







JOAQUIN MILLER

From a Photograph taken previous to 1890

The Poetical Works
of
Joaquin Miller

Edited with an Introduction and Notes
by

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G. P. Putnam's Sons
New York & London
The Knickerbocker Press

1923

PS 2395
A4
1923

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APR 10 '23

PREFACE

THE justification of this edition, undertaken with the approval of Mrs. Miller, is that for the first time it exhibits the full range of Joaquin Miller's poetical works in a single volume. The Bear edition in six volumes, which he had prepared in his later years, must be regarded as an interesting but somewhat chaotic personal repository rather than as a definitive popular edition. Following his text and his general plan, yet with numerous rearrangements and additions, I have reprinted here all the poems which he gathered into that storehouse; but in the interests of condensation and coherence have omitted his shredded memoirs, his four plays in prose, his essays and his sheaf of press notices, and have greatly abridged his copious running commentary. In compensation I have added more than fifty poems which he discarded or overlooked but which are either of intrinsic merit or of value to the student of his development. The whole of the rare Portland volume, *Joaquin, Et Al.*, is reprinted from the original text, except "Joaquin" and "Benoni," which Miller had revised and incorporated in *Songs of the Sierras*. The "Fallen Leaves" series is restored from the American edition of *Songs of the Sun-Lands*, 1873, except in the case of "Thomas of Tigre," "Yosemite," and "Dead in the Sierras," where the text of the Bear edition is followed. The other principal additions are the series from *Shadows of Shasta* and from *The Building of the City Beautiful*; and "Light of the Southern Cross," printed from a pamphlet supplied by Mrs. Miller, to whom and to her daughter Juanita I am indebted for various information contained in the Introduction.

S. P. S.

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INTRODUCTION

INTRODUCTION

JOAQUIN MILLER was a picturesque figure on the American scene for more than forty years. The romantic life which he had conceived and which he had, in considerable measure, enacted, he recorded in both verse and prose, with due regard for the attention of posterity. Though much of his poetry is a genuine conquest, he wrote too easily and he wrote too much. In the summer of 1921, only eight years after his death, though occasional curious pilgrims visited his home on The Hights above San Francisco Bay, and carried off a stone from his monument to Moses The Law-Giver, booksellers of a dozen shops in the cities that fringe the bay looked up with surprise when one enquired for a copy of his works, and replied that they had none. It is not strange that popular interest refuses to float a six-volume edition of Miller. But our literature is not so rich in distinctive national types that we can afford to let this poetical pioneer fade, as he is now in danger of fading, into a colorless shadow like the once famous scouts who accompanied Frémont into the West.

He is, to be sure, difficult to fix for an adequate portrait, because in his time he played several parts; and he himself was never quite sure in which of his various costumes and poses he would most adorn the national gallery. An emigrant from the Middle Border, a gold-hunter of the Far West, an Indian fighter, a frontier judge, he first rose above the horizon, in 1871, with assistance and cheers from England, as the long-haired top-booted "poet of the Sierras." Even at the outset of his career, he was not quite satisfied with that rôle. His own early aspiration was rather to be known as "the American Byron"; and, in keeping with that

high calling, he shook off the dust of his native land, wandered for a time in "exile," and bore through Italy and the Ægean Isles the pageant of his bleeding heart. Following his personal contact with the Pre-Raphaelites in London, this impressionable mountaineer disciplined himself for a brief period in the early 'seventies to Swinburne and the Rossettis, was intensely "æsthetic," and contemplated devoting himself to the Orient. Returning to America about 1875, he made through his middle years numerous ventures in prose fiction and drama, ranging all the way from the Forty-Niners and the Indians of the Pacific slope to fast life in New York and to the more or less autobiographical affairs of the artist Alphonso Murietta in Italy (*The One Fair Woman*). In what we may call his final period, after his return to California in the middle 'eighties, there grew strong in him a sense that he was the leader of a native poetical movement, a spiritual seer with Messianic or at least prophetic mission; and in the flowing hair and beard of his last years, stalking majestically under the trees which he had planted by his monuments on The Hights, and gazing dreamily out over the Pacific, he looked the part.

Now, whatever one may think of Miller's actual contribution to poetry or to prose fiction, this evolution of an Indian fighter into the Moses of the Golden Gate is an extraordinary phenomenon. Considered merely as a detached individual, he is abundantly interesting to the biographer. But he repays sympathetic curiosity most generously perhaps when one regards and studies him as a register of the power exerted upon the individual by the American environment and the national culture, even at their thinnest and crudest. To study him in this fashion the first requisite is a more coherent account of his career than has been hitherto available. Joaquin Miller was his own principal hero, but by a singular fatality his adventures have never been adequately written. Certain scenes and events he himself sketched repeatedly; but concerning many passages of his history he was extremely reticent. What is more serious, he had

no steady narrative power. Lifelong an adventurous rover, in love with action, he finds it next to impossible to stick to the thread of his story. As soon as he grasps the pen, he overflows with sentiment and moralization and he riots in description. Consequently his longer poems frequently produce the effect of panorama; and the feeling which they present remains obscure till the shifting pictures are connected and explained by the events of his own life.

To the student of American culture, the case of Joaquin Miller is the more valuable from the fact that he did not—like Bret Harte, for example—put on the frontier as a literary garment, after an eastern upbringing. By birth and ancestry he belonged in the great migration which settled the Middle Border and the Far West. He was born in 1841, in a covered wagon, “at or about the time it crossed the line dividing Indiana from Ohio.” His mother, Margaret Witt of Dutch stock from North Carolina, and his father, Hulings Miller of Scotch stock from Kentucky, were married in Indiana; and after some oscillation between Indiana and Ohio, gravitated slowly westward for a decade through the Miami Reservation and up along the banks of the Wabash and the Tippecanoe rivers, before they heard a clear call to follow the overland trail to the coast. Meanwhile they made various cabin homes for their young family. The mother cooked and sewed and wove and spun. The father worked his little clearings, failed as storekeeper, served as magistrate, and kept school for the children of the wilderness. It was a rough life, but every reference of Miller to his childhood indicates that it was in many respects a good and a happy life; and every reference to his parents is marked by a tenderness without condescension. These simple people were impecunious, restless, and not very shrewd—rather sentimental and visionary. But they were honest and pious, with the pacificism of the Quaker discipline and the abolitionism of Horace Greeley; they were loyal to one another and gentle and affectionate in all the family re-

lationships; they were kindly in their intercourse with the Indians of the Reservation; and they were hospitable with their meagre shelter to wanderers less fortunately circumstanced. Most of the parents' traits ultimately reappeared in the son, from their hospitality to their turn for roving.

