,

Philip is yours. [*Exit.*

Mary. Mine—but not yet all mine.

Enter Usher.

Usher. Your Council is in Session,
please your Majesty.

Mary. Sir, let them sit. I must
have time to breathe.
No, say I come. (*Exit Usher.*) I won
by boldness once.

The Emperor counsell'd me to fly to
Flanders. [rode,
I would not; but a hundred miles I
Sent out my letters, call'd my friends
together,
Struck home and won.

And when the Council would not
crown me—thought [keep,
To bind me first by oaths I could not
And keep with Christ and conscience
was it boldness.

Or weakness that won there? when I
their Queen, [fore them,
Cast myself down upon my knees be-
And those hard men brake into woman
tears, [that passion
Ev'n Gardiner, all amazed, and in
Gave me my Crown.

Enter Alice.

Girl; hast thou ever heard
Slanders against Prince Philip in our
Court? [Grace; no, never.

Alice. What slanders? I, your

Mary. Nothing?

Alice. Never, your Grace.

Mary. See that you neither hear
them nor repeat!

Alice (*aside*). Good Lord! but I
have heard a thousand such.

Ay, and repeated them as often—
mmm! [again?

Why comes that old fox—Fleming back

Enter Renard.

Ren. Madam, I scarce had left your
Grace's presence

Before I chanced upon the messenger
Who brings that letter which we
waited for— [hand,

The formal offer of Prince Philip's



It craves an instant answer, Ay or No? [Council sits.]

Mary. An instant, Ay or No! the Give it me quick.

Alice (stepping before her). Your Highness is all trembling.

Mary. Make way.

[Exit into the Council Chamber.]

Alice. O, Master Renard, Master Renard.

[Prince; If you have falsely painted your fine Praised, where you should have blamed him, I pray God

No woman ever loved you, Master Renard.

[at night It breaks my heart to hear her moan As tho' the nightmare never left her bed.

[you over Ren. My pretty maiden, tell me, did Sigh for a beard?

Alice. That's not a pretty question.

Ren. Not prettily put? I mean, my pretty maiden,

A pretty man for such a pretty maiden.

Alice. My Lord of Devon is a pretty man.

[then? I hate him, Well, but if I have, what Ren. Then, pretty maiden, you should know that whether.

A wind be warm or cold, it serves to A kindled fire.

[fan Alice. According to the song. His friends would praise him, I believed 'em.

His foes would blame him, and I scorned 'em,

His friends—as Angels I received 'em,

His foes—The Devil had suborn'd 'em.

Ren. Peace, pretty maiden. I hear them stirring in the Council Chamber.

[and yet, Lord Paget's "Ay" is sure—who else? They are all too much at odds to close at once

[ness comes. In one full throated No! Her High-

Enter Mary.

Alice. How deathly pale!—a chair, your Highness.

[Bringing one to the Queen. Ren. Madam,

The Council?

Mary. Ay! My Philip is all mine.

[Sinks into chair, half fainting.]

ACT II.

SCENE I.—Allington Castle.

Sir Thomas Wyatt. I do not hear from Carew or the Duke

[move. Of Suffolk, and till then I should not The Duke hath gone to Leicester;

Carew stirs In Devon: that fine porcelain Cour-

tenay,

[in using, Save that he fears he might be crack'd (I have known a semi-madman in my time

[too. So fancy ridd'n) should be in Devon

Enter William.

News abroad, William?

Will. None so new, Sir Thomas, and none so old, Sir Thomas. No new news that Philip comes to wed Mary, no old news that all men hate it. Old Sir Thomas would have hated it. The bells are ringing at Maidstone. Doesn't your worship hear?

Wyatt. Ay, for the Saints are come to reign again.

[no call Most like it is a Saint's-day. There's As yet for me; so in this pause, before The mine be fired, it were a pious work To string my father's sonnets, left about

[order, Like loosely-scatter'd jewels, in fair And head them with a lamer rhyme of mine,

To grace his memory.

Will. Ay, why not, Sir Thomas? He was a fine courtier, he; Queen Anne loved him. All the women loved him. I loved him, I was in Spain with him. I couldn't eat in Spain, I couldn't sleep in Spain. I hate Spain, Sir Thomas.

Wyatt. But thou couldst drink in Spain if I remember.

Will. Sir Thomas, we may grant the wine. Old Sir Thomas always granted the wine.

Wyatt. Hand me the casket with my father's sonnets.

Will. Ay—sonnets—a fine courtier of the old Court, old Sir Thomas.

[Exit.

Wyatt. Courtier of many courts, he loved the more

His own gray towers, plain life and letter'd peace,

To read and rhyme in solitary fields, The lark above, the nightingale below, And answer them in song. The Sire begets

Not half his likeness in his son. I fall Where he was fullest: yet—to write it down.

[He writes.

Re-enter William.

Will. There is news, there is news, and no call for sonnet-sorting now, nor for sonnet-making either, but ten thousand men on Penenden Heath all calling after your worship, and your worship's name heard into Maidstone market, and your worship the first man in Kent and Christendom, for the world's up, and your worship a-top of it.

Wyatt. Inverted Æsop—mountain out of mouse.

[house knaves, Say for ten thousand ten—and pot-Brain-dizzied with a draught of morning ale.

Enter Antony Knyvett.

Will. Here's Antony Knyvett.

Kny. Look you, Master W. att. Tear up that woman's work there.



Wyatt. No; not these,
Dumb children of my father, that will
speak

When I and thou and all rebellious lie
Dead bodies without voice. Song flies
For ages. [you know]

Kny. Tut, your sonnet's a flying
Wing'd for a moment. [ant,

Wyatt. Well, for mine own work
[tearing the paper],
It lies there in six pieces at your feet;
For all that I can carry it in my head.

Kny. If you can carry your head
upon your shoulders.

Wyat. I fear you come to carry it
off my shoulders,
And sonnet-making's safer.

Kny. Why, good Lord,
Write you as many sonnets as you
will. [ears, brains?]

Ay, but not now; what, have you eyes,
This Philip and the black-faced
swarms of Spain, [world,

The hardest, cruellest people in the
Come locusting upon us, eat us up,
Confiscate lands, goods, money—

Wyatt, Wyatt, [come
Wake, or the stout old island will be-
A rotten limb of Spain. They roar
for you [them—more—

On Penenden Heath, a thousand of
All arm'd waiting a leader; there's
no glory

Like his who saves his country: and
you sit [judge,
Sing-singing here; but, if I'm any
By God, you are as poor a poet, Wyatt,
As a good soldier.

Wyatt. You as poor a critic
As an honest friend: you stroke me
on one cheek, [Anthony!

Buffet the other. Come, you bluster,
You know I know all this I must not
move

Until I hear from Carew and the Duke.
I fear the mine is fired before the time.

Kny [showing a paper]. But here's
some Hebrew. Faith, I half forgot
it. [strange youth

Look; can you make it English? A
Suddenly thrust it on me, whisper'd,
"Wyatt," [his back

And whisking round a corner, show'd
Before I read his face.

Wyatt. Ha! Courtenay's cipher,
[Reads.

"Sir Peter Carew fled to France: It
is thought the Duke will be taken. I
am with you still; but, for appearance'
sake, stay with the Queen. Gardiner
knows, but the Council are all at odds,
and the Queen hath no force for resist-
ance. Move, if you move, at once."

[taken?
Is Peter Carew fled? Is the Duke
Down scabbard, and out sword! and
let Rebellion

Roar till throne rock, and crown fall.
No; not that; [reign.

But we will teach Queen Mary how to

Who are those that shout below there?

Kny. Why, some fifty
That follow'd me from Penenden
Heath in hope

To hear you speak. [Knyvett;
Wyatt. Open the window,
The mine is fired, and I will speak to
them.

Men of Kent; England of England:
you that have kept your old customs
upright, while all the rest of England
bow'd theirs to the Norman, the cause
that hath brought us together is not
the cause of a county or a shire, but of
this England, in whose crown our Kent
is the fairest jewel. Philip shall not
wed Mary; and ye have called me to
be your leader. I know Spain. I have
been there with my father; I have seen
them in their own land; have marked
the haughtiness of their nobles; the
cruelty of their priests. If this man
marry our Queen, however the Council
and the Commons may fence round his
power with restriction, he will be King,
King of England, my masters; and the
Queen, and the laws, and the people, his
slaves. What? shall we have Spain on
the throne and in the parliament; Spain
in the pulpit and on the law-bench;
Spain in all the great officers of state;
Spain in our ships, in our forts, in our
houses, in our beds?

Crowd. No! no! no Spain.

Will. No Spain in our beds—that
were worse than all. I have been
there with old Sir Thomas, and the
beds I know. I hate Spain.

A Peasant. But, Sir Thomas, must
we levy war against the Queen's
Grace?

Wyatt. No, my friend; war for the
Queen's Grace—to save her from her-
self and Philip—war against Spain.
And think not we shall be alone—
thousands will flock to us. The Coun-
cil, the Court itself, is on our side.
The Lord Chancellor himself is on our
side. The King of France is with us;
the King of Denmark is with us; the
world is with us—war against Spain!
And if we move not now, yet it will be
known that we have moved; and if
Philip come to be King, O, my God!
the rope, the rack, the thumbscrew,
the stake, the fire. If we move not
now, Spain moves, bribes our nobles
with her gold, and creeps, creeps snake-
like about our legs till we cannot move
at all; and ye know, my masters,
that wherever Spain hath ruled she
hath wither'd all beneath her. Look
at the New World—a paradise made
hell; the red man, that good helpless
creature, starved, maim'd, flogg'd,
flay'd, burn'd, boil'd, buried alive,
worried by dogs; and here, nearer
home, the Netherlands, Sicily, Naples,
Lombardy. I say no more—only this,
their lot is yours. Forward to London



with me! forward to London! If ye love your liberties or your skins, forward to London! [Wyatt! A Wyatt!

Crowd. Forward to London! A Wyatt. But first to Rochester, to take the guns [river. From out the vessels lying in the Then on.

A Peasant. Ay, but I fear we be too few, Sir Thomas.

Wyatt. Not many yet. The world as yet, my friend, [tower Is not half-waked; but every parish Shall clang and clash alarm as we pass, [and fed

And pour along the land, and swoll'n With indraughts and side-currents, in full force

Roll upon London. [Forward!

Crowd. A Wyatt! a Wyatt!

Kny. Wyatt, shall we proclaim Elizabeth?

Wyatt. I'll think upon it, Knyvett.

Kny. Or Lady Jane?

Wyatt. No, poor soul; no.

Ay, gray old castle of Allington, green field [chance

Beside the brimming Medway, it may That I shall never look upon you more.

Kny. Come, now, you're sonneting again.

Wyatt. Not I.

I'll have my head set higher in the state; [stake.

Or—if the Lord God will it—on the [Execution.

SCENE II.—Guildhall. Sir Thomas

White (*the Lord Mayor*), Lord William Howard, Sir Ralph Bagenhall,

Aldermen and Citizens.

White. I trust the Queen comes

hither with her guards.

How. Ay, all in arms.

[Several of the citizens move hastily out of the hall.

Why do they hurry out there?

White. My Lord, cut out the rotten

from your apple, [go.

Your apple eats the better. Let them

They go like those old Pharisees in

John [cowards,

Convicted by their conscience, arrant

Or tamperers with that treason out of

Kent.

When will her Grace be here?

How. In some few minutes.

She will address your guilds and companies.

[her.

I have striven in vain to raise a man for

But help her in this exigency, make

Your city loyal, and be the mightiest

man

This day in England.

White. I am Thomas White.

Few things have fail'd to which I set

my will.

I do my most and best.

How. You know that after

The Captain Brett, who went with your train bands [him

To fight with Wyatt, had gone over to

With all his men, the Queen in that

distress [traitor,

Sent Cornwallis and Hastings to the

Feigning to treat with him about her

marriage—

Know too what Wyatt said.

White. He'd sooner be,

While this same marriage question

was being argued,

Trusted than trust—the scoundrel—

and demanded [Tower.

Possession of her person and the

How. And four of her poor Council

too, my Lord,

As hostages.

White. I know it. What do and say

Your Council at this hour?

How. I will trust you.

We fling ourselves on you, my Lord.

The Council, [waters;

The Parliament as well, are troubled

And yet like waters of the fen they

know not [address,

Which way to flow. All hangs on her

And upon you, Lord Mayor.

White. How look'd the city

When now you past it? Quiet?

How. Like our Council,

Your city is divided. As we past,

Some hail'd, some hiss'd us. There

were citizens [and look'd

stood each before his shut-up booth,

As grim and grave as from a funeral.

And here a knot of ruffians all in rags,

With execrating execrable eyes,

Glared at the citizen. Here was a

young mother, [blown back,

Her face on flame, her red hair all

She shrilling "Wyatt," while the boy

she held [red as she

Mimick'd and piped her "Wyatt," as

in hair and cheek; and almost elbow-

ing her, [death

So close they stood, another, mute as

And white as her own milk; her babe

in arms [heart

Had felt the faltering of his mother's

And look'd as bloodless. Here a pious

Catholic, [prayers

Mumbling and mixing up in his scared

Heaven and earth's Marias; over his

bow'd shoulder [hating beast,

Scowl'd that world-hated and world-

A haggard Anabaptist. Many such

groups. [Courtenay,

The names of Wyatt, Elizabeth,

Nay the Queen's right to reign—fore

God, the rogues— [I say

Were freely buzz'd among them. So

Your city is divided, and I fear

One scruple, this or that way, of suc-

cess [now the Queen

Would turn it thither. Wherefore

In this low pulse and palsy of the

state,

Bade me to tell you that she counts

on you



And on myself as her two hands ; on
you, [Lord,
In your own city, as her right, my
For you are loyal.

White. Am I Thomas White ?
One word before she comes. Eliza-
beth— [these traitors.
Her name is much abused among
Where is she? She is loved by all of
us. [matter.
I scarce have heart to mingle in this
If she should be mishandled?

How. No ; she shall not.
The Queen had written her word to
come to court : [letter,
Methought I smelt out Renard in the
And fearing for her, sent a secret
missive [or not
Which told her to be sick. Happily
It found her sick indeed.

White. God send her well ;
Here comes her Royal Grace.

Enter Guards, Mary and Gardiner.
*Sir Thomas White leads her to a
raised seat on the dais.*

White. I, the Lord Mayor, and these
our companies

And guilds of London, gathered here,
beseech [thanks
Your highness to accept our lowliest
For your most princely presence ; and
we pray

That we, your true and loyal citizens,
From your own royal lips, at once may
know [learn
The wherefore of this coming, and so
Your royal will, and do it—I, Lord
Mayor [panies.

Of London, and our Guilds and Com-
Mary. In mine own person am I
come to you, [know.

To tell you what indeed ye see and
How traitorously these rebels out of
Kent [selves and you.

Have made strong head against our-
They would not have me wed the
Prince of Spain ; [at first—

That was their pretext—so they spake
But we sent divers of our Council to
them, [ask'd,

And by their answer to the question
It doth appear this marriage is the
least

Of all their quarrel. [their hearts :
They have betrayed the treason of
Seek to possess our person, hold our

Tower, [and use
Place and displace our councillors,
Both us and them according as they
will. [your Queen;

Now what am I ye know right well—
To whom, when I was wedded to the
realm [ring whereof.

And the realm's laws (the spousal
Not ever to be laid aside, I wear
Upon this finger, ye did promise
full

Allegiance and obedience to the death.
Ye know my father was the rightful
heir

Of England, and his right came down
to me,

Corroborate by your acts of Parlia-
ment :

And as ye were most loving unto him,
So doubtless will ye show yourselves
to me. [one

Wherefore, ye will not brook that any
Should seize our person, occupy our
state, [sumptuous

More especially a traitor so pre-
As this same Wyatt, who hath tam-
per'd with

A public ignorance, and, under color
Of such a cause as hath no color,
seeks [yield

To bend the laws to his own will, and
Full scope to persons rascal and for-
lori, [goods.

To make free spoil and havoc of your
Now as your Prince, I say,
I, that was never mother, cannot tell

How mothers love their children ; yet
methinks,

A prince as naturally may love his peo-
ple [your Queen
As these their children ; and be sure
So loves you, and so loving, needs
must deem

This love by you return'd as heartily :
And thro' this common knot and bond
of love, [thrown.

Doubt not they will be speedily over-
As to this marriage, ye shall under-
stand [selves,

We made thereto no treaty of our-
And set no foot theretoward unad-
vised [more,

Of all our Privy council ; further-
This marriage had the assent of those
to whom [trust ;

The king, my father, did commit his
Who not alone esteem'd it honorable,
But for the wealth and glory of our
realm, [pedient.

And all our loving subjects, most ex-
As to myself, [choose

I am not so set on wedlock as to
But where I list, nor yet so amorous
That I must needs be husbanded ; I
thank God, [doubt

I have lived a virgin, and I noway
But that with God's grace, I can live
so still. [should leave

Yet if it might please God that I
Some fruit of mine own body after me,
To be your king, ye would rejoice
thereat, [trust ;

And it would be your comfort, as I
And truly, if I either thought or knew
This marriage should bring loss or
danger to you,

My subjects, or impair in any way
This royal state of England, I would
never [live ;

Consent thereto, nor marry while I
Moreover, if this marriage should not
seem,

Before our own high Court of Parlia-
ment,



To be of rich advantage to our realm
We will refrain, and not alone from
this,

Likewise from any other, out of which
Looms the least chance of peril to our
realm.

Wherefore be bold, and with your
lawful Prince [yours,
Stand fast against our enemies and
And fear them not. I fear them not.
My Lord.

I leave Lord William Howard in your
city,
To guard and keep you whole and safe
from all [these rebels,
The spoil and sackage aim'd at by
Who mouth and foam against the
Prince of Spain.

Voices. Long live Queen Mary :
Down with Wyatt !

The Queen !
White. Three voices from our guilds
and companies.

You are shy and proud like English-
men, my masters,
And will not trust your voices. Under-
stand :

Your lawful Prince hath come to cast
herself [fall
On loyal hearts and bosoms, hoped to
Into the wide-spread arms of fealty,
And finds you statutes. Speak at once
For whom ? [—and all !

Our sovereign Lady by King Harry's
will ; [ish Squire ?
The Queen of England—or the Kent-
I know you loyal. Speak ! in the
name of God ! [of Kent ?

The Queen of England or the rabble
The recking dungfork master of the
mace ! [and spade—

Your havings wasted by the scythe
Your rights and charters hobnail'd
into slush— [bling blood—

Your houses fired—your gutters bub-
Acclamation. No ! No ! The Queen !
the Queen !

White. Your Highness hears
This burst and bass of loyal harmony,
And how we each and all of us abhor
The venomous, bestial, devilish revolt
Of Thomas Wyatt. Hear us now
make oath

To raise your Highness thirty thou-
sand men, [and brush
And arm and strike as with one hand,
This Wyatt from our shoulders, like
a flea [wares.

That might have leapt upon us un-
swear with me, noble fellow-citizens,
all, [companies.

With all your trades, and guilds, and
Citizens. We swear !

Mary. We thank your Lordship
and your loyal city.

[*Exit Mary attended.*
White. I trust this day, thro' God,
I have saved the crown.

1 *Ald.* Ay, so my Lord of Pembroke
in command

Of all her force be safe ; but there are
doubts.

2 *Ald.* I hear that Gardiner, coming
with the Queen,
And meeting Pembroke, bent to his
saddle-bow, [him.

As if to win the man by flattering
Is he so safe to fight upon her side ?

1 *Ald.* If not, there's no man safe.
White. Yes, Thomas White.

I am safe enough : no man need flatter
me. [you mark our Queen ?

2 *Ald.* Nay, no man need ; but did
The color freely play'd into her face,
And the half sight which makes her
look so stern, [of hers,
Seem'd thro' that dim dilated world
To read our faces ; I have never seen
So queenly or so goodly. [her

White. Courage, sir,
That makes or man or woman look
their goodliest. [whine

Die like the torn fox-dumb, but never
Like that poor heart, Northumberland,
at the block.

Bag. The man had children, and he
whined for those.

Methinks most men are but poor-
hearted, else [it commoner ?
Should we so doat on courage, were
The Queen stands up, and speaks for
her own self ; [is goodly.

And all men cry, she is queenly, she
Yet she's no goodlier ; tho' my Lord
Mayor here, [to-day,

By his own rule, he had been so bold
Should look more goodly than the rest
of us.

White. Goodly ? I feel most goodly
heart and hand, [all Kent.

And strong to throw ten Wyatts and
Ha ! ha ! sir ; but you jest ; I love it : a
jest [even.

In time of danger shows the pulses
Be merry ! yet, Sir Ralph, you look but
sad. [self,

I dare avouch you'd stand up for your-
Tho' all the world should bay like winter
wolves.

Bag. Who knows ? the man is proven
by the hour.

White. The man should make the
hour, not this the man ;

And Thomas White will prove this
Thomas Wyatt, [Cade,

And he will prove an Iden to this
And he will play the Walworth to this
Wat ;

Come, sirs, we prate ; hence all—gather
your men—

Myself must bustle. Wyatt comes to
Southwark ; [the Thames

I'll have the drawbridge hewn into
And see the citizen arm'd. Good day ;
good day. [*Exit White.*

Bag. One of much outdoor bluster.
How. For all that,

Most honest, brave, and skilful ; and
his wealth

A fountain of perennial alms—his fault



So thoroughly to believe in his own self. [one's own self.]

Bag. Yet thoroughly to believe in So one's own self be thorough, were to Great things, my lord. [do]

How. It may be.
Bag. I have heard One of your council flee and jeer at him. [will jeer at aught]

How. The nursery-cocker'd child That may seem strange beyond his nursery. [flee at men.]

The statesman that shall jeer and Makes enemies for himself and for his king;

And if he jeer not seeing the true man Behind his folly, he is thrice the fool; And if he see the man and still will jeer. [State.]

He is child and fool, and traitor to the Who is he? Let me shun him.

Bag. Nay, my Lord, He is damn'd enough already.

How. I must set The guard at Ludgate. Fare you well, Sir Ralph.

Bag. "Who knows?" I am for England. But who knows. That knows the Queen, the Spaniard, and the Pope,

Whether I be for Wyatt, or the Queen? [Exeunt.]

SCENE III.—London Bridge.

Enter Sir Thomas Wyatt and Brett.

Wyatt. Brett, when the Duke of Norfolk moved against us, Thou criest "a Wyatt," and flying to our side

Left his all here, for which I love thee, Brett. [can give,]

Have for thine asking aught that I For thro' thine help we are come to London Bridge; [we cannot.]

But how to cross it balks me. I fear Brett. Nay, hardly, save by boat, swimming, or wings.

Wyatt. Last night I climb'd into the gate-house, Brett, And scared the gray old porter and his wife. [saw]

And then I crept along the gloom and They had hewn the drawbridge down into the river. [same tide]

It roll'd as black as death; and that Which, coming with our coming, seem'd to smile [saidest,]

And sparkle like our fortune as thou Ran sunless down, and moan'd against the piers.

But o'er the chasm I saw Lord William Howard By torchlight, and his guard; four guns gaped at me,

Black, silent mouths: had Howard spied me there

And made them speak, as well he might have done, [you this.] Their voice had left me none to tell What shall we do?

Brett. On somehow. To go back Were to lose all.

Wyatt. On over London Bridge We cannot: stay we cannot; there is ordnance [Tower,]

On the White Tower and on the Devil's And pointed full at Southwark; we By Kingston Bridge. [must round]

Brett. Ten miles about.
Wyatt. Ev'n so.

But I have noticed from our partisans Within the city that they will stand by us, [to-morrow.] If Ludgate can be reach'd by dawn

Enter one of Wyatt's men.

Man. Sir Thomas, I've found this paper, pray your worship read it; I know not my letters; the old priest taught me nothing.

Wyatt (reads). Whosoever will apprehend the traitor Thomas Wyatt shall have a hundred pounds for reward.

Man. Is that it? That's a big lot of money.

Wyatt. Ay, ay, my friend; not read it? 'tis not written Half plain enough. Give me a piece of paper!

[Writes "Thomas Wyatt" large.] There, any man can read that.

Brett. But that's foolhardy. [Sticks it in his cap.]

Wyatt. No! boldness, which will give my followers boldness.

Enter Man with a prisoner.

Man. We found him, your worship, a plundering o' Bishop Winchester's house; he says he's a poor gentleman.

Wyatt. Gentleman, a thief! Go hang him. Shall we make Those that we come to serve our sharpest foes?

Brett. Sir Thomas—
Wyatt. Hang him, I say.

Brett. Wyatt, but now you promised me a boon. [fellow's life.]

Wyatt. Ay, and I warrant this fine
Brett. Ev'n so; he was my neighbor once in Kent. [gambled out]

He's poor enough, has drunk and All that he had, and gentleman he was. [live.]

We have been glad together; let him
Wyatt. He has gambled for his life, and lost, he hangs.

No, no, my word's my word. Take thy Gamble thyself at once out of my sight, Or I will dig thee with my dagger.

Women and children! [Away!]

Enter a crowd of Women and Children.

1 Woman. O Sir Thomas, Sir Thomas, pray you go away, Sir Thomas, or you'll make the White Tower a black un for us this blessed day. He'll be



the death on us ; and you'll set the Devil's Tower a-spitting, and he'll smash all our bits o' things worse than Philip o' Spain.

2 *Woman*. Don't ye now go to think that we be for Philip o' Spain.

3 *Woman*. No, we know that ye be come to kill the Queen, and we'll pray for you all on our bended knees. But o' God's mercy don't ye kill the Queen here, Sir Thomas ; look ye, here's little Dickon, and little Robin and little Jenny—though she's but a side-cousin—and all on our knees, we pray you to kill the Queen farther off, Sir Thomas.

Wyatt. My friends, I have not come to kill the Queen [all, Or here or there : I come to save you And I'll go farther off.

Crowd. Thanks, Sir Thomas, we be beholden to you, and we'll pray for you on our bended knees till our lives' end.

Wyatt. Be happy, I am your friend. To Kingston ; forward. [*Exeunt*.

SCENE IV.—*Room in the Gatehouse of Westminster Palace.* Mary, Alice, Gardiner, Renard, Ladies.

Alice. O madam, if Lord Pembroke should be false ?

Mary. No, girl ; most brave and loyal, brave and loyal.

His breaking with Northumberland broke Northumberland. [guards. At the park gate he hovers with our These Kentish, ploughmen cannot break the guards.

Enter Messenger.

Mes. Wyatt, your Grace, hath broken thro' the guards And gone to Ludgate.

Gard. Madams, I much fear That all is lost ; but we can save your Grace.

The river still is free. I do beseech you, [to Windsor.

There yet is time, take boat and pass *Mary*. I pass to Windsor and I lose my crown.

Gard. Pass, then, I pray your Highness, to the Tower.

Mary. I shall but be their prisoner in the Tower. [Pembroke!

Cries without. The traitor ! treason ! Ladies. Treason ! Treason !

Mary. Peace. [to me ? False to Northumberland, is he false Bear witness, Renard, that I live and die [A sound

The true and faithful bride of Philip— Of feet and voices thickening hither—

blows— [gates, Hark, there is battle at the palace And I will out upon the gallery.

Ladies. No, no, your Grace ; see there the arrows flying.

Mary. I am Harry's daughter, Tudor, and not fear,

[*Goes out on the gallery.* The guards are all driven in, skulk into corners [guard Like rabbits to their holes. A gracious Truly ; shame on them, they have shut the gates !

Enter Sir Robert Southwell.

South. The porter, please your Grace, hath shut the gates On friend and foe. Your gentlemen-at-arms,

If this be not your Grace's order, cry To have the gates set wide again, and they [you right

With their good battle-axes will do Against all traitors.

Mary. They are the flower of England ; set the gates wide.

[*Exit Southwell.*

Enter Courtenay.

Court. All lost, all lost, all yielded ; a barge, a barge, The Queen must to the Tower.

Mary. Whence come you, sir ? *Court*. From Charing Cross ; the rebels broke us there, [might

And I sped hither with what haste I To save my royal cousin.

Mary. Where is Pembroke ? *Court*. I left him somewhere in the

thick of it. [that wouldst be King, *Mary*. Left him and fled ; and thou

And hast no heart nor honor. I myself Will down into the battle and there

bide [those The upshot of my quarrel, or die with That are no cowards and no Courtenays

[should call me coward. *Court*. I do not love your Grace

Enter another Messenger.

Mes. Over, your Grace, all crush'd ; The brave Lord William

Thrust him from Ludgate, and the traitor flying [Berkeley

To Temple Bar there by Sir Maurice Was taken prisoner.

Mary. To the Tower with him ! *Mes*. 'Tis said he told Sir Manrice

there was one [unto, Cognizant of this, and party there— My Lord of Devon.

Mary. To the Tower with him ! *Court*. O la, the Tower, the Tower

always the Tower, [the Tower. I shall grow into it— I shall be

Mary. Your Lordship may not have so long to wait.

Remove him ! *Court*. La, to whistle out my life,

And carve my coat upon the walls again ! [*Exit Courtenay guarded.*

Mes. Also this Wyatt did confess the Princess [unto.

Cognizant thereof, and party there— *Mary*. What? whom— whom did you say ?



Mes. Elizabeth,
Your Royal sister.

Mary. To the Tower with her!
My foes are at my feet and I am
Queen.

[*Gardiner and her Ladies kneel to her.*
Gard. (*rising.*) There let them lie,
your footstool! (*Aside.*)

Can I strike Elizabeth?—not now and save the
Of Devon: if I save him, he and his
Are bound to me—may strike here-
after. (*Aloud.*) Madam,

What Wyatt said, or what they said
he said,

Cries of the moment and the street—
Mary. He said it.

Gard. Your courts of justice will
determine that.

Ren. (*advancing.*) I trust by this
your Highness will allow

Some spice of wisdom in my telling
you,

When last we talk'd, that Philip would
Till Guildford Dudley and the Duke
of Suffolk

And Lady Jane had left us.
Mary. They shall die.

Ren. And your so loving sister?
Mary. She shall die.

My foes are at my feet, and Philip
King. [*Exeunt.*]

ACT III.

SCENE I.—*The Conduit in Grace
Church. Painted with the Nine
Worthies among them King Henry
VIII., holding a book, on it inscribed
"Verbum Dei."*

*Enter Sir Ralph Bagenhall and Sir
Thomas Stafford.*

Bag. A hundred here and hundreds
hang'd in Kent. [*at last,*

The Tigress had unsheath'd her nails
And Renard and the Chancellor sharp-
en'd them. [*stood.*

In every London street a gibbet
They are down to-day. Here by this
house was one; [*door,*

The traitor husband dangled at the
And when the traitor wife came out
for bread

To still the petty treason therewithin,
Her cap would brush his heels.

Staf. It is Sir Ralph,
And muttering to himself as hereto-
fore.

Sir, see you aught up yonder?

Bag. I miss something,
The tree that only hears dead fruit is
gone.

Staf. What tree, sir? [*sir,*

Bag. Well, the tree in Virgil,
That bears not its own apples.

Staf. What! the gallows?

Bag. Sir, this dead fruit was ripen-
ing overmuch, [*Spain*
And had to be removed lest living
Should sicken at dead England.

Staf. Not so dead
But that a shock may rouse her.

Bag. I believe
Sir Thomas Stafford?

Staf. I am ill disguised.

Bag. Well, are you not in peril
here?

Staf. I think so.

I came to feel the pulse of England,
whether [*you see't?*

It heats hard at this marriage. Did
Bag. Stafford, I am a sad man and
a serious.

Far liefer had I in my country hall

Been reading some old book, with
mine old hound [*flask of wine*

Couch'd at my hearth, and mine old
Beside me, than have seen it, yet I

saw it.

Staf. Good, was it splendid?

Bag. Ay, if Dukes, and Earls,
And Counts, and sixty Spanish cava-
liers, [*pearls,*

Some six or seven Bishops, diamonds,
That royal commonplace too, cloth
Could make it so. [*of gold,*

Staf. And what was Mary's dress?

Bag. Good faith, I was too sorry
for the woman [*shoes!*

To mark the dress. She wore red
Staf. Red shoes?

Bag. Scarlet, as if her feet were
washed in blood,

As if she had waded in it.

Staf. Were your eyes

So hashful that you look'd no higher?

Bag. A diamond,
And Philip's gift, as proof of Philip's
love, [*true one,*

Who hath not any for any,—tho' a
Blazed false upon her heart.

Staf. But this proud Prince—

Bag. Nay, he is King, you know,
the King of Naples.

The father ceded Naples, that the son
Being a King, might wed a Queen—O

he [*trunk hose,*

Flamed in brocade—white satin his
Inwrought with silver,—on his neck a
collar, [*down from this*

Gold, thick with diamonds; hanging
The Golden Fleece—and round his
knee, misplaced,

Our English Garter, studded with
great emeralds, [*had enough*

Rubies, I know not what. Have you
Of all this gear?

Staf. Ay, since you hate the
telling it.

How look'd the Queen?

Bag. No fairer for her jewels.
And I could see that as the new-made
couple [*by side*

Came from the Minster, moving side
Beneath one canopy, ever and anon
She cast on him a vassal smile of love,



Which Philip, with a glance of some distaste, [wrong, sir. Or so methought, return'd. I may be This marriage will not hold.

Staf. I think with you. The King of France will help to break it.