The migratory influences from his immediate family were reënforced by the spirit of the age. The Millers were not alone in finding it difficult to "settle down" in the eighteen-forties. It was an expansive and exploratory epoch in both the physical and the intellectual senses. The East was in a philosophical and social ferment. Descendants of the Puritans, corporally resident in Concord, were extending their mental frontiers to Greece and India; and in 1841 Emerson published the first series of his Essays, "striking up" for a new world. It is not clear that these expansive utterances promptly reached the Indiana settlement. But between 1842 and 1844 Frémont started a movement which was the material complement of Transcendentalism by his series of bold expeditions to the Rocky Mountains, Oregon, and California. Frémont's account of these explorations Hulings Miller borrowed from an Indian agent and read in the evenings to his assembled family. "I was never so fascinated," says Joaquin, "I never grew so fast in my life. Every scene and circumstance in the narrative was painted in my mind to last, and to last forever." The hide of the "woolly white horse" celebrated in Frémont's presidential campaign is exhibited to this day in Miller's home in California; and it may be mentioned here that Frémont's guide, the hunter and Indian fighter Kit Carson, is the hero of one of Miller's most readable poems. In 1845 Texas was admitted to the Union, and Sam Houston, another of the poet's western heroes, was elected to the United States Senate. At about this time the Mormons, whom he was to commemorate in *The Danites*, were drifting westward through Illinois and Missouri; and in 1847 Brigham Young led the faithful into the valley of the Great Salt Lake. In 1849 the cry, "Gold is discovered in California,"

ran like prairie fire among our middle-borderers, and doubled the attraction of the full section of land offered to each settler in Oregon, in a bill introduced by Senator Linn of Missouri. By 1850 still another of Miller's heroes, the enigmatic William Walker, was in California, soon to be preparing his filibustering excursions into Mexico and Nicaragua. To add the last attraction General Joe Lane, once a pupil of Hulings Miller, in the sugar camps of Indiana, had been appointed governor of Oregon.

The multiplied appeals of the Far West had become irresistible. As soon as they could equip themselves for the journey, three years after the discovery of gold, the Millers started for the promised land. With a presentiment on his father's part that it would some day be a pleasure to go over the record, Joaquin, then in his eleventh year, kept a journal of the great expedition. Though this unfortunately was lost, the poetic residuum of his impressions is preserved in "Exodus for Oregon" and "The Ship in the Desert." As he recalled their adventure many years later, they set out in wagons on the seventeenth of March, 1852; in May, they crossed the Missouri above St. Joe, where they found the banks for miles crowded with tents of the emigrants; followed the Platte River; threaded Frémont's South Pass over the Rockies; rested at Salt Lake City; skirmished with the Indians in the desert; descended to the head waters of the Snake River; crossed the Cascade Mountains at the Dalles; and, after seven months and five days, ended their march of three thousand miles in Oregon, near the middle of the Willamette Valley, "the most poetic, gorgeous and glorious valley in flowers and snow-covered mountains on the globe." Miller's enthusiasm for the scenery of Oregon is only equalled by his enthusiasm for the new settlers: "The vast multitude," he declares, that fought their way across the plains in the face of cholera, hostile Indians, famine, and drouth "was, as a rule, religious, and buried their dead with hymns and prayers, all along the dreary half year's journey on which no

coward ever ventured, and where the weak fell by the wayside, leaving a natural selection of good and great people, both in soul and body.”

It was about two years after the establishment of the Millers in Oregon that Joaquin's independent adventures began. They had cultivated a little land, bought a few cows and sheep and hens, and were running a tavern in a small way. The father and elder brother were now absent, teaching school, and Joaquin and his younger brother Jimmy were left with their mother to look after the place. Stories brought up from the mining camps of California by pedlars and itinerant preachers had for some time been making him restless; and it had been conceded, he says, that he was ultimately to be allowed to seek his fortune in the wicked and dangerous territory to the southward. In his fourteenth year, anticipating the parental consent, he ran away, and joining a party of miners who were opening a placer claim in a wooded gulch by the Klamath River, just below the border between Oregon and California, he offered his services as cook and dishwasher. Here began his intimate acquaintance with the tougher and more miscellaneous element of the western population which was streaming through the Golden Gate—the Australians, the European adventurers, the Mexicans, the Chinese, and wanderers from eastern cities. And here, if his memory is to be trusted, he wrote his first song, in celebration of an adjutant cook's marriage to a woman from Australia.

Joaquin was at this time small for his age, slender, pale, frail-looking, with hair of the color of “hammered gold,” reaching to his shoulders. The camp diet of bacon and beans did not agree with him, and his first mining experience was terminated by a serious attack of scurvy. He was nursed back to health in Yreka by Dr. Ream and a “kind little Chinaman”; and then was taken by a mysterious stranger to another camp for the winter by the forks of several little streams which flow into the Klamath River from the north of Mt. Shasta. “Here,” he says, “I laid the scene

of 'The Danites,' my famous play, but have always been sorry I printed it, as it is unfair to the Mormons and the Chinese." The tall stranger with whom he spent the winter is another of Miller's heroes, whom at this period he seems to have regarded with unqualified adoration. He figures so largely and mysteriously in his work that he requires identification. In the introduction to the collected poems he is described merely as "the Prince," and is said to have gone "south," in the spring of 1855. But in *Life Among the Modocs*, 1873, he is represented as a very handsome and romantic professional gambler of great courage and chivalrous nature who was generally understood to be a prince, but who, after fighting with Walker in Nicaragua, acknowledged himself to be only plain James Thompson, an American. In 1876, Miller dedicated his *First Fam'lies of the Sierras* as follows: "To my old companion in arms, Prince Jamie Tomas, of Leon, Nicaragua." But that this "Prince Jamie Tomas" was the James Thompson of *Life Among the Modocs* and the mysterious stranger of the autobiographical sketch is made clear at last by a footnote to the poem called "Thomas of Tigre," in the fourth volume of the *Bear* edition.

After the departure of "the Prince," the most influential friend of the strange boyhood days on Mt. Shasta was another rather mysterious figure, Joseph De Bloney, whom Miller had met in the spring of 1855. In an apparently serious sketch of him, included in *Memorie And Rime*, De Bloney is described as "a California John Brown in a small way." According to this account, he was of an old and noble Swiss family, and had probably crossed the plains with Frémont under an impulse similar to that which animated Brigham Young in Utah and Walker in Nicaragua—an impulse to found a new state. "His ambition was to unite the Indians about the base of Mount Shasta and establish a sort of Indian republic, the prime and principal object of which was to set these Indians entirely apart from the approach of the white man, draw an impassable line, in fact, behind which the

Indian would be secure in his lands, his simple life, his integrity, and his purity. . . . It was a hard undertaking at best, perilous, almost as much as a man's life was worth to befriend an Indian in those stormy days on the border, when every gold-hunter . . . counted it his privilege, to shoot an Indian on sight. An Indian sympathizer was more hated in those days, is still, than ever was an abolitionist. . . . De Bloney gradually gathered about twenty-five men around him in the mountains, took up homes, situated his men around him, planted, dug gold, did what he could to civilize the people and subdue the savages. . . . But he had tough elements to deal with. The most savage men were the white men. The Indians, the friendly ones, were the tamest of his people. These white men would come and go; now they would marry the Indian women and now join a prospecting party and disappear for months, even years. At one time they nearly all went off to join Walker in Nicaragua."

Under the influence of this odd character, young Joaquin seems for the time to have forgotten the Oregon homestead, and to have embraced the dream of a little Indian republic on Mt. Shasta. Between 1855 and 1859 he represents himself as living in the shadow of the mountains with De Bloney and the Indians and "Indian Joe," a scout and horsetrader of German birth, who had been with Frémont, and who furnished Miller some of the materials for his poems. He was also on intimate terms with the Indian chief Blackbeard, who, he remarks in *Memorie And Rime*, had "a very beautiful daughter," and gave him a "beautiful little valley," where he built a cabin, and "first began to write." According to *Life Among the Modocs*, a romance with a biographical core, he married the chief's daughter and became eventually the leader in the movement to unite the tribes in an Indian republic. These stories of his Indian bride and of his fighting defiance of the white men seem rather more plausible when one forgets that he was but fourteen when he remarked the beauty of the girl and only seventeen when he assumed the responsibilities

for which, according to *Memorie And Rime*, De Bloney's growing inebriety disqualified him.

Viewed from within by a romantic poet, this colony of adventurers and Indians was a noble enterprise for the preservation of an oppressed race; viewed from without it probably seemed more like a nest of horse-thieves. Its importance for Miller was partly in its development of his romantic sympathy with the outlaw. In a paper on "How I Came to be a Writer of Books," contributed to *Lippincotts* in 1886, he illustrates this point, and, at the same time, explains the origin of his pen-name "Joaquin." His parents had called him Cincinnatus Heine (or Hiner); but, during his sojourn on Mt. Shasta, his friends had already begun to call him by his now familiar name. According to this account, he had made several trips with Mexican horse and mule drivers down into Arizona and northern Mexico, and on these expeditions, "These Mexicans were most kind to me." They, on the contrary, were treated by the Anglo-Saxon conquerors of California with a brutality which was "monstrous." "It was this," says Miller "that had driven Joaquin Murietta, while yet a youth, to become the most terrible and bloody outlaw our land has ever known. A reward of many thousands had been offered for his head, he had been captured, killed, and his head was in spirits and on exhibition in San Francisco, when I took up my pen for the first time and wrote a public letter in defence of the Mexicans." In consequence of this letter he was banteringly identified by a Sacramento paper with the bandit. His friends continued the banter. The name was revived when he returned to Oregon, and was employed to twit him when he became an editor. And so he finally accepted it and used it in the title of his first book.

In the chapter of his relations with the Indians there are manifold obscurities and contradictions. He adhered pretty consistently throughout his life to the assertion that he was in three Indian battles or campaigns, the Battle of Castle Rocks, the

“Pitt River War,” and a later campaign in Oregon. But according to one set of stories he figures as a renegade fighting with the Indians against the whites; while according to the other set of stories he is fighting with the whites against the Indians. The chief prose sources of the renegade story are *Life Among the Modocs* and *Memorie And Rime*; but he still calls himself a “renegade” in the introduction to the *Bear* edition. On the other hand, there is in existence among the papers preserved by the Miller family a petition for damages, never presented, in which Miller represents himself as the victim of Indian depredations; and in his annotations of the poem “Old Gib At Castle Rocks” he establishes by a sworn affidavit that this first battle was *against* the “Modocs and Other Renegades,” and that his wound in the head was received while he was fighting at Judge Gibson’s side. In *Memorie And Rime*, however, he declares that the battle of Castle Rocks was fought under the leadership of De Bloney, to punish unfriendly Indians for burning his camp. But in the introduction to the *Bear* edition, he says nothing of De Bloney; the leader of Miller’s party is there represented as Mountain Joe, who in the battle unites forces with Judge Gibson, the *alcalde* of the district.

The discrepancies in his various accounts may be explained in three ways. First, Miller did in his poems and prose narratives deliberately adulterate his facts with imaginary elements in the interest of romance, and like his early model Lord Byron, he enjoyed and encouraged identification of himself with all his hard-riding, hard-fighting, and amorous heroes. Secondly, he tells us that as a result of his arrow wound in the head and neck at the Battle of Castle Rocks, “on the 15th day of June, 1855,” he lost his memory for months, was “nearly a year” in recovering, and was somewhat feeble minded for sometime after. Thirdly, if he ever actually became a renegade and participated in outlaw raids, when he returned to “civilization” he indulged in wise “lapses of memory.”

With a consciousness, then, that we are treading the uncertain border between fact and fiction, we pull the arrow from Joaquin's neck in the summer of 1855, and commit him to the care of an Indian woman, who treats him as her son. Late in the fall, restored at last to his senses and beginning to recover his strength, he teaches school in a mining camp near Shasta City at night and tries to mine by day—rather strenuous activities for a feeble-minded convalescent! But in the following spring, 1856, he again joins the red men on the mountain. "When the Modocs rose up one night and massacred eighteen men, every man in Pitt River Valley, I alone was spared";—thus runs the introduction to the *Bear* edition—"and spared only because I was *Los bobo*, the fool. Then more battles and two more wounds. My mind was as the mind of a child and my memory is uncertain here." But according to *Memorie And Rime*, news of the Pitt River massacre came to Joaquin in the spring of 1857, when he was encamped on the spurs of Mt. Shasta, "*sixty miles distant*"; so that it must have been in a later stage of the "war" that he got his "bullet through the right arm." Had he complicity in the massacre? He raises the question. He says that he knew in advance that it had been planned, and he sympathized with its perpetrators years later. Following it, he made an expedition to Shasta City for ammunition to arm De Bloney's Indians "against the brutal and aggressive white men"; had a horse shot under him by the pursuing whites, stole another horse, was overtaken, threatened with hanging, lodged in Shasta City jail, "and my part in the wild attempt to found an Indian republic was rewarded with a prompt indictment for stealing horses." This, he says, was in 1859. After long confinement, he was delivered from jail by the Indians on the night of the 4th of July, thrown upon a horse, "and such a ride for freedom and fresh air was never seen before." (See *Memorie And Rime*, pp. 234-235, *Life Among the Modocs*, chap. xxx, and *The Tale of the Tall Alcalde*.)