Bag. France! We once had half of France, and hurl'd our battles

Into the heart of Spain; but England now [and Spain,

Is but a ball chuck'd between France His in whose hand she drops; Harry of Bolingbroke

Had holpen Richard's tottering throne to stand, [our nobles

Could Harry have foreseen that all Would perish on the civil slaughter-field, [crown,

And leave the people naked to the And the crown naked to the people; the crown [men

Female, too! Sir, no woman's regi- Can save us. We are fallen, and as I think,

Never to rise again.

Staf. You are too black-blooded. I'd make a move myself to hinder that: [France.

I know some lusty fellows there in *Bag.* You would but make us weaker, Thomas Stafford.

Wyatt was a good soldier, yet he And strengthen'd Philip. [fall'd,

Staf. Did not his last breath Clear Courtenay and the Princess from the charge

Of being his co-rebels?

Bag. Ay, but then. What such a one as Wyatt says is nothing: [Lords

We have no men among us. The new Are quieted with their sop of Abbey-lands, [Gardiner buys them

And ev'n before the Queen's face With Philip's gold. All greed, no faith, no courage! [umberland,

Why, ev'n the haughty prince, North- The leader of our Reformation, knelt And blubber'd like a lad, and on the scaffold [Rome.

Recanted, and resold himself to

Staf. I swear you do your country wrong, Sir Ralph.

I know a set of exiles over there, Dare-devils, that would eat fire and spit it out [already.

At Philip's beard; they pillage Spain The French King winks at it. An hour will come

When they will sweep her from the seas. No men? [man?

Did not Lord Suffolk die like a true Is not Lord William Howard a true man? [black-hooded

Yea, you yourself, altho' you are And I, by God, believe myself a man. Ay, even in the church there is a man—Crammer.

Fly, would he not, when all men bade him fly.

And what a letter he wrote against the Pope?

There's a brave man, if any.

Bag. Ay; if it hold. [Graces! Crowd (coming on). God save their

Staf. Bagenhall, I see The Tudor green and white. (*Trumpets.*) They are coming now.

And here's a crowd as thick as her- ring-shoals. (we are torn

Bag. Be limpets to this pillar, or Down the strong wave of brawlers.

Crowd. God save their Graces.

[*Procession of Trumpeters, Javelin- men, etc.; then Spanish and Flem- ish Nobles intermingled.*

Staf. Worth seeing, Bagenhall!

These black dog-Dons

Garb themselves bravely. Who's the long-face there.

Looks very Spain of very Spain?

Bag. The Duke

Of Alva, an iron soldier.

Staf. And the Dutchman,

Now laughing at some jest?

Bag. William of Orange,

William the Silent.

Staf. Why do they call him so?

Bag. He keeps, they say, some se- cret that may cost

Philip his life.

Staf. But then he looks so merry.

Bag. I cannot tell you why they call him so.

[*The King and Queen pass, attended by Peers of the Realm, Officers of State, etc. Cannon shot off.*

Crowd. Philip and Mary, Philip and

Mary. [Philip and Mary.

Long live the King and Queen,

Staf. They smile as if content with one another.

Bag. A smile abroad is oft a scowl at home.

[*King and Queen pass on. Procession.*

1 *Cit.* I thought this Philip had been one of those black devils of Spain, but he hath a yellow beard.

2 *Cit.* Not red like Iscariot's.

1 *Cit.* Like a carrot's, as thou sayst, and English carrot's better than Spanish licorice; but I thought he was a heast.

3 *Cit.* Certain I had heard that every Spaniard carries a tail like a devil under his trunk hose.

Tailor. Ay, but see what trunk- hoses! Lord! they be fine; I never stitche'd none such. They make amends for the tails!

4 *Cit.* Tut! every Spanish priest will tell you that all English heretics have tails.

5 *Cit.* Death and the Devil—if he find I have one—

4 *Cit.* Lo! thou hast call'd them up! here they come—a pale horse for

Death and Gardiner for the Devil.



Enter Gardiner (turning back from the procession).

Gard. Knave, wilt thou wear thy cap before the Queen?
Man. My lord, I stand so squeezed among the crowd [head.
 I cannot lift my hands unto my
Gard. Knock off his cap there, some of you about him! [hands.
 See there be others that can use their
 Thou art one of Wyatt's men?
Man. No, my Lord, no.
Gard. Thy name, thou knave?
Man. I am nobody, my Lord.
Gard. (shouting). God's passion! knave, thy name?
Man. I have ears to hear.
Gard. Ay, rascal, if I leave thee ears to hear. [Attendant].
 Find out his name and bring it me (to
 At. Ay, my Lord.
Gard. Knave, thou shalt lose thine ears and find thy tongue,
 And shalt be thankful if I leave thee that.
 [Coming before the Conduit.
 The conduit painted—the nine worthies—ay!
 But then what's here? King Harry with a scroll. [God!
 Ha—Verbum Dei—verbum—word of God's passion! do you know the knave that painted it?
 At. I do, my Lord.
Gard. Tell him to paint it out, and put some fresh device in lieu of it— [ha?
 A pair of gloves, a pair of gloves, sir; There is no heresy there.
 At. I will, my Lord.
 The man shall paint a pair of gloves. I am sure [ignorantly,
 (Knowing the man) he wrought it and not from any malice.
Gard. Word of God
 In English! over this the brainless loons [Paul,
 That cannot spell Esaias from St. Make themselves drunk and mad, fly out and flare [burnt.
 Into rebellious: I'll have their Bibles The Bible is the priest's. Ay! fellow, what! [ing rogue.
 Stand staring at me! shout, you gap.
Man. I have, my Lord, shouted till I am hoarse. [knave?—
Gard. What hast thou shouted,
Man. Long live Queen Mary.
Gard. Knave, there be two. There be both King and Queen,
 Philip and Mary. Shout.
Man. Nay, but, my Lord,
 The Queen comes first, Mary and Philip.
Gard. Shout, then
 Mary and Philip.
Man. Mary and Philip!
Gard. Now,
 Thou hast shouted for thy pleasure, shout for mine!

Philip and Mary!

Man. Must it be so, my Lord?
Gard. Ay knave.
Man. Philip and Mary.
Gard. I distrust thee.
 Thine is a half voice and a lean assent.
 What is thy name?
Man. Sanders.
Gard. What else!
Man. Zerubbabel.
Gard. Where dost thou live?
Man. In Cornhill.
Gard. Where, knave, where?
Man. Sign of the Talbot.
Gard. Come to me to-morrow.—Rascal!—this land is like a hill of fire, One crater opens when another shuts. But so I get the laws against the heretic, [Liam Howard,
 Spite of Lord Paget and Lord Will—And others of our Parliament, revived, [and fire—
 I will show fire on my side—stake Sharp work and short. The knaves are easily cow'd.
 Follow their Majesties.

[Exit. The crowd following.

Bag. As proud as Becket,
Staf. You would not have him murder'd as Becket was?
Bag. No—murder fathers murder: but I say [woman with us—
 There is no man—there was one It was a sin to love her married, dead I cannot choose but love her.
Staf. Lady Jane?
Crowd (going off). God save their Graces.
Staf. Did you see her die?
Bag. No, no; her innocent blood had blinded me. [enough,
 You call me too black-blooded—true Her dark dead blood is in my heart with mine.
 If ever I cry out against the Pope, Her dark dead blood that ever moves with mine [the cry.
 Will stir the living tongue and make
Staf. Yet doubtless you can tell me how she died?
Bag. Seventeen—and knew eight languages—in music
 Peerless—her needle perfect, and her learning [so modest.
 Beyond the churchmen: yet so meek, So wife-like humble to the trivial boy Mismatch'd with her for policy! I have heard [of him,
 She would not take a last farewell She fear'd it might unman him for his end [outwoman'd—
 She could not be unmann'd—no nor Seventeen—a rose of grace!
 Girl never breathed to rival such a rose: [a bud.
 Rose never blew that equal'd such a
Staf. Pray you go on.
Bag. She came upon the scaffold,



And said she was condemn'd to die for treason;
 She had but follow'd the device of Her nearest kin: she thought they knew the laws
 But for herself, she knew but little And nothing of the titles to the crown;
 She had no desire for that, and wrung And trusted God would save her thro' Of Jesus Christ alone.

Staf. Pray you go on.
Bag. Then knelt and said the Miserere Mel—
 But all in English, mark you; rose And, when the headsmen pray'd to be forgiven,
 Said, "You will give me my true But do it quickly;" then all wept but she,
 Who changed not color when she saw But ask'd him, childlike: "Will you take it off"
 Before I lay me down?" "No, mad-Gasping; and when her innocent eyes were bound,
 She, with her poor blind hands feeling—"where is it?" [which follow'd
 Where is it!—"You must fancy that If you have heart to do it!

Crowd (in the distance). God save their Graces!

Staf. Their Graces, our disgraces! God confound them!

Why, she's grown bloodier! when I last was here,
 This was against her conscience—would be murder!

Bag. The "Thou shalt do no murder," which God's hand
 Wrote on her conscience, Mary rubb'd out pale—

She could not make it white—and over Traced in the blackest text of Hell—"Thou shalt!"

And sign'd it—Mary!

Staf. Philip, and the Pope Must 'have sign'd too. I hear this Legate's coming
 To bring us absolution from the Pope. The Lords and Commons will bow down before him—

You are of the house? what will you do, Sir Ralph?

Bag. And why should I be bolder Or honest than all?

Staf. But, sir, if I—
 And over sea they say this state of yours

Hath no more mortise than a tower And that a puff would do it—then if I And others made that move I've touch'd upon,

Back'd by the power of France, and Came with a sudden splendor, shout, and show,

And dazzled men and deafen'd by some bright

Loud venture, and the people so unquiet—

And I the race of murder'd Buckingham—

Not for myself, but for the kingdom—Sir,

I trust that you would fight along

Bag. No; you would fling your lives into the gulf.

Staf. But if this Philip, as he's Left Mary a wife-widow here alone,
 Set up a viceroy, sent his myriads hither

To seize upon the forts and fleet, and A Spanish province; would you not fight then?

Bag. I think I should fight then.

Staf. I am sure of it. Hist! there's the face coming on here of one

Who knows me. I must leave you. You'll hear of me again.

Bag. Upon the scaffold. [Exit.

SCENE. II.—Room in Whitehall Palace.

Mary. Enter Philip and Cardinal Pole.

Pole. Ava Maria, gratia plena, Benedicta tu in mulieribus.

Mary. Loyal and royal cousin, humblest thanks.

Had you a pleasant voyage up the Pole. We had your royal barge, and that same chair,

Or rather throne of purple, on the deck.

Our silver cross sparkled before the prow,

The ripples twinkled at their di-

The boats that follow'd, were as glowing-gay

As regal gardens; and your flocks As fair and white as angels; and your shores

Wore in mine eyes the green of Par-

My foreign friends, who dream'd us blanketed

In ever-closing fog, were much amaz-

To find as fair a sun as might have flash'd

Upon their Lake of Garda, fire the Our voyage by sea was all, but miracle;

And here the river flowing from the Not toward it (for they thought not of our tides),

Seem'd as a happy miracle to make in quiet—home your banish'd country-

man.

Mary. We heard that you were sick

Pole. A dizziness.

Mary. And how came you round again?

Pole. The scarlet thread of Rahab And mine, a little letting of the

Mary. Well? now? blood.

Pole. Ay, cousin, as the heathen giant

Had but to touch the ground, his force Thus, after twenty years of banish-

ment, Feeling my native land beneath my



I said thereto : " Ah, native land of mine, [of mine, Thou are much beholden to this foot That hastes with full commission from the Pope To absolve thee from thy guilt of heresy. [me, Thou hast disgraced me and attained And mark'd me ev'n as Cain, and I return [me well." As Peter, but to bless thee : make Methinks the good land heard me, for to-day [you, cousin. My heart beats twenty, when I see Ah, gentle cousin, since your Herod's death. [gate ! How oft hath Peter knock'd at Mary's And Mary would have risen and let him in, [the house But Mary, there were those within Who would not have it. [Mary. True, good cousin Pole ; And there were also those without Who would not have it. [the house Pole. I believe so, cousin. State-policy and church-policy are con-joint, But Jausus-faces looking diverse ways. I fear the Emperor much misvalued me. [God, But all is well ; 'twas ev'n the will of Who, waiting till the time had ripeu'd, now, [Hail, Makes me his mouth of holy greeting. Daughter of God, and savor of the faith, Sit benedictus fructus ventris tui ! " Mary. Ah, heaven ! Pole. Unwell, your grace ? Mary. No, cousin, happy— Happy to see you : never yet so happy Since I was crown'd. Pole. Sweet cousin, you forget That long low minster where you gave your hand To this great Catholic King. Phi. Well said, Lord Legate. Mary. Nay, not well said ; I thought of you, my liege, Ev'n as I spoke. Phi. Ay, Madam ; my Lord Paget Waits to present our Council to the Legate. Sit down here, all ; Madam, between us you. Pole. Lo, now you are enclosed with hoards of cedar, Our little sister of the Song of Songs ! You are doubly fenced and shielded sitting here Between the two most high-set thrones on earth, [boll'd by The Emperor's highness happily sym-The King your husband, the Pope's By mine own self. [Holiness Mary. True, cousin, I am happy. When will you that we summon both our houses To take this absolution from your lips, And be regather'd to the Papal fold ?

Pole. In Britain's calendar, the brightest day [their Gods, Beheld our rough forefathers break And clasp the faith in Christ ; but after that [piest day ? Might not St. Andrew's be her hap-Mary. Then these shall meet upon St. Andrew's day.

Enter Paget, who presents the Council. Dumb show.

Pole. I am an old man wearied with my journey, [withdraw Ev'n with my joy. Permit me to To Lambeth ? [Cranmer.

Phi. Ay, Lambeth has onsted It was not meet, the heretic swine In Lambeth. [should live

Mary. There or anywhere, or at all. Phi. We have had it swept and garnish'd after him.

Pole. Not for the seven devils to enter in ? [in the swine.

Phi. No, for we trust they parted Pole. True, and I am the Angel of Farewell, your Graces. [the Pope.

Phi. Nay, not here—to me ; I will go with you to the waterside.

Pole. Not be my Charon to the counter side ?

Phi. No, my Lord Legate, the Lord Chancellor goes.

Pole. And unto no dead world ; but Lambeth palace, [faith.

Henceforth a centre of the living [Execunt. Philip, Pole, Paget, etc.

Manet Mary.

He hath awaked ! he hath awaked ! He stirs within the darkness ! Oh, Philip, husband ! now thy love to mine [manners thaw, Will cling more close, and those bleak That make me shamed and tongue-tied in my love.

The second Prince of Peace— The great unborn defender of the Faith,

Who will avenge me of mine enemies— He comes, and my star rises. [lands, The stormy Wyatts and Northumber-The proud ambitions of Elizabeth, And all her fieriest partisans—are pale

Before my star ! [and dies : The light of this new learning wanes The ghosts of Luther and Zuinglius fade [doom

Into the deathless hell which is their Before my star ! [to Ind ! His sceptre shall go forth from Ind His sword shall hew the heretic peoples down ! [will be his,

His faith shall clothe the world that Like universal air and sunshine ! Open, Ye everlasting gates ! The King is My star, my son ! [here !—

Enter Philip, Duke of Alva, etc. Oh, Philip, come with me ;



Good news have I to tell you, news to make
Both of us happy—ay the Kingdom
Nay come with me—one moment!

Phi. (to Alva). More than that :
There was one here of late—William
the Silent [talk,
They call him—he is free enough in
But tells me nothing. You will be, we
trust, [ince—
Some time the viceroy of those prov-
He must deserve his surname better.
Alva. Ay, sir ;
Inherit the Great Silence.

Phi. True ; the provinces
Are hard to rule and must be hardly
ruled ; [rind,
Most fruitful, yet, indeed, an empty
All hollowed out with stinging her-
esies ; [fight :
And for their heresies, Alva, they will
You must break them or they break
you.

Alva. (proudly). The first.
Phi. Good !
Well, Madam ; this new happiness of
mine. [Exeunt.

Enter Three Pages.

1 Page. News, mates ! a miracle ! a
miracle ! news !
The bells must ring ; Te Deums must
be sung ; [her babe !
The Queen hath felt the motion of

2 Page. Ay ; but see here !
1 Page. See what ?
2 Page. This paper, Dickon.

I found it fluttering at the palace
gates :— [of a dead dog !"
"The Queen of England is delivered
3 Page. These are the things that
madden her. Fie upon it.

1 Page. Ay ; but I hear she hath a
dropsy, lad, [call it.
Or a high-dropsy, as the doctors

3 Page. Fie on her dropsy, so she
have a dropsy ! [me.
I know that she was ever sweet to

1 Page. For thou and thine are
Roman to the core. [Take heed !
3 Page. So thou and thine must be.

1 Page. Not I.
And whether this flash of news be
false or true,
So the wine run, and there be revelry,
Content am I. Let all the steeples
clash,
Till the sun dance, as upon Easter Day.

[Exeunt.

SCENE III.—*Great Hall in Whitehall*
[At the far end a dais. On this three
chairs, two under one canopy for
Mary and Philip, another on the right
of these for Pole. Under the dais on
Pole's side, ranged along the wall,
sit all the Spiritual Peers, and along
the wall opposite, all the Temporal.
The Commons on cross benches in
front, a line of approach to the dais

between them. In the foreground Sir
Ralph Bagenhall and other Members
of the Commons.

1 Mem. St. Andrew's day ; sit close,
sit close, we are friends. [again ?
Is reconciled the word ? The Pope
It must be thus ; and yet, cocksbody !
how strange [of us

That Gardiner, once so one with all
Against this foreign marriage, should
have yielded [still that he,
So utterly !—strange ! but stranger
So fierce against the Headship of the
Pope, [pageant

Should play the second actor in this
That brings him in ; such a chameleon
he !

2 Mem. This Gardiner turn'd his
coat in Henry's time ;
The serpent that hath slough'd will
slough again. [pents.

3 Mem. Tut, then we are all ser-
2 Mem. Speak for yourself.
3 Mem. Ay, and for Gardiner ! being
English citizen,

How should he bear a bridegroom out
of Spain ?
The Queen would have him ! being
English churchman. [the Pope ?

How should he bear the headship of
The Queen would have it ! Statesmen
that are wise

Shape a necessity, as the sculptor clay,
To their own model.
2 Mem. Statesmen that are wise
Take truth herself for model, what say
you ?

[To Sir Ralph Bagenhall.

Bag. We talk and talk. [talk ?
1 Mem. Ay, and what use to
Philip's no sudden alien—the Queen's
husband, [cocksbody !

He's here, and king, or will be,—yet
So hated here ! I watched a hive of
late ; [my young boy ;
My seven-years' friend was with me,
Out crept a wasp, with half the swarm
behind. [rogue

"Philip," says he. I had to cuff the
For infant treason.
3 Mem. But they say that bees,
If any creeping life invade their hive
Too gross to be thrust out, will build
him round [their combs.

And bind him in from harming of
And Philip by these articles is bound
From stirring hand or feet to wrong
the realm.

2 Mem. By bonds of beeswax, like
your creeping thing ;
But your wise bees had stung him
first to death.

3 Mem. Hush, hush !
You wrong the Chancellor : the claus-
es added [or sent us
To that same treaty which the emper-
Were mainly Gardiner's ; that no for-
eigner

Hold office in the household, fleet
forts, army ;



That if the Queen should die without
a child, [dissolved ;
The bond between the kingdoms be
That Philip should not mix us any way
With his French wars—

2 *Mem.* Ay, ay, but what security,
Good sir, for this, if Philip—

3 *Mem.* Peace—the Queen,
Philip, and Pole. [*All rise and stand.*
Enter Mary, Philip, and Pole.

[*Gardiner conducts them to the three
'chairs of state. Philip sits on the
Queen's left, Pole on her right.*

Gard. Our short-lived ann, before
his winter plunge, [drew's day.
Laughs at the last red leaf, and An-
Mary. Should not this day be held
in after years

More solemn than of old ?

Phi. Madam, my wish
Echoes your Majesty's.

Pole. It shall be so.

Gard. Mine echoes both your
Graces', (*aside*) but the Pope—

Can we not have the Catholic church
as well [cannot,
Without as with the Italian ? if we
Why then the Pope.

My lords of the upper house,
And ye my masters, of the lower
house, resolved ?

Do you stand fast by that which ye
Voices. We do. [supplicate

Gard. And be you all one mind to
The Legate here for pardon, and ac-
knowledge

The primacy of the Pope ?

Voices. We are all one mind.

Gard. Then must I play the vassal to
this Pole. [*Aside.*

[*He draws a paper from under his robes
and presents it to the King and Queen,
who look through it and return it to
him; then ascends a tribune and
reads.*

We, the Lords Spiritual and Temporal,
[assembled,

And Commons here in Parliament
Presenting the whole body of this
realm [same,

Of England, and dominions of the
Do make most humble suit unto your
Majesties, [state,

In our own name and that of all the
That by your gracious means and in-
tercession

Our supplication be exhibited
To the Lord Cardinal Pole, sent here
as Legate [Pope,

From our most holy father Julius,
And from the apostolic see of Rome ;
And do declare our penitence and
grief

For our long schism and disobedience,
Either in making laws and ordinances
Against the Holy Father's primacy,
Or else by doing or by speaking aught
[same ;

Which might impugn or prejudice the
By this our supplication promising,

As well for our own selves as all the
realm, [quick,

That now we be and ever shall be
Under and with your Majesties' au-
thorities,

To do to the utmost all that in us lies
Towards the abrogation and repeal
Of all such laws and ordinances made ;

[ties,
Whereon we humbly pray your Majes-
As persons undefiled with our offence,
So to set forth this humble suit of
ours [sion

That we the rather by your interces-
May from the apostolic see obtain,
Thro' this most reverend Father, ab-
solution, [censures

And full release from danger of all
Of Holy Church that we be fall'n into,
So that we may, as children penitent,
Be once again received into the bosom
And unity of Universal Church ;

And that this noble realm thro' after
years
May in this unity and obedience
Unto the holy see and reigning Pope
Serve God and both your Majesties.

Voices. Amen. [*All sit.*
[*He again presents the petition to the
King and Queen, who hand it reve-
rentially to Pole.*

Pole (sitting). This is the loveliest
day that ever smiled

On England. All her breath should,
incense like, [of Him
Rise to the heavens in grateful praise
Who now recalls her to his ancient
fold. [given

Lo ! once again God to this realm hath
A token of His more especial Grace ;
For as this people were the first of all
[chnrch

The islands call'd into the dawning
Out of the dead, deep night of heathen-
dom,

So now are these the first whom God
hath given [schism ;
Grace to repent and sorrow for their
And if your penitence be not mockery,
[joice

Oh how the blessed angels who re-
Over one saved do triumph at this
hour

In the reborn salvation of a land
So noble. [*A pause.*

For ourselves we do protest
That our commission is to heal, not
harm ; [cile ;

We come not to condemn, but recon-
We come not to compel, but call
again ;

We come not to destroy, but edify ;
Nor yet to question things already
done ;

These are forgiven — matters of the
past—
And range with jetsam and with offal
thrown

Into the blind sea of forgetfulness.
[*A pause.*



Ye have reversed the attainder laid
on us [and we,
By him who sacked the house of God;
Amplier than any field on our poor
earth [sown,
Can render thanks in fruit for being
Do here and now repay you sixty-fold,
A hundred, yea, a thousand thousand
With heaven for earth. [fold,

[*Rising and stretching forth his hands. All kneel but Sir Ralph Bagenhall, who rises and remains standing.*

The Lord who hath redeem'd us
With his own blood, and wash'd us
from our sins, [bride;
To purchase for himself a stainless
He, whom the Father hath appointed
Head [absolve you!
Of all his church, He by His mercy
[*A pause.*

And we by that authority Apostolic
Given unto us, his Legate, by the
Pope,
Our Lord and Holy Father, Julius,
God's Vicar and Vicegerent upon
earth,
Do here absolve you and deliver you
And every one of you, and all the
realm

And its dominions from all heresy,
All schism, and from all and every
censure, [upon;
Judgment, and pain accruing there-
And also we restore you to the bosom
And unity of Universal Church.

[*Turning to Gardiner.*
Our letters of commission will declare
this plainlier.

[*Queen heard sobbing. Cries of Amen! Amen! Some of the members embrace one another. All but Sir Ralph Bagenhall pass out into the neighboring chapel, whence is heard the Te Deum.*

Bag. We strove against the papacy
from the first, [ward's time,
In William's time, in our first Ed-
And in my master Henry's time; but
now,

The unity of Universal Church,
Mary would have it; and this Gar-
diner follows;
The Unity of Universal Hell,
Philip would have it; and this Gar-
diner follows!

A Parliament of imitative apes!
Sheep at the gap which Gardiner
takes, who not believe—
Believes the Pope, nor any of them
These spaniel-Spaniard English of the
time, [dust,

Who rub their fawning noses in the
For that is Philip's gold-dust, and
adore

This Vicar of their Vicar. Would I
had been
Born Spaniard! I had held my head
up then,

I am ashamed that I am Bagenhall,
English.

Enter Officer.

Of. Sir Ralph Bagenhall,

Bag. What of that?

Of. You were the one sole man in
either house [houses fell.
Who stood upright when both the
Bag. The houses fell!

Of. I mean the houses knelt
Before the Legate.

Bag. Do not scrimp your phrase,
But stretch it wider; say when Eng-
land fell. [man who stood.

Of. I say you were the one sole

Bag. I am the one sole man in
either house [a son.
Perchance in England loves her like

Of. Well, you one man, because
you stood upright, [to the Tower.
Her Grace the Queen commands you

Bag. As traitor, or as heretic, or
for what? [be

Of. If any man in any way would
The one man he shall be so to his
cost.

Bag. What! will she have my
head?

Of. A round fine liker!er.
Your pardon. [*Calling to Attendant.*
By the river to the Tower.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE IV.—*Whitehall. A room in the Palace.*

Mary, Gardiner, Pole, Paget,
Bonner, etc.

Mary. The king and I, my Lords,
now that all traitors [the heads
Against our royal state have lost
Wherewith they plotted in their trea-
sonous malice,

Have talk'd together and are well
agreed [lardism

That those old statutes touching Lol-
To bring the heretic to the stake,
should be [quicken'd.

No longer a dead letter, but re-
One of the Council. Why, what hath
fluster'd Gardiner? how he rubs

His forelock.
Paget. I have changed a word
with him [again.

In coming, and may change a word
Gard. Madam, your Highness is
our sun, the King [one;

And you together our two suns in
And so the beams of both may shine
upon us, [feel your light,

The faith that seem'd to droop will
Lift head, and flourish; yet not light
alone, [heat enough

There must be heat—there must be
To scorch and wither heresy to the
root. [to come in.]

For what saith Christ? "Compel them
And what saith Paul? "I would
they were cut off [ter live!

That trouble you. "Let the dead let-



Trace it in fire, that all the louts to whom
 Their A B C is darkness, clowns and May read it! so you quash rebellion too,
 For heretic and traitor are all one :
 Two vipers of one breed—an amphibiaena, [letter burn!
 Each end a sting: let the dead Pag. Yet there be some disloyal Catholics, [throats
 And many heretics loyal; heretic Cried no God-bless-her to the Lady Jane, [be
 But shouted in Queen Mary. So there Some traitor-heretic, there is axe and cord. [loyal,
 To take the lives of others that are And by the churchman's pitiless doom of fire, [crown,
 Were but a thankless policy in the Ay, and against itself; for there are many.

Mary. If we could burn out heresy, my Lord Paget, [of England—
 We reck not tho' we lost this crown Ay! tho' it were ten Englands!

Gard. Right your Grace, Paget, you are all for this poor life of ours,
 And care but little for the life to be.

Paget. I have some time, for curiousness, my Lord,
 Watch'd children playing at their life to be,
 And cruel at it, killing helpless flies;
 Such is our time—all times for aught I know. [sting the soul—

Gard. We kill the heretics that They, with right reason, flies that prick the flesh.

Paget. They had not reach'd right reason; little children!
 They kill'd but for their pleasure and They felt in killing. [the power

Gard. A spice of Satan, ha!
 Why, good! what then? granted!—
 we are fallen creatures;

Look to your Bible, Paget! we are fallen. [Lord Bishop,

Paget. I am but of the laity, my And may not read your Bible, yet I found [the children,
 One day a wholesome scripture, "Lit-Love one another."

Gard. Did you find a scripture, "I come not to bring peace but a sword"? The sword [Paget,
 Is in her Grace's hand to smite with, You stand up here to fight for heresy, You are more than guess'd at as a heretic, [true faith
 And on the steep up-track of the Your lapses are far seen.

Paget. The faultless Gardiner!

Mary. You brawl beyond the question; speak, Lord Legate.

Pole. Indeed, I cannot follow with your Grace, [not kill
 Rather would say—the shepherd doth

The sheep that wander from his flock, but sends [fold.

His careful dog to bring them to the Look to the Netherlands, wherein have been [end?

Such holocausts of heresy! to what For yet the faith is not established Gard. The end's not come. [there.

Pole. No—nor this way will come, Seeing there lie two ways to every end, [here

A better and a worse—the worse is To persecute, because to persecute Makes a faith hated, and is further-more

No perfect witness of a perfect faith In him who persecutes: when men are tost [sure

On tides of strange opinion, and not Of their own selves, they are wroth with their own selves,
 And thence with others; then, who lights the fagot?

Not the full faith, no, but the lurking doubt. [the Church,

Old Rome, that first made martyrs in Trembled for her own gods, for these were trembling—

But when did our Rome tremble?

Paget. Did she not In Henry's time and Edward's?

Pole. What, my Lord! The Church on Peter's rock? never! I have seen

A pine in Italy that cast its shadow Athwart a cataract; firm stood the pine— [my mind,

The cataract shook the shadow. To The cataract typed the headlong plunge and fall [Rome.

Of heresy to the pit: the pine was You see, my Lords, [trembled;
 It was the shadow of the Church that Your church was but the shadow of Wanting the triple mitre. [a church,

Gard. (muttering). Here be tropes. Pole. And tropes are good to clothe a naked truth,

And make it look more seemly.

Gard. Tropes again!

Pole. You are hard to please. Then without tropes my Lord,

An overmuch severeness, I repeat, When faith is wavering makes the waverer pass [doctrines

Into the more settled hatred of the Of those who rule, which hatred by and by [to light

Involves the ruler (thus there springs That Centaur of a monstrous common-weal [misy quail,

The traitor-heretic) then tho' some Yet others are that dare the stake and fire, [borne, begets

And their strong torment bravely An admiration and an indignation, And hot desire to imitate; so the plague

Of schism spreads; were there but three or four



Of these misleaders, yet I would not say

Burn! and we cannot burn whole towns; they are many
As my Lord Paget says.

Gard. Yet my Lord Cardinal—
Pole. I am your Legate; and please you let me finish.

regimen
Methinks that under our Queen's We might go softlier than with crimson rowel

[Henry first]
And streaming lash. When Herod-Began to batter at your English Church This was the cause, and hence the judgment on her.

She seethed with such adulteries, and the lives *[so foul]*

Of many among your churchmen were That heaven wept and earth blush'd. I would advise

That we should thoroughly cleanse the Church within *[quicken'd]*. Before these bitter statutes he re-So after that when she once more is seen

[of Christ]
White as the light, the spotless bride Like Christ himself on Tabor, possibly *[again]*;

The Lutheran may be won to her Till when, my Lords, I counsel tolerance. *[hand my Lord]*

Gard. What if a mad dog bit you Would you not chop the bitten finger off, *[with the poison?]*

Lest your whole body should madden I would not, were I Queen, tolerate the heretic,

No, not an hour. The ruler of a land Is bounden by his power and place to see *[them]*!

His people he not poison'd. Tolerate Why? do they tolerate you? Nay, many of them *[call they not]*

Would burn—have burnt each other; The one true faith, a loathsome idol-worship? *[crime]*

Beware, Lord Legate, of a heavier Than heresy is itself; beware I say, Lest men accuse you of indifference

To all faith, all religion; for you know Right well that you yourself have been supposed

Tainted with Lutheranism in Italy. *Pole (angered).* But you, my Lord, beyond all supposition,

In clear and open day were congruent With that vile Cranmer in the accus-ed lie *[the spring]*

Of good Queen Catherine's divorce— Of all those evils that have flow'd upon us; *[tyrant]*,

For you yourself have truckled to the And done your best to bastardize our Queen, *[fell upon you]*

For which God's righteous judgment In your five years of imprisonment, my Lord *[ster'd up]*

Under young Edward. Who so bol-The gross King's headship of the Church, or more

Denied the Holy Father!

Gard. Ha! what! eh? But you, my Lord, a polli'd gentle-man, *[tussle]*

A bookman, flying from the heat and You lived among your vines and oranges, *[sent for]*

In your soft Italy yonder! You were You were appeal'd to, but you still pre-fer'd *[did]*

Your learned leisure. As for what I I suffer'd and repented. You, Lord Legate *[to learn]*

And Cardinal-Deacon, have not now That ev'n St. Peter in his time of fear Denied his Master, ay, and thrice, my Lord, *[years, my Lord]*.

Pole. But not for five and twenty *Gard.* Ha! good! it seems then I was summon'd hither

But to be mock'd and baited. Speak, friend Bonner,

And tell this earned Legate he lacks zeal.

The Church's evil is not as the King's. Cannot he heal'd by stroking. The mad hite *[at once]*.

Must have the cautory—tell him—and What wouldst thou do hadst thou his power, thou *[with me]*.

That layest so long in heretic bonds Wouldst thou not burn and blast them root and branch?

Bon. Ay, after you, my Lord. *Gard.* Nay, God's passion, before me! speak. *[flame]*.

Bon. I am on fire until I see them *Gard.* Ay, the psalm-singing weavers, cobblers, scum— *[genet]*.

But this most noble prince Planta-Our good Queen's cousin—dallying over seas *[noble mother's]*

Even when his brother's, nay, his Head fell—
Pole. Peace, mad man!

Thou stirrest up a grief thou canst not fathom. *[Chancellor]*

Thou Christian Bishop, thou Lord Of England? no more rein upon thine anger *[ashamed]*

Than any child! Thou mak'st me much That I was for a moment wroth at thee. *[give me feuds]*,

Mary. I come for counsel and ye Like dogs that set to watch their master's gate,

Fall, when the thief is ev'n within the walls *[Chancellor]*,

To worrying one another. My Lord You have an old trick of offending us; *[with us]*

And but that you are art and part In purging heresy, well we might, for this *[the Legate]*,

Your violence and much roughness to Have shut you from our counsels. Cousin Pole, *[Retire with me]*.

You are fresh from brighter lands. His highness and myself *(so you allow us)*



Will let you learn in peace and privacy

What power this cooler son of England hath
In breeding Godless vermin. And
That you may see according to our
Come, cousin.

[Exeunt Queen and Pole, etc.]
Gard. Pole has the Plantagenet
face.
But not the force made them our
Fine eyes—but melancholy, irresolute—

A fine beard, Bonner, a very full
But a weak mouth, an indeterminate
—ha?

Bon. Well, a weak mouth per-
Gard. And not like thine
To gorge a heretic whole roasted or
raw.

Bon. I'd do my best, my Lord; but
Is here as Pope and Master of the
Church,
And if he go not with you—

Gard. Tut, Master Bishop,
Our bashful Legate, saw'st not how he
finsh'd?

Touch him upon his old heretical talk,
He'll burn a diocese to prove his or-
thodoxy.

And let him call me truckler. In
Thou knowest we had to dodge, or
duck, or die;
I kept my head for use of Holy
And see you, we shall have to dodge
again,

And let the Pope trample our rights,
His foreign fist into our island
Church

To plumb the leaner pouch of Italy.
For a time for a time.
Why? that these statutes may be
And that his fan may thoroughly
purge his floor.

Bon. So then you hold the Pope—
Gard. I hold the Pope!
What do I hold him? what do I hold
the Pope?

[Cardinal's fault—]
Come, come, the morsel stuck—this
I have gulped it down. I am wholly
for the Pope,

Utterly and altogether for the Pope,
The Eternal Peter of the changeless
chair,

Crown'd slave of slaves, and mitred
God upon earth! what more? what
would you have?

Hence, let's be gone.

Enter Usher.

Ush. Well that you be not gone,
My Lord. The Queen, most wroth at
first with you,
Is now content to grant you full
So that you crave full pardon of the
Legate.

I am sent to fetch you.
Gard. Doth Pole yield, sir, ha!
Did you hear 'em? were you by?

Ush. I cannot tell you,

His bearing is so courtly delicate;
And yet methinks he falters: their
two Graces

Do so dear-cousin and royal-cousin
So press on him the duty which as
Legate

He owes himself, and with such
Gard. Smiles that burn men. Bon-
ner, it will be carried.

He falters, ha? 'fore God we change
and change;

Men now are bow'd and old, the doc-
At three-score years; then if we
change at all

We needs must do it quickly; it is
Of brief life, and brief purpose, and
fury patience,

As I have shown to-day. I am sorry
If Pole be like to turn. Our old friend
Crammer,

Your more especial love, hath turn'd
He knows not where he stands, which,
if this pass,

We two shall have to teach him; let
Crammer and Hooper, Ridley and Lat-
imer,

Rogers and Ferrar, for their time
Their hour is hard at hand, their "dies
Irae,"

Their "dies Illa," which will test
I feel it but a duty—you will find in
it

Pleasure as well as duty, worthy
To test their sect. Sir, I attend the
Queen

To crave most humble pardon—of her
Royal, Infallible, Papal Legate-cousin.
[Exeunt.]

SCENE V.—Woodstock.

Elizabeth, Lady in Waiting.

Lady. The colors of our Queen are
green and white,
These fields are only green, they make
me gape.

Eliz. There's a whitethorn, girl.
Lady. Ay, for an hour in May.
But court is always May, buds out in
masks,

Breaks into feather'd merriments, and
In silken pageants. Why do they
keep us here?

Why still suspect your Grace?
Eliz. Hard upon both.

*[Writes on the window with a dia-
mond.]*
*Much suspected, of me
Nothing proven can be,
Quoth Elizabeth, prisoner.*

Lady. What hath your Highness
written?

Eliz. A true rhyme.
Lady. Cut with a diamond; so to
last like truth.

Eliz. Ay, if truth last. *[out.]*
Lady. But truth, they say, will
So it must last. It is not like a word,



That comes and goes in uttering.

Eliz. Truth, a word !
The very Truth and very Word are
one. [at, girl,
But truth of story, which I glanced
Is like a word that comes from olden
days, [tongue
And passes thro' the peoples : every
Alters it passing, till it spells and
speaks
Quite other than at first.

Lady. I do not follow.

Eliz. How many names in the long
sweep of time [but hang
That so foreshortens greatness, may
On the chance mention of some fool
that oncs

Brake bread with us, perhaps ; and
my poor chronicle [field
Is hut of glass. Sir Henry Beding-
May split it for a spite.

Lady. God grant it last,
And witness to your Grace's inno-
cence,
Till doomsday melt it.

Eliz. Or a second fire,
Like that which lately crackled under-
foot [glass,
And in this very chamber, fuse the
And char us back again into the dust
We spring from. Never peacock
against rain
Scream'd as you did for water.

Lady. And I got it.
I woke Sir Henry—and he's true to
you—

I read his honest horror in his eyes.
Eliz. Or true to you ?

Lady. Sir Henry Bedingfield !
I will have no man true to me, your
Grace, [the clown !
But one that pares his nails ; to me ?
For, like his cloak, his manners want
the nap [says,
And gloss of court ; but of this fire he
Nay swears, it was no wicked wilful-
ness,
Only a natural chance.

Eliz. A chance—perchance
One of those wicked wilfuls that men
make, [know
Nor shame to call it nature. Nay, I
They hunt my blood. Save for my
daily range [Writ
Among the pleasant fields of Holy
I might despair. But there hath some
one come ;
The house is all in movement. Hence.
and see.

[Exit Lady.

Milkmaid (singing without).

*Shame upon you, Robin,
Shame upon you now !
Kiss me would you ? with my hands
Milking the cow ?
Daisies grow again,
Kingscups blow again,
And you came and kiss'd me milking
the cow.*

*Robin came behind me,
Kiss'd me well I vow ;
Cuff him could I ? with my hands
Milking the cow ?
Swallows fly again,
Cuckoos cry again,
And you came and kiss'd me milking
the cow.*

*Come, Robin, Robin,
Come and kiss me now ;
Help it can I ? with my hands
Milking the cow ?
Ringdoves coo again,
All things woo again,
Come behind and kiss me milking the
cow.*

Eliz. Right honest and red-cheek'd ;
Robin was violent,
And she was crafty—a sweet violence,
And a sweet craft. I would I were a
milkmaid, [bake, and die,
To sing love, marry, churn, brew,
Then have my simple headstons by
the church,
And all things lived and ended hon-
estly.

I could not if I would. I am Harry's
daughter : [are not sweet.
Gardiner would have my head. They
The violence and the craft that do
divide [must lie ;
The world of nature ; what is weak
The lion needs but roar to guard his
young ; [they are there.
The lapwing lies, says " here " when
Threaten the child ; " I'll scourge
you if you did it." [soft tongue,
What weapon hath the child, save his
To say, " I did not ? " and my rod's
the block.

I never lay my head upon the pillow
But that I think, " Wilt thou lie there
to-morrow ? " [fell,
How oft the falling axe, that never
Hath shock'd me back into the day-
light truth [black, dead
That it may fall to-day ! Those damp,
Nights in the Tower ; dead—with the
fear of death— [of a bell,
Too dead ev'n for a death-watch ! Toll
Stroke of a clock, the scurrying of a
rat

Affrighted me, and then delighted me,
For there was life—And there was life
in death— [light,
The little murder'd princes, in a pale
Rose hand in hand, and whisper'd,
" come away,

The civil wars are gone forevermore :
Thou last of all the Tudors, come away
[was a dream ;
With us is peace ! " The last ? It
I must not dream, not wink, but watch.
She has gone, [by
Maid Marian to her Robin—by and
Both happy ! a fox may flch a hen by
night, [yard ;
And make a morning outcry in the



But there's no Renard here to "catch her tripping." [have wish'd

Catch me who can; yet, sometimes I fhat I were caught, and kill'd away at once [Gardiner,

Out of the flutter. The gray rogue, Went on his knees, and pray'd me to confess [self

In Wyatt's business, and to cast my-Upon the good Queen's mercy; ay, when, my Lord?

God save the Queen. My jailer—
Enter Sir Henry Bedingfield.

Bed. One, whose bolts That jail you from free life, bar you from death. [hereabout

There haunt some Papist ruffians Would murder you.

Eliz. I thank you heartily, sir, But I am royal, tho' your prisoner, And God hath blest or cursed me with a nose—

Your boots are from the horses.

Bed. Ay, my Lady. When next there comes a missive from the Queen [hour

It shall be all my study for one To rose and lavender my horsiness, Before I dare to glance upon your Grace. [time she wrote,

Eliz. A missive from the Queen: last I had like to have lost my life: it takes my breath: [boots,

O God, sir, do you look upon your Are you so small a man? Help me: Is it life or death? [what think you,

Bed. I thought not on my boots; The devil take all boots were ever made [lay it here,

Since man went barefoot. See, I For I will come no nearer to your Grace; [Laying down the letter.

And whether it bring you bitter news or sweet, [or not,

And God hath given your Grace a nose I'll help you, if I may.

Eliz. Your pardon, then; It is the heat and narrowness of the cage [free wing

That makes the captive testy; with The world were all one Araby. Leave me now,

Will you, companion to myself, sir?
Bed. Will I? With most exceeding willingness, I will;

You know I never come until I be call'd. [Exit.

Eliz. It lies there folded: is there venom in it? [sting.

A snake—and if I touch it, it may Come, come, the worst! Best wisdom is to know the worst at once. [Reads:

It is the King's wish that you should wed Prince Philibert of Savoy. You are to come to Court on the instant; and think of this in your coming.

Mary the Queen. Think! I have many thoughts;

I think there may be birdlime here for me; [the realm;

I think they fain would have me from I think the Queen may never bear a child; [Queen,

I think that I may be some time the Then, Queen indeed: no foreign prince or priece [the steps.

Should fill my throne, myself upon I think I will not marry any one, Specially not this landless Philibert

Of Savoy; but, if Philip menace me, I think that I will play with Philibert,—

As once the holy father did with mine, Before my father married my good mother,—

For fear of Spain.

Enter Lady.

Lady. O Lord! your Grace, your Grace, [shall fly

I feel so happy: it seems that we These bald, blank fields, and dance into the sun

That shines on princes.

Eliz. Yet, a moment since, I wish'd myself the milkmaid singing here; [flowers—

To kiss and cuff among the birds and A right rough life and heatful.

Lady. But the wench Hath her own troubles; she is weeping now; [word.

For the wrong Robin took her at her Then the cow kick'd, and all her milk was spilt.

Your Highness such a milkmaid?
Eliz. I had kept My Robins and my cows in sweeter order

Had I been such. [a Robin?
Lady (stily). And had your Grace

Eliz. Come, come, you are chill here: you want the sun

That shines at court; make ready for the journey.

Pray God, we 'scape the sunstroke. Ready at once. [Exeunt.

SCENE VI.—*London. A Room in the Palace.*

Lord Petre and Lord William Howard.

Petre. You cannot see the Queen. Renard denied her,

Ev'n now to me.
How. Their Flemish go-between And all-in-all. I came to thank her Majesty [the Tower;

For freeing my friend Bagenhall from A grace to me! Mercy, that herb-of-Flowers now but seldom. [grace,

Petre. Only now perhaps, Because the Queen hath been three days in tears [hedge-rose

For Philip's going—like the wild Of a soft winter, possible, not probable,

However, you have prov'n it.
How. I must see her.



Enter Renard.

Ren. My Lords, you cannot see her Majesty.

How. Why then the King! for I would have him bring it [Queen, Home to the leisure wisdom of his Before he go, that since these statutes past, [his heat, Gardiner, out-Gardiners Gardiner in Bonner cannot out-Bonner his own self— [dren do, Beast!—but they play with fire as chil— And burn the house. I know that these are breeding [in men A fierce resolve and fixt heart-hate Against the King, the Queen, the Holy Father,

The faith itself. Can I not see him? *Ren.* Not now.

And in all this, my Lord, her Majesty is flint of flint, you may strike fire from her, [your message. Not hope to melt her. I will give [Exit Petre and Howard.

Enter Philip (musing).
Phi. She will not have Prince Philibert of Savoy, [she will live I talk'd with her in vain—says And die true maid—a goodly creature too [she must have him; Would she had been the Queen! yet She troubles England: that she breathes in England

Is life and lungs to every rebel birth That passes out of embryo.

Simon Renard!— This Howard, whom they fear, what was he saying? [said, my liege, *Ren.* What your imperial father To deal with heresy gentlier. Gardiner burns, [this people And Bonner burns; and it would seem Care more for our brief life in their wet land [my Lord Than yours in happier Spain. I told He should not vex her Highness; she would say [that His church These are the means God works with, May flourish.

Phi. Ay, sir, but in statemanship [blow. To strike too soon is oft to miss the Thou knowest I bade my chaplain, Castro, preach Against these burnings.

Ren. And the Emperor approved you, and when last he wrote, declared [were bland His comfort in your Grace that you And affable to men of all estates, In hope to charm them from their hate of Spain. [under Spain.

Phi. In hope to crush all heresy But, Renard, I am sicker staying here Than any sea could make me passing hence, Tho' I be ever deadly sick at sea. So sick am I with biding for this child. [women Is it the fashion in this clime for

To go twelve months in hearing of a child? [they led

The nurses yawn'd, the cradle gaped, Processions, chanted litanies, clash'd their bells, [priests Shot off their lying cannon, and her Have preach'd, the fools, of this fair prince to come, [fool.

Till, by St. James, I find myself the Why do you lift your eyebrow at me thus? [moved till now.

Ren. I never saw your Highness *Phi.* So, weary am I of this wet land of theirs, And every soul of man that breathes therein.

Ren. My liege, we must not drop the mask before The masquerade is over—

Phi. —Have I dropt it? I have but shown a loathing face to you, Who knew it from the first.

Enter Mary.

Mary (aside). With Renard. Still Parleying with Renard, all the day with Renard, me— And scarce a greeting all the day for And goes to-morrow. [Exit Mary.

Phi. (to Renard who advances to him). Well, sir, is there more? *Ren.* (who has perceived the Queen). May Simon Renard speak a single word?

Phi. Ay. *Ren.* And be forgiven for it? *Phi.* Simon Renard Knows me too well to speak a single That could not be forgiven. [word

Ren. Well, my liege, Your Grace hath a most chaste and loving wife.

Phi. Why not? The Queen of Philip should be chaste.

Ren. Ay, but, my Lord, you know what Virgil sings, Woman is various and most mutable. *Phi.* She play the harlot! never.

Ren. No, sire, no, Not dream'd of by the rabidest gosseller. [palace, There was a paper thrown into the "The King hath wearied of his barren bride." [rent it, She came upon it, read it, and then With all the rage of one who hates a truth [have you— He cannot but allow. Sire, I would What should I say, I cannot pick my words— [Queen.

Be somewhat less—majestic to your *Phi.* Am I to change my manners, Simon Renard, [beasts? Because these islanders are brutal Or would you have me turn a sonneteer, And warble those brief-sighted eyes of hers?



Ren. Brief-sighted tho' they be, I have seen them, sire, [royally] When you perchance were trifling With some fair dame of court, suddenly fill [indeed] With such fierce fire—had it been fire It would have burnt both speakers.

Phi. Ay, and then?

Ren. Sire, might it not be policy in some matter [to cede] Of small importance now and then A point to her demand?

Phi. Well, I am going.

Ren. For should her love when you are gone, my liege, [be wanting] Witness these papers, there will not Those that will urge her injury— should her love— [than one—]

And I have known such women more Vex to the counterpoint, and jealousy Hath in it an alechemic force to fuse Almost into one metal love and hate,— [Council]

And she impress her wrongs upon her And these again upon her Parliament— [then perhaps]

We are not loved here, and would Not so well holpen in our wars with France,

As else we might be—here she comes.

Enter Mary.

Mary. O Philip! Nay, must you go indeed?

Phi. Madam, I must.

Mary. The parting of a husband and a wife [half] Is like the cleaving of a heart; one Will flutter here, one there.

Phi. You say true, Madam.

Mary. The Holy Virgin will not have me yet [a prince]. Lose the sweet hope that I may bear If such a prince were horn and you not here! [were born.]

Phi. I should be here if such a prince

Mary. But must you go?

Phi. Madam, you know my father, Retiring into cloistral solitude To yield the remnant of his years to heaven, [the world]

Will shift the yoke and weight of all From off his neck to mine. We meet at Brussels. [long]

But since mine absence will not be for Your Majesty shall go to Dover with And wait my coming back. [me]

Mary. To Dover? no, I am too feeble. I will go to Greenwich, [there watch]

So you will have me with you; and All that is gracious in the breath of heaven [land, and pass]

Draw with your sails from our poor And leave me, Philip, with my prayers for you. [your prayers.]

Phi. And doubtless I shall profit by

Mary. Methinks that would you tarry one day more [myself] The news was sudden) I could mould

To bear your going better; will you do it? [save a realm.]

Phi. Madam, a day may sink or *Mary.* A day may save a heart from breaking too. [stop a day?]

Phi. Well, Simon Renard, shall we *Ren.* Your Grace's business will not suffer, sire, [tell.]

For one day more, so far as I can

Phi. Then one day more to please her Majesty. [my life again.]

Mary. The sunshine sweeps across O if I knew you felt this parting, As I do! [Philip]

Phi. By St. James I do protest, Upon the faith and honor of a Spaniard, [Majesty.]

I am vastly grieved to leave you Simon, is supper ready?

Ren. Ay, my liege,

I saw the covers laying.

Phi. Let us have it. [Exeunt.]

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—A Room in the Palace.

Mary, Cardinal Pole.

Mary. What have you there?

Pole. So please your Majesty, A long petition from the foreign exiles To spare the life of Cranmer. Bishop

Thirlby, [Howard]

And my Lord Paget and Lord William Crave, in the same cause, hearing of your Grace. [at—]

Hath he not written himself—infatu— To sue you for his life?

Mary. His life? Oh, no; Not sued for that—he knows it were in vain.

But so much of the anti-papal leaven Works in him yet, he hath pray'd me not to sully [the realm]

Mine own prerogative, and degrade By seeking justice at a stranger's hand

[Queen] Against my natural subject. King and To whom he owes his loyalty after God, [prince?]

Shall these accuse him to a foreign Death would not grieve him more. I cannot be [Pope]

True to this realm of England and the Together, says the heretic.

Pole. And there errs; As he hath ever err'd thro' vanity. A secular kingdom is but as the body

Lacking a soul; and in itself a beast. The Holy Father in a secular kingdom Is as the soul descending out of heaven into a body generate.

Mary. Write to him, then.

Pole. I will.

Mary. And sharply, Pole.

Pole. Here come the Cranmerites! *Enter* Thirlby, Lord Paget, Lord William Howard.



How. Health to your Grace, Good-morrow, my Lord Cardinal ;
 We make our humble prayer unto your Grace [eign parts,
 That Cranmer may withdraw to for- Or into private life within the realm.
 In several bills and declarations, Madam,
 He hath recanted all his heresies.
Paget. Ay, ay ; if Bonner have not forged the bills. [Aside
Mary. Did not More die, and Fisher ? he must burn.
How. He hath recanted, Madam.
Mary. The better for him. He burns in Purgatory, not in Hell.
How. Ay, ay, your Grace ; but it was never seen
 That any one recanting thus at full, As Cranmer hath, came to the fire on earth.
Mary. It will be seen now, then.
Thi. O Madam, Madam ! I thus implore you, low upon my knees, [friend.
 To reach the hand of mercy to my I have err'd with him ; with him I have recanted.
 What human reason is there why my friend
 Should meet with lesser mercy than myself ? [a riot
Mary. My Lord of Ely, this. After We hang the leaders, let their following go.
 Cranmer is head and father of these heresies, [God
 New learning as they call it ; yea, may Forget me at most need when I forget Her foul divorce—my sainted mother—
 No !— [doubted there.
How. Ay, ay, but mighty doctors The Pope himself waver'd ; and more than one [wit,
 Row'd in that galley—Gardiner to Whom truly I deny not to have been Your faithful friend and trusty councillor. [book,
 Hath not your Highness ever read his His tractate upon True Obedience, Write by himself and Bonner ?
Mary. I will take Such order with all bad heretical books [house and live,
 That none shall hold them in his Henceforward. No, my Lord.
How. Then never read it. The truth is here. Your father was a man [courteous,
 Of such colossal kinghood, yet so Except when wroth, you scarce could meet his eye
 And hold your own ; and wens he wroth indeed,
 You held it less, or not at all. I say, Your father had a will that beat men down ; [men down—
 Your father had a brain that beat *Pole.* Not me, my Lord.
How. No, for you were not here ;

You sit upon this fallen Cranmer's throne ; [Lord Legate,
 And it would more become you, my To join a voice, so potent with her Highness, [stand
 To ours in plea for Cranmer than to On naked self-assertion.
Mary. All your voices Are wares on fint. The heretic must burn. [esty's own life ;
How. Yet once he saved your Majesty stood out against the King in your At his own peril. [behalf,
Mary. I know not if he did ; And if he did I care not, my Lord Howard.
 My life is not so happy, no such boon, That I should spare to take a heretic priest's, [you vex me ?
 Who saved it or not saved. Why do *Paget.* Yet to save Cranmer were to save the Church,
 Your Majesty's I mean ; he is effaced, Self-blotted out ; so wounded his honor, [hole
 He can hut creep down into some dark Like a hurt beast, and hide himself and die ; [Highness knows
 But if you burn him,—well, your The saying, "Martyr's blood—seed of the Church."
Mary. Of the true Church ; but his is none, nor will be.
 You are too politic for me, my Lord *Paget.* [life,
 And if he have to live so loath'd a It were more merciful to burn him now. [knew him
Thi. O yet relent. O, Madam, if you As I do, ever gentle, and so gracious, With all his learning—
Mary. Yet a heretic still. His learning makes his burning the more just. [came across him ;
Thi. So worship't of all those that The stranger at his hearth, and all his house— [hine, helike.
Mary. His children and his concubine. *Thi.* To do him any wrong was to beget [was rich,
 A kindness from him, for his heart Of such fine mould, that if you sow'd therein [ity.
 The seed of Hats, it blossom'd Char- *Pole.* "After his kind it costs him nothing," there's [point.
 An old world English adage to the These are hut natural graces, my good Bishop, [flowers,
 Which in the Catholic garden are as But on the heretic dunghill only weeds. [gracious.
How. Such weeds make dunghills *Mary.* Enough, my Lords,
 It is God's will, the Holy Father's will, And Philip's will, and mine, that he should burn.
 He is pronounced anathema. *How.* Farewell, Madam,



God grant you ampler mercy at your
call

Than you have shown to Cranmer:
[*Exit* Lords.

Pole. After this,
Your Grace will hardly care to over-
look [exiles,
This same petition of the foreign
For Craumer's life.

Mary. Make out the writ to-night.

SCENE II.—*Oxford. Cranmer in prison.*

Cran. Last night I dream'd the
fagots were alight, [stake,
And that myself was fasten'd to the
And found it all a visionary flame,
Cool as the light in old decaying wood;
[a cloud,

And then King Harry look'd from out
And had me have good courage; and
I heard [heaven,"—

An angel cry, "there is more joy in
And after that, the trumpet of the
dead. [*Trumpets without.*

Why, there are trumpets blowing now;
what is it?

Enter Father Cole.

Cole. Cranmer, I come to question
you again; [olic Faith,
Have you remain'd in the true Cath-
I left you in?

Cran. In the true Catholic faith,
By Heaven's grace, I am more and
more confirm'd. [ther Cole?

Why are the trumpets blowing, Fa-
Cole. Cranmer, it is decided by the
Council [cantation
That you to-day should read your re-
Before the people in St. Mary's
Church.

And there be many heretics in the town,
Who loathe you for your late return to
Rome, [the street,

And might assail you passing through
And tear you piecemeal: so you have
a guard. [thank the Council.

Cran. Or seek to rescue me. I
Cole. Do you lack any money?

Cran. Nay, why should I?
The prison fare is good enough for me.

Cole. Ay, but to give the poor.
Cran. Hand it me, then!
I thank you.

Cole. For a little space, farewell;
Until I see you in St. Mary's Church.
[*Exit* Cole.

Cran. It is against all precedent to
burn [don me,

One who recants; they mean to par-
To give the poor—they give the poor
who die. [fixt:

Well, burn me or not burn me I am
It is hut a communion, not a mass;
A holy supper, not a sacrifice;
No man can make his Maker—Villa
Garcia.

Enter Villa Garcia.

V. G. Pray you write out this
paper for me, Cranmer.

Cran. Have I not writ enough to
satisfy you?

V. G. If it the last.

Cran. Give it me, then. [*He writes.*

V. G. Now sign.

Cran. I have sign'd enough, and I
will sign no more.

V. G. It is no more than what you
have sign'd already,
The public form thereof.

Cran. It may be so;
I sign it with my presence, if I read
it. [sir, well,

V. G. But this is idle of you. Well,
You are to heg the people to pray for
you; [life;

Exhort them to a pure and virtuous
Declare the Queen's right to the
throne; confess [and retract

Your faith before all your hearers;
That Eucharistic doctrine in your
Will you not sign it now? [book.

Cran. No, Villa Garcia,
I sign no more. Will they have mercy
on me? [cy. So, farewell

V. G. Have you good hopes of mer-
[*Exit.*

Cran. Good hopes, not theirs, have
I that I am fixt.

Fixt beyond fall; however, in strange
hours, [quies,

After the long brain-dazing collo-
And thousand-times recurring argu-
ment

Of those two friars ever in my prison,
When left alone in my deapendency,
Without a friend, a book, my faith
would seem [heavily

Dead or half-drown'd, or else swam
Against the huge corruptions of the
Church,

Monsters of mistradition, old enough
To scare me into dreaming, "what
am I, [it so,

Cranmer, against whole ages!" was
Or am I slandering my most inward
friend, [foe—

To veil the fault of my most outward
The soft and tremulous coward in the
flesh?

O higher, holier, earlier, purer church,
I have found thee and not leave thee
any more.

It is but a communion, not a mass—
No sacrifice, but a life-giving feast!
[*Writes.*] So, so; this will I say—thus
will I pray. [*Puts up the paper.*

Enter Bonner.

Bon. Good-day, old friend; what,
you look somewhat worn:
And yet it is a day to test your health
Ev'n at the best: I scarce have spoken
with you [your trial

Since when?—your degradation. At
Never stood up a holder man than
you; [missioner—

You would not cap the Pope's com-
Your learning, and your stoutness,
and your heresy,

Dumfounded half of us. So, after that,



We had to dis-archbishop and unlord.
And make you simple Cranmer once
again.

The common barber olist your hair,
and I [holy oil ;
Scraped from your finger-points the
And worse than all, you had to kneel
to me : [Master Cranmer.

Which was not pleasant for you,
Now you, that would not recognize the
Pope, [Presence,
And you, that would not own the Real
Have found a real presence in the
stake, [ancient faith ;

Which frights you back into the
And so you have recanted to the Pope.
How are the mighty fallen, Master
Cranmer !

Cran. You have been more fierce
against the Pope than I ;
But why fling back the stone he
strikes me with ? [Aside.

O Bonner, if I ever did you kindness—
Power hath been given you to try
faith by fire—

Pray you, remembering how yourself
have changed, [gone,
Be somewhat pitiful, after I have
To the poor flock—to women and to
children— [me,

That when I was archbishop held with
Bon. Ay—gentle as they call you—
live or die !

Pitiful to this pitiful heresy ?
I must obey the Queen and Council,
man. [yourself.

Win thro' this day with honor to
And I'll say something for you—so—
good-by. [Exit.

Cran. This hard coarse man of old
hath crouch'd to me [him,
Till I myself was half ashamed for

Enter Thirlby.

Weep not, good Thirlby.
Thi. Oh, my Lord, my Lord !
My heart is no such block as Bonner's
Who would not weep ? [is :

Cran. Why do you so my lord me,
Who am disgraced ? [ven

Thi. On earth ; but saved in hea-
By your recanting.

Cran. Will they burn me, Thirlby ?
Thi. Alas, they will ; these burn-
ings will not help
The purpose of the faith ; but my poor
voice

Against them is a whisper to the roar
Of a spring tide. [me ?

Cran. And they will surely burn
Thi. Ay ; and besides, will have
you in the church

Repeat your recantation in the ears
Of all men, to the saving of their
souls, [help you
Before your execution. May God
Thro' that hard hour. [Thirlby.

Cran. And may God bless you,
Well, they shall hear my recantation
there. [Exit Thirlby.

Disgraced, dishonor'd !—not by them,
indeed,

By mine own self—by mine own hand !
O thin-skinn'd hand and jutting veins,
'twas you [of Kent ;

That sign'd the burning of poor Joan
But then she was a witch. You have
written much, [for Faith,

But you were never raised to plead
Whose dogmas I have reach'd : he was
deliver'd [was Lambert ;

To the secular arm to burn ; and there
Who can forsee himself ? truly these
burnings, [burners,

As Thirlby says, are profitless to the
And help the other side. You shall
burn too,

Burn first when I am burnt.
Fire—inch by inch to die in agony !
Latimer [burn'd

Had a brief end—not Ridley. Hooper
Three-quarters of an hour. Will my
fagots [rain.

Be wet as his were ? It is a day of
I will not muse upon it. [makes

My fancy takes the burner's part, and
The fire seem even crueller than it is.
No, I not doubt that God will give me
Albeit I have denied him. [strength,

Enter Soto and Villa Garcia.
V. G. We are ready
To take you to St. Mary's, Master
Cranmer.

Cran. And I : lead on ; ye loose me
from my bonds. [Exit.

SCENE III.—*St. Mary's Church.*
Cole in the Pulpit, Lord Williams of
Thame presiding. Lord William
Howard, Lord Paget, and others,
*Cranmer enters between Soto and
Villa Garcia, and the whole Choir
strike up "Nunc Dimittis."* Cran-
mer is set upon a Scaffold before
the people.

Cole. Behold him—
[A pause : people in the foreground.
People. Oh, unhappy sight !

1 *Prot.* See how the tears run down
his fatherly face.

2 *Prot.* James, didst thou ever see
a carrion crow [dies ?

Stand watching a sick beast before he
1 *Prot.* Him perch'd up there ? I
wish some thunderbolt

Would make this Cole a cinder, pulpit
and all.

Cole. Behold him, brethren : he
hath cause to weep !— [will,
So have we all : weep with him if ye
Yet—

It is expedient for one man to die,
Yea, for the people, lest the people
die. [return'd

Yet wherefore should he die that hath
To the one Catholic Universal Church,
Repentant of his errors.

Prot. murmurs. Ay, tell us that.
Cole. Those of the wrong side will
despise the man,



Deeming him one that thro' the fear
of death
Gave up his cause, except he seal his
faith [dom.]
In sight of all with flaming martyr-
Cran. Ay. [may seem
Cole. Ye hear him, and albeit there
According to the canons pardon due
fo him that so repents, yet are there
causes [this time
Wherefore our Queen and Council at
Adjudge him to the death. He hath
been a traitor,
A shaker and confounder of the realm;
And when the King's divorce was
sued at Rome
He here, this heretic metropolitan,
As if he had been the Holy Father,
sat
And judged it. Did I call him heretic?
A huge heresiarch! never was it
known
That any man so writing, preaching so,
So poisoning the Church, so long con-
tinuing, [must die,
Hath found his pardon; therefore he
For warning and example.
Other reasons
There be for this man's ending, which
our Queen [not
And Council at this present deem it
expedient to be known.
Prot. murmurs. I warrant you.
Cole. Take therefore, all, example
by this man,
For if our Holy Queen not pardon him,
Much less shall others in like cause
escape, [lowest,
That all of you, the highest as the
May learn there is no power against
the Lord. [degree,
There stands a man, onces of so high
Chief prelate of our Church, arch-
bishop, first
In Council, second person in the
realm,
Friend for so long time of a mighty
King; [based
And now ye see downfallen and de-
From councillor to catiff — fallen so
low, [scum
The leprous flutterings of the hyway,
And offal of the city would not change
Estates with him; in brief, so miser-
ble, [him,
There is no hope of better left for
No place for worse.
Yet, Crammer, be thou glad.
This is the work of God. He is glori-
fied [claim'd;
In thy conversion: lo! thou art re-
He brings thee home; nor far but
that to-day [thief's award
Thou shalt receive the penitent
And be with Christ the Lord in Para-
dise. [fire seem
Remember how God made the fierce
To those three children like a pleasant
dew.
Remember, too,

The triumph of St. Andrew on his
cross, [fire.
The patience of St. Lawrence in the
Thus, if thou call on God and all the
saints, [flame,
God will beat down the fury of the
Or give thee saintly strength to under-
go. [sung
And for thy soul shall masses here be
By every priest in Oxford. Pray for
him. [pray for me;
Cran. Ay, one and all, dear brothers,
Pray with one breath, one heart, one
soul, for me. [you doubt
Cole. And now, lest any one among
The man's conversion and remorse of
heart, [Speak Master Crammer,
Yourselves shall hear him speak.
Fulfil your promise made me, and pro-
claim [may hear.
Your true undoubted faith, that all
Cran. And that I will. O God,
Father of Heaven! [world!
O Son of God, Redeemer of the
O Holy Ghost! proceeding from them
both, [mercy on me,
Threes persons and one God, have
Most miserable sinner, wretched
man. [earth
I have offended against heaven and
More grievously than any tongue can
tell.
Then whither should I flee for any
help? [heaven,
I am ashamed to lift my eyes to
And I can find no refuge upon earth.
Shall I despair then?—God forbid! O
God,
For thou art merciful, refusing none
That come to Thee for succor; unto
Thee, [to Thee;
Therefore, I come; humble myself
Saying, O Lord God, although my sins
be great, [God the Son,
For thy great mercy have mercy! O
Not for slight faults alone, when thou
becamest
Man in the Flesh, was the great mys-
tery wrought;
O God the Father, not for little sins
Didst thou yield up thy Son to human
death; [sinn'd,
But for the greatest sin that can be
Yea, even such as mine, incalculable,
Unpardonable,—sin against the light,
The truth of God, which I had proven
and known. [sin.
Thy mercy must be greater than all
Forgive me, Father, for no merit of
mine,
But that thy name by man be glorified,
And thy most blessed Son's who died
for man. [death
Good people, every man at time of
Would fain set forth some saying that
may live
After his death and better human-
kind;
For death gives life's last word a
power to live,



And, like the stone-cut epitaph, remain
 After the vanish'd voice, and speak
 God grant me grace to glorify my
 God!