Miller hints, in *Memorie And Rime*, at one more disastrous

attempt to carry out De Bloney's plan for the republic, followed by separation from his leader, and flight to Washington Territory. But in the introduction to the *Bear* edition, he interposes at this point in his career, though without dates and vaguely and briefly, his connection with the filibuster William Walker. "I, being a renegade," he says, "descended to San Francisco and set sail for Boston, but stopped at Nicaragua with Walker."

In his poem "With Walker in Nicaragua," he represents himself as riding side by side with the filibuster in his campaigns and as treated by him like a son; and he always encouraged the common belief that this poem had a substantial autobiographical core. There is a good deal of evidence for concluding that it had none. Walker sailed from San Francisco in May and landed in Nicaragua on June 16, 1855. On the previous day, Miller was wounded at Castle Rocks in northern California. In May, 1857, Walker left Nicaragua and was a paroled prisoner in the United States till August, 1860, when he landed in Honduras, where he was executed on the 12th of September in the same year. Miller later associated himself with his hero by publishing the last words of Walker, obtained from the priest who attended the execution; but Miller says in his notes on the poem in the *Bear* edition: "I was not with him on this last expedition." Of course the intended implication is that he *was* with Walker on a previous expedition. Recruits from California sailed down to join the filibuster at frequent intervals, it is true; but, if any credit is to be given to Miller's Indian stories, he was recovering from his Castle Rocks wound from June, 1855, till the spring of 1856, when he joined the red men on the mountains; he spends the winter on the spurs of Mt. Shasta, and in the spring of 1857 he becomes implicated in the Pitt River Valley War, in which he is again seriously wounded; and his connections with this affair are not terminated till 1859. He might then have set out in time to join Walker's fatal expedition in Honduras; but he tells us that he did not. Walker, in his account of *The War in Nicaragua*, published in

1860, nowhere mentions the boy whom he is alleged to have fathered. One's final impression is that the poem is pure fiction, colored by the tales and published narratives of the filibusters and perhaps by Miller's subsequent acquaintance with Central America. And this impression is strengthened by Miller's reply to one who asked him point blank whether he was ever with Walker in Nicaragua: "Was Milton ever in Hell?"¹

The fiasco of De Bloney's and Joaquin's Mt. Shasta "republic" fell, according to the legend, in the year of John Brown's raid at Harper's Ferry, and two years after the ejection of Walker from Nicaragua. In Miller's mind these three curious attempts to escape from the jurisdiction of the United States became closely associated memories of forlorn hopes, with a singular appeal to his imagination. Writing at Harper's Ferry in 1883 (*Memorie And Rime*, 228 ff.), he gives this account of his movements and sentiments following his alleged connection with Walker and De Bloney: "I made my way to Washington Territory, sold my pistols, and settled down on the banks of the Columbia, near Lewis River, and taught school. And here it was that the story of John Brown, his raid, his fight, his capture, and his execution, all came to me. Do you wonder that my heart went out to him and remained with him? I, too, had been in jail. Death and disgrace were on my track, and might find me any day hiding there under the trees in the hearts of the happy children. And so, sympathizing, I told these children over and over again the story of old John Brown there."

From 1860 to 1870 Miller was chiefly an Oregonian, though he made many excursions from his base. We shall have to notice one more interesting inconsistency which casts a suspicion over his account of his life with the Indians. In the introduction to the *Bear* edition, he says in his baffling summary fashion, without dates, that on his return from being "with Walker," he "went home, went to college some, taught school some, studied law at

¹ This reply was related to me by Mrs. Miller.

home some." Now, in a note to the *Bear* edition (vol. II., p. 185), he speaks of teaching school in 1858 below Fort Vancouver, "during vacation at Columbia College, the forerunner of the Oregon University"; and, in another note (vol. I, p. 170), he says that he wrote, "the valedictory class poem" for Columbia College in 1859. It thus appears that his attendance at "Columbia College" falls in the period when, according to his other stories, he was engaged in his last desperate efforts to establish De Bloney's "Mt. Shasta republic"; and his valedictory poem was apparently delivered in the year in which he fled from Californian justice to hide in Washington Territory.

If one thinks of Miller as having taken a regular college course ending in 1859, then one must be prepared to dismiss most of the Mt. Shasta stories as mythical; and doubtless there is a large element of fiction in them. They are not, however, quite so inconsistent with the "college" course as at first sight they appear. Eugene City, in which the "college" was located, was not settled till 1854; and the institution, with its "pleasant campus," in which the poem was perhaps delivered five years later was nothing more than a small town high school or seminary. And Miller, returning from California in 1858, or even as late as 1859, might, after very brief instruction, have appeared as class poet in 1859. It is, moreover, unfortunately necessary to regard the statements about his own life made towards the close of his literary career with almost as much skepticism as those which he made near its outset; and for an interesting reason. In his last period as the seer on The Hights, Miller desired to be regarded as an authoritative man of letters; consequently he minimized his frontier upbringing and magnified his education and general culture. Furthermore, he ultimately desired to be regarded as devoutly American and intensely pacifistic; consequently he touched very lightly in later years the period when he was a secessionist, he skilfully hinted here and there that the stories of his outlawry were mythical, and he worked over his poems, making great ex-

cisions and adding new passages, with the purpose of harmonizing them with his declaration that he would rather starve than be celebrated as the poetic glorifier of war.¹ This was obviously a difficult task in the case of the bloody and imperialistic career of Walker.

In the summer of 1861 Miller began other interesting adventures which are better attested. At this time he was riding Mossman and Miller's pony express; carrying letters and gold dust between Walla Walla, Washington, and the newly opened mines at Millersburg in Idaho. Attracted by certain contributions of "Minnie Myrtle" appearing in the newspapers of his pack, he wrote to her and had replies. His mining ventures yielded him enough to enable him to build a "beautiful new home" for his parents, and also to buy a newspaper. In 1863 he began to edit *The Democratic Register* in Eugene, Oregon, and he avowed southern sympathies which aroused the community. Though he had been brought up an ardent abolitionist and his elder brother John had entered the northern army, he himself had imbibed, in his "college," which was tainted with disloyalty, or from the friends of Walker, who was a pro-slavery man, or elsewhere—principles and sentiments obnoxious to the aroused Unionist spirit of Oregon. As he explained it in *Memorie And Rime*, "when the war came,

¹ "The Tale of the Alcalde," he says in his note in the *Bear* edition, "has been a fat source of feeding for grimly humorous and sensational writers, who long ago claimed to have found in it the story of my early life; and strangely enough I was glad when they did so, and read their stories with wild delight. I don't know why I always encouraged this idea of having been an outlaw, but I recall that when Trelawny told me that Byron was more ambitious to be thought the hero of his wildest poems than even to be King of Greece I could not help saying to myself, as Napoleon said to the thunders preceding Waterloo, 'We are of accord.' The only serious trouble about the claim that I made the fight of life up the ugly steeps from a hole in an adobe prison-wall to the foothills of Olympus instead of over the pleasant campus of a college is the fact that 'our friends the enemy' fixed the date at about the same time in which I am on record as reading my class poem in another land."

and the armies went down desolating the South, then with that fatality that has always followed me for getting on the wrong side, siding with the weak, I forgot my pity for the one in my larger pity for the other.”

His entrance into journalism brought him again to the attention of his unknown correspondent, “Minnie Myrtle,” who was then living in a mining and lumber camp at Port Orford by the sea, not far from the southern boundary of Oregon. Twenty years later, when this lady died in New York, in May, 1883, Miller told in his own fashion the story of his brief unhappy relations with her. Since they made a turning point in his career and introduced into his poetry additional “Byronic” notes, let us have an abridgment of his own version of the affair as set forth in *Memorie And Rime*.

“When I came down from the mountains and embarked in journalism, she wrote to me, and her letters grew ardent and full of affection. Then I mounted my horse and rode hundreds of miles through the valleys and over the mountains, till I came to the sea, at Port Orford, then a flourishing mining town, and there first saw ‘Minnie Myrtle.’ Tall, dark, and striking in every respect, this first Saxon woman I had ever addressed had it all her own way at once. She knew nothing at all of my life, except that I was an expressman and country editor. I knew nothing at all of hers, but I found her with kind, good parents, surrounded by brothers and sisters, and the pet and spoiled child of the mining and lumber camp. . . . The heart of the bright and merry girl was brimming full of romance, hope, and happiness. I arrived on Thursday. On Sunday next we were married! Oh, to what else but ruin and regret could such romantic folly lead?”

“Procuring a horse for her”—for she, too, was an excellent and daring rider—“we set out at once to return to my post, far away over the mountains.” After a week’s ride, the bridal couple reached their intended home in Eugene, “but only to find that my paper had been suppressed by the Government, and we resolved

to seek our fortunes in San Francisco. But we found neither fortune nor friends in that great city." In 1863 Mrs. Frémont was there, and Charles Warren Stoddard, and Prentice Mulford, and Ina Coolbrith. Bret Harte was writing for *The Golden Era*. The nucleus was already formed of the literary group which Mark Twain joined in 1864, and which launched *The Californian* and *The Overland Monthly*. Whether at this time Miller made any attempt to break into the "western school" does not appear. If he did so, we can understand his failure. He was still a very immature writer, though Stoddard records that he did contribute to *The Golden Era*, "from the backwood depths of his youthful obscurity." But coming as he did in the midst of the Civil War to the outskirts of a group animated by Bret Harte, then engaged in writing strongly patriotic verse and prose, the editor of a paper which had just been suppressed for disloyalty could hardly have expected a very cordial reception.

One is tempted to conjecture that Miller's failure to establish a literary or journalistic connection in the city may perhaps have dashed a little the spirits of his bride. At any rate, he says that even while they were living in San Francisco, she had presentiments of "wreck and storm and separation for us." If thwarted aspiration for more literary and social life than she had enjoyed in the lumber camp had stimulated these presentiments, they must have been strengthened when Joaquin bought a band of cattle and journeyed with his wife and baby to a new mining camp at Canyon City, in eastern Oregon. As for him, it was the life to which he had always been accustomed, and he threw himself into the task of establishing himself with unwonted application of his restless energy. He practised law among the miners, he planted the first orchard in the land, he led in his third Indian campaign, he was rewarded in 1866 by election, for a four-year term, as judge of the Grant County court, and finally, he had begun to occupy himself seriously with poetry. In 1868 he published a pamphlet of *Specimens*, and in 1869, at Portland, Oregon,

his first book: "*Joaquin, Et Al.*, By Cincinnatus H. Miller,"—dedicated "To Maud."¹

Ambition and a multitude of business, as he depicted the matter, had made him not the most genial of companions:

"Often I never left my office till the gray dawn, after a day of toil and a night of study. My health gave way and I was indeed old and thoughtful. Well, all this, you can see, did not suit the merry-hearted and spoiled child of the mines at all. . . . She became the spoiled child here that she had been at her father's, and naturally grew impatient at my persistent toil and study. But she was good all the time . . . Let me say here, once for all, that no man or woman can put a finger on any stain in this woman's whole record of life, so far as truth and purity go. But she was not happy here. Impatient of the dull monotony of the exhausted mining camp . . . she took her two children and returned to her mother, while I sold the little home . . . promising to follow her, yet full of ambition now to be elected to a place on the Supreme Bench of the State . . . She had been absent from me quite a year, when . . . I went to Portland, seeking the nomination for the place I desired. But the poor impatient lady, impulsive as always and angry that I had kept so long away, had forwarded papers from her home, hundreds of miles remote, to a lawyer here, praying for a divorce. This so put me to shame that I abandoned my plans and resolved to hide my head in Europe."

To "hide" his head was hardly the prime object of Miller's first trip abroad, nor, except by a wide poetic license, can the phrase be used to describe his activities there. His object was more candidly presented in his Byronic "Ultime," the last poem of the little volume, *Joaquin, Et Al.*, published in Portland in 1869—a poem written as if in premonition of death:

¹ The contents were: "Joaquin," "Is It Worth While," "Zanara," "In Exile," "To the Bards of S. F. Bay," "Merinda," "Nepenthe," "Under the Oaks," "Dirge," "Vale," "Benoni," and "Ultime."