And first I say it is a grievous case,
 Many so dote upon this bubble
 world, [fly,
 Whose colors in a moment break and
 They care for nothing else. What
 saith St. John: [God.]
 "Love of this world is hatred against
 Again, I pray you all that, next to
 God,
 You do unmurmuringly and willingly
 Obey your King and Queen, and not
 for dread [Him
 Of these alone, but from the fear of
 Whose ministers they be to govern
 you. [gether
 Thirdly, I pray you all to love to-
 Like brethren; yet what hatred Chris-
 tian men [brethren,
 Bear to each other, seeming not as
 But mortal foes! But do you good to
 all [man more
 As much as in you lieth. Hurt no
 Than you would harm your loving
 natural brother [any do,
 Of the same roof, same breast. If
 Albeit he think himself at home with
 God, [away.
 Of this be sure, he is whole worlds
 Protestant murmurs.. What sort of
 brethren then be those that lust
 To burn each other?
 Will. Peace among you, there.
 Cran. Fourthly, to those that own
 exceeding wealth, [once
 Remember that sore saying spoken
 By Him that was the truth, "how
 hard it is [Heaven;"
 For the rich man to enter into
 Let all rich men remember that hard
 word.. [now
 I have not time for more: if ever,
 Let them flow forth in charity, seeing
 now [dear.
 The poor so many, and all food so
 Long have I lain in prison, yet have
 heard [the poor
 Of all their wretchedness. Give to
 Yet give to God. He is with us in the
 poor. [come
 And now, and forasmuch as I have
 To the last end of life, and thereupon
 Hangs all my past, and all my life to
 be, [with joy,
 Either to live with Christ in Heaven
 Or to be still in pain with devils in
 hell;
 And, seeing in a moment, I shall find
 [Pointing upwards.
 Heaven or else hell ready to swallow
 me, [Pointing downwards.
 I shall declare to you my very faith
 Without all color.
 Cole. Hear him my good brethren.
 Cran. I do believe in God, Father
 of all;

In every article of the Catholic faith,
 And every syllable taught us by our
 Lord,
 His prophets and apostles, in the Tes-
 Both Old and New. [tamen:us
 Cole. Be plainer, Master Cranmer,
 Cran. And now I come to the great
 cause that weighs [thing
 Upon my conscience more than any
 Or said or done in all my life by me;
 For there be writings I have set
 abroad [heart,
 Against the truth I knew within my
 Written for fear of death, to save my
 life, [hand
 If that might be; the papers by my
 Sign'd since my degradation—by this
 hand [Holding out his right hand
 Written and sign'd—I here renounce
 them all; [written
 And, since my hand offended, having
 Against my heart, my hand shall first
 be burnt,
 So I may come to the fire.

[Dead silence.

Protestant murmurs.

1 Prot. I knew it would be so.
 2 Prot. Our prayers are heard!
 3 Prot. God bless him!
 Catholic murmurs. Out upon him!
 out upon him!
 Liar! dissembler! traitor! to the fire!
 Will. (raising his voice). You know
 that you recanted all you said
 Touching the sacrament in that same
 book [chester;
 You wrote against my Lord of Win-
 Dissemble not; play the plain Chris-
 tian man.
 Cran. Alas, my Lord,
 I have been a man loved plainness all
 my life;
 I did dissemble, but the hour has come
 [fore, I say,
 For utter truth and plainness; where-
 I hold by all I wrote within that book.
 Moreover, [christ,
 As for the Pope I count him Anti-
 With all his devil's doctrines; and re-
 fuse, [said.
 Reject him, and abhor him. I have
 [Cries on all sides, "Pull him
 down! Away with him."
 Cole. Ay, stop the heretic's mouth.
 Hale him away.
 Will. Harm him not, harm him not,
 have him to the fire.
 [Cranmer goes out between two
 Friars, smiling; hands are reached
 to him from the crowd. Lord Wil-
 liam Howard and Lord Paget are
 left alone in the church.
 Paget. The nave and aisles all
 empty as a fool's jest!
 No, here's Lord William Howard.
 What, my Lord,
 You have not gone to see the burning!
 How. Fie!



To stand at ease, and stare as at a
show, [again.
And watch a good man burn. Never
I saw the deaths of Latimer and Ridley.

[not
Moreover, tho' a Catholic, I would
For the pure honor of our common
nature, [tation
Hear what I might—another recan-
Of Craumer at the stake.

Paget. You'd not hear that.
He pass'd out smiling, and he walk'd
upright; [general
His eye was like a soldier's whom the
He looks to and he leans on as his
God,

Hath rated for some backwardness
and bidd'n him [the man
Charge one against a thousand, and
Hurls his soil'd life against the pikes
and dies. [all those papers

How. Yet that he might not after
Of recantation yield again, who
knows? [think you then

Paget. Papers of recantation,
That Crammer read all papers that
he sign'd? [sign'd?
Or sign'd all those they tell us that he
Nay, I trow not: and you shall see,
my Lord,

That howsoever hero-like the man
Dies in the fire, this Bonner or another
Will in some lying fashion misreport
His ending to the glory of their
church.

And you saw Latimer and Ridley die?
Latimer was eighty, was he not? his
Of life was over then. [best

How. His eighty years
Look'd somewhat crooked on him in
his frieze. [shroud,

But after they had stript him to his
He stood upright, a lad of twenty-one,
And gather'd with his hands the start-
ing flame, [therein,
And wash'd his hands and all his face
Until the powder suddenly blew him
dead. [did

Ridley was longer burning; but he
As manfully and boldly, and 'fore
God, [lish oncs.
I know them heretics, but right Eng-
If ever, as heaven grant, we clash with
Spain, [sailors
Our Ridley-soldiers and our Latimer-
Will teach her something.

Paget. Your mild Legate Pole
Will tell you that the devil helpt them
thro' it.

[*A murmur of the crowd in the dis-
tance.*

Hark, how those Roman wolfdogs
howl and bay him.

How. Might it not be the other side
rejoicing
In his brave end?

Paget. They are too crush'd, too
broken,
They can but weep in silence.

How. Ay, ay, *Paget,*

They have brought it in large meas-
ure on themselves. [blessed Host
Have I not heard them mock the
In songs so lewd, the beast might
roar his claim [they?

To being in God's image, more than
Have I not seen the gamekeeper, the
groom, [son's place,
Gardener and huntsman, in the par-
The parson from his own spire swung
out dead, [and all men
And Ignorance crying in the streets,
Regarding her? I say they have drawn
the fire [do hold

On their own heads: yet, *Paget,* I
The Catholic, if he have the greater
Hath been the crnelier. [right,

Paget. Action and re-action,
The miserable see-saw of our child-
world, [Lard.

Make us despite it at odd hours, my
Heaven help that this re-action not
re-act

Yet fiercelier under Queen Elizabeth,
So that she come to rule us.

How. The world's mad.
Paget. My Lord, the world is like a
drunken man,

Who cannot move straight to his end—
but reels

Now to the right, then as far to the
left, [underfoot
Push'd by the crowd beside—and
An earthquake; for since Henry for
a doubt— [the back,

Which a young lust had clapt upon
Crying, "Forward,"—set our old
church rocking, men [or whether

Have hardly known what to believe,
They should believe in anything;
the currents [they are borne,

So shift and change, they see not how
Nor whither. I conclude the King a
beast;

Verily a lion if you will—the world
A most obedient beast and fool—my-
self [to it;

Half beast and fool as appertaining
Altho' your Lordship hath as little of
each

Cleaving to your original Adam-clay,
As may be consonant with mortality.

How. We talk and Cranmer suffers.
The kindest man I ever knew; see,
see, [and!

I speak of him in the past. Unhappy
Hard-natured Queen, half Spanish in
herself, [stock of Spain—

And grafted on the hard-grain'd
Her life, since Philip left her, and she
lost [child,

Her fierce desire of hearing him a
Hath, like a brief and bitter winter's
day, [to a close.

Gone narrowing down and darkening
There will be more conspiracies, I
fear.

Paget. Ay, ay, beware of France.
How. O *Paget,* *Paget!*
I have seen heretics of the poorer sort,



Expectant of the rack from day to day,
To whom the fire were welcome, lying
chain'd, [ing sewers,
In breathless dungeons over steam-
Fed with rank bread that crawl'd upon
the tongue,

And putrid water, every drop a worm,
Until they died of rotted limbs; and
then [come
Cast on the dunghill naked, and be-
hideously alive again from head to
heel,

Made even the carrion-nosing mon-
With hate and horror. [grel vomit

Paget. Nay, you sicken me
To hear you.

How. Fancy-sick; these things
are done, [Queen
Done right against the promise of this
Twice given.

Paget. No faith with heretics,
my Lord! [pellers,
Hist! there be two old gossips—gos-
I take it; stand behind the pillar
here; [burning.

I warrant you they talk about the
Enter Two Old Women. Joan, and
after her Tib.

Joan. Why, it be Tib.
Tib. I cum behind tha, gall, and
couldn't make tha hear. Eh, the
wind and the wet! What a day, what
a day! nigh upo' judgment daay loike.
Pwoaps be pretty things, Joan, but
they wunt set i' the Lords' cheer o'
that daay.

Joan. I must set down myself,
Tib; it be a var waay vor my owld
legs up vro' Islip. Eh, my rheuma-
tiz be that bad howiver be I to win
to the burnin'.

Tib. I should saay 'twur ower by
now. I'd ha' been here avore, but
Dumble wur blow'd wi' the wind, and
Dumble's the best milcher in Islip.

Joan. Our Daisy's as good 'z her.
Tib. Noa, Joan.

Joan. Our Daisy's butter's as good
Tib. Noa, Joan. [z hern.

Joan. Our Daisy's cheeses be bet-
Tib. Noa, Joan. [ter.

Joan. Eh, then ha' thy waay wi' nie,
Tib; ez thou hast wi' thy owld man.

Tib. Ay, Joan, and my owld man
wur up and awaay betimes wi' dree
hard eggs for a good pleece at the
burnin'; and barrin' the wet, Hodge
'ud ha' been a-barrowin' o' white
peasen i' the outfield—and barrin' the
wind, Dumble wur blow'd wi' the
wind, so 'z we was forced to stück her,
but we fetched her round at last.
Thank the Lord therevore. Dumble's
the best milcher in Islip.

Joan. Thou's thy way wi' man and
beast, Tib. I wonder at tha', it beats
me! Eh, but I do know ez Pwoaps
and viree be bad things; tell 'ee now,
I heerd summat as summun towld
summun o' owld Bishop Gardiner's

end; there wur an owld lord a-cum to
dine wi' un, and a wur so owld a
couldn't bide vor his dinner, but a had
to bide howsomiver, vor, "I wunt
dine," says my Lord Bishop, says he,
"not till I hears ez Latimer and
Ridley be a-vire;" and so they bided
on and on till your o'clock, till his
man cum in post vro' here, and tells
un ez the vire has tuk holt. "Now,"
says the bishop, says he, "we'll gwo
to dinner;" and the owld lord fell to
's meat wi' a will, God bless un: but
Gardiner wur struck down like by the
hand-o' God avore a could taste a
mossel, and a set him all a-vire, so 'z
the tongue on un cum a lolluping out
o' is mouth, as black as a rat. Thank
the Lord, therevore.

Paget. The fools!
Tib. Ay, Joan; and Queen Mary
gwoes on a-burnin' and a burnin', to
git her baaby born; but all her burn-
ins' 'll never burn out the hypocrisy
that makes the water in her. There's
nought but the vire of God's hell ez
can burn out that.

Joan. Thank the Lord, therevore.
Paget. The fools!

Tib. A-burnin', and a-burnin', and a-
makin' o' volk madder and madder;
but tek thou my word vor't, Joan,—
and I bean't wrong not twice i' ten
year—the burnin' o' the owld arch-
bishop 'll burn the Pwoap out o' this
'ere land vor iver and iver.

How. Out of the church, you brace
of cursed croncs,
Or I will have you duck'd.

[Women hurry out.

Said I not right?
For how should reverend prelate or
throned prince [nity?
Brook for an hour such brute malig-
Ah, what an acrid wine has Luther
brew'd!

Paget. Pooch, pooch, my Lord! poor
garrulone countrywives.

Buy you their cheeces, and they'll side
with you; [the lees.

You cannot judge the liquor from
How. I think that in some sort we
may. But see,

Enter Peters.

Peters, my gentleman, an honest
Catholic, [Cranmer's fire.
Who follow'd with the crowd to
One that would neither misrepor
nor lie, [Pope
Not to gain paradise: no, nor if the
Charged him to do it—he is white as
death.

Peters, how pale you look! you bring
the smoke
Of Cranmer's burning with you.

Pet. Twice or thrice
The smoke of Cranmer's burning
wrapt me round.



How. Peters, you know me Catholic, but English. [or leave
Did he die bravely? Tell me that,
All else untold.

Pet. My Lord, he died most bravely.

How. Then tell me all.

Paget. Ay, Master Peters, tell us.

Pet. You saw him how he passed
among the crowd; [friars
And ever as he walk'd the Spanish
Still plied him with entreaty and re-
proach: [helm

But Cranmer, as the helmsman at the
Steers, ever looking to the happy
haven [his death;

Where he shall rest at night, moved to
And I could see that many silent
hands [own; and thus,

Came from the crowd and met his
When we had come where Ridley
burnt with Latimer, [whose mind

He, with a cheerful smile, as one
Is all made up, in haste put off the
rags [all in white,

They had mocked his misery with, and
His long white beard, which he had
never shaven [to the chain,

Since Henry's death, down-sweeping
Wherewith they bound him to the
stake, he stood, [Church,

More like an ancient, father of the
Than heretic of these times; and still
the friars [his head,

Plied him, but Cranmer only shook
Or answer'd them in smiling nega-
tives; [den cry:—

Whereat Lord Williams gave a sud-
"Make short! make short!" and so
they lit the wood.

Then Cranmer lifted his left hand to
heaven,
And thrust his right into the bitter
flame; [than once,

And crying, in his deep voice, more
"This hath offended—this unworthy
hand!"

So held it till all was burn'd, before
The flame had reach'd his body; I
stood near— [of pain:

Mark'd him—he never uttered moan
He never stirr'd or writhed, but, like
a statue, [flame,

Unmoving, in the greatness of the
Gave up the ghost; and so past mar-
tyr-like— [but whither?

Martyr I may not call him—past—
Paget. To purgatory, man, to pur-
gatory.

Pet. Nay, but, my Lord, he denied
purgatory.

Paget. Why then to heaven, and
God ha' mercy on him.

How. Paget, despite his fearful
heresies, [moan for him;
I loved the man, and needs must
O Cranmer!

Paget. But your moan is useless
now;
Come out, my Lord, it is a world of
fools. [Exeunt.

ACT. V.

SCENE I.—*London, Hall in the Palace.*

Queen, Sir Nicholas Heath.

Heath. Madam, [look'd to :
I do assure you, that it must be
Calais is but ill-garrison'd in Guisnes
Are scarce two hundred men, and the
French fleet [look'd to,

Rule in the narrow seas. It must be
If war should fall between yourself
and France;

Or you will lose your Calais.

Mary. It shall be look'd to ;
I wish you a good-morning, good Sir
Nicholas :

Here is the King. [Exit Heath

Enter Philip.

Phi. Sir Nicholas tells you true,
And you must look to Calais when I
go. [again—so soon?

Mary. Go! must you go, indeed—
Why, nature's licensed vagabond, the
swallow,

That might live always in the sun's
warm heart,
Stays longer here in our poor north
than you:— [again.

Knows where he nested—ever comes
Phi. And, Madam, so shall I.

Mary. O, will you? will you?
I am faint with fear that you will
come no more. [me hence.

Phi. Ay, ay; but many voices call
Mary. Voices—I hear unhappy rum-
ours—nay

I say not, I believe. What voices call
you [est to you?
Dearer than mine that should be dear-
Alas, my Lord; what voices and how
many? [agon,

Phi. The voices of Castile and Ar-
Granada, Naples, Sicily and Milan,—
The voices of the Franche-Comte and
the Netherlands.

The voices of Peru and Mexico.
Tunis, and Oran, and the Phillipines.
And all the fair spice-islands of the
East.

Mary (admiringly). You are the
mightiest monarch upon earth,
I but a little Queen; and so, indeed,
Need you the more: and wherefore
could you not [liege,

Helm the huge vessel of your state, my
Here, by the side of her who loves you
most? [the sun

Phi. No, Madam, no! a candle in
Is all but smoke—a star beside the
moon [crown me—

Is all but lost; your people will not
Your people are as cheerless as your
clime; [brawls, the gibbets.

Hate me and mine: witness the
Here swings a Spaniard—there an
Englishman;

The peoples are unlike as their com-
plexion;



Yet will I be your swallow and return—

But now I cannot bide.

Mary. Not to help me? They hate me also for my love to you, My Philip; and these judgments on the land—

Harvestless autumns, horrible ague, *Phi.* The blood and sweat of heretics at the stake

Is God's best dew upon the barren field.

Burn more!

Mary. I will, I will: and you will stay.

Phi. Have I not said? Madam, I Your Council and yourself to declare war.

Mary. Sir, there are many English To help your battle.

Phi. So far good. I say. I come to sue your Council and yourself

To declare war against the King of *Mary.* Not to see me?

Phi. Ay, Madam, to see you. Unalterably and pesteringly fond!

But, soon or late you must have war with France;

King Henry warms your traitors at Carew is there, and Thomas Stafford Courtenay, belike—

Mary. A fool and featherhead!

Phi. Ay, but they use his name. In brief, this Henry

Stirs up your land against you to That you may lose your English heritage.

And then your Scottish namesake The Dauphin, he would weld France, England, Scotland,

Into one sword to hack at Spain and *Mary.* And yet the Pope is now col-leagued with France;

You make your wars upon him down in Italy:—

Philip, can that be well? *Phi.* Content you, Madam; You must abide my judgment, and my father's,

Who deems it a most just and holy The Pope would cast the Spaniard out of Naples:

He calls us worse than Jews, Moors, The Pope has pushed his horns beyond his mitre—

Beyond his province. Now, Duke Alva will but touch him on the horns,

And he withdraws; and of his holy For Alva is true son of the true church—

No hair is harm'd. Will you not *Mary.* Alas! the Council will not bear of war.

They say your wars are not the wars They will not lay more taxes on a land

So hunger-nipt and wretched; and

The crown is poor. We have given the church-lands back:

The nobles would not; nay, they clapt their hands

Upon their swords when ask'd; and Is hard upon the people. What's to be done?

Sir, I will move them in your cause And we will raise us loans and subsidies

Among the merchants; and Sir Will aid us. There is Antwerp and the Jews.

Phi. Madam, my thanks. *Mary.* And you will stay your go-

Phi. And further to discourage and lay lame

The plots of France, altho' you love You must proclaim Elizabeth your heir.

She stands beyond you and the Queen *Mary.* The Queen of Scots at least is Catholic.

Phi. Ay, Madam, Catholic; but I will not have

The King of France the King of Eng- *Mary.* But she's a heretic, and, when I am gone,

Brings the new learning back. *Phi.* It must be done. You must proclaim Elizabeth your heir

Mary. Then it is done; but you will stay your going

Somewhat beyond your settled pur- *Phi.* No!

Mary. What, not one day? *Phi.* You beat upon the rock. *Mary.* And I am broken there.

Phi. Is this a place To wait in, Madam? what! a public hall.

Go in, I pray you. *Mary.* Do not seem so changed. Say go; but only say it lovingly.

Phi. You do mistake. I am not one to change. I never loved you more.

Mary. Sire, I obey you, Come quickly. *Phi.* Ay.

Fer. *(aside.)* The Queen in tears. *Phi.* Ferial!

Hast thou not mark'd—come closer to mine ear—

How doubly aged this Queen of ours Since she lost hope of bearing us a child?

Fer. Sire, if your Grace hath mark'd it, so have I.

Phi. Hast thou not likewise mark'd Elizabeth,

How fair and royal—like a Queen, in- *Fer.* Allow me the same answer as before—

That if your grace hath mark'd her, *Phi.* Good, now; methinks my Queen is like enough To leave by and by.



Fer. To leave you, sire ?
Phi. I mean not like to live. Elizabeth—
 To Philibert of Savoy, as you know,
 We meant to wed her ; but I am not
 sure [Queen
 She will not serve me better—so my
 Would leave me—as—my wife.
Fer. Sire, even so.
Phi. She will not have Prince Philibert of Savoy.
Fer. No, sire. [time,
Phi. I have to pray you, some odd
 To sound the Princess carelessly on
 this ;
 Not as from me, but as your fantasy ;
 And tell me how she takes it.
Fer. Sire, I will.
Phi. I am not certain but that
 Philibert [his suit
 Shall be the man ; and I shall urge
 Upon the Queen, because I am not
 certain :
 You understand, *Feria*.
Fer. Sire, I do.
Phi. And if you be not secret in
 this matter,
 You understand me there, too ?
Fer. Sire, I do.
Phi. You must be sweet and supple,
 like a Frenchman.
 She is none of those who loathe the
 honeycomb. [Exit *Feria*.
Enter Renard.
Ren. My liege, I bring you goodly
 tidings.
Phi. Well.
Ren. There will be war with France,
 at last, my liege ; [ass,
 Sir Thomas Stafford, a bull-headed
 Sailing from France, with thirty Eng-
 lishmen, [of York ;
 Hath taken Scarboro' Castle, north
 Proclaims himself protector, and af-
 firms [to reign
 The Queen has forfeited her right
 By marriage with an alien—other things
 As idle ; a weak Wyatt ! Little doubt
 This buzz will soon be silenced ! but
 the Council [for war.
 (I have talk'd with some already) are.
 This is the fifth conspiracy hatch'd in
 France ; [your Grace,
 They show their teeth upon it ; and
 So you will take advice of mine, should
 stay [the event.
 Yet for awhile, to shape and guide
Phi. Good ! Renard, I will stay
 then.
Ren. Also, sire,
 Might I not say—to please your wife,
 the Queen ? [it so.
Phi. Ay, Renard, if you care to put
 [Exit *unt*.

SCENE II.—A Room in the Palace.
Mary and Cardinal Pole.
Lady Clarence and Alice in the back-ground.

Mary. Reginald Pole, what news
 hath plagued thy heart ?
 What makes thy favor like the blood-
 less head [the hair ?
 Fall'n on the block, and held up by
 Philip ?—
Pole. No, Philip is as warm in life
 As ever.
Mary. Ay, and then as cold as ever.
 Is Calais taken ?
Pole. Cousin, there hath chanced
 A sharper harm to England and to
 Rome.
 Than Calais taken. Julius the Third
 Was ever just, and mild, and father-
 like ; [Fourth,
 But this new Pope Caraffa, Paul the
 Not only reft me of that legateship
 Which Julius gave me, and the legateship
 Annex'd to Canterbury—nay, but
 worse—
 And yet I must obey the holy father,
 And so must you, good cousin ;—worse
 than all,
 A passing bell toll'd in a dying ear—
 He hath cited me to Rome, for heresy,
 Before his Inquisition.
Mary. I knew it, cousin,
 But held from you all papers sent by
 Rome, [the Pope,
 That you might rest among us, till
 To compass which I wrote myself to
 Rome, [might not seem
 Reversed his doom, and that you
 To disobey his Holiness.
Pole. He hates Philip ;
 He is all Italian, and he hates the
 Spaniard ; [war .
 He cannot dream that I advised the
 He strikes thro' me at Philip and your-
 self. [me too ;
 Nay, but I know it of old, he hates
 So brands me in the star of Christen-
 dom
 A heretic !
 Now, even now, when bow'd before
 my time, [out ;
 The house half-ruin'd ere the lease be
 When I should guide the Church in
 peace at home,
 After my twenty years of banishment,
 And all my lifelong labor to uphold
 The primacy—a heretic. Long ago,
 When I was ruler in the patrimony,
 I was too lenient to the Lutheran,
 And I and learned friends among our-
 selves [anisms.
 Would freely canvass certain Luther-
 What then, he knew I was no Lu-
 A heretic ! [theran.
 He drew this shaft against me to the
 head, [chosen Pope,
 When it was thought I might be
 But then withdrew it. In full con-
 sistory, [proved me.
 When I was made Archbishop, he ap-
 And how should he have sent me Le-
 gate hither,



Deeming me heretic? and what heresy since?

But he was evermore mine enemy,
And hates the Spaniard—fiery-choleric,
[wines.

A drinker of black, strong, volcanic
That ever make him fiercer. I, a heretic!
[ing heresy

Your Highness knows that in pursuit
I have gone beyond your late Lord
Chancellor,— [his death.—

He cried enough! enough! before
Gone beyond him and mine own natural
man [me now,

(It was God's cause); so far they call
The scourge and butcher of their English
church,

Mary. Have courage, your reward
is Heaven itself. [into the fire

Pole. They groan amen; they swarm
Like flies—for what? no dogma. They
know nothing.

They burn for nothing.

Mary. You have done your best.

Pole. Have done my best, and as a
faithful son, [father's work,

That all day long hath wrought his
When back he comes at evening hath
the door [loved,

Shut on him by the father whom he
His early follies cast into his teeth,

And the poor son turn'd out into the
street [cousin.

To sleep, to die—I shall die of it,
Mary. I pray you be not so dis-
consolate; [Pope,

I still will do my utmost with the
Poor cousin. [your life

Have I not been the fast friend of
Since mine began, and it was thought
we two [each other

Might make one flesh, and cleave unto
As man and wife.

Pole. Ah, cousin, I remember
How I would dandle you upon my
knee [once

At lisping-age. I watch'd you dancing
With your huge father; he look'd the
Great Harry, [did it,

You but his cockboat; prettily you
And innocently. No—we were not
made [here;

One flesh in happiness, no happiness
But now we are made one flesh in
misery; [appointment,

Our bridemaids are not lovely—Dis-
Ingratitude, Injustice, Evil-tongue,
Labor-in-vain.

Mary. Surely, not all in vain.
Peace, cousin, peace! I am sad at
heart myself.

Pole. Our altar is a mound of dead
men's clay,
Dug from the grave that yawns for us
beyond; [the Groom,

And there is one Death stands behind
And there is one Death stands be-
hind the Bride—

Mary. Have you been looking at the
"Dance of Death?"

Pole. No; but these libellous pa-
pers which I found

Strewn in your palace. Look you here
—the Pope [tic,

Pointing at me with "Pole, the here-
Thou hast burnt others, do thou burn
thyself, [see!—

Or I will burn thee," and this other;
"We pray continually for the death
Of our accursed Queen and Cardinal
Pole."

This last—I dare not read it her.

Mary. [Aside.
Away!

Why do you bring me these?

I thought you knew me better. I never
read. [my dreams.

I tear them: they come back upon
The hands that write them should be
burnt clean off [utter them

As Cranmer's, and the fiends that
Tongue-torn with pincers, lash'd to
death, or lie [ish'd rats

Famishing in black cells, while fam-
Eat them alive. Why do they bring
me these?

Do you mean to drive me mad?

Pole. I had forgotten
How these poor libels trouble you.

Your pardon, [ble world,

Sweet cousin, and farewell! "O bub-
Whose colors in a moment break and
fly!" [true enough!

Why, who said that? I know not—
[Puts up the papers, all but the last,
which falls.

[Exit Pole.

Alice. If Cranmer's spirit were a
mocking one [sport for him.

And heard these two, there might be
[Aside.

Mary. Clarence, they hate me;
even while I speak

There lurks a silent dagger, listening
In some dark closet, some long gallery,
drawn,

And panting for my blood as I go by.

Lady C. Nay, Madam, there be
loyal papers too,

And I have often found them.

Mary. Find me one!

Lady C. Ay, Madam; but Sir Nich-
olas Heath, the Chancellor,

Would see your Highness.

Mary. Wherefore should I see him?

Lady C. Well, Madam, he may bring
you news from Philip.

Mary. So, Clarence.

Lady C. Let me first put up your
It tumbles all abroad. [hair;

Mary. And the gray dawn
Of an old age that never will be mine
Is all the clearer seen. No, no; what
matters?

Forlorn I am, and let me look forlorn.
Enter Sir Nicholas Heath.

Heath. I bring your Majesty such
grievous news

I grieve to bring it. Madam. Calais is
taken.



Mary. What traitor spoke? Here,
let my cousin Pole [ran,
Seize him and burn him for a Lutherean.
Heath. Her Highness is unwell. I
will retire.

Lady C. Madam, your chancellor,
Sir Nicholas Heath.

Mary. Sir Nicholas? I am stunn'd
—Nicholas Heath? [the head.
Methought some traitor smote me on
What said you, my good Lord, that our
brave English [back
Had sallied out from Calais and driven
The Frenchman from their trenches?
Heath. Alas! no.

That gateway to the mainland over
which [years
Our flag hath floated for two hundred
Is France again.

Mary. So; but it is not lost—
Not yet. Send out: let England as of
old [into

Rise lionlike, strike hard and deep
The prey they are rending from her
—ay, and rend [and make

The renders too. Send out, send out,
Musters in all the counties; gather all
From sixteen years to sixty; collect
the fleet; [gun
Let every craft that carries sail and
Steer towards Calais. Guisnes is not
taken yet?

Heath. Guisnes is not taken yet.

Mary. There yet is hope.

Heath. Ah, Madam, but your people
are so cold; [care.
I do much fear that England will not
Methinks there is no manhood left
among us.

Mary. Send out; I am too weak to
stir abroad: [Parliament:
Tell my mind to the Council—to the
Proclaim it to the winds. Thou art
cold thyself [I were

To babble of their coldness. O would
My father for an hour! Away now—
quick! [Exit Heath.

I hoped I had served God with all my
might!

It seems I have not. Ah! much heresy
Shelter'd in Calais. Saints, I have re-
built [ages;

Your shrines, set up your broken im-
Be comfortable to me. Suffer not
That my brief reign in England be de-
famed [after

Thro' all her angry chronicles here-
By loss of Calais. Grant me Calais.
Philip, [Father

We have made war upon the Holy
All for your sake: what good could
come of that?

Lady C. No, Madam, not against
the Holy Father;

You did but help King Philip's war
with France,
Your troops were never down in Italy.

Mary. I am a byword. Heretic and
rebel [gone!
Point at me and make merry. Philip

And Calais gone! Time that I were
gone too! [a voice

Lady C. Nay, if the fetid gutter had
And cried I was not clean, what should
I care?

Or you, for heretic cries! And I be-
lieve, [las,
Spite of your melancholy, Sir Nicho-
Your England is as loyal as myself.

Mary (seeing the paper dropt by Pole).
There, there! another paper! Said
you not [try

Many of these were loyal? Shall I
If this be one of such?

Lady C. Let it be, let it be.
God pardon me! I have never yet
found one. [Aside.

Mary (reads). "Your people hate you
as your husband hates you."
Clarence, Clarence, what have I done?
what sin [Mother of God,

Beyond all grace, all pardon?
Thou knowest never woman meant so
well, [world.

And fared so ill in this disastrous
My people hate me and desire my
Lady C. No, Madam, no. [death.

Mary. My husband hates me, and
desires my death [bels.

Lady C. No Madam; these are il-
Mary. I hate myself, and I desire
my death. [Shall Alice sing you

Lady C. Long live your Majesty!
One of her pleasant songs? Alice, my
child, [say the gloom of Saul

Bring us your lute (Alice goes). They
Was lighten'd by young David's harp.
Mary. Too young!

And never knew a Philip (re-enter
Alice). Give me the lute.
He hates me!

She sings.