“It was my boy-ambition to be read beyond the brine.”

As soon as *Joaquin, Et Al.* was published, what Miller burned for was a literary recognition impossible on the Oregon frontier. In March of 1869, he wrote from Portland to Charles Warren Stoddard to solicit his interest in getting the book adequately noticed in *The Overland Monthly*, which had been launched two months before. Stoddard was absent in Hawaii; but in January, 1870, Bret Harte gave Joaquin a humorous but not unfriendly salute in the new magazine: “We find in ‘Joaquin, et al.’ the true poetic instinct, with a natural felicity of diction and a dramatic vigour that are good in performance and yet better in promise. Of course, Mr. Miller is not entirely easy in harness, but is given to pawing and curvetting; and at such times his neck is generally clothed with thunder and the glory of his nostrils is terrible.”

Following this recognition from the leading literary periodical of the Far West, Miller came down from Oregon to embrace the bards of San Francisco Bay—so romantically addressed by him in *Joaquin, Et Al.*—came to embrace them and to be embraced by them—“clad,” says Stoddard, who had now returned from Hawaii, “in a pair of beaded moccasins, a linen ‘duster’ that fell nearly to his heels, and a broad-brimmed *sombrero*.” Fresh, breezy, ingenuous, Miller exclaimed at once, “Well, let us go and talk with the poets.” Stoddard took him around to call upon Bret Harte, and presented him also to the most lyrical third of their Trinity, the local Sappho, Ina Coolbrith, who was at once impressive and sympathetic. But on the whole, literary glory at the Golden Gate was paler than his expectations—“he had been somewhat chilled by his reception in the metropolis.” Had he really desired to hide his head, he might have accepted Stoddard’s invitation to flee away with him to the South Seas. Instead of doing so, Miller accepted a wreath of laurel from Ina Coolbrith, to lay on the tomb of Byron, and, in midsummer of 1870, “started for England in search of fame and fortune.”

One dwells upon his first visit to the old world, because now

one sees for the first time adequately manifested the literary sensibility and the imaginative yearning which for years had been secretly growing in the heart of the judge of Grant County, Oregon. Here is an astounding fact: jottings from a diary, preserved in *Memorie And Rime*, prove that this backwoodsman went abroad, not with the jaunty insolence of Mark Twain's jolly Philistines, but rather in the mood of Henry James's delicately nurtured "passionate pilgrims" of the decade following the Civil War, those sentimental and æsthetically half-starved young Americans, who in the middle years of the last century flung themselves with tearful joy on England and Europe as the dear homeland of their dreams. There is a touch, sometimes more than a touch, of the theatrical in his gesture; but there is an unquestionable depth of sincere feeling animating the performance as a whole.

There is even a touch of pathos—the more affecting because he himself, for once, seems hardly aware of it—in the memoranda of his departure from New York. He bought his ticket on August 10, 1870, "second class, ship Europa, Anchor Line, to land at Glasgow; and off to-morrow." While waiting for the sailing, he notes that he has tried in vain to see Horace Greeley and Henry Ward Beecher, but has got some leaves from a tree by the door of Beecher's church "to send to mother." There, in a sentence, was his unconscious epitome of what the higher culture of the American metropolis had to offer in 1870 to a passionate pilgrim, to a romantic poet: the editorials of a great journalist, the sermons of a great preacher—a rebuff from the office of the one, and a leaf from a tree of the other. A note of the voyage, which he seems to have found very dreary, reminds us that the Franco-Prussian War was then in progress: "A lot of Germans going home to fight filled the ship; a hard, rough lot, and they ate like hogs."

Arrived in Scotland, he turns his back on commercial Glasgow, and makes straight for the haunts of Burns. On September 10, he writes: "God bless these hale and honest Scotch down

here at peaceful Ayr. . . . One man showed me more than a hundred books, all by Ayrshire poets, and some of them splendid! I have not dared to tell any one yet that I too hope to publish a book of verse. . . . I go every day from here to the 'Auld Brig' over the Doon, Highland Mary's grave, and Alloway's auld haunted kirk! . . . Poetry is in the air here. I am working like a beaver . . . September 18: In the sunset to-day, as I walked out for the last time toward the tomb of Highland Mary, I met a whole line of splendid Scotch lassies with sheaves of wheat on their heads and sickles on their arms. Their feet were bare, their legs were bare to the knees. Their great strong arms were shapely as you can conceive; they were tall, and their lifted faces were radiant with health and happiness. I stepped aside in the narrow road to enjoy the scene and let them pass. They were going down the sloping road toward some thatched cottages by the sea; I towards the mountains. How beautiful! I uncovered my head as I stepped respectfully aside. But giving the road to women here seems to be unusual. . . ." Having paid his devotions to Burns, his "brother," he goes on into the Scott country, wades the Tweed, and spends a night in Dryburgh Abbey.

Thence he proceeds, with ever more reverential mood, to Nottingham, where he lays his western laurel on the tomb of his "master," Byron, and bargains with the care-taker "to keep the wreath there as long as he lives (or I have sovereigns)." "O my poet!" he cries, "Worshipped where the world is glorious with the fire and the blood of youth! Yet here in your own home—ah well!" The parallelism between Byron's fate and his own, on which he broods in Nottingham, stimulates him to fresh poetical efforts. On September 28, the record runs: "Have written lots of stuff here. I have been happy here. I have worked and not thought of the past. But to-morrow I am going down to Hull, cross the Channel, and see the French and Germans fight. For I have stopped work and begun to look back. . . . I see

the snow-peaks of Oregon all the time when I stop work. . . . And then the valley at the bottom of the peaks; the people there; the ashes on the hearth; the fire gone out. . . . The old story of Orpheus in hell has its awful lesson. I, then, shall go forward and never look back any more. Hell, I know, is behind me. There cannot be worse than hell before me. . . . Yet for all this philosophy and this setting the face forward, the heart turns back."

After a glimpse of the war, he began on November 2, 1870, his adventures in London,—which he found delightfully different from New York—by walking straight to Westminster Abbey, guided only by the spirit in his feet. Later, he continued his passionate pilgrimage by looking up the haunts of Washington Irving and Bayard Taylor, and he lived for a while in Camberwell, because Browning had lived there. In February, 1871, he was lodged in a garret of the poet Cowley's house, "right back of the Abbey," looking out on Virginia creepers planted by Queen Elizabeth, and listening to the sound of the city's bells. Refreshed from his bath in the stream of poetic tradition and "atmospherically" inspired, Miller made a little book called *Pacific Poems*, containing "Arazonian" and his drama "Oregonia," and, having printed, at his own expense, a hundred copies, he scoured the city seeking a publisher. But the publishers would have none of it. Murray, "son of the great Murray, Byron's friend," received him, indeed, and showed him many pictures of Byron, but rejected the proffered opportunity to become Joaquin's publisher, saying, with definitive uplifted finger: "Aye, now, don't you know poetry won't do? Poetry won't do, don't you know?"

In other quarters he met with better fortune. Knocking at the door of *Punch*, as a nameless American, he was cordially received by "my first, firmest friend in London," a man in whose arms Artemus Ward had died,—Tom Hood, son of the famous humorist. By March, 1871, he got his *Pacific Poems* to the reviews and into a kind of private circulation without a publisher.

Almost at once both book and author began to catch the fancy of the London literary tasters, who are always hospitably inclined to real curiosities from overseas, and welcome a degree of crudity in a trans-Atlantic writer as evidence that he is genuinely American. By the end of the month, "Arazonian" was attributed by the *Saint James Gazette* to Robert Browning; and, notes the diary, "Walter Thornbury, Dickens's dear friend, and a better poet than I can hope to be, has hunted me up, and says big things of the 'Pacific Poems' in the *London Graphic*." There are, moreover, "two splendid enthusiasts from Dublin University." And, finally, Tom Hood has introduced him to the society poet of the city, who, in turn, has given him letters "to almost everybody"; and so he is socially launched. With this encouragement and backing, he attacks the publishers again, this time successfully. By April, 1871, Longmans has brought out his *Songs of the Sierras*, and Miller's "boy-ambition" is accomplished.

At one stride he had stepped from backwoods obscurity into the full noontide of glory; and it is not strange that the remembrance of his English reception dazzled him for the rest of his life. It is hardly an exaggeration to say that this acclaim was instantaneous, enthusiastic, and unanimous—"over generous," he called it, years later, when he published in the *Bear* edition some thirty pages of appreciations from the English press, including *The Spectator*, *The Athenæum*, *The Saturday Review*, *The Pall Mall Gazette*, *The Illustrated London News*, *The Academy*, *The Evening Standard*, *The Westminster Review*, *The Dark Blue*, *The London Sunday Times*, *Chambers's Journal*, *Frazer's Magazine*, *The Evening Post*, *The Globe*, *The Morning Post*, and others. These are largely concerned with his first volume, *The Songs of the Sierras*. The reviewers, in general, touch lightly upon his obvious inequalities, blemishes, slips in grammar, and faults in metre; some of them apologize slightly for his frontier culture, more recognize it boldly as the source of his power, and proceed to speak in glowing terms of his freshness of theme and treatment, of his tropical

color, his myth-making power, his fluent, rapid, and melodious verse, and "the supreme independence, the spontaneity, the all-pervading passion, the unresting energy, and the prodigal wealth of imagery which stamp the poetry before us."

They did not hesitate, this chorus of reviewers, to tell him that his poetry was the most important that had ever come out of America. Nor did they stop with this equivocal praise. *The Athenæum* found him like Browning in his humor and in the novelty of his metaphor. *The Saturday Review* dwelt on his Byronic qualities, and remarked in him "a ring of genuineness which is absent from Byron." *The Westminster Review* thought that he reminded one of Whitman, with the coarseness left out. And *The Academy* gravely declared, that "there is an impassable gap between the alien *couleur locale* of even so great a poet as Victor Hugo in such a work as *Les Orientales*, and the native recipiency of one like our California author, whose very blood and bones are related to the things he describes, and from whom a perception and a knowledge so extremely unlike our own are no more separable than his eye, and his brain."

In the wake of the journalistic ovation, social invitations came in upon the poet faster than he could accept or answer them. Among those which he had put aside were three letters signed "Dublin." His Irish friends discovered these and explained that they were from the Archbishop (Trench). "At 'Dublin's' breakfast," says Miller, "I met Robert Browning, Dean Stanley, Lady Augusta, a lot more ladies, and a duke or two, and after breakfast, 'Dublin' read to me—with his five beautiful daughters grouped about—from Browning, Arnold, Rossetti, and others, till the day was far spent." The other great feast of the season was an all-night dinner with Dante Gabriel Rossetti, at which all "the literary brain" of London was present. As he recalled the event, with an intoxication of delight, later in the summer: "These giants of thought, champions of the beautiful earth, passed the secrets of all time and all lands before me like a mighty

panorama. . . . If I could remember and write down truly and exactly what these men said, I would have the best and the greatest book that was ever written."

From this rather bewildering contact with the Pre-Raphaelite group, Miller departed with a vivid conviction that he, too, was above all else, a lover of the beautiful; and he carried away a strong impression, which markedly affected his next volume of poems, that beauty is resident in "alliteration and soft sounds." Perhaps, however, the most noteworthy utterance which he preserved was his own reply to a question of Rossetti's:

"'Now, what do you call poetry?' and he turned his great Italian eyes tenderly to where I sat at his side."

"'To me a poem must be a picture,' I answered."

There was more than a drop of bitterness mingled in the joy of his English welcome. With the cup raised to his lips, he wrote in his diary, "I was not permitted to drink." In the midsummer of this most triumphal year, he received news that his sister had died. He returned to the United States, only in time to attend the death-bed of his elder brother in Pennsylvania. Revisiting his parents in Oregon, he found his mother in broken health and failing mind. Furthermore, the American reception of his poems lacked the warmth of the English cordiality. The traditional superciliousness of the East towards the West and a resentful unwillingness to have this uncouth frontiers-man accepted abroad as a leading or even a significant representative of American letters—these not altogether lovely notes are strident in a review in the *New York Nation* in 1871: "It is the 'sombros' and 'serapes' and 'gulches,' we suppose, and the other Californian and Arizonian properties, which have caused our English friends to find in Mr. Miller a truly American poet. He is Mr. William Rossetti's latest discovery. We trust, however, that we have no monopoly of ignorance and presumption and taste for Byronism. In other climes, also, there have been Firmilians, and men need not be born in California to have the will in excess of the understand-

ing and the understanding ill informed. There are people of all nationalities whom a pinch more brains and a trifle more of diffidence would not hurt."