*Hapless doom of woman happy in be-
trothing!*

*Beauty passes like a breath and love is
lost in loathing:*

*Low, my lute; speak low, my lute, but
say the world is nothing—*

Low, lute, low!

*Love will hover round the flowers when
they first awaken;*

*Love will fly the fallen leaf, and not
be overtaken;*

*Low, my lute! oh low, my lute! we fade
and are forsaken—*

Low, dear lute, low!

Take it away! not low enough for me!
Alice. Your Grace hath a low voice.

Mary. How dare you say it?
Even for that he hates me. A low voice
Lost in a wilderness where none can
hear! [sea!
A voice of shipwreck on a shoreless
A low voice from the dust and from the
grave. (sitting on the ground).

There, am I low enough now?
Alice. Good Lord, how grim and
ghastly looks her Grace,



With both her knees drawn upward to
her chin.
There was an old-world tomb beside
my father's,
And this was open'd, and the dead
were found [a corpse.
Sitting, and in this fashion; she looks
Enter Lady Magdalen Dacres.
Lady M. Madam, the Count de Fe-
ria waits without.
In hopes to see your Highness.
Lady C. (*pointing to Mary.*) Wait he
must— [nor hears,
Her trance again. She neither sees
And may not speak for hours.
Lady M. Unhappiest
Of Queens and wives and women.
Alice (*in the foreground with Lady
Magdalen.*) And all along
Of Philip.
Lady M. Not so loud! Our Clarence
there [Queen,
Sees ever such an aureole round the
It gilds the greatest wronger of her
peace,
Who stands the nearest to her.
Alice. Ay, this Philip;
I used to love the Queen with all my
heart— [less
God help me, but methinks I love her
For such a dotage upon such a man.
I would I were as tall and strong as
you. [to be so tall.
Lady M. I seem half-shamed at times
Alice. You are the stateliest deer
in all the herd— [scandalous,
Beyond his aim—but I am small and
And love to hear bad tales of Philip.
Lady M. Why?
I never heard him utter worse of you
Than that you were low-statured.
Alice. Does he think
Low stature is low nature, or all
women's
Low as his own? [nail.
Lady M. There you strike in the
This coarseness is a want of fantasy.
It is the low man thinks the woman
low;
Sin is too dull to see beyond himself.
Alice. Ah, Magdalen, sin is bold as
How dared he? [well as dull.
Lady M. Stupid soldiers oft are
bold. [eral sees,
Poor lads, they see not what the gen-
A risk of utter ruin. I am not
Beyond his aim, or was not.
Alice. Who? Not you?
Tell, tell me: save my credit with my-
self. [bird in the eaves,
Lady M. I never breathed it to a
Would not for all the stars and maiden
moon
Our drooping queen should know!
In Hampton Court
My window look'd upon the corridor;
And I was robing; — this poor throat
of mine,
Barer than I should wish a man to see
it,—

When he we speak of drove the win-
dow back, [hand;
And, like a thief, push'd in his royal
But by God's providence a good
stout staff
Lay near me, and you know me
strong of arm;
I do believe I lamed his Majesty's
For a day or two, tho', give the Devil
his due,
I never found he bore me any spite.
Alice. I would she could have wed-
ded that poor youth,
My Lord of Devon—light enough, God
knows, [the boy
And mixt with Wyatt's rising—and
Not out of him—but neither cold,
coarse, cruel,
And more than all—no Spaniard.
Lady C. Not so loud.
Lord Devon, girls! what are you whis-
pering here?
Alice. Probing an old state secret—
how it chanced [foreign travel,
That this young Earl was sent on
Not lost his head. [him.
Lady C. There was no proof against
Alice. Nay, Madam, did not Gard-
ner intercept [wrote,
A letter which the Count de Noailles
To that dead traitor, Wyatt, with full
proof [came of that?
Of Courtenay's treason? What, be-
Lady C. Some say that Gardiner,
out of love for him, [lost
Burnt it, and some relate that it was
When Wyatt sack'd the Chancellor's
house in Southwark.
Let dead things rest.
Alice. Ay, and with him who died
Alone in Italy.
Lady C. Much changed, I hear, [on.
Had put off levity and put graveness
The foreign courts report him in his
manner [shield.
Noble as his young person and old
It might be so—but all is ov'r now;
He caught a chill in the lagoons of
And died in Padua. [Venice,
Mary (*looking up suddenly*). Died in
the true faith?
Lady C. Ay, Madam, happily.
Mary. Happier he than I.
Lady M. It seems her Highness hath
awaken'd. Think you
That I might dare to tell her that the
Count— [evermore.
Mary. I will see no man hence for
Saving my confessor and my cousin
Pole. [dear lady.
Lady M. It is the Count de Feria, my
Mary. What Count?
Lady M. The Count de Feria, from
his Majesty
King Philip. [hair!
Mary. Philip! quick! loop up my
Throw cushions on that seat, and make
it throne-like.
Arrange my dress—the gorgeous In-
dian shawl



That Philip brought me in our happy days!—

That covers all, So—am I somewhat Queenlike. [earth?

Bride of the mightiest sovereign upon Lady C. Ay, so your Grace would bide a moment yet.

Mary. No, no, he brings a letter. I may die

Before I read it. Let me see him at once.

Enter Count de Feria (kneels).

Fer. I trust your Grace is well.

(aside) How her hand burns.

Mary. I am not well, but it will better me, [bring.

Sir Count, to read the letter which you

Fer. Madam, I bring no letter.

Mary. How! no letter?

Fer. His Highness is so vex'd with strange affairs—

Mary. That his own wife is no affair of his. [veriest love,

Fer. Nay, Madam, nay! he sends his And says he will come quickly.

Mary. Doth he, indeed?

You, sir, do you remember what you said

When last you came to England?

Fer. Madam, I brought

My King's congratulations; it was hoped [happy state

Your Highness was once more in To give him an heir male.

Mary. Sir, you said more:

You said he would come quickly. I had horses [night;

On all the road from Dover, day and

On all the road from Harwich, night

and day; [band came not;

But the child came not, and the bus-

And yet he will come quickly

Thou hast learnt [need

Thy lesson and I mine. There is no

For Philip so to shame himself again.

Return, [more,

And tell him that I know he comes no

Tell him at last I know his love is

dead, [death—

And that I am in state to bring forth

Thou are commission'd to Elizabeth,

And not to me!

Fer. Mere compliments and

wishes. [your Grace?

But shall I take some message from

Mary. Tell her to come and close my

dying eyes, [my grave.

And wear my crown, and dance upon

Fer. Then I may say your Grace will

see your sister?

Your Grace is too low-spirited. Air

and sunshine. [warm Spain.

I would we had you, Madam, in our

You droop in your dim London.

Mary. Have him away,

I sicken of his readiness.

Lady C. My Lord Count,

Her Highness is too ill for colloquy.

Fer. (kneels and kisses her hand).

I wish her Highness better. (Aside)

How her hand burns. [Exeunt.

SCENE III.—A House near London.

Elizabeth, Steward of the Household,
Attendants.

Eliz. There's half an angel wrong'd,
in your account;
Methinks I am all angel that I bear it
Without more ruffling. Cast it o'er
again.

Steward. I were whole devil if I
wrong'd you, Madam.

[Exit Steward.

At. The Count de Feria, from the
King of Spain. [need not go:

Eliz. Ah!—let him enter. Nay, you
[To her Ladies.

Remain within the chamber, but apart.

[Welcome to England!

We'll have no private conference.

Enter Feria.

Fer. Fair island star. [Count?

Eliz. I shine! what else, Sir

Fer. As far as France, and into
Philip's heart. [served,

My King would know if you be fairly
And lodged, and treated.

Eliz. You see the lodging, sir,

I am well served, and am in every
thing [Queen.

Most loyal and most grateful to the
Fer. You should be grateful to my

master, too, [owe

He spoke of this; and unto him you
That Mary hath acknowledged you her

heir. [the people.

Eliz. No, not to her or him; but to
Who know my right, and love me as I

The people! whom God aid! [love

Fer. You will be Queen,

And were I Philip—
Eliz. Wherefore pause you—what?

Fer. Nay, I but speak from mine

own self, not him:

Your royal sister cannot last; your
hand [eate one!

Will be much coveted! What a deli-
Our Spanish ladies have none such—

and there, [samer gold—

Were you in Spain, this fine fair gos-
Like sun-gilt breathings on a frosty

dawn—
That hovers round your shoulder—

Eliz. Is it so fine?

Troth, some have said so.
Fer. Would be deemed a miracle.

Eliz. Your Philip hath gold hair and
golden beard, [like mine.

There must be ladies many with hair
Fer. Some few of Gothic blood have

golden hair,
But none like yours.

Eliz. I am happy you approve it.

Fer. But as to Philip and your

Grace—consider,—

If such a one as you should match with
Spain,
What hinders but that Spain and Eng-
land join'd,



Should make the mightiest empire
earth has known.

Spain would be England on her seas,
and England

Mistress of the Indies.

Eliz. It may chance, that England
Will be mistress of the Indies yet,
Without the help of Spain.

Fer. Impossible;
Except you put Spain down.

Wide of the mark ev'n for a madman's
dream. [men. Count de Feria,

Eliz. Perhaps; but we have sea-
I take it that the King hath spoken to
you; [match?

But is Don Carlos such a goodly
Fer. Don Carlos, madam, is but
twenty years old.

Eliz. Ay, tell the King that I will
muse upon it; [keep him so;

He is my good friend, and I would
But—he would have me Catholic of
Rome,

And that I scarce can be; and, sir,
till now [marriages,

My sister's marriage, and my father's
Make me full fain to live and die a
maid. [King.

But I am much beholden to your
Have you aught else to tell me?

Fer. Nothing, Madam,
Save that methought I gather'd from
the Queen [fore she—died.

That she would see your Grace be-
Eliz. God's death! and wherefore
spake you not before?

We dally with our lazy moments here,
And hers are number'd. Horses there,
without! [master.

I am much beholden to the King, your
Why did you keep me prating. Horses,
there! [*Exit Elizabeth, etc.*

Fer. So from a clear sky falls the
thunderbolt! [Philip,

Don Carlos? Madam, if you marry
Then I and he will snaffle your "God's
death," [you tame;

And break your paces in, and make
God's death, forsooth—you do not
know King Philip. [*Exit.*

SCENE IV.—*London. Before the Pal-
ace.*

*A light burning within. Voices of the
night passing.*

1. Is not yon light in the Queen's
chamber?

2. Ay,
They say she's dying.

1. So is Cardinal Pole.
May the great angels join their wings,
and make

Down for their heads to heaven!

2. Amen. Come on.
[*Exeunt.*

Two Others.

1. There's the Queen's light. I hear
she cannot live.

2. God curse her and her Legate!
Gardiner burns

Already; but to pay them full in kind,
The hottest hold in all the devil's den
[Guernsey,

Were but a sort of winter; sir, in
I watch'd a woman burn; and in her
agony [was born—

The mother came upon her—a child
And, sir, they hurl'd it back into the
fire, [habe

That, being but baptized in fire, the
Might be in fire forever. Ah, good
neighbor, [than fire

There should be something fierier
To yield them their deserts.

1. Amen to all
You wish, and further.

A 3d. Voice. Deserts! Amen to what?
Whose deserts? Yours? You have a
gold ring on your finger, and soft
raiment about your body; and is not
the woman up yonder sleeping after
all she has done, in peace and quiet-
ness, on a soft bed, in a closed room,
with light, fire, physic, tendance; and
I have seen the true men of Christ
lying famine-dead by scores, and under
no ceiling but the cloud that wept on
them, net for them.

1. Friend, tho' so late, it is not safe
to preach. [you?

You had best go home. What are
3. What am I? One who cries con-
tinually with sweat and tears to the
Lord God that it would please Him
out of His infinite love to break down
all kingship and queenship, all priest-
hood and prelaey; to cancel and abol-
ish all bonds of human allegiance, all
the magistracy, all the nobles, and all
the wealthy; and to send us again,
according to his promise, the one King,
the Christ, and all things in common,
as in the day of the first church, when
Christ Jesus was King.

1. If ever I heard a madman,—let's
away! [beyond me.

Why, you long-winded— Sir, you go
I pride myself on being moderate.

Good night! Go home. Besides, you
curse so loud,
The watch will hear you. Get you
home at once. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE V.—*London. A Room in the
Palace.*

*Gallery on one side. The moon-
light streaming through a range of
windows on the wall opposite.*

Mary, Lady Clarence, Lady Mag-
dalen Dacres, Alice. Queen pacing
the Gallery. A writing-table in
front. Queen comes to the table and
writes and goes again, pacing the
Gallery.

Lady C. Mine eyes are dim: what
hath she written? read. [to me."

Alice. "I am dying, Philip; come



Lady M. There—up and down, poor lady, up and down.
Alice. And how her shadow crosses one by one [on the wall, The moonlight casements pattern'd Following her like her sorrow. She turns again.
 [Queen sits and writes and goes again.
Lady C. What hath she written now? [come," and all awry,
Alice. Nothing; but "come, come, And blotted by her tears. This cannot last. [Queen returns.
Mary. I whistle to the hird has broken cage, And all in vain. [Sitting down. Calais gone—Guines gone, too—and Philip gone!
Lady C. Dear Madam, Philip is but at the wars; [again; I cannot doubt hut that he comes And he is with you in a measure still. I never look'd upon so fair a likeness As your great King in armor there, Upon his helmet. [his hand
 [Pointing to the portrait of Philip on the wall.
Mary. Doth he not look noble? I had heard of him in battle over seas, And I would have my warrior all in arms. He said it was not courtly to stand helmeted [cious moment, Before the Queen. He had his gra- Altho' you'll not believe me. How As if he loved me yet! [he smiles
Lady C. And so he does.
Mary. He never loved me—nay, he could not love me. [France. It was his father's policy against I am eleven years older than he. Poor boy. [Weeps.
Alice. That was a lusty hoy of twenty-seven; [Aside
 Poor enough in God's grace!
Mary. —And all in vain!
 The Queen of Scots is married to the Dauphin, [world is gone; And Charles, the lord of this low And all his wars and wisdoms past away;
 And in a moment I shall follow him.
Lady C. Nay, dearest Lady, see your good physician.
Mary. Drugs—but he knows they cannot help me—says [think— That rest is all—tells me I must not That I must rest—I shall rest by and by. [when he springs Catch the wild cat, cage him, and And maim himself against the hare, say "rest:" [have him rest— Why, you must kill him if you would Dead or alive you cannot make him happy. [pure a life,
Lady C. Your Majesty has lived so And done such mighty things by Holy Church, [yet. I trust that God will make you happy

Mary. What is the strange thing happiness? Sit down here; Tell me thine happiest hour.
Lady C. I will, if that May make your Grace forget yourself a little. [our field
 There runs a shallow brook across For twenty miles, where the black crow flies five, [the way
 And doth so bound and babble all As if itself were happy. It was May-time, [loved.
 And I was walking with the man I I loved him, but I thought I was not loved. [brook
 And both were silent, letting the wild Speak for us—till he stoop'd and gather'd one [nots,
 From out a hed of thick forget-me- Look'd hard and sweet at me, and gave it me,
 I took it, tho' I did not know I took it, And put it in my bosom, and all at once I felt his arms about me, and his lips—
Mary. O God! I have been too slack, too slack;
 There are Hot Gospellers even among our guards— [but burnt
 Nobles we dared not touch. We have The heretic priest, workmen, and women and children.
 Wet, famine, ague, fever, storm, wreck, wrath,— [God's grace,
 We have so play'd the coward; but by We'll follow Philip's leading, and set up The Holy Office here—garnier the wheat, And burn the tares with unquenchable fire!
 Burn!
 Fie, what a savor! tell the cooks to close The doors of all the offices below.
 Latimer! [here—
 Sir, we are private with our women Ever a rough, blunt, and uncourtly fellow— [out!
 Thou light a torch that never will go 'Tis out—mine flames. Women, the Holy Father [in Pole—
 Has ta'en the legateship from our coun- Was that well done? and poor Pole pines of it.
 As I do, to the death. I am but a woman, I have no power.—Ah, weak and meek old man.
 Sevenfold dishonor'd even in the sight Of thine own secretaries—No, no. No pardon!— [hand still
 Why that was false: there is the right Beckons me hence.
 Sir, you were burnt for herey, not for treason,
 Remember that! 'twas I and Bonner did it,
 And Pole; we are three to one—Have you found mercy there,
 Grant it me here: and see he smiles and goes,
 Gentle as in life.
Alice. Madam, who goes? King Philip?



Mary. No, Philip comes and goes,
but never goes.
Women, when I am dead,
Open my heart, and there you will find
written [his,—
Two names, Philip and Calais; open
So that he have one,— [icy,—
You will find Philip only, policy, pol-
Ay, worse than that—not one hour true
to me! [vice!
Foul maggots crawling in a fester'd
Adulterous to the very heart of Hell.
Hast thou a knife? [God's mercy—
Alice. Ay, Madam, but o'
Mary. Fool, think'st thou I would
peril mine own soul [girl,
By slaughter of the body? I could not,
Not this way—callous with a constant
strife,
Unwoundable. Thy knife!
Alice. Take heed, take heed!
The blade is keen as death.
Mary. This Philip shall not
Stare in upon me in my haggardness;
Old, miserable, diseased, [down,
Incapable of children. Come thou
[Cuts out the picture and throws it
down. [my Philip.
Lie there. (Wails.) O God, I have killed
Alice. No [out,
Madam, you have but cut the canvas
We can replace it.
Mary. All is well then; rest—
I will to rest; he said, I must have rest.
[Cries of "Elizabeth" in the street.
A cry! What's that? Elizabeth? re-
volt? [Wyatt?
A new Northumberland, another
I'll fight it on the threshold of the
'grave. [comes to see you.
Lady C. Madam, your royal sister
Mary. I will not see her.
Who knows if Boleyn's daughter be my
sister? [arm.
I will see none except the priest. Your
[To Lady Clarence.
O Saint of Aragon, with that sweet
worn smile [hence.
Among thy patient wrinkles—help me
[Exeunt.
The Priest passes. Enter Elizabeth
and Sir William Cecil.
Eliz. Good counsel yours—
No one in waiting? still,
As if the chamberlain were Death him-
self! way?
The room she sleeps in—is not this the
No, that way there are voices. Am I
too late? [way.
Cecil . . . God guide me lest I lose the
[Exit Elizabeth.
Cecil. Many points weather'd, many
perilous ones,
At last a harbor opens; but therein
Sunk rocks—they need fine steering—
much it is
To be nor mad, nor bigot—have a mind—
Not let Priests' talk, or dream of worlds
to be,

Miscorol things about her—sudden
touches
For him, or him—sunk rocks; no pas-
sionate faith— [mise;
But—if let be—balance and compro-
Brave, wary, same to the heart of hei
—a Tudor [Boleyn, too,
School'd by the shadow of death—a
Glancing across the Tudor—not so well.
Enter Alice.
How is the good Queen now?
Alice. Away from Philip.
Back in her childhood—prattling to
her mother [Charles,
Of her hetrothal to the Emperor
And childlike-jealous of him again—
and once [book
She thank'd her father sweetly for his
Against that godless German. Ah, those
days
Were happy. It was never merry world
In England, since the Bible came
among us.
Cecil. And who says that?
Alice. It is a saying among the Cath-
olics.
Cecil. It never will be merry world
in England, [poor.
Till all men have their Bible, rich and
Alice. The Queen is dying, or you
dare not say it.
Enter Elizabeth.
Eliz. The Queen is dead.
Cecil. Then here she stands!
my homage.
Eliz. She knew me, and acknowl-
edged me her heir,
Pray'd me to pay her debts, and keep
the Faith; [in peace.
Then claspt the cross, and pass'd away
I left her lying still and beautiful,
More beautiful than in life. Why
should you vex yourself,
Poor sister? Sir, I swear I have no
heart [fence,
To be your Queen. To reign is restless
Tierce, quart, and trickery. Peace is
with the dead. [nupt:
Her life was winter, for her spring was
And she loved much: pray God she be
forgiven.
Cecil. Peace with the dead who
never were at peace!
Yet she loved one so much—I needs
must say—
That never English monarch dying left
England so little.
Eliz. But with Cecil's aid
And others, if our person be secured
From traitor stabs—we will make Eng-
land great.
*Enter Paget, and other Lords of the
Council, Sir Ralph Bagenhall, etc.*
Lords. God save Elizabeth, the
Queen of England!
Bag. God save the Crown: the Pa-
pacy is no more.
Paget (aside). Are we so sure of that?
Acclamation. God save the Queen!



HAROLD.

SHOW-DAY AT BATTLE ABBEY. 1876.

A GARDEN here—May breath and bloom
of spring—
The cuckoo yonder from an English elm
Crying “with my false egg I overwhelm
The native nest:” and fancy hears the
ring [sing,
Of harness, and that deathful arrow
And Saxon battle-axe clang on Norman
helm. [realm :
Here rose the dragon-banner of our

Here fought, here fell, our Norman-
slander'd king.
O Garden blossoming out of English
blood !
O strange hate-healer Time ! We stroll
and stare [years ago ;
Where night made right eight hundred
Might, right ? ay good, so all things
make for good—
But he and he, if soul be soul, are where
Each stands full face with all he did
below.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

King Edward the Confessor.
Stigand, created Archbishop of Can-
terbury by the Anti-pope Benedict.
Aldred, Archbishop of York.
The Norman Bishop of London.
Harold, Earl of Wessex, af-
terwards King of Eng-
land, [iria,
Tostig, Earl of Northum-
Gurth, Earl of East Anglia,
Leofwin, Earl of Kent and
Essex, } Sons of
Godwin.
Wulfnoth,
Count William of Normandy.
William Rufus.
William Malet, a Norman Noble.*

Edwin, Earl of Mercia, } Sons of Alfgar
Morcar, Earl of North- } of Mercia.
umbria after Tostig,
Gamel, a Northumbrian Thane.
Guy, Count of Ponthieu.
Roll, a Ponthieu Fisherman.
Hugh Margot, a Norman Monk.
Osgod and Athelric, Canons from Wal-
tham.
The Queen, Edward the Confessor's
Wife, Daughter of Godwin.
Aldwyth, Daughter of Alfgar and
Widow of Griffyth, King of Wales.
Edith, Ward of King Edward.
Courtiers, Earls and Thanes, Men-at-
Arms, Canons of Waltham, Fisher-
men, &c.

* . . . quidam partim Normannus et Anglus
Compter Heraldus. (*Guy of Amiens*, 587.)

ACT I.

SCENE I.—London. *The King's Palace.*
(*A comet seen through the open win-
dow.*) Aldwyth, Gamel, Courtiers
talking together.
First Courtier. Lo ! there once more
—this is the seventh night ! [sconrge
Yon grimly-glaring, treble-brandished
Of England !
Second Courtier. Horrible !
1 Court. Look you, there's a star
That dances in it as mad with agony !
Third Courtier. Ay, like a spirit in
Hell who skips and flies
To right and left, and cannot scape the
flame.
2 Court. Steam'd upward from the
undescendable
Abysm.

1 Court. Or floated downward from
the throne
Of God Almighty.
Aldwyth. Gamel, son of Orm,
What thinkest thou this means ?
Gamel. War, my dear lady !
Ald. Doth this affright thee ?
Gamel. Mightily, my dear lady.
Ald. Stand by me then, and look
upon my face,
Not on the comet.

Enter Morcar.

Brother ! why so pale ?
Morcar. It glares in heaven, it flares
upon the Thames.
The people are as thick as bees below,
They hum like bees,—they cannot
speak—for awe ; [strike
Look to the skies, then to the river,



Their hearts, and hold their habies up
to it. [too,
I think that they would Molochize them
To have the heavens clear.

Ad. They fright not me.

Enter Leofwin, *after him* Gurth.
Ask thou Lord Leofwin what he thinks
of this! [I lieve, that these

Mor. Lord Leofwin, dost thou be-
Three rods of blood-red fire up yonder
mean [Heaven?

The doom of England and the wrath of
Bishop of London (passing). Did ye
not cast with bestial violence [all

Our holy Norman bishops down from
Their thrones in England? I alone
remain.

Why should not Heaven be wroth?

Leofwin. With us or thee?
Bp. of Lond. Did ye not outlaw your
archbishop Robert,

Robert of Jumliéges—well-nigh murder
him too? [Heaven?

Is there no reason for the wrath of
Leaf. Why then the wrath of Heav-
en hath three tails, [London.

The devil only one. [*Exit* Bishop of

Enter Archbishop Stigand.

Stigand should know the purposes of
Heaven. [face of heaven,

Stigand. Not I. I cannot read the
Perhaps our vines will grow the better
for it. [the king's face on his coins.

Leaf. (laughing.) He can hut read
Stig. Ay, ay, young lord, there the
king's face is power. [lie fear,

Gurth. O father mock not at a pub-
But tell us, is this pendent hell in hea-
ven.

A harm to England?

Stig. Ask it of King Edward!
And he may tell thee, I am a harm to
England.

Old uncanonical Stigand—ask of *me*
Who had my pallium from an Anti-
pope? [world

Not he the man—for in our windy
What's up is faith, what's down is
heresy. [shake his chair.

Our friends, the Normans, help to
I have a Norman fever on me, son,
And cannot answer sanely . . . What
it means?

Ask our broad Earl. [*Pointing to Har-
old, who enters.*

Harold seeing Gamel). Hail, Gamel,
son of Orm! [Gamel,

Albeit no rolling stone, my good friend
Thou hast rounded since we met. Thy
life at home [not

Is easier than mine here. Look! am I
Work-wan, flesh-fallen!
Gamel. Art thou sick, good Earl?

Har. Sick as an autumn swallow for
a voyage, [hound
Sick for an idle week of hawk and
Beyond the seas—a change! When
camest thou hither?

Gamel. To-day, good Earl.

Har. Is the North quiet, Gamel?

Gamel. Nay, there be murmurs, for
thy brother breaks us
With over-taxing—quiet, ay, as yet—
Nothing as yet.

Har. Staud by him, mine old friend,
Thou art a great voice in Northumber
land! [hear thee.

Advise him: speak him sweetly, he will
He is passionate but honest. Stand
thou by him! [weird sign

More talk of this to-morrow, if you
Not blast us in our dream.—Well,
father Stigand—

To Stigand, who advances to him.

Stigand (pointing to the comet). War
here, my son? is that the doom
of England?

Har. Why not the doom of all the
world as well? [land.

For all the world sees it as well as Eng-
These meteors came and went before
our day, [more

Not harming any: it threatens us no
Than French or Norman. War? the
worst that follows [mon rut

Things that seem jerk'd out of the com-
Of Nature is the hot religious fool,
Who, seeing war in heaven, for hea-
ven's credit

Makes it on earth: but look where Ed-
ward draws
A faint foot hither, leaning upon
Tostig.

He hath learnt to love our Tostig much
of late. [tiger in him,

Leaf. And he hath learnt, despite the
To sleek and supple himself to the
king's hand. [cures the evil

Gurth. I trust the kingly touch that
May serve to charm the tiger out of him.
Leaf. He hath as much of cat as tiger
in him. [man.

Our Tostig loves the hand and not the
Har. Nay! Better die than lie!

Enter King, Queen and Tostig.

Edw. In heaven signs!
Sigus upon earth! signs everywhere!
your Priests!

Gross, worldly, simoniacal, unlearned!
They scarce can read their Psalter!
and your churches [manland

Uncouth, unhandsons, while in Nor-
God speaks thro' ailer voices, as He
dwells [being

In statelier shrines. I say not this, as
Half Norman-blooded, nor as some
have held,

Because I love the Norman better—no,
But dreading God's revenge upon this
realm. [say it

For narrowness and coldness: and I
For the last time perchance, before I go
To find the sweet refreshment of the
Saluts.

I have lived a life of utter purity:
I have builded the great church of
Holy Peter:



I have wrought miracles—to God the glory—

And miracles will in my name be wrought [go—

Hereafter.—I have fought the fight and I see the flashing of the gates of pearl— And it is well with me, tho' some of you Have scorn'd me—ay—hut after I am gone [vision;

Woe, woe to England! I have had a The seven sleepers in the cave at Ephesus

Have turn'd from right to left.

Har. My most dear Master, What matters? let them turn from left to right

And sleep again.

Tostig. Too hardy with thy king! A life of prayer and fasting well may see

Deeper into the mysteries of heaven Than thou, good brother.

Ald. (aside). Sees he into thine, That thou wouldst have his promise for the crown? [art too hard,

Edw. Tostig says true; my son, thou Not stagger'd by this ominous earth and heaven: [same loom,

But heaven and earth are threads of the Play into one another, and weave the web

That may confound thee yet.

Har. Nay, I trust not. For I have served thee long and honestly.

Edw. I know it, son; I am not thankful: thou [me Hast broken all my foes, lighten'd for The weight of this poor crown, and left me time [one.

And peace for prayer to gain a better Twelve years of service! England loves thee for it.

Thou art the man to rule her!

Ald. (aside). So, not Tostig!

Har. And after those twelve years a boon, my king,

Respite, a holiday; thyself wast wont To love the chase: thy leave to set my feet [the seas!

On board, and hunt and hawk'd beyond *Edw.* What, with this flaming horror overhead?

Har. Well, when it passes then.

Edw. Ay if it pass. Go not to Normandy—go not to Normandy. [to Normandy?

Har. And wherefore not, my king, Is not my brother Wulfnoth hostage there

For my dead father's loyalty to thee? I pray thee, let me hence and bring him home. [messenger.

Edw. Not thee, my son; some other *Har.* And why not me, my lord, to Normandy? [and mine?

Is not the Norman Count thy friend *Edw.* I pray thee, do not go to Normandy. [Normans out

Har. Because my father drove the

Of England?—That was many a summer gone— [thee.

Forgotten and forgiven by them and *Edw.* Harold, I will not yield thee leave to go. [hawk and hunt

Har. Why then to Flanders. I will In Flanders. [fields

Edw. Be there not fair woods and In England? Wilful, wilful. Go—the Saints

Pilot and prosper all thy wandering out And homeward. Tostig, I am faint again.

Son Harold, I will in and pray for thee. [*Exit, leaning on Tostig, and followed by Stigand, Morcar, and Courtiers.*

Har. What lies upon the mind of our good king [mandy?

That he should harp this way on *Queen.* Brother, the king is wiser than he seems; [king.

And Tostig knows it; Tostig loves the *Har.* And love should know; and—he the king so wise,— [seems.

Then Tostig too were wiser than he I love the man but not his fantasies.

Re-enter Tostig.

Well, brother, [umbria? When didst thou hear from thy North-
Tostig. When did I hear aught but this "When" from thee?

Leave me alone, brother, with my Northumbria:—

She is my mistress, let me look to her! The King hath made me Earl; make me not fool! [me Earl!

Nor make the King a fool, who made *Har.* No, Tostig—lest I make myself a fool [make thee Earl.

Who made the King who made thee, *Tostig.* Why chafe me then? Thou knowest I soon go wild.

Gurth. Come, come! as yet thou art not gone so wild [of us.

But thou canst hear the best and wisest *Har.* So says old Gurth, not I: yet hear! thine earldom, [crown

Tostig, hath been a kingdom. Their old Is yet a force among them, a sun set But leaving light enough for Alfgar's house [ghastly glare

To strike thee down by—may, this May heat their fancies,

Tostig. My most worthy brother, That art the quietest man in all the world— [war

Ay, ay and wise in peace and great in Pray God the people choose thee for their king! [win

But all the powers of the house of God—Are not enframed in thee.

Har. Thank the Saints, no! But thou hast drain'd them shallow by thy tolls, [King:

And thou art ever here about the Thine absence well may seem a want of care. [of Godwin

Cling to their love; for, now the sons



Sit topmost in the field of England,
 envy,
 Like the rough bear beneath the tree,
 good brother,
 Waits till the man let go.

Tostig. Good counsel truly!
 I heard from my Northumbria yester-
 day. [Northumbria? Well?

Har. How goes it then with thy
Tostig. And wouldst thou that it
 went aught else than well?

Har. I would it went as well as with
 mine earldom.

Leofwin's and Gurth's.

Tostig. Ye govern milder men.

Gurth. We have made them milder
 by just government.

Tostig. Ay, ever give yourselves
 your own good word.

Leof. An honest gift by all the
 Saints, if giver

And taker be but honest! but they
 bribe

Each other, and so often, an honest
 world

Will not believe them.

Har. I may tell thee, *Tos-
 tig,* [day]

I heard from thy Northumberland, to-
 [my nakedness

Tostig. From spies of thine to spy
 in my poor North!

Har. There is a movement there,
 A blind one—aothing yet.

Tostig. Crush it at once
 With all the power I have!—I must—I
 will!— [dom there,

Crush it half-born! Fool still? or wis-
 My wise head-shaking Harold?

Har. Make not thou
 The nothing something. Wisdom when
 in power [but smile

And wisest, should not frown as Power,
 As kindness, watching all, till the true
 must [when to strike—

Shall make her strike as Power: but
 O *Tostig,* O dear brother—if they
 prance,

Rein in, not lash them, lest they rear
 and run

And break both neck and axle.

Tostig. Good again!
 Good counsel tho' scarce needed. Pour
 not water

In the full vessel running out at top
 To swamp the house.

Leof. Nor thou be a wild thing
 Out of the waste, to turn and bite the
 hand

Would help thee from the trap.

Tostig. Thou playest in tune.

Leof. To the deaf adder thee, that
 wilt not dance

However wisely charm'd.

Tostig. No more, no more!

Gurth. I likewise cry 'no more.'

Unwholesome talk [has a tongue!
 For Godwin's house! Leofwin, thou
Tostig, thou lookst as thou would'st
 spring upon him.

St. Olaf, not while I am by! Come,
 come,

Join hands, let brethren dwell in unity;
 Let kith and kin stand close as our
 shield-wall, [a tongue,

Who breaks us then? I say, thou hast
 And *Tostig* is not stout enough to bear it
 Vex him not, Leofwin.

Tostig. No, I am not vext,—
 Altho' ye seek to vex me, one and all.

I have to make report of my good earl-
 dom [you.

To the good king who gave it—not to
 Nor any of you,—I am not vext at all.

Har. The king? the king is ever at
 his prayers;

In all that handles matter of the state
 I am the king.

Tostig. That shalt thou never be
 if I can thwart thee.

Har. Brother, brother!
Tostig. Away!

[Exit *Tostig.*

Queen. Spite of this grisly star ye
 Poor *Tostig.* [three must gall

Leof. *Tostig,* sister, galls himself,
 He cannot smell a rose but pricks his
 nose [rose.

Against the thorn, and rails against the
Queen. I am the only rose of all the
 stock [him, so

That never thorn'd him; Edward loves
 Ye hate him, Harold always hated him.

Why—how they fought when boys—
 and, Holy Mary!

How Harold used to beat him!

Har. Why, boys will fight.
 Leofwin would often fight me, and I
 beat him. [much ado

Even old Gurth would fight. I had
 To hold mine own against old Gurth.

Old Gurth, [cause; but *Tostig*—
 We fought like great states for grave
 On a sudden—at a something—for a
 nothing— [we fought

The boy would fist me hard, and when
 I conquer'd, and he loved me none the
 less, [tell him

Till thou wouldst get him all apart, and
 That where he was but worsted, he was
 wrong'd. [him too;

Ah! thou hast taught the king to spoil
 Now the spoilt child sways both. Take
 heed, take heed;

Thou art the Queen; ye are boy and
 girl no more:

Side not with *Tostig* in any violence,
 Lest thou be sideways guilty of the vio-
 lence.

Queen. Come fall not foul on me. I
 leave thee, brother.

Har. Nay, my good sister—

[*Exeunt* *Queen,* *Harold,* *Gurth* and
Leofwin.

Ald. Gamel, son of Orm,
 What thinkest thou this means?

[*Pointing to the comet.*

Gamel. War, my dear lady,



War, waste, plague, famine, all malignities. [his earldom.]

Ald. It means the fall of Tostig from Gamel. That were too small a matter for a comet! [house of Alfgar.]

Ald. It means the lifting of the Gamel. Too small! a comet would not show for that! [compass it.]

Ald. Not small for thee if thou canst Gamel. Thy love? [man;]

Ald. As much as I can give thee, This Tostig is, or like to be, a tyrant; Stir up thy people: oust him!

Gamel. And thy love?
Ald. As much as thou canst bear.

Gamel. I can bear all,
And not be giddy.

Ald. No more now: to-morrow.

SCENE II.—*In the Garden. The King's House near London. Sunset.*

Edith. Mad for thy mate, passionate nightingale . . . [ment;]

I love thee for it—ay, but stay a mo-
He can but stay a moment; he is going.
I fain would hear him coming! . . . near

me . . . near,
Somewhere—To draw him nearer with
Like thine to thine. [a charm]

(*Singing.*)

*Love is come with a song and a smile,
Welcome Love with a smile and a song:*

*Love can stay but a little while.
Why cannot he stay? They call him*

*away:
Ye do him wrong, ye do him wrong;
Love will stay for a whole life long.*

Enter Harold.

Har. The nightingales at Havering-
in-the-bower [ward's prayers]

Sang out their loves so loud, that Ed-
Wers deafen'd, and he prayed them
dumb, and thus [gale!]

I dumb thee too, my wingless nightin-
[*Kissing her.*]

Edith. Thou art my music! Would
their wings were mine [go?]

To follow thee to Flanders! Must thou
Har. Not must, but will. It is but
for one moon. [ward's hall]

Edith. Leaving so many foes in Ed-
To league against thy weal. The Lady
Aldwyth [on thee,

Was here to-day, and when she touch'd
She stammer'd in her hate; I am sure
she hates thee,

Pants for thy blood.

Har. Well, I have given her cause—
I fear no woman.

Edith. Hate not one who felt
Some pity for thy hater! I am sure
Her morning wanted sunlight, she so
praised [pale—

The convent and lone life—within the
Beyond the passion. Nay—she held
with Edward,

At least methought she held with holy
Edward,

That marriage was half sin.

Har. A lesson worth
Finger and thumb—thus [*snaps his fin-*
gers]. And my answer to it—

See here—an interwoven H and E!
Take thou this ring; I will demand
his ward [would she?]

From Edward when I come again. Ay,
She to shut up my blossom in the dark!
Thou art my nun, thy cloister in mine
arms.

Edith. (*taking the ring.*) Yea, but
Earl Tostig—

Har. That's a truer fear!
For if the North take fire, I should be
back;

I shall be, soon enough.

Edith. Ay, but last night
An evil dream that ever came and went—

Har. A gnat that vext thy pillow—
Had I been by [what was it?]

I would have spoil'd his horn. My girl,
Edith. Oh! that thou wert not going!

For so methought it was our marriage-
morn, [man]

And while we stood together, a dead
Rose from behind the altar, tore away
My marriage ring, and rent my bridal
veil; [all fill'd

And then I turn'd, and saw the church
With dead men upright from their
graves, and all [thee,

The dead men made at thee to murder
But thou didst back thyself against a
pillar, [axe—

And strike among them with thy battle
There, what a dream

Har. Well, well—a dream—no more!
Edith. Did not Heaven speak to men
in dreams of old? [what, my child;

Har. Ay—well—of old. I tell thee
Thou hast misread this merry dream
of thine,

Taken the rifted pillars of the wood
For smooth stone columnus of the sanc-
tuary,

The shadows of a hundred fat dead deer
For dead men's ghosts. True, that the
battle-axe [the bow—

Was out of place; it should have been
Come, thou shalt dream no more such
dreams; I swear it, [phires—these

By mine own eyes—and these two sap-
Twin rubies, that are amulets against
all

The kisses of all kind of womankind
In Flanders, till the sea shall roll me
To tumble at thy feet. [back

Edith. That would but shame me,
Rather than make me vain. The sea
may roll [ing rock

Sand, shingle, shore-weed, not the liv-
Which guards the land.

Har. Except it be a soft one,
And underateen to the fall. Mine amu-
let . . . upon thine eyelids, to
shut in



A happier dream. Sleep, sleep, and
 thou shalt see
 My grayhounds fleeting like a beam of
 light,
 And hear my peregrine and her bells in
 heaven; [heaven's;]
 And other bells on earth, which yet are
 Guess what they be.
Edith. He cannot guess who knows.
 Farewell, my king.
Har. Not yet, but then—my queen.
[Exeunt.]

Enter Aldwyth from the thicket.

Ald. The kiss that charms thine eye-
 lids into sleep, [could love him
 Will hold mine waking. Hate him? I
 More, tenfold, than this fearful child
 can do;
 Griffyth I hated: why not hate the foe
 of England? Griffyth when I saw him
 flee, [the blood
 Chased deer-like up his mountains, all
 That should have only pulsed for Griff-
 yth's heat [love him,
 For his pursuer. I love him or think I
 If he were King of England, I his
 queen,
 I might be sure of it. Nay, I do love
 him.— [the king
 She must be cloister'd somehow, lest
 Should yield his ward to Harold's
 will. What harm? [love.—
 She hath but blood enough to live, not
 When Harold goes and Tostig, shall I
 play [upon him?
 The craftier Tostig with him? fawn
 Chime in with all? "O thou more
 saint than king!" [relics!]
 And that were true enough. "O blessed
 "O Holy Peter!" If he found me
 thus,
 Harold might hate me; he is broad and
 honest, [like Aldwyth . . .
 Breathing an easy gladness . . . not
 For which I strangely love him. Should
 not England [that part
 Love Aldwyth, if she stay the feuds
 The sons of Godwin from the sons of
 Alfgar [Aldwyth!
 By such a marrying? Courage, noble
 Let all thy people bless thee!
 Our wild Tostig,
 Edward hath made him Earl: he would
 be king:— [the bone.—
 The dog that snapt the shadow, dropt
 I trust he may do well, this Gamel,
 whom
 I play upon, that he may play the note
 Whereat the dog shall howl and run,
 and Harold [him,
 Hear the king's music, all alone with
 Pronounced his heir of England.
 I see the goal and half the way to it.—
 Peace-lover is our Harold for the sake
 Of England's wholeness—so—to shake
 the North [division—
 With earthquake and disruption—some
 Then fling mine own fair person in the
 gap

A sacrifice to Harold, a peace-offering,
 A scape-goat marriage—all the sins of
 both [life
 The houses on mine head—then a fair
 And bless the Queen of England.
Morcar (coming from the thicket).

Art thou assured
 By this, that Harold loves but Edith?
Ald. Morcar!
 Why creepst thou like a timorous beast
 of prey

Out of the bush by night?

Mor. I follow'd thee.

Ald. Follow my lead, and I will
 make thee earl.

Mor. What lead then?

Ald. Thou shalt flash it secretly
 Among the good Northumbrian folk,
 that I— [ently

That Harold loves me—yea, and pres-
 That I and Harold are betroth'd—and
 last— [I would not

Perchance that Harold wrongs me; tho'
 That it should come to that.

Mor. I will both flash
 And thunder for thee.

Ald. I said "secretly:"
 It is the flash that murders, the poor
 thunder

Never harm'd head.

Mor. But thunder may bring down
 That which the flash hath stricken.

Ald. Down with Tostig!

That first of all.—And when doth Har-
 old go? [then to Flanders.

Mor. To-morrow—first to Bosham,

Ald. Not to come back till Tostig
 shall have shown [the testh
 And reddened with his people's blood

That shall be broken by us—yea, and
 thou [dream thyself
 Chair'd in his place. Good-night, and
 Their chosen Earl. [*Exit* Aldwyth.

Mor. Earl first, and after that
 Who knows I may not dream myself
 their king!

ACT II.

SCENE I.—*Seashore. Ponthieu. Night.*
Harold and his Men, wrecked.

Har. Friends, in that last inhospit-
 able plunge [are whole;
 Our boat hath burst her ribs; but ours
 I have but bark'd my hands.

Attendant. I dug mine into
 My old fast friend the shore, and cling-
 ing thus [desp

Felt the remorseless outdraught of the
 Haul like a great strong-fellow at my
 legs, [that came

And then I rose and ran. The blast
 So suddenly hath fallen as suddenly—
 Put thou the comet and this blast to-
 gether—

Har. Put thou thyself and mother-
 wit together.

Be not a fool!



Enter Fishermen with torches, Harold going up to one of them, Rolf.

Wicked sea-will-o'-the-wisp !
Wolf of the shore ! dog, with thy lying
lights [thine !
Thou hast betray'd us on these rocks of
Rolf. Ay, but thou liest as loud as the
black herring-pond behind thee.
We be fishermen, I came to see after
my nets.

Har. To drag us into them. Fishermen ? devils ! [false fires,
Who, while ye fish for men with your
Let the great Devil fish for your own
souls.

Rolf. Nay then, we be liker the blessed
Apostles ; they were fishers of men,
Father Jean says.

Har. I had liefer that the fish had
swallowed me,
Like Jonah, than have known there
were such devils.

What's to be done ?

[*To his Men—goes apart with them.*

Fisherman. Rolf, what fish did swallow
Jonah ?

Rolf. A whale !

Fish. Then a whale to a whelk we
have swallowed the King of England.
I saw him over there. Look thee, Rolf,
when I was down in the fever, she was
down with the hunger, and thou didst
stand by her and give her thy crabs, and
set her up again, till now, by the patient
Sainte, she's as crab'd as ever.

Rolf. And I'll give her my crabs
again, when thou art down again.

Fish. I thank thee, Rolf. Run thou
to Count Guy ; he is heard at hand. Tell
him what hath crept into our creel, and
he will fee thee as freely as he will
wrench this outlander's ransom out of
him—and why not ? for what right had
he to get himself wrecked on another
man's land ?

Rolf. Thou art the human-heartedest,
Christian-charitiest of all crab-catchers !
Share and share alike !

[*Exit.*

Har. (to Fisherman). Fellow, dost
thou catch crabs ?

Fish. As few as I may in a wind,
and less than I would in a calm. Ay !

Har. I have a mind that thou shalt
Fish. How ? [catch no more.

Har. I have a mind to brain thee
with mine axe.

Fish. Ay, do, do, and our great
Count-crab will make his nippers meet
in thine heart ; he'll sweat it out of
thee, he'll sweat it out of thee. Look,
he's here ! He'll speak for himself !
Hold thine own, if thou canst !

Enter Guy, Count of Ponthieu.

Har. Guy, Count of Ponthieu !

Guy. Harold, Earl of Wessex !

Har. Thy villains with their lying
lights have wreck'd us !

Guy. Art thou not Earl of Wessex ?

Har. In mine earldom
A man may hang gold bracelets on a
bush, [back
And leave them for a year, and coming
Find them again.

Guy. Thou art a mighty man
In thine own earldom !

Har. Were such murderous liars
In Wessex—if I caught them, they
should hang [mew
Cliff-gibbeted for sea-marks ; our sea-
Winging their only wail !

Guy. Ay, but my men
Hold that the shipwreck are accursed
of God ;— [men ?

What hinders me to hold with mine own
Har. The Christian manhood of the
man who reigns !

Guy. Ay, rave thy worst, but in our
oubliettes

Thou shalt or rot or ransom. Hale him
hence ! [*To one of his attendants.*
Fly thou to William ; tell him we have
Harold.

SCENE II.—*Bayeux. Palace. Count
William and William Malet.*

William. We hold our Saxon wood-
cock in the springe,
But he begins to flunter. As I think
He was thine host in England when I
went

To visit Edward.

Malet. Yea, and there, my lord,
To make allowance for their rougher
fashions,
I found him all a noble host should be.

Will. Thou art his friend : thou
know'st my claim on England

Thro' Edward's promise : we have him
in the toils. [him feel,
And it were well, if thou shouldst let
How dense a fold of danger nets him
round,

So that he bristle himself against my
will. [I were you ?

Malet. What would I do, my lord, if
Will. What wouldst thou do ?

Malet. My lord, he is thy guest.
Will. Nay, by the splendor of God,
no guest of mine.

He came not to see me, had past me by
To hunt and hawk elsewhere, save for
the fate [blast,

Which hunted him when that un-Saxon
And bolts of thunder moulded in high
heaven [and crack'd

To serve the Norman purpose, drave
His boat on Ponthieu beach ; where
our friend Guy [the rack,

Had wrung his ransom from him by
But that I slept between and purchased
him,

Translating his captivity from Guy
To mine own hearth at Bayeux, where
he sits my ransom'd prisoner.

Malet. Well, if not with gold,
With golden deeds and iron strokes
that brought



Thy war with Brittany to a goodlier close

Than else had been, he paid his ransom back. [not like to league

Will. So that henceforth they are With Harold against me.

Malet. A marvel, how He from the liquid sands of Coesnon Haled thy shore—swallow'd, armor'd Normans up

To fight for thee again!

Will. Perchance against Their savor, save thou save him from himself. [again, my lord.

Malet. But I should let him home

Will. Simple! let fly the bird within the hand, [bush!

To catch the bird again within the No. [with me;

Smooth thou my way, before he clash I want his voice in England for the crown, [round;

I want thy voice with him to bring him And being brave he must be subtly cow'd, [swear

And being truthful wrought upon to Vows that he dare not break, England our own [dear friend

Thro' Harold's help, he shall be my As well as thine, and thou thyself shalt have [ritory.

Large lordship there of lands and tennants.

Malet. I know thy purpose; he and Wulfnoth never [meet

Have met, except in public; shall they In private? I have often talk'd with Wulfnoth, [these may act

And stuff'd the boy with fears that On Harold when they meet.

Will. Then let them meet!

Malet. I can but love this noble, honest, Harold.

Will. Love him! why not? thine is a loving office, [man:

I have commission'd thee to save the Help the good ship, showing the sunken rock,

Or he is wreckt for ever.

Enter William Rufus.

William Rufus. Father.

Will. Well, boy.

Will. Ruf. They have taken away the toy thou gavest me, The Norman knight.

Will. Why, boy?

Will. Ruf. Because I broke The horse's leg—it was mine own to break;

I like to have my toys, and break them too.

Will. Well, thou shalt have another Norman knight!

Will. Ruf. And may I break his legs? *Will.* Yea,—get thee gone!

Will. Ruf. I'll tell them I have had my way with thee. [*Exit.*

Malet. I never knew thee check thy will for ought

Save for the prattling of thy little ones.

Will. Who shall be kings of England. I am heir

Of England by the promise of her king. *Malet.* But there the great Assembly choose their king, [England.

The choice of England is the voice of *Will.* I will be king of England by the laws,

The choice, and voice of England.

Malet. Can that be?

Will. The voice of any people is the sword [beats them down.

That guards them, or the sword that Here comes the would-be what I will be . . . kinglike . . . [see break,

Tho' scarce at ease: for, save our mesh-More kinglike he than like to prove a king.

[*Enter Harold, musing, with his eyes on the ground.* [me.

He sees me not—and yet he dreams of Earl, wilt thou fly my falcons this fair day? [against the wind.

They are of the best, stroug-wing'd *Har.* (looking up suddenly, having caught but the last word.) Which way does it blow?

Will. Blowing for England, ha?

Not yet. Thou hast not learnt thy quarters here. [these towers.

The winds so cross and jostle among *Har.* Count of the Normans, thou hast ransom'd us,

Maintain'd, and entertained us royally!

Will. And thou for us hast fought as loyally, [ever!

Which binds us friendship-fast for *Har.* Good!

But lest we turn the scale of courtesy By too much pressure on it, I would fain, [home with us,

Since thou hast promised Wulfnoth Be home again with Wulfnoth.

Will. Stay—as yet

Thou hast but seen how Norman hands can strike,

But walk'd our Norman field, scarce touch'd or tasted,

Thou splendors of our Court.

Har. I am in no mood; I should be as the shadow of a cloud Crossing your light.

Will. Nay, rest a week or two, And we will fill thee full of Norman sun, [mists

And send thee back among thine island With laughter.

Har. Count, I thank thee, but had rather [Saxon downs,

Breathe the free wind from off our Tho' charged with all the wet of all the west. [thou shalt.

Will. Why if thou wilt, so let it be— That were a graceless hospitality

To chain the free guest to the banquet-board; [Harfleur,

To-morrow we will ride with thee to And see thee shipt, and pray in thy behalf [which crack'd

For happier homeward winds than that



Thy bark at Ponthieu,—yet to us in
faith, [know
A happy one—whereby we came to
Thy valor and thy value, noble earl.
Ay, and perchance a happy one for
thee, [row—
Provided—I will go with thee to-mor-
Nay—but there be conditions, easy
ones, [easily.
So thou, fair friend, will take them

Enter Page.

Page. My lord, there is a post from
over seas

With news for thee. [*Exit Page.*

Will. Come, Malet, let us hear!

[*Execunt Count William and Malet.*

Har. Conditions? What conditions?

pay him back [nay—

His ransom? “easy”—that were easy—

No money-lover he! What said the

King?

“I pray you do not go to Normandy.”

And fate hath blown me hither, hound

me too

With bitter obligation to the Count—

Have I not fought it out? What did

he mean? [his eyes,

There lodged a gleaming grimness in

Gave his shorn smile the lie. The

walls oppress me, [the heaven,

And you huge keep that hinders half

Free air! free field!

[*Moves to go out. A Man-at-Arms*

follows him.

Har. (to the Man-at-Arms.) I need

thee not. Why dost thou follow

me?

Man-at-Arms. I have the Count's

commands to follow thee.

Har. What then? Am I in danger

in this court?

Man-at-Arms. I cannot tell. I have

the Count's commands.

Har. Stand out of earshot then, and

in eyeshot. [keep me still

Man-at-Arms. Yea, lord Harold.

[*Withdraws.*

Har. And arm'd men

Ever keep watch beside my chamber

door,

And if I walk within the lonely wood,

There is an arm'd man ever glides be-

hind!

Enter Malet.

Why am I follow'd, haunted, harass'd,

See yonder! [watch'd?

[*Pointing to Man-at-Arms.*

Malet. 'Tis the good Count's care

for thee! [the Normans,

The Normans love thee not, nor thou

Or—so they deem.

Har. But wherefore is the wind,

Which way soever the vane-arrow

ewing,

Not ever fair for England? Why but

now [not hence

He said (thou heardst him) that I must

Save on conditions.

Malet. So in truth he said.

Har. Malet, thy mother was an

Englishwoman;

There somewhere beats an English

pulse in thee!

Malet. Well—for my mother's sake

I love your England,

But for my father I love Normandy.

Har. Speak for thy mother's sake,

and tell me true.

Malet. Then for my mother's sake,

and England's sake

That suffers in the daily want of thee,

Obey the Count's conditions, my good

friend. [honorable!

Har. How, Malet, if they be not

Malet. Seem to obey them.

Har. Better die than lie!

Malet. Choose therefore whether

thou wilt have thy conscience

White as a maiden's hand, or whether

England

Be shatter'd into fragments.

Har. News from England?

Malet. Morcar and Edwin have

stirr'd up the Thanes [nancc;

Against thy brother Tostig's gover-

And all the North of Humber is one

storm. [should be there!

Har. I should be there, Malet, I

Malet. And Tostig in his own hall

on suspicjon [his guest.

Hath massacred the Thane that was

Gamel, the son of Orm: and there be

As villainously slain. [more

Har. The wolf! the beast!

Ill news for guests, ha, Malet! More?

What more? [of this?

What do they say? did Edward know

Malet. They say, his wife was know-

ing and abetting.

Har. They say, his wife!—To marry

and have no husband [be there.

Makes the wife fool. My God, I should

I'll hack my way to the sea.

Malet. Thou canst not, Harold;

Our Duke is all between thee and the

sea,

Our Duke is all about thee like a God;

All passes block'd. Obey him, speak

him fair,

For he is only debonair to those

That follow where he leads, but stark

as death [here is Wulfnoth!

To those that cross him.—Look thou,

I leave thee to thy talk with him alone;

How wan, poor lad! how sick and sad

for home! [*Exit Malet.*

Har. (muttering.) Go not to Nor-

mandy—go not to Normandy!

Enter Wulfnoth.

Poor brother! still a hostage!

Wulfnoth. Yea, and I

Shall see the dewy kiss of dawn no

more [tall cliffs,

Make blush the maiden-white of our

Nor mark the sea-bird rouse himself

and hover [sky

Above the windy ripple, and fill the



With free sea-laughter—never—save indeed [moored Duke
Thou canst make yield this iron—
To let me go.

Har. Why, brother, so he will ;
But on conditions. Canst thou guess
at them. [corridor,

Wulf. Draw nearer,—I was in the
I saw him coming with his brother Odo
The Bayeux bishop, and I hid myself.

Har. They did thee wrong who
made thee hostage ; thou
Wast ever fearful.

Wulf. And he spoke—I heard him—
“This Harold is not of the royal blood,
Can have no right to the crown,” and
Odo said, [might : he is here,
“Thine is the right, for thine the
And yonder is thy keep.”

Har. No, Wulfnoth, no.
Wulf. And William laugh'd and
swore that might was right,
Far as he knew in this poor world of
ours— [with us,

“Marry, the Saints must go along
And, brother, we will find a way,”
said he—

Yea, yea, he would be king of England.
Har. Never !

Wulf. Yea, but thou must not this
way aneuer him. [the truth ?

Har. Is it not better still to speak
Wulf. Not here, or thou wilt never
hence nor I : [goal

For in the racing toward this golden.
He turns not right or left, but tramples
flat [never heard

Whatever thwarts him ; hast thou
His savagery at Alençon,—the town
Hung out raw hides along their walls,
and cried

“Work for the tanner.”

Har. That had anger'd me
Had I been William.

Wulf. Nay, but he had prisoners,
He tore their eyes out, elicited their
hands away, [battlements
And flung them streaming o'er the
Upon the heads of those who walk'd
within— [own sake.

O speak him fair, Harold, for thine
Har. Your Welshman says, “The
Truth against the World.”

Much more the truth against myself.
Wulf. Thyself ?

But for my sake, oh brother ! oh ! for
my sake !

Har. Poor Wulfnoth ! do they not
entreat thee well ? [dungeon loom

Wulf. I see the blackness of my
Across their lamps of revel, and beyond
The merriest murmurs of their ban-
quet clank [wall.

The shackles that will bind me to thee
Har. Too fearful still !

Wulf. Oh no, no—speak him fair !
Call it to temporize ; and not to lie ;
Harold, I do not counsel thee to lie.
The man that hath to foil a murderous
May, surely, play with words. [aim

Har. Words are the man.
Not ev'n for thy sake, brother, would I

Wulf. Then for thine Edith ? [lie.

Har. There thou prickst me deep.
Wulf. And for our Mother Eng-
land ?

Har. Deeper still.
Wulf. And deeper still the deep-
down oubliette, [day—
Down thirty feet below the smiling
In blackness—dogs' food thrown upon
thy head.

And over thee the suns arise and set,
And the lark sings, the sweet stars
come and go, [their fields
And men are at their markets, in
And woo their loves and have forgot-
ten thee ; [grave,
And thou are upright in thy living
Where there is barely room to shift
thy side, [thee ;

And all thine England hath forgotten
And he our lazy-pious Norman King,
With all his Normans round him once
again, [thee.
Counts his old beads, and hath forgot-
Har. Thou art of my blood, and so
methinks, my boy, [Peace !

Thy fears infect me beyond reason.
Wulf. And then our fiery Tostig,
while thy hands [rise

Are palsied here, if his Northumbrians
And hurl him from them,—I have
heard the Normans [not make
Count upon this confusion—may he
A league with William, so to bring
him back ? [of the chance.

Har. That lies within the shadow
Wulf. And like a river in flood
thro' a burst dam [good King
Descends the ruthless Norman—our
Kneele mumbling some old bone—our
helpless folk [own blood—

Are wash'd away, wailing, in their
Har. Wailing ! not warring ? Boy,
thou hast forgotten

That thou art English.
Wulf. Then our modest women—
I know the Norman license—thine own
Edith— [—William comes.

Har. No more ! I will not hear thee
Wulf. I dare not well be seen in
talk with thee. [with thee.

Make thou not mention that I spake
[*Moves away to the back of the stage.*

Enter William, Malet, and Officer.

Officer. We have the man that rail'd
against thy birth.

Will. Tear out his tongue.
Officer. He shall not rail again ;
He said that he should see confusion
fall

On thee and on thine house.
Will. Tear out his eyes,
And plunge him into prison.

Officer. It shall be done.
[*Exit Officer.*

Will. Look not amazed, fair earl !
Better leave undone



Than do by halves—tongueless and
eyeless, prison'd— [man at once!

Har. Better methinks have slain the
Will. We have respect for man's
immortal soul, [war ;

We seldom take man's life, except in
It frights the traitor more to maim and
blind. [have scorn'd the man,

Har. In mine own land I should
Or lash'd his rascal back, and let him
go.

Will. And let him go? To slander
thee again!

Yet in thine own land in thy father's
They blinded my young kinsman, Al-
fred—ay,

Some said it was thy father's deed.

Har. They lied.

Will. But thou and he—whom at
thy word, for thou
Art known a speaker of the truth, I
free

From this foul charge—

Har. Nay, nay, he freed himself
By oath and compurgation from the
charge. [him of it.

The king, the lords, the people clear'd
Will. But thou and he drove our
good Normans out [yet.

From England, and this rankles in us
Archbishop Robert hardly scaped with
life. [the Archbishop!

Har. Archbishop Robert! Robert
Robert of Jumièges, he that—

Malet. Quiet! quiet!

Har. Count! if there sat within thy
Norman chair

A ruler all for England—one who fill'd
All offices, all bishoprics with English—
We could not move from Dover to the
Humber

Saving thro' Norman bishoprics—I say
Ye would applaud that Norman who
should drive

The stranger to the fiends!

Will. Why, that is reason!
Warrior thou art, and mighty wise
withal! [lords

Ay, ay, but many among our Norman
Hate thee for this, and press upon me
—saying [hands—

God and the sea have given thee to our
To plunge thee into life-long prison
here—

Yet I hold out against them, as I may,
Yea—would hold out, yea, tho' they
should revolt— [cause;

For thou hast done the battle in my
I am thy fastest friend in Normandy.

Har. I am doubly bound to thee. . .
if this be so. [and would myself

Will. And I would hind thee more,
Be bounden to thee more.

Har. Then let me hence
With Wulfnoth to King Edward.

Will. So we will.

We hear he hath not long to live.

Har. It may be.

Will. Why then the heir of England,
who is he?

Har. The Atheling is nearest to the
throne.

Will. But sickly, slight, half-witted
and a child,
Will England have him king?

Har. It may be, no.

Will. And hath King Edward not
pronounced his heir?

Har. Not that I know.

Will. When he was here in Nor-
mandy, [found him
He loved us and we him because we
A Norman of the Normans.

Har. So did we.

Will. A gentle, gracious, pure and
saintly man! [him,
And grateful to the hand that shielded
He promised that if ever he were king

In England, he would give his kingly
voice [this?

To me as his successor. Knowest thou

Har. I learn it now.

Will. Thou knowest I am his cousin,
And that my wife descends from Al-
fred?

Har. Ay.

Will. Who hath a better claim then
to the crown
So that ye will not crown the Athe-
ling?

Har. None that I know . . . if that

King Edward's will. [but hung upon

Will. Wilt thou uphold my claim?

Malet (aside to Harold). Be careful

of thine answer, my good friend.

Wulf (aside to Harold). Oh! Har-
old, for my sake and for thine own!

Har. Ay . . . if the king have not

revoked his promise.

Will. But hath he done it then?

Har. Not that I know.

Will. Good, good, and thou wilt help

me to the crown.

Har. Ay . . . if the Witan will con-
sent to this. [in England, man,

Will. Thou art the mightiest voice

Thy voice will lead the Witan—shall I

have it?

Wulf (aside to Harold). Oh! Harold,

if thou love thine Edith, ay.

Har. Ay, if—

Malet (aside to Harold). Thine 'ifs'

will sear thine eyes out—ay.

Will. I ask thee, wilt thou help me

to the crown?

And I will make thee my great Earl of

Earls,

Foremost in England and in Nor-

mandy;

Thou shalt be verily king—all but the

name—

For I shall most sojourn in Normandy;

And thou be my vice-king in England.

Speak.

Wulf (aside to Harold). Ay, brother

—for the sake of England—ay.

Har. My lord. [now.

Malet (aside to Harold). Take heed

Har. Ay.

Will. I am content.



For thou art truthful, and thy word
thy bond. [Harfeur.

To-morrow will we ride with thee to
[Exit William.

Malet. Harold, I am thy friend, one
life with thee, [mine,
And even as I should bless thee saving
I thank thee now for having saved
thyself. [Exit Malet.

Har. For having lost myself to save
myself, [a lad

Said 'ay' when I meant 'no,' lied like
That dreads the pendent scourge, said
'ay' for 'no'! [oath—

Ay! No!—he hath not bound me by an
Is 'ay' an oath? is 'ay' strong as an
oath?

Or is it the same sin to break my word
As break mine oath? He call'd my
word my bond!

He is a liar who knows I am a liar,
And makes believe that he believes my
word— [—no.

The crime be on his head—not bounden

*Suddenly doors are flung open, discover-
ing in an inner hall Count Wil-
liam in his state robes, seated upon
his throne, between two Bishops,
Odo of Bayeux being one; in the
centre of the hall an ark covered
with cloth of gold; and on either
side of it the Norman barons.*

Enter a Jailer before William's throne.

Will. (to Jailer). Knave, hast thou
let thy prisoner scape?

Jailer. Sir Count,
He had but one foot, he must have
hopt away, help'd him.

Yea, some familiar spirit must have
Will. Woe knave to thy familiar
and to thee!

Give me thy keys. [They fall clashing.
Nay let them lie. Stand there and wait
my will. [The Jailer stands aside.

Will. (to Harold.) Hast thou such
trustless jailors in thy North?

Har. We have few prisoners in
mine earldom there,
So less chance for false keepers.

Will. We have heard
Of thy just, mild and equal govern-
ance;

Honor to thee! thou art perfect in all
honor! [now

Thy naked word thy bond! confirm it
Before our gather'd Norman baronage,
For they will not believe thee—as I
believe.

[Descends from his throne and stands
by the ark. [bond!

Let all men here bear witness of our
[Beckons to Harold who advances.

Enter Malet behind him.

Lay thou thy hand upon this golden
pall!

Behold the jewel of St. Pancrathus
Woven into the gold. Swear thou on
this!

Har. What should I swear? Why
should I swear on this?

Will. (savagely). Swear thou to help
me to the crown of England.

Halet (whispering to Harold). My
friend, thou hast gone too far to
palter now.

Wulf. (whispering to Harold). Swear
thou to-day, to-morrow is thine own.

Har. I swear to help thee to the
crown of England

According as King Edward promises.
Will. Thou must swear absolutely,
noble Earl.

Halet (whispering). Delay is death
to thee, ruin to England.

Wulf. (whispering). Swear, dearest
brother, I beseech thee, swear!

Harold (putting his hand on the jewel).
I swear to help thee to the crown of
England. [not doubt thy word.

Will. Thanks, truthful Earl; I did
But that my barons might believe thy
word,

And that the holy Saints of Normandy,
When thou art home in England, with
thine own, [thy word,

Might strengthen thee in keeping of
I made thee swear. Show him by
whom he hath sworn.

The two Bishops advance and raise
the cloth of gold. The bodies and
bones of Saints are seen lying in the
ark.

The holy bones of all the Canonized
From all the holiest shrines in Nor-

Har. Horrible! [mandy.

[They let the cloth fall again.

Will. Ay, for thou hast sworn an
oath. [hard earth rive

Which, if not kept, would make the
To the very Devil's horns, the bright
sky cleave [hosts

To the very feet of God, and send her
Of injured Saints to scatter sparks of
plague [dash

Thro' all your cities, blast your infants,
The torch of war among your standing
corn, [blood.—Enough!

Dabble your hearths with your own
Thou wilt not break it! I, the Count
—the King— [est oath,

Thy friend—am grateful for thine hon-
Not coming fiercely like a conqueror,
now,

But softly as a bridegroom to his own.
For I shall rule according to your laws,
And make your ever-jarring Earldoms
move

To music and in order—Angle, Jute,
Dane, Saxon, Norman, help to build a
throne [wind is fair

Out-towering hers of France....The
For England now....To-night we will
be merry. [feur.

To-morrow will I ride with thee to Har-
[Exit William and all the Norman
barons, &c.

Har. To-night we will be merry—and
[to-morrow—



Juggler and bastard—bastard—he hates that most—
 William the tanner's bastard ! Would he heard me !
 O God, that I were in some wide, waste field [him
 With nothing but my battle-axe and To spatter his brains ! Why let earth rive, gulf in [own self.
 These cursed Normans—yea and mine Cleave heaven, and send thy saints that I may say [William
 Ev'n to their faces, 'If ye side with Ye are not noble.' How their pointed fingers [son
 Glared at me ! Am I Harold, Harold, Of our great Godwin ? Lo ! I touch mine arms, [a liar's—
 My limbs—they are not mine—they are I mean to be a liar—I am not bound—Stigand shall give me absolution for it—
 Did the chest move ? did it move ? I am utter craven [hast betray'd me !
 O Wulfnoth, Wulfnoth, brother, thou Wulf. Forgive me, brother, I will live here and die.

Enter Page.

Page. My lord ! the Duke awaits thee at the banquet.

Har. Where they eat dead men's flesh, and drink their blood.

Page. My lord— [is so spiced,

Har. I know your Norman cookery It masks all this. [death.

Page. My lord ! thou art white as *Har.* With looking on the dead. Am I so white ? [I follow.

Thy Duke will seem the darker. Hence, [Exeunt.

ACT III.

SCENE I—*The King's Palace.* London. King Edward dying on a couch, and by him standing the Queen, Harold, Archbishop Stigand, Gurth, Leofwin, Archbishop Aldred, Aldwyth, and Edith.

Stig. Sleeping or dying there ? If this be death, [thee King—

Then our great Council wait to crown Come hither, I have a power ; [to Harold
 They call me near, for I am close to thee. [I,

And England—I, old shrivell'd Stigand, Dry as an old wood-fungus on a dead I have a power ! [tree,

See here this little key about my neck ! There lies a treasure buried down in Ely :

If e'er the Norman grow too hard for Ask me for this at thy most need, son At thy most need—not sooner. [Harold,

Har. So I will.

Stig. Red gold—a hundred purses—yea, and more ! [these
 If thou canst make a wholesome use of To think against the Norman, I do believe

My old crook'd spine would bud out two young wings
 To fly to heaven straight with.

Har. Thank thee, father !
 Thou art English, Edward too is English now, [hem.
 He hath clean repented of his Norman-Stig. Ay, as the libertine repents who cannot [ing sense

Make done undone, when thro' his dy-Shrills 'lost thro' thee.' They have built their castle here ; [adder

Our priories are Norman ; the Norman Hath bitten us ; we are poison'd : our Is demi-Norman. He !—[dear England

[Pointing to King Edward, sleeping.

Har. I would I were
 As holy and as passionless as he ! [him,
 That I might rest as calmly ! Look at The rosy face, and long down-silvering beard, [mere—

The brows unwrinkled as a summer *Stig.* A summer mere with sudden wreckful gusts [he flamed

From a side-gorge. Passionless ? How When Tostig's anger'd earldom flung him, nay,

He fain had calined all Northumbria To one black ash, but that thy patriot passion [Tostig,

Siding with our great Council against Out-passion'd his ! Holy ? ay, ay, for-sooth, [realm ;

A conscience for his own soul, not his A twilight conscience lighted thro' a chink ; [be,

Thine by the sun ; nay, by some sun to When all the world hath learnt to speak the truth, [state

And lying were self-murder by that Which was the exception.

Har. That sun may God speed !
Stig. Come, Harold, shake the cloud off !

Har. Can I, father ?
 Our Tostig parted cursing me and England ;

Our sister hates us for his banishment ; He hath gone to kindle Norway against England,

And Wulfnoth is alone in Normandy. For when I rode with William down to Harfleur, [follow ;

'Wulfnoth is sick,' he said ; 'he cannot Then with that friendly-fiendly smile of his, [little longer

'We have learnt to love him, let him a Remain a hostage for the loyalty Of Godwin's house.' As far as touches Wulfnoth,

I that so prized plain word and naked truth Have sinn'd against it—all in vain.

Leaf. Good brother,
 By all the truths that ever priest hath preach'd,

Of all the lies that ever men have lied, Thine is the pardonablest.

Har. May be so !
 I think it so, I think I am a fool



To think it can be otherwise than so.

Stig. Tut, tut, I have absolved thee :
dost thou scorn me,
Because I had my Canterbury pallium
From one whom they dispeopled?

Har. No, Stigand, no !
Stig. Is naked truth actable in true
life ?

I have heard a saying of thy father
Godwin,

That, were a man of state nakedly true,
Men would but take him for the crafter
liar. [Devil himself ?

Leof. Be men less delicate than the
I thought that naked truth would
shame the Devil,

The Devil is so modest.

Gurth. He never said it !
Leof. Be thou not stupid-honest,
brother Gurth ! [hold

Har. Better to be a liar's dog, and
My master honest, than believe that
lying [cannot

And ruling men are fatal twins that
Move one without the other. Ed-
ward wakes !—

Dazed—he hath seen a vision.

Edw. The green tree !
Then a great Angel past along the
highest [once

Crying 'the doom of England,' and at
He stood beside me, in his grasp a sword
Of lightnings, wherewithal he cleft
the tree [it from him

From off the bearing trunk, and hurl'd
Three fields away, and then he dash'd
and dash'd, [human blood,

He dyed, he soak'd the trunk with
And brought the sunder'd tree again,
and set it [tized in blood

Straight on the trunk, that thus hap-
Grew ever high and higher, beyond my
seeing, [the deep

And shot out sidelong boughs across
That dropt themselves, and rooted in
far jales [rose

Beyond my seeing : and the great Angel
And past again along the highest crying
'The doom of England !'—Tostig, raise
my head ! [Falls back senseless.

Har. (raising him). Let Harold serve
for Tostig !

Queen. Harold served
Tostig so ill, he cannot serve for Tos-
tig !

Ay, raise his head, for thou has laid
it low !

The sickness of our saintly king, for
whom

My prayers go up as fast as my tears
fall,

I well believe, hath mainly drawn itself
From lack of Tostig—thou hast banish'd
him. [king himself !

Har. Nay—but the Council, and the
Queen. Then hatest him, hatest him.
Har. (coldly). Ay—Stigand, unriddle
This vision, canst thou ?

Stig. Dotage !

Edw. (starting up). It is finish'd.

I have built the Lord a house—the

Lord hath dwelt [house—
In darkness. I have built the Lord a
Palms, flowers, pomegranates, golden
cherubim [wall—

With twenty-cubit wings from wall to
I have built the Lord a house—sing,

Asaph ! clash [et priest !

The cymbal, Heman ! blow the trumpet—
Fall, cloud, and fill the house—Jo ! my
Jachin and Boaz !— [two pillars,

[Seeing Harold and Gurth.

Harold, Gurth,—where am I ?
Where is the charter of our Westmin-
ster ? [thy hed-

Stig. It lies beside thee, king, upon

Edw. Sign, sign at once—take, sign
it, Stigand, Aldred ! [and Leofwin,

Sign it, my good sen Harold, Gurth,
Sign it, my queen !

All. We have sign'd it.

Edw. It is finish'd !
The kingliest Abbey in all Christian
lands,

The lordliest, loftiest minster ever built
To Holy Peter in our English isle !

Let me be buried there, and all our
kings,

And all our just and wise and holy men
That shall be born hereafter. 'It is fin-
ish'd !

Hast thou had absolution for thine
oath ? [To Harold.

Har. Stigand hath given me abso-
lution for it. [enough

Edw. Stigand is not canonical
To save thee from the wrath of Norman
Saints. [Saints of England

Stig. Norman enough ! Be there no
To help us from their brethren yonder ?

Edw. Prelate,

The Saints are one, but those of Nor-
manland [Aldred.

Are mightier than our own. Ask it of
[To Harold.

Aldred. It shall be granted him, my
king ; for he [meth

Who vows a vow to strangle his own
Is guiltier keeping this, than breaking
it.

Edw. O friends, I shall not overlive
the day.

Stig. Why then the throne is empty.
Who inherits ?

For tho' we be not bound by the king's
voice [voice

In making of a king, yet the king's
is much toward his making. Who in-
Edgar the Atheling ? [herits ?

Edw. No, no, but Harold.

I love him : he hath served me : none
but he

Can rule all England. Yet the curse
is on him

For swearing falsely by those blessed
bones ;

He did not mean to keep his vow.

Har. Not mean

To make our England Norman.

Edw. There spake Godwin,



Who hated all the Normans; but their

Have heard thee, Harold. [Saints

Edith. Oh! my lord, my king!

He knew not whom he swore by.

Edw. Yea, I know

He knew not, but those heavenly ears

have heard, [another

Their curse is on him; with thou bring

Edith. Edith, upon his head?

Edw. No, no, not I.

Edw. Why then, thou must not wed

him.

Har. Wherefore, wherefore?

Edw. O son, when thou didst tell

me of thine oath, [given

I sorrow'd for my random promise

To yon fox-hen. I did not dream then

I should be king.—My son, the Saints

are virgins;

They love the white rose of virginity,

The cold, white lily blowing in her

cell:

I have been myself a virgin; and I

sware

To consecrate my virgin here to

heaven—

The silent, cloister'd, solitary life,

A life of life-long prayer against the

curse

That lies on thee and England.

Har. No, no, no.

Edw. Treble denial of the tongue

of flesh, [have

Like Peter's when he fell, and thou wilt

To wait for it like Peter. O my son!

Are all oaths to be broken then, all

promises [heaven?

Made in our agony for help from

Son, there is one who loves thee: and a

wife,

What matters who, so she be serviceable

In all obedience, as mine own hath

been:

God bless thee, wedded daughter.

[*Laying his hand on the Queen's head.*

Queen. Bless thou too

That brother whom I love beyond the

My banish'd Tostig. [rest,

Edw. All the sweet saints bless him!

Spare and forbear him, Harold, if he

comes! [me, Harold!

And let him pass unscathed; he loves

Be kindly to the Normans left among

us, [son, swear

Who follow'd me for love! and dear

When thou art king, to see my solemn

Accomplish'd! [vow

Har. Nay, dear lord, for I have sworn

Not to swear falsely twice.

Edw. Thou wilt not swear?

Har. I cannot. [curse,

Edw. Then on thee remains the

Harold, if thou embrace her: and on

Edith. [if thou abide it,— [thee

[*The King swoons; Edith falls and*

kneels by the couch.

Stig. He hath swoon'd!

Death? . . . no, as yet a breath.

Har. Look up! look up!

Edith!

Aldred. Confuse her not; she hath

begun

Her life-long prayer for thee.

Ald. O noble Harold,

I would thou couldst have sworn.

Har. For thine own pleasure?

Ald. No, but to please our dying

king, and those [England, Earl,

Who make thy good their own—all

Aldred. I would thou couldst have

sworn. Our holy king [Church

Hath given his virgin lamb to Holy

To save thee from the curse.

Har. Alas! poor man,

His promise brought it on me.

Aldred. O good son!

That knowledge made him all the care-

fuller [might glance

To find a means whereby the curse

From thee and England.

Har. Father, we so loved—

Aldred. The more the love, the

mightier is the prayer;

The more the love, the more acceptable

The sacrifice of both your loves to

heaven. [heaven;

No sacrifice to heaven, no help from

That runs thro' all the faiths of all the

world.

And sacrifice there must be, for the

king

Is holy, and hath talk'd with God, and

seen [heaven—

A shadowing horror; there are signs in

Har. Your comet came and went.

Aldred. And signs on earth!

Knowest thou Senlac hill?

Har. I know all Sussex;

A good entrenchment for a perilous

hour! [deny! There is one

Aldred. Pray God that come not sud-

Who passing by that hill three nights

ago— [with it—

He shook so that he scarce could out

Heard, heard—

Har. The wind in his hair?

Aldred. A ghostly horn

Blowing continually, and faint battle-

hymns, [of men;

And cries, and clashes, and the groans

And dreadful shadows strove upon the

hill, [the marsh—

And dreadful lights crept up from out

Corp-e-candles gliding over nameless

graves—

Har. At Senlac?

Aldred. Senlac.

Edw. (waking). Senlac! Sanguelac,

The Lake of Blood!

Stig. This lightning before death

Plays on the word,—and Normanizes

too!

Har. Hush, father, hush!

Edw. Thou uncanonical fool,

Wilt thou play with the thunder? North

and South [are blown

Thunder together, showers of blood

Before a never-ending blast, and hiss

Against the blaze they cannot quench

—a lake,



A sea of blood—we are drown'd in blood
—for God
Has fill'd the quiver, and Death has
drawn the bow—
Sanguelac ! Sanguelac ! the arrow ! the
arrow ! *[Dies.]*
Stig. It is the arrow of death in his
own heart— *[thee King.]*
And our great Council wait to crown
SCENE II.—*In the Garden. The King's
House near London.*
Edith. Crown'd, crown'd and lost,
crown'd King—and lost to me !

Singing.

*Two young lovers in winter weather,
None to guide them,
Walk'd at night on the misty heather,
Night, as black as a raven's feather ;
Both were lost and found together,
None beside them.*

That is the burthen of it—lost and
found
Together in the cruel river Swale
A hundred years ago ; and there's an-
other,

Lost, lost, the light of day,

To which the lover answers lovingly

" I am beside thee."

Lost, lost, we have lost the way.

" Love, I will guide thee."

*Whither, O whither ? into the river,
Where we two may be lost together,
And lost for ever ? " Oh ! never, oh !
never,
Tho' we be lost and be found together."*

Some think they loved within the pale
forbidden *[the truth]*
By Holy Church : but who shall say ?
Was lost in that fierce North, where
they were lost, *[Tostig lost]*
Where all good things are lost, where
The good hearts of his people. It is
Harold !

Enter Harold.

Harold the King !

Har. Call me not King, but Harold.

Edith. Nay, thou art King !

Har. Thine, thine, or King or churl !
My girl, thou hast been weeping : turn
not thou

Thy face away, but rather let me be
King of the moment to thee, and com-
mand *[will make]*
That kiss my due when subject, which.
My Kingship kingly to me than to
reign

King of the world without it.

Edith. Ask me not,
Lest I should yield it, and the second
curse *[only]*
Descend upon thine head, and thou be
King of the moment over England.

Har. *Edith,*
Tho' somewhat less a king to my true
self

Than ere they crown'd me one, for I
have lost

Somewhat of upright stature thro' mine
oath, *[thou]*
Yet thee I would not lose, and sell not
Our living passion for a dead man's
dream ; *[spake.]*

Stigand believed he knew not what he
Oh God ! I cannot help it, but at times
They seem to me too narrow, all the
faiths *[eye]*
Of this grown world of ours, whose baby
Saw them sufficient. Fool and wise, I
fear *[light !—]*

This curse, and scorn it. But a little
And on it falls the shadow of the priest ;
Heaven yield us more ! for better, Wo-
den, all *[Walhalla.]*

Our cancell'd warrior-gods, our grim
Eternal war, than that the Saints at
peace *[be]*

The Hollest of our Hollest one should
This William's fellow tricksters ;—bet-
ter die *[else]*

Than credit this, for death is death, or
Lifts us beyond the lie. Kiss me—thou
art not

A holy sister yet, my girl, to fear
There might be more than brother in
my kiss

And more than sister in thine own.

Edith. I dare not.

Har. Scared by the church—' Love
for a whole life long'
When was that sung ?

Edith. Here to the nightingales.

Har. Their anthems of no church,
how sweet they are ! *[cross]*
Nor kingly priest, nor priestly king to
Their billings ere they nest.

Edith. They are but of spring,
They fly the winter change—not so
with us—

No wings to come and go.

Har. But wing'd souls flying
Beyond all change and in the eternal
distance

To settle on the Truth.

Edith. They are not so true,
They change their mates.

Har. Do they ? I did not know it.

Edith. They say thou art to wed the
Lady Aldwyth.

Har. They say, they say.

Edith. If this be politic,
And well for thee and England—and for
Care not for me who love thee. *[her—
Gurth (calling). Harold, Harold !*

Har. The voice of Gurth ! *(Enter
Gurth.)* Good even, my good brother !
Gurth. Good even, gentle Edith.

Edith. Good even, Gurth.
Gurth. Ill news hath come ! Our
hapless brother, Tostig—

He, and the giant King of Norway, Har-
old

Hardrada—Scotland, Ireland, Iceland,
Orkney,
Are landed North of Humber, and in a
field



So packt with carnage that the dykes
and brooks [have overthrown
Were bridged and damm'd with dead,
Morcar and Edwin.

Har. Well then, we must fight.

How blows the wind?

Gurth. Against St. Valery

And William.

Har. Well then, we will to the North.

Gurth. Ay, but worse news; this
William sent to Rome, [Sainte:
Swearing thou swarest falsely by his
The Pope and that Archdeacon Hilde-
brand [him back

His master, heard him, and have sent
A holy gonfanon, and a blessed hair
Of Peter, and all France, all Burgundy,
Poitou, all Christendom is raised
against thee; [fight for thee,
He hath cursed thee, and all those who
And given thy realm of England to the

bastard

Har. Ha! ha!

Edith. Oh! laugh not! . . . Strange
and ghastly in the gloom [cloud
And ahadowing of this double thunder-
That lours on England—laughter!

Har. No, not strange!
This was old human laughter in old
Rome [which reign'd

Before a Pope was born, when that
Call'd itself God.—A kindly rendering
Of 'Render unto Cæsar.' . . . The Good
Shepherd!

Take this, and render that.

Gurth. They have taken York.

Har. The Lord was God and came
as man—the Pope

Is man and comes as God.—York taken?

Gurth. Yea,

Tostig hath taken York!

Har. To York then. Edith,
Hadst thou been braver, I had better
braved [that

All—but I love thee and thou me—and
Remains beyond all chances and all
And that thou knowest. [churches,

Edith. Ay, but take back thy ring.
It burns my hand—a curse to thee and
I dare not wear it. [me.

[*Proffers Harold the ring, which he
takes.*

Har. But I dare. God with thee!

[*Exeunt Harold and Gurth.*

Edith. The King hath cursed him,
if he marry me; [or no!

The Pope hath cursed him, marry me
God help me! I know nothing—can
but pray [but prayer,

For Harold—pray, pray, pray—no help
A breath that fleets beyond this iron
world,

And touches Him that made it.

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—In Northumbria. Arch-
bishop Aldred, Morcar, Edwin, and
Forces.

*Enter Harold. The standard of the
golden Dragon of Wessex preced-
ing him.*

Har. What! are thy people eulien
from defeat? [Humber,

Our Wessex dragon flies beyond the
No voice to greet it.

Edwin. Let not our great king
Believe us sullen—only shamed to the
quick [bruised

Before the king—as having been so
By Harold, king of Norway; but our
help [us, thou!

Is Harold king of England. Pardon
Our silence is our reverence for the
king! [truth be gall,

Har. Earl of the Mercians! if the
Cram me not thou with honey, when
our good hive

Needs every sting to save it.

Voices. Aldwyth! Aldwyth!

Har. Why cry thy people on thy
sister's name. [thro' her beauty,

Mor. She hath won upon our people
And pleasantness among them.

Voices. Aldwyth, Aldwyth!

Har. They shout as they would
have her for a queen.

Mor. She hath followed with our
host, and suffer'd all.

Har. What would ye, men?

Voice. Our old Northumbrian crown,
And kings of our own choosing.

Har. Your old crown
Were little help without our Saxon
Against Hardrada. [carles

Voice. Little! we are Danes,
Who conquer'd what we walk on, our
own field.

Har. They have been plotting here!

[*Aside.*

Voice. He calls us little!
Har. The kingdoms of this world
began with little, [hand

A hill, a fort, a city—that reach'd
Down to the field beneath it, 'Be thou
mine,' [field

Then to the next, 'Thou also—' if the
Cried out 'I am mine own;' another
hill

Or fort, or city, took it, and the first
Fell, and the next became an Empire.

Voice. Yet
Thou art but a West Saxon; we are
Danes! [English;

Har. My mother is a Dane and I am
There is a pleasant fable in old books,
Ye take a stick, and break it; bind a
score

All in one faggot, snap it over knee,
Ye cannot. [true!

Voice. Hear King Harold! he says

Har. Would ye be Norsemen?

Voices. No!

Har. Or Norman?

Voices. No!

Har. Snap not the faggot-band then.

Voice. That is true!

Voice. Ay, but thou art not kingly
only grandson



To Wulfnoth, a poor cow-herd.
Har. This old Wulfnoth
 Would take me on his knees and tell
 me tales
 Of Alfred and of Athelstan the Great
 Who drove you Danes; and yet he
 held that Dane, [all
 Jute, Angle, Saxon, were or should be
 One England, for this cow-herd, like
 my father, [the thrones,
 Who shook the Norman scoundrels off
 Had in him kingly thoughts—a king of
 men,
 Not made but born, like the great king
 A light among the oxen. [of all,
Voice. That is true!
Voice. Ay, and I love him now, for
 mine own father
 Was great, and cobbled.
Voice. Thou art Tostig's brother,
 Who wastes the land.
Har. This brother comes to save
 Your land from waste; I saved it once
 before, [hence,
 For when your people banish'd Tostig
 And Edward would have sent a host
 against you, [king
 Then I, who loved my brother, had the
 Who doted on him sanction your de-
 cree
 Of Tostig's banishment, and choice of
 Morcar,
 To help the realm from scattering.
Voice. King! thy brother,
 If one may dare to speak the truth,
 was wrong'd, [against him
 Wild was he, born so: but the plots
 Had madden'd tamer men.
Mor. Thou art one of those
 Who brake into Lord Tostig's treasure-
 house
 And slew two hundred of his following,
 And now, when Tostig hath come back
 with power,
 Are frighted back to Tostig.
Old Thane. Ugh! Plots and feuds!
 This is my ninetieth birthday. Can ye
 not [Alfgar,
 Be brethren? Godwin still at feud with
 And Alfgar hates King Harold. Plots
 and feuds!
 This is my ninetieth birthday!
Har. Old man, Harold
 Hates nothing; not his fault, if our two
 Be less than brothers. [houses
Voices. Aldwyth, Harold, Aldwyth!
Har. Again: Morcar! Edwin!
 What do they mean?
Edwin. So the good king would
 deign to lend an ear [perchance—
 Not over scornful, we might chance—
 To guess their meaning.
Mor. Thine own meaning, Harold,
 To make all England one, to close all
 feuds, [may rise
 Mixing our bloods, that thence a king
 Half-Godwin and half Alfgar, one to
 rule
 All England beyond question, beyond
 quarrel.

Har. Who sow'd this fancy here
 among the people?
Mor. Who knows what sows itself
 among the people?
 A goodly flower at times.
Har. The Queen of Wales?
 Why, Morcar, it is all but duty in her
 To hate me; I have heard she hates
 me.
Mor. No!
 For I can swear to that, but cannot
 swear [Norsemen,
 That these will follow thee against the
 If thou deny them this.
Har. Morcar and Edwin,
 When will ye cease to plot against my
 house? [that we, who know
Edwin. The king can scarcely dream
 His prowess in the mountains of the
 West, [North.
 Should care to plot against him in the
Har. Who dares arraign us, king, of
 such a plot? [now.
Har. Ye heard one witness even
Har. The craven!
 There is a faction risen again for Tos-
 tig,
 Since Tostig came with Norway—fright
 not lovs. [yield,
Har. Morcar and Edwin, will ye, if I
 Follow against the Norsemen?
Har. Surely surely!
Har. Morcar and Edwin, will ye
 upon oath,
 Help us against the Norman?
Har. With good will;
 Yea, take the Sacrament upon it, king.
Har. Where is thy sister?
Har. Somewhere hard at hand,
 Call and she comes.
 [One goes out, then enter Aldwyth.
Har. I doubt not but thou knowest
 Why thou art summon'd.
Ald. Why?—I stay with these,
 Lest thy fierce Tostig spy me out alone,
 And slay me all alive.
Har. Canst thou love one
 Who did discrown thine husband, un-
 queen thee?
 Didst thou not love thine husband?
Ald. Oh! my lord,
 The nimble, wild, red, wiry, savage
 king—
 That was, my lord, a match of policy.
Har. Was it?
 I knew him brave; he loved his laud:
 he fain
 Had made her great: his finger on her
 harp
 (I heard him more than once) had in it
 Wales. [been his,
 Her floods, her woods, her hills: had I
 I had been all Welsh.
Ald. Oh, ay—all Welsh—and yet
 I saw thee drive him up his hills—and
 women [more;
 Cling to the conquer'd if they love, the
 If not, they cannot hate the conqueror.
 We never—oh! good Morcar, speak for
 His conqueror conquer'd Aldwyth. [us,



Har. Goodly news !
Mor. Doubt it not thou ! Since Grif-
 fyth's head was sent
 To Edward, she hath said it.

Har. I had rather
 She would have loved her husband.

Aldwyth, Aldwyth, [where I love ?
 Canst thou love me, thou knowing

Ald. I can, my lord, for mine own
 sake, for thine, [who flutters
 For England, for thy poor white dove,
 Between thee and the porch, but then
 would find

Her nest within the cloister, and be
 still.

Har. Canst thou love one, who can-
 not love again ? [answer love.

Ald. Full hope have I that love will

Har. Then in the name of the great
 God, so be it ! [the hosts,

Come, Aldred, join our hands before
 That all may see.

[Aldred joins the hands of Harold
 and Aldwyth and blesses them.

Voices. Harold, Harold and Aldwyth !

Har. Set forth our golden Dragon,
 let him flap

The wings that heat down Wales !
 Advance our Standard of the Warrior,
 Dark among gems and gold ; and thou,

brave banner,
 Blaze like a night of fatal stars on
 those

Who read their doom and die,
 Where lie the Norsemen ? on the Der-
 went ? ay

At Stamford-bridge.
Morcar, collect thy men ; *Edwin,* my
 friend—

Thou lingerest.—*Gurth,*—
 Last night King Edward came to me
 in dreams—

The rosy face and long down—silvering
 beard—

He told me I should conquer :—
 I am no woman to put faith in dreams.

(To his army.)

Last night King Edward came to me
 in dreams,
 And told me we should conquer.

Voices. Forward ! Forward !
 Harold and Holy Cross !

Ald. The day is won !

SCENE II.—*A Plain. Before the*

Battle of Stamford-bridge. Harold
 and his Guard.

Har. Who is it comes this way ?

Tostig ? (Enter *Tostig* with a small
 force.) O brother,

What art thou doing here ?

Tostig. I am foraging
 For Norway's army.

Har. I could take and slay thee.
 Thou art in arms against us.

Tostig. Take and slay me,
 For Edward loved me.

Har. Edward bade me spare thee.

Tostig. I hate King Edward for he
 join'd with thee [me, I say,
 To drive me outlaw'd. Take and slay
 Or I shall count thee fool.

Har. Take thee, or free thee,
 Free thee or slay thee, Norway will
 have war ; [for Norway.

No man would strike with *Tostig*, save
 Thou art nothing in thine England,
 save for Norway [thou here,

Who loves not thee hut war. What dost
 Trampling thy mother's bosom into
 blood ? [with such bitterness.

Tostig. She hath wean'd me from it
 I come for mine own Earldom, my
 Northumbria ; [house.

Thou hast given it to the enemy of our
Har. Northumbria threw thee off,
 she will not have thee, [ing crime!

Thou hast misused her : and, O crown-
 Hast murder'd thine own guest, the son
 Gamel, at thine own hearth. [of *Orm*,

Tostig. The slow, fat fool !
 He draw'd and prated so, I smote him
 I knew not what I did. [suddenly,

Har. Come back to us,
 Know what thou dost, and we may find
 for thee,

So thou be chasten'd by thy banish-
 ment,
 Some easier Earldom.

Tostig. What for Norway then ?
 He looks for land among you, he and
 his.

Har. Seven feet of English land, or
 Seeing he is a giant. [something more,

Tostig. O brother, brother,
 O Harold—

Har. Nay, then come thou back to us !
Tostig. Never shall any man say that
 I, that *Tostig* [North

Conjured the mightier Harold from his
 To do the battle for me here in England,
 Then left him for the meaner ! thee !—
 Thou has no passion for the House of—
 Godwin—king—

Thou hast hut cared to make thyself a
 Thou hast sold me for a cry.—
 Thou gavest thy voice against me in
 Council— [thee.

I hate thee, and despise thee, and defy
 Farewell for ever ! [Exit.

Har. On to Stamford-bridge.

SCENE III.—*After the battle of Stam-*

ford-bridge. Banquet. Harold and
 Aldwyth, *Gurth*, *Leafwin*, *Morcar*,
Edwin, and other Earls and Thanes.

Voices. Hail ! Harold ! Aldwyth !
 hail, bridegroom and bride !
 Aldwyth (talking with Harold).

Answer them thou ! [the wines
 Is this our marriage-banquet ? Would
 Of wedding had been dash'd into the
 cups [glory

Of victory, and our marriage and thy
 Been drunk together ! these poor hands
 but sew, [man's to have held
 Spin, broider—would that they were
 The battle-axe by thee !



Har. There was a moment
When being forced aloof from all my
guard, [men
And striking at Hardrada and his mad-
I had wish'd for any weapon.

Ald. Why art thou sad ?

Har. I have lost the boy who play'd
at ball with me, [this
With whom I fought another fight than
Of Stamford-bridge.

Ald. Ay ! ay ! thy victories
Over our own poor Wales, when at thy
He conquer'd with thee. [side

Har. No—the childish fist
That cannot strike again.

Ald. Thou art too kindly.
Why didst thou let so many Norsemen
hence ? [pirate hides

Thy fierce forekings had clench'd their
To the bleak church doors, like kites
upon a barn. [these why ?

Har. Is there so great a need to tell

Ald. Yea, am I not thy wife ?

Voices. Hail, Harold, Aldwyth !
Bridegroom and bride !

Ald. Answer them ! [To Harold.]

Harold [To all]. Earls and Thanes !
Full thanks for your fair greeting of
my bride ! [the day,

Earls, Thanes, and all our countrymen !
Our day beside the Derwent will not
shine [hours

Less than a star among the goldenest
Of Alfred, or of Edward his great son,
Or Athelstan, or English Ironside

Who fought with Knut, or Knut who
coming Dane [King
Died English. Every man about his
Fought like a king ; the king like his
own man,

No better ; one for all, and all for one,
One soul ! and therefore have we shat-
ter'd back [yet

The hugest wave from Norseland ever
Surged on us, and our battle-axes
broken

The Raven's wing, and dumb'd his car-
rion croak [gone—

From the gray sea for ever. Many are
Drink to the dead who died for us, the
living [happier lived,

Who fought and would have died, but
If happier be to live ; they both have
life [voice

In the large mouth of England, till her
Die with the world. Hail—hail !

Hor. May all invaders perish like
Hardrada ! [but Harold.

All traitors fall like Tostig ! [All drink.

Ald. Thy cup's full !

Har. I saw the hand of Tostig cover
it. [him

Our dear, dead, traitor-brother, Tostig,
Reverently we buried. Friends, had I
been here, [hold

Without too large self-landing I must
The sequel had been other than his
league

With Norway, and this battle. Peace
be with him !

He was not of the worst. If there be
those [me—

At banquet in this hall, and hearing
For there be those I fear who prick'd
the lion [fish blood

To make him spring, that sight of Dan-
Might serve an end not English—peace
be with them [what

Likewise, if they can be at peace with
God gave us to divide us from the wolf !

Ald. [aside to Harold]. Make not our

Morcar sullen : it is not wise.

Har. Hail to the living who fought,
the dead who fell !

Voices. Hail, hail !

1 *Thane.* How ran that answer
which King Harold gave
To his dead namesake, when he ask'd
for England ?

Leaf. 'Seven feet of English earth,
or something more,
Seeing he is a giant !'

1 *Thane.* Then for the bastard

Six feet and nothing more !

Leaf. Ay, but belike

Thou hast not learnt his measure.

1 *Thane.* By St. Edmond

I over-measure him. Sound sleep to the
man [dawn !

Here by dead Norway without dream or

2 *Thane.* What, is he bragging still
that he will come [under him ?

To thrust our Harold's throne from
My nurse would tell me of a molehill
crying [for me !'

To a mountain 'Stand aside and room

1 *Thane.* Let him come ! let him
come. Here's to him, sink or swim !
[Drinks.

2 *Thane.* God sink him !

1 *Thane.* Cannot hands which had
the strength [shores,

To shove that stranded iceberg off our

And send the shattered North again to
sea, [nanburg

Scuttle his cockle-shell ? What's Bru-

To Stamford-bridge ? a war-crash, and
so hard, [Thor—

So loud, that, by St. Dunstan, old St.

By God, we thought him dead—but our

old Thor [and came

Heard his own thunder again, and woke

Among us again, and mark'd the sons of
those [the North :

Who made this Britain England, break

Mark'd how the war-axe swang,

Heard how the war-horn sang

Mark'd how the spear-head sprang,

Heard how the shield-wall rang,

Iron on iron clang,

Anvil on hammer bang—

2 *Thane.* Hammer on anvil, hammer

on anvil. Old dog,

Thou art drunk, old dog ! [thee !

1 *Thane.* Too drunk to fight with

2 *Thane.* Fight thou with thine own

double, not with me,

Keep that for Norman William !



- 1 *Thane.* Down with William !
 3 *Thane.* The washerwoman's brat !
 4 *Thane.* The tanner's bastard !
 5 *Thane.* The Falaise byblow !

Enter a Thane, from Pevensey, spatter'd with mud.

Har. Ay, but what late guest,
 As haggard as a fast of forty days,
 And caked and plaster'd with a hundred mires,
 Hath stumbled on our cups ?

Thane from Pevensey. My lord the King !
 [changed—

William the Norman, for the wind had
Har. I felt it in the middle of that
 fierce fight [landed, ha ?

At Stamford-bridge. William hath
Thane from Pevensey. Landed at
 Pevensey—I am from Pevensey—

Hath wasted all the land at Pevensey—
 Hath harried mine own cattle—God
 confound him ! [ensey—

I have ridden night and day from Pevensey—
 A thousand ships, a hundred thousand
 men—

Thousands of horses, like as many lions
 Neighing and roaring as they leapt to
 land— [broken bread ?

Har. How oft in coming hast thou
Thane from Pevensey. Some thrice,
 or so.

Har. Bring not thy hollowness
 On our full feast. Famine is fear, were
 it but [and eat,

Of being starved. Sit down, sit down
 And, when again red-blooded, speak
 again ; [Aside.

The men that guarded England to the
 South [power mine
 Were scattered to the harvest . . . No
 To hold their force together . . . Many
 are fallen [stupid-sure

At Stamford-bridge . . . the people
 Sleep like their swine . . . in South and
 I could not be. [North at once

[Aloud.
 Gurth, Leofwin, Morcar, Edwin !

[Pointing to revellers.] The curse of
 England ! these are drowned in
 wassall, [their wines !

And cannot see the world but thro'
 Leave them ! and thee too, Aldwyth,
 must I leave— [moon !

Harsh is the news ! hard is our honey-
 Thy pardon. [Turning round to his
 attendants.] Break the banquet
 up . . . Ye four ! [news,

And thou, my carrier-pigeon of black
 Cram thy crop full, but come when
 thou art call'd. [Exit Harold.

ACT V.

SCENE I.—A tent on a mound, from
 which can be seen the field of Senlac.
 Harold, sitting ; by him standing
 Hugh Margot the Monk, Gurth, Leofwin.

Har. Refer my cause, my crown to
 Rome ! . . . The wolf [all,
 Mudded the brook, and predetermined
 Monk, [stant 'No'

Thou hast said thy say, and had my con-
 For all but instant battle. I hear no
 more. [time. Arise,

Har. Hear me again for the last
 Scatter thy people home, descend the
 hill,

Lay hands of full allegiance in thy
 Lord's

And crave his mercv. for the Holy Fa-
 ther [the Norman.

Hath given this realm of England to
Har. Then for the last time, monk,
 I ask again [Father

When had the Lateran and the Holy
 To do with England's choics of her
 own king ? [drew to the East

Har. Earl, the first Christian Cæsar
 To leave the Pope dominion in the
 West, [West-

He gave him all the kingdoms of the
Har. So !—did he ?—Earl—I have a
 mind to play [thy tongue.

The William with thine eyesight and
 Earl—ay—thou art but a messenger of
 William. [with thee !

I am weary—go : make me not wroth
Har. Mock-king, I am the messenger
 of God, [Tekel !

His Norman Daniel ! Mene, Mene,
 Is thy wrath Hell, that I should spare
 to cry,

Yon Heaven is wroth with thee ? Hear
 me again !

Our Saints have moved the Church that
 moves the world, [heard—
 And all the Heavens and very God : they
 They know King Edward's promise and
 thine—thine.

Har. Should they not know free
 England crowns herself ? [promise ?
 Not know that he nor I had power to
 Not know that Edward cancell'd his
 own promise ? [juggler, (rising)

And for my part : therein—Back to that
 Tell him the Saints are nobler than he
 dreams, [Saints,

Tell him that God is nobler than the
 And tell him we stand armed on Senlac
 And bide the doom of God. [Hill,

Har. Hear it thro' me.
 The realm for which thou art forsworn
 is cursed, [is cursed,

The babe enwomb'd and at the breast
 The corpse thou whelmeest with thine
 earth is cursed, [cursed,

The soul who fighteth on thy side is
 The seed thou sowest in thy field is
 cursed, [field is cursed,

The steer wherewith thou plowest thy
 The fowl that feeth o'er thy field is
 And thou, usurper, liar— [cursed,

Har. Out, beast monk !
 [Lifting his hand to strike him. Gurth
 stops the blow.

I ever hated monks.

Har. I am but a voice



Among you : murder, martyr me if ye will— [silent, selfless man]

Har. Thanks, Gurth ! The simple is worth a world of tonguesters. (To Margot.) Get thee gone !

He means the thing he says. See him out safe ! [as fire with curses,

Leof. He hath blown himself as red an honest fool ! Follow me, honest fool, [folk,

But if thou blurt thy curse among our I know not—I may give that egg-bald the tap that silences. [head

Har. See him out safe.

[*Exeunt* Leofwin and Margot.]
Gurth. Thou hast lost thine even temper, brother Harold !

Har. Gurth, when I past by Waltham, my foundation [themselves, for men who serve their neighbor, not I cast me down prone, praying ; and, when I rose, [lean'd

They told me that the Holy Rood had And bow'd above me ; whether that which held it [bound

Had weaken'd, and the Rood itself were To that necessity which binds us down ; Whether it bow'd at all but in their fancy ;

Or if it bow'd, whether it symbol'd r'nin Or glory, who shall tell ? but they were And somewhat sadden'd me. [sad

Gurth. Yet if a fear, Or shadow of a fear, lest the strange Saints [power to balk

By whom thou swarest, should have Thy puissance in this fight with him, who made [not sworn—

And heard theeswear—brother—have If the king fall, may not the kingdom fall ?

But if I fall, I fall, and thou art king ; And, if I win, I win, and thou art king ; Draw thou to London, there make strength to breast [me.

Whatever chance, but leave this day to Leof. (*entering*). And waste the land about thee as thou goest,

And be thy hand as winter on the field, To leave the foe no forage.

Har. Noble Gurth ! Best son of Godwin ! If I fall, I fall—The doom of God ! How should the people fight [thou mad ?

When the king flies ? And, Leofwin, art How should the King of England waste the fields [glance yet

Of England, his own people ?—No Of the Northumbrian helmet on the heath ? [the heath,

Leof. *No, but a shoal of wives upon And some one saw thy willy-nilly nun Vying a tress against our golden fern.

Har. Vying a tear with our cold dew, a sigh [her be fetch'd.

With these low-moaning heavens. Let We have parted from our wife without reproach, [fices ;

Tho' we have dived thro' all her prac— And that is well.

Leof. I saw her even now : She hath not left us.

Har. Nought of Morecar then ?

Gurth. Nor seen, nor heard ; thine, William's or his own

As wind blows, or tide flows : belike he watches,

If this war-storm in one of its rough rolls [land.

Wash up that old crown of Northumber— Har. I married her for Morecar—a sin against [seems,

The truth of love. Evil for good, it is oft as childless of the good as evil For evil. [times

Leof. Good for good hath borne at A bastard false as William.

Har. Ay, if Wisdom Pair'd not with Good. But I am some- what worn, [God.

A snatch of sleep were like the peace of Gurth, Leofwin, go once more about the hill— [lac,

What did the dead man call it—Sanguelake of blood ?

Leof. A lake that dips in William As well as Harold.

Har. Like enough. I have seen The trenches dug, the palisades up-rear'd [wand ;

And wattled thick with ash and willow— Yea, wrought at them myself. Go round once more ; [man horse

See all be sound and whole. No Norcan shatter England, standing shield Tell that again to all. [by shield ;

Gurth. I will, good brother.

Har. Our guardsman hath but toil'd his hand and foot ;

I hand, foot, heart and head. Some wine ! (*One pours wine into a goblet, which he hands to Harold.*)

Too much ! What ? we must use our battle-axe to-day. [we came in ?

Our guardsmen have slept well, since Leof. Ay, slept and snored. Your second-sighted man [king,

That scared the dying conscience of the Misheard their snores for groans. They are up again [burg

And chanting that old song of Brunan— Where England conquer'd.

Har. That is well. The Norman, What is he doing ?

Leof. Praying for Normandy ; Our scouts have heard the tinkle of their bells. [for England too !

Har. And our old songs are prayers But by all Saints—

Leof. Barring the Norman !

Har. Nay. Were the great trumpet blowing dooms-day dawn, [man moves—

I needs must rest. Call when the Nor— [*Exeunt all, but Harold.*

No horse—thousands of horses—our shield wall—

Wall—break it not—break not—break— [Sleeps.



Vision of Edw. Son Harold, I thy king, who came before [ford-bridge
To tell thee thou should'st win at Stam-
Come yet once more, from where I am
at peace,
Because I loved thee in my mortal day,
To tell thee thou shalt die on Senlac
Sanguelac! [hill—

Vision of Wulf. O brother, from my
ghastly outhlette [seas—
I send my voice across the narrow
No more, no more, dear brother, never-
Sanguelac! [more—

Vision of Tostig. O brother, most
unbrotherlike to me, [life,
Thou gavest thy voice against me in my
I give my voice against thee from the
Sanguelac! [grave—

Vision of Norman Saints. O hapless
Harold! King but for an hour!
Thou swarest falsely by our blessed
bones, [heaven!
We give our voice against thee out of
Sanguelac! Sanguelac! The arrow, the
arrow!

Har. (starting up battle-axe in hand).

Away!
My battle-axe against your voices.
Peace! [shall die—
The king's last word—'the arrow!' I
die for England then, who lived for
England—

What nobler? men must die.
I cannot fall into a falsar world—
I have done no man wrong. Tostig,
Art thou so anger'd? [poor brother,
Fain had I kept thine earldom in thy
hands [wrench'd
Save for thy wild and violent will that
All hearts of freemen from thee. I could
do

No other than this way advise the king
Against the race of Godwin. Is it possible
[earthly hates
That mortal men should hear their
Into yon bloodless world, and threaten
us thence [art revenged—
Unschool'd of Death! Thus then thou
I left our England naked to the South
To meet thee in the North. The Norse-
man's raid [of Godwin
Hath helpt the Norman, and the race
Hath ruin'd Godwin. No—our waking
thoughts [pools
Suffer a stormless shipwreck in the
Of sullen slumber, and arise again
Disjointed: only dreams—where mine
own self [a spark
Takes part against myself! Why? For
Of self-disdain born in me when I aware
Falsely to him, the falsar Norman, over
His gilded ark of mummy-saints, by
whom

I knew not that I aware,—not for my
For England—yet not wholly— [self—

Enter Edith.

Edith, Edith,
Get thou into my cloister as the king

Will'd it: he safe: the perjury-monger-
ing Count

Hath made too good an use of Holy
Church

To break her close! There the great
God of truth [ing devi.
Fill all thine hours with peace!—A ly-
Hath haunted me—mine oath—my wife
—I fain [could not:

Had made my marriage not a lie; I
Thou art my bride! and thou in after
years [mine
Praying perchance for this poor soul of
In cold, white cells beneath an icy
moon— [England,

Thine memory to thee!—and this to
My legacy of war against the Pope
From child to child, from Pope to
Pope, from age to age, [shores,
Till the sea wash her level with her
Or till the Pope be Christ's.

Enter Aldwyth.

Ald. (to Edith). Away from him!

Edith. I will . . . I have not spoken
to the king
One word; and one I must. Farewell!
[Going.

Har. Not yet.

Stay. *Edith.* To what use?

Har. The king commands thee,
woman!

(To Aldwyth.)

Have thy two brethren sent their
forces in?

Ald. Nay, I fear not.

Har. Then there's no force in thee!
Thou didst possess thyself of Edward's
ear [loved!

To part me from the woman that I
Thou didst arouse the fierce Northum-
brians! [to me!
Thou hast been false to England and
As . . . in some sort . . . I have been
false to thee. [sides—Go!

Leave me. No more—Pardon on both

Ald. Alas, my lord, I loved thee.

Har. (bitterly). With a love
Passing thy love for Griffyth! where-
fore now [Go!

Obey my first and last commandment.

Ald. O Harold! husband! Shall we
meet again? [tle. Go.

Har. After the battle—after the bat-
Ald. I go. (Aside.) That I could
stab her standing there!

[Exit Aldwyth.

Edith. Alas, my lord, she loved thee.

Har. Never! never!

Edith. I saw it in her eyes!

Har. I see it in thine.

And not on thee—nor England—fall
God's doom!

Edith. On thee? 'on me. And thou
art England! Alfred [England

Was England. Etheired was nothing.

Is but her king, and thou art Harold!

Har. Edith,



The sign in heaven—the sudden blast
at sea— [dark dreams—
My fatal oath—the dead Saints—the
The Pope's Anathema—the Holy Rood
That bow'd to me at Waltham—Edith,
if
I, the last English King of England—
Edith. No,
First of a line that coming from the
people,
And chosen by the people—
Har. And fighting for
And dying for the people—
Edith. Living! living!
Har. Yea so, good cheer! thou art
Harold, I am Edith!
Look not thus wan!
Edith. What matters how I look?
Have we not broken Wales and Norae-
land? slain, [war,
Whose life was all one battle, incarnate
Their giant-king, a mightier man-in-
Than William. [arms
Har. Ay, my girl, no tricks in him—
No bastard he! when all was lost, he
yell'd, [ground,
And bit his shield, and dash'd it on the
And swaying his two-handed sword
about him. [upon us
Two deaths at every swing, ran in
And died so, and I loved him as I hate
This liar who made me liar. If Hate
can kill, [axe—
And Loathing-wield a Saxon battle-
Edith. Waste not thy might before
the battle!
Har. No,
And thou must hence. Stigand will
see thee safe,
And so—Farewell.
[He is going, but turns back.
The ring thou darest not wear,
I have had it fashion'd, see, to meet
my hand.
[Harold shows the ring which is
on his finger.
Farewell!
[He is going, but turns back again.
I am dead as Death this day to aught
of earth's
Save William's death or mine.
Edith. Thy death!—to-day!
Is it not thy birthday?
Har. Ay, that happy day!
A birthday welcome! happy days and
many!
One—this! [They embrace.
Look, I will bear thy blessing into the
battle
And front the doom of God.
Norman cries (heard in the distance).
Ha Rou! Ha Rou!
Enter Gurth.
Gurth. The Norman moves!
Har. Harold and Holy Cross!
[Exeunt Harold and Gurth.
Enter Stigand.
Stig. Our Church in arms—the lamb
the lion—not

Spear into pruning-hook—the counter
way—
Cowl, helm; and crozier, battle-axe.
Abbot Alfwig, [bro'
Leofric, and all the monks of Peter-
Strike for the king, but I, old wretch,
old Stigand, —and yet
With hands too limp to brandish iron
I have a power—would Harold ask me
I have a power. [for it—
Edith. What power, holy father?
Stig. Power now from Harold to
command thee hence
And see thee safe from Senlac.
Edith. I remain!
Stig. Yea, so will I, daughter, until
I find [see it
Which way the battle balanced. I can
From where we stand: and, live or die,
I would I were among them?
Canons from Waltham (singing with-
out).
Salva patriam,
Sancte Pater,
Salva Fili,
Salva Spiritus,
Salva patriam,
Sancta Mater.*
Edith. Are those the blessed angels
quiring, father?
Stig. No, daughter, but the canons
out of Waltham, [low'd him.
The king's foundation, that have fol-
Edith. O God of battles, make their
wall of shields [sides!
Firm as thy cliffs, strengthen their pal-
What is that whirring sound?
Stig. The Norman arrow!
Edith. Look out upon the battle—is
he safe? [between his banners.
Stig. The king of England stands
He glitters on the crowning of the hill.
God save king Harold!
Edith. —chosen by his people
And fighting for his people!
Stig. There is one
Come as Goliath came of yore—he
flings
His brand in air and catches it again,
He is chanting some old warsong.
Edith. And no David
To meet him? [him,
Stig. Ay, there springs a Saxon on
Falls—and another falls.
Edith. Have mercy on us!
Stig. Lo! our good Gurth hath
smitten him to the death.
Edith. So perish all the enemies of
Harold!
Canons (singing).
Hostis in Angliam
Ruit predator,
Illorum, Domine,
Scutum scindatur!
Hostis per Angliæ
Plagas vacchatur;
* The *a* throughout these hymns should be
sounded broad, as in "father."



*Casa crematur,
Pastor fugatur
Grex trucidatur—*

Stig. Illos trūcida, Domine.
Edith. Ay, good father.
Canons (singing).

*Illorum scelera
Pœna sequatur!*

English cries. Harold and Holy
Cross! Out! out!

Stig. Our javelins
Answer their arrows. All the Norman
foot [of knights
Are storming up the hill. The range
Sit, each a statue on his horse, and
wait. [mighty!

Eng. cries. Harold and God Al-
Norman cries. Ha Rou! Ha Rou!
Canons (singing).

*Eques cum pedite
Præcipiatur!
Illorum in lacrymas
Cruor fundatur!
Pereant, pereant,
Anglia præcatur.*

Stig. Look, daughter, look.

Edith. Nay, father, look for me!

Stig. Our axes lighten with a single
flash [heads
About the summit of the hill, and
And arms are sliver'd off and splin-
ter'd by [Norman flies.
Their lightning—and they fly—the
Edith. Stigand, O father, have we
won the day? [behind the horse—

Stig. No, daughter, no—they fall.
Their horse are thronging to the har-
ricades;
I see the gonfanon of Holy Peter
Floating above their helmets—ha! he
is down!

Edith. He down! Who down?

Stig. The Norman Count is down.

Edith. So perish all the enemies of
England!

Stig. No, no, he hath risen again—
he bares his face—all their horse
Shouts something—he points onward—
Swallow the hill locust-like, swarming
up. [battle-axe keen

Edith. O God of battles, make his
As thine own sharp-dividing justice,
heavy [ful heads
As thine own bolts that fall on crime-
Charged with the weight of heaven
wherefrom they fall!

Canons (singing).

*Jacta tonitrua
Deus bellator!
Surgas e tenebris,
Sis vindicator!
Fulmina, fulmina
Deus vastator!*

Edith. O God of battles, they are
three to one, [thenu down!
Make thou one man as three to roll
Canons (singing).

*Equus cum equite
Dejiciatur!
Acies, Acies
Prona sternatur!
Illorum lanceas
Frangere Creator!*

Stig. Yea, yea, for how their lances
snap and shiver [axe!
Against the shifting blaze of Harold's
War-woodman of old Woden. how he
fells [there!
The mortal copse of faces! There! And
The horse and horsemen cannot meet
the shield. [cleaves the horse,
The blow that brains the horseman
The horse and horsemen roll along the
hill, [flies!
They fly once more, they fly, the Nor-
man.

*Equus cum equite
Præcipiatur.*

Edith. O God, the God of truth hath
heard my cry. [to the sea!
Follow them, follow them, drive them

*Illorum scelera
Pœna sequatur!*

Stig. Truth! no; a lie; a trick, a
Norman trick!

They turn on the pursuer, horse against
They murder all that follow. [foot,

Edith. Have mercy on us!

Stig. Hot-headed fools—to burst the
wall of shields! [of the king!
They have broken the commandment
Edith. His oath was broken—O holy
Norman saints, [beyond

Ye that are now of heaven, and see
Your Norman shrines, pardon it, par-
don it, [loved,
That he forswore himself for all he
Me, me and all! Look out upon the
battle! [barricades.

Stig. They thunder again upon the
My sight is eagle, but the strife so
thick— [hold, willow!

This is the hottest of it: hold, ash!

Eng. cries. Out, out!

Nor. cries. Ha Rou!

Stig. Ha! Gurth hath leapt upon
him.
And slau him: he hath fallen.

Edith. And I am heard.

Glory to God in the Highest! fallen,
fallen! [another—wields

Stig. No, no, his horse—he mounts
His war-club, dashes it on Gurth, and
Gurth,
Our noble Gurth is down!

Edith. Have mercy on us!

O Thou that knowest, let not my strong
prayer
Be weakened in thy sight, because I
love

The husband of another!

Nor. cries. Ha Rou! Ha Rou!

Edith. I do not hear our English
war-cry.





Stig. No.
Edith. Look out upon the battle — is he safe?
Stig. He stands between the banners with the dead
 So pilled about him he can hardly move.
Edith (takes up the war-cry). Out! out!
Nor. cries. Ha Rou!
Edith (cries out). Harold and Holy Cross!
Nor. cries. Ha Rou! Ha Rou!
Edith. What is that whirring sound?
Stig. The Norman sends his arrows up to Heaven,
 They fall on those within the palisade!
Edith. Look out upon the hill — is Harold there?
Stig. Sanguelac — Sanguelac — the arrow — the arrow! — away!

SCENE II.—*Field of the dead. Night.*
 Aldwyth and Edith.

Ald. O Edith, art thou here? O Harold, Harold — [more.
 Our Harold — we shall never see him
Edith. For there was more than sister in my kiss, [not love them,
 And so the saints were wroth. I can-
 For they are Norman saints — and yet I should —
 They are so much holier than their har-
 lot's son
 With whom they play'd their game
 against the king!
Ald. The king is slain, the kingdom
 overthrown!
Edith. No matter!
Ald. How no matter, Harold slain?
 — I cannot find his body. O help me
 thou!
 O Edith, if I ever wrought against thee,
 Forgive me thou, and help me here!
Edith. No matter!
Ald. Not help me, nor forgive me?
Edith. So thou saidest.
Ald. I say it now, forgive me!
Edith. Cross me not!
 I am seeking one who wedded me in
 secret. [Ha!
 Whisper! God's angels only know it.
 What art thou doing here among the
 dead? [naked yonder,
 They are stripping the dead bodies
 And thou art come to rob them of their
 rings!
Ald. O Edith, Edith, I have lost both
 crown
 And husband.
Edith. So have I.
Ald. I tell thee, girl,
 I am seeking my dead Harold.
Edith. And I mine!
 The Holy Father strangled him with a
 hair
 Of Peter, and his brother Tostig helpt;
 The wicked sister clapt her hands and
 laugh'd;
 Then all the dead fell on him.
Ald. Edith, Edith —

Edith. What was he like, this hus-
 band? like to thee? [not.
 Call not for help from me. I knew him
 He lies not here; not close beside the
 standard. [England.
 Here fell the truest, manliest hearts of
 Go further hence and find him.
Ald. She is crazed!
Edith. That doth not matter either.
 Lower the light.
 He must be here.

*Enter two Canons, Osgod and Athel-
 ric, with torches. They turn over
 the dead bodies and examine them
 as they pass.*

Osgod. I think that this is Thurkill.
Athelric. More likely Godric.
Osgod. I am sure this body
 Is Alfwig, the king's uncle.

Ath. So it is!
 No, no — brave Gurth, one gash from
 brow to knee!
Osgod. And here is Leofwin.
Edith. And here is He!
Ald. Harold? Oh no — nay, if it
 were — my God, [his face
 They have so msin'd and murder'd all
 There is no man can swear to him.
Edith. But one woman!
 Look you, we never mean to part agsin.
 I have found him, I am happy.
 Was there not some one ask'd me for
 forgiveness?
 I yield it freely, being the true wife
 Of this dead King, who never bore re-
 venge.

*Enter Count William and William
 Malet.*

Will. Who be these women? And
 what body is this?
Edith. Harold, thy better!
Will. Ay, and what art thou?
Edith. His wife!
Malet. Not true, my girl, here is the
 Queen. (*Pointing out Aldwyth,*)
Will. (to Aldwyth). Wast thou his
 Queen?
Ald. I was the Queen of Wales.
Will. Why then of England, Madam,
 fear us not.

(*To Malet,*)

Knowest thou this other?
Malet. When I visited England,
 Some held she was his wife in secret —
 some — [mour.
 Well — some believed she was his para-
Edith. Norman, thou liest! liars all
 of you, [and she —
 You! Saints and all! I am his wife!
 For look, our marriage ring!
 [*She draws it off the finger of Harold.*
 I lost it somehow —
 I lost it, playing with it when I was
 wild.
 That bred the doubt! but I am wiser
 now. . . I am too wise. . . Will
 none among you all



Beard me true witness—only for this
once—

That I have found it here again?
[*She puts it on.*
And thou,

Thy wife am I for ever and evermore.
[*Falls on the body and dies.*

Will. Death!—and enough of death
for this one day,
The day of St. Calixtus, and the day,
My day, when I was born.

Malet. And this dead king's,
Who, king or not, hath kinglike fought
and fallen, [even

His birthday, too. It seems but yester-
I held it with him in his English halls,
His day, with all his roof-tree ringing
'Harold,'

Before he fell into the snare of Guy;
When all men counted Harold would
be king,

And Harold was most happy.

Will. Thou art half English.
Take them away!

Malet. I vow to build a church to God
Here on this hill of battle; let our high
altar [where these two lie.

Stand where their standard fell . . .
Take them away, I do not love to see
them. [*Malet!*

Pluck the dead woman off the dead man,

Malet. Faster than ivy. Must I hack
her arms off?

How shall I part them?

Will. Leave them. Let them be!
Bury him and his paramour together.
He that was false in oath to me, it seems
Was false to his own wife. We will not
give him [rior,

A Christian burial: yet he was a war-
And wise, yea truthful, till that blight-
ed vow

Which God avenged to-day.
Wrap them together in a purple cloak
And lay them both upon the waste sea-
shore [which

At Hastings, there to guard the land for.
He did forswear himself—a warrior—
ay,

And but that Holy Peter fought for us,
And that the false Northumbrian held
aloof, [the Saints

And save for that chance arrow which
Sharpen'd and sent against him—who
can tell?— [twice

Three horses had I slain beneath me;
I thought that all was lost. Since I,
knew battle, [yet

And that was from my boyhood, never
No, by the splendor of God—have I
fought men [guard

Like Harold and his brethren, and his
Of English. Every man about his king
Fell where he stood. They loved him:
and, pray God [with me

My Normans may but move as true
To the door of death. Of one self-stock,
at first, [English;

Make them again one people—Norman,
And English, Norman:—we should
have a hand

To grasp the world with, and a foot to
stamp it . . .

Flat. Praise the Saints. It is over.
No more blood!

I am king of England, so they thwart
me not,

And I will rule according to their laws.

(*To Aldwyth.*)

Madam, we will entreat thee with all
honor.

Ald. My punishment is more than I
can bear.

'THE REVENGE.'

A BALLAD OF THE FLEET.

I.

AT Flores in the Azores Sir Richard Gren-
ville lay,
And a pinnace like a flutter'd bird, came
flying from far away;
'Spanish ships of war at sea! we have
sighted fifty-three!
Then swore Lord Thomas Howard: 'Fore
God I am no coward!
But I cannot meet them here, for my
ships are out of gear,
And the half my men are sick. I must
fly, but follow quick.
We are six ships of the line; can we fight
with fifty-three?'

II.

Then spake Sir Richard Grenville: 'I
know you are no coward;

You fly them for a moment to fight with
them again.
But I've ninety men and more that are
lying sick ashore.
I should count myself the coward if I left
them, my Lord Howard,
To these Inquisition dogs and the devil-
doms of Spain.'

III.

So Lord Howard part away with five ships
of war that day,
Till he melted like a cloud in the silent
summer heaven;
But Sir Richard bore in hand all his sick
men from the land
Very carefully and slow,
Men of Bideford in Devon,



And we laid them on the ballast down below;
For we brought them all aboard,
And they blest him in their pain, that
they were not left to Spain,
To the thumbscrew and the stake, for the
glory of the Lord.

IV.

He had only a hundred seamen to work
the ship and to fight,
And he sail'd away from Flores till the
Spaniard came in sight,
With his hugo sea-castles heaving upon
the weather bow.
'Shall we fight or shall we fly?
Good Sir Richard, let us know,
For to fight is but to die!
There'll be little of us left by the time this
sun be set.'
And Sir Richard said again: 'We be all
good English men.
Let us bang these dogs of Seville, the
children of the devil,
For I never turn'd my back upon Don or
devil yet.'

V.

Sir Richard spoke and he laugh'd, and we
roared a hurrah, and so
The little 'Revenge' ran on sheer into
the heart of the foe,
With her hundred fighters on deck, and
her ninety sick below;
For half of their fleet to the right and
for half to the left were seen,
And the little 'Revenge' ran on thro' the
long sea-lane between.

VI.

Thousands of their soldiers look'd down
from their decks and laugh'd.
Thousands of their seamen made mock at
the mad little craft
Running on and on, till delay'd
By their mount-in-like 'San Philip' that,
of fifteen hundred tons,
And up-shadowing high above us with
her yawning tiers of guns,
Took the breath from our sails, and we
stay'd.

VII.

And while now the great 'San Philip'
hung above us like a cloud
Whence the thunderbolt will fall
Long and loud,
Four galleons drew away
From the Spanish fleet that day,
And two upon the larboard and two upon
the starboard lay,
And the battle-thunder broke from them
all.

VIII.

But anon the great 'San Philip,' she be-
thought herself and went
Having that within her womb that had
left her ill-content;

And the rest they came aboard us, and
they fought us hand to hand,
For a dozen times they came with their
pikes and musqueteers,
And a dozen time we shook 'em off as a
dog that shakes his ears
When he leaps from the water to the
land.

IX.

And the sun went down, and the stars
came out far over the summer sea,
But never a moment ceased the fight of
the one and the fifty-three.
Ship after ship, the whole night long,
their high-built galleons came,
Ship after ship, the whole night long, with
her battle-thunder and flame;
Ship after ship, the whole night long, drew
back with her dead and her shame.
For some were sunk and many were shat-
ter'd, and so could fight us no more—
God of battles, was ever a battle like this
in the world before?

X.

For he said, 'Fight on! fight on!'
Tho' his vessel was all but a wreck,
And it chanced that, when half of the
summer night was gone,
With a grisly wound to be drest he had
left the deck,
But a bullet struck him that was dressing
it suddenly dead,
And himself he was wounded again in the
side and the head,
And he said, 'Fight on! fight on!'

XI.

And the night went down, and the sun
smiled out far over the summer sea,
And the Spanish fleet with broken sides
lay round us all in a ring;
But they dared not touch us again, for
they fear'd that we still could sting,
So they watch'd what the end would be.
And we had not fought them in vain,
But in perils plight were we,
Seeing forty of our poor hundred were
slain,
And half of the rest of us maim'd for life
In the crash of the cannonades and the
desperate strife;
And the sick men down in the hold were
most of them stark and cold,
And the pikes were all broken or bent,
and the powder was all of it spent;
And the masts and the rigging were lying
over the side;
But Sir Richard cried in his English pride,
'We have fought such a fight for a day
and a night
As may never be fought again!
We have won great glory, my men!
And a day less or more
At sea or shore,
We die—does it matter when?



Sink me the ship, Master Gunner—sink
her, split her in twain !
Fall into the hands of God, not into the
hands of Spain !'

XII.

And the gunner said 'Ay, ay,' but the
seamen made reply :
'We have children, we have wives,
And the Lord hath spared our lives.
We will make the Spaniard promise, if we
yield, to let us go ;
We shall live to fight again and to strike
another blow.'
And the lion there lay dying, and they
yielded to the foe.

XIII.

And the stately Spanish men to their flag-
ship bore him then,
Where they laid him by the mast, old Sir
Richard caught at last,
And they praised him to his face with
their courtly foreign grace ;
But he rose upon their decks, and he
cried :
'I have fought for Queen and Faith like
a valiant man and true ;
I have only done my duty as a man is
bound to do :
With a cheerful spirit I Sir Richard Gren-
ville die !'
And he fell upon their decks, and he died.

XIV.

And they stared at the dead that had
been so valiant and true,
And had holden the power and glory of
Spain so cheap
That he dared her with one little ship and
his English few ;
Was he devil or man ? He was devil for
aught they knew,
But they sank his body with honor down
into the deep,
And they mann'd the 'Revenge' with a
swarthier alien crew,
And away she sail'd with her loss and
long'd for her own ;
When a wind from the lands they had
ruin'd awoke from sleep,
And the water began to heave and the
weather to moan,
And or ever that evening ended a great
gale blew,
And a wave like the wave that is raised
by an earthquake grew,
Till it smote on their hulls and their sails
and their masts and their flags,
And the whole sea plunged and fell on the
shot-shatter'd navy of Spain,
And the little 'Revenge' herself went
down by the island crags
To be lost evermore in the main.

ALFRED TENNYSON.

THE END.



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