The chilliness of American literary criticism was not all, nor perhaps the worst, that Miller had to face on his return to the United States. During his absence in Europe, he had been accused at home, and not without a basis in fact, of deserting his wife. His celebrity as author of *Songs of the Sierras* gave newspaper value to the story. And in the fall of 1871, "Minnie Myrtle" made the entire subject a topic for editorial comment both at home and abroad by corroborating the story and then proceeding, in the spirit of magnanimity or of irony or of publicity, to justify the poet. Early in 1872, *The Saturday Review* summarized "Minnie Myrtle's" communication to the American press, and discussed it at length, with elaborate comparison of the classical case of Lord Byron. From this discussion the following extract will suffice for our purposes:

"The public, she holds [by her own act belying the contention], has nothing to do with Mr. Miller except as a poet, and has no right to sit in judgment on his conduct as a husband or father; and in the next place, poets are different from other people, and their lives must be judged, if at all, by a different standard. Mr. Miller, we are informed, 'felt that he was gifted, and his mind being of a fine, poetic structure, and his brain very delicately organized, the coarse and practical duties of providing for a family, and the annoyance of children, conflicted with his dreams and literary whims.' It had been for years his ambition to go to Europe and become famous. Time and money were of course necessary to his project, and when he wrote to his wife that he should be absent for five or six years, and that she must not expect to hear from him often, she thought it would be better to release him at once from domestic obligations. . . . Mrs. Miller assures us that she fully sympathized with her husband's projects, and that she believes them to be justified by their prac-

tical results. 'Mr. Miller,' she says, 'felt that he had gifts of the mind, and if his system of economy was rigid and hard to endure, it was at least a success; and if he needed all his money to carry out his plans, I am satisfied that he thus used it. . . . As we are both mortals, it would be affectation in me were I to profess to take upon myself all the blame, but I ask to bear my full share. . . . Good sometimes comes of evil. . . . Our separation and sorrows produced the poems of 'Myrrh' and 'Even So.'"

It was at about this point in his career that Miller proved the adage about a prophet in his own country.

And now perhaps he did seriously consider hiding his head for a time in Europe—hiding it in the Byronic fashion. From early in 1872 till 1875 "Childe" Miller wandered extensively, returning to Europe with a wide detour by way of South America and the Near East. From scattered references one gathers that he made acquaintance with the Emperor of Brazil, that he went down the Danube and up the Nile, saw Athens and Constantinople, visited Palestine, and was "in and about the tomb of buried empires and forgotten kings." These wanderings, impossible to trace in detail, were interrupted and punctuated by considerable periods of steady literary work, by visits to England, by a sojourn in Italy, and by publications—all of which can be dated with tolerable accuracy.

Beside the new edition of *Songs of the Sierras*, he published in 1873 the first reflection of these travels in *Songs of the Sun-Lands*. Of this, a reviewer in the *Athenæum* said, "Mr. Miller's muse in this, its second flight, has taken the same direction as in its first essay, but, upon the whole, we think, with a stronger wing." In the prelude to the first long poem in the book, Miller cries with fine bravado that "the passionate sun and the resolute sea" have been his masters, "and only these."¹ So far as the prosodical qualities of this collection are concerned, this announcement is

¹ This poem, "An Answer," he transferred in his collective edition to the end of the series called *The Ultimate West*.

amusing, because nowhere else in his work does he show himself so obviously the "sedulous ape" of his English contemporaries. The volume is dedicated to the Rossettis; in "Isles of the Amazons" he is affected by the stanza of "In Memoriam" and he also echoes Mrs. Browning; remembering the Rossetti dinner of 1871, he works on the theory that "a poem must be a picture," and he is everywhere studious of "alliteration and soft sounds"; finally in the Palestinian sequence called "Olive Leaves," the influence of Swinburne has quite transformed and disguised the sound of his voice:

With incense and myrrh and sweet spices,
 Frankincense and sacredest oil
 In ivory, chased with devices
 Cut quaint and in serpentine coil;
 Heads bared, and held down to the bosom;
 Brows massive with wisdom and bronzed;
 Beards white as the white may in blossom,
 And borne to the breast and beyond,—
 Came the Wise of the East, bending lowly
 On staffs, with their garments girt round
 With girdles of hair, to the Holy
 Child Christ, in their sandals.

Despite all this mimicry in the manner, the stuff in the *Songs of the Sun-Lands* is, in great measure, Miller's own. In "Isles of the Amazons" he considers himself as a scout of the imagination, a Kit Carson of poetry, who has carried his banner from Oregon and the Sierras to plant it in South American islands by a mighty unsung river. His hero, a singing warrior fleeing from strife to seek a Utopian peace and felicity, is once more a kind of self-projection. "From Sea to Sea" is a poetical reminiscence of a transcontinental journey by the new Pacific Railway. "By the Sun-Down Seas," which he later cut up into its constituent pictures, sings the glories of Oregon and the emigrants. In "Olive Leaves," his garland from Palestine, he begins a peculiarly Amer-

ican reappropriation of Christianity and an assimilation of it to his growing humanitarian sentiment. And "Fallen Leaves" are for the most part memories of the West. So that if he does not exhibit any very daring unconventionalities in form, he does employ his forms with a good deal of flexibility in imaginatively molding the raw stuff of American experience.

In 1873, also, Miller published in France and England the most original and the most poetical of all his books in prose, and, on the whole, perhaps the most interesting book that he ever produced, *Life Among the Modocs*, which circulated in translations, later editions, and abridgments, pirated or otherwise, under various titles—as *Unwritten History*, *Scenes de la vie des mineurs et des Indiens de California*, *Paquita*, *My Own Story*, and *My Life Among the Indians*. In 1872 and 1873 the Modoc Indians were attracting the attention of the public by their stubborn resistance to the government's attempt to move them from their old lands to a new reservation. In the course of this resistance their killing of two peace commissioners naturally excited popular indignation. But in Miller, instinctively sympathetic with the underdog, the last hopeless stand of this warlike tribe, which he had known in his boyhood, appealed strongly to the humanitarian sentiment, stirred up old memories, and aroused the imagination. He had, as we have seen, in at least one of his "campaigns" fought against them; but now as a poet and Utopian he is all on their side, he embraces their cause, he speaks from their point of view, he makes himself one of them.

In the introduction to the *Bear* edition he gives this brief account of the origin of the book: "Having met the Prince on a visit from Nicaragua at the time, he helped me to recall our life among the Modocs, adding such romance of his own as he chose." Elsewhere he acknowledges the collaboration of Prentice Mulford. How much is due to the influence of these collaborators, one cannot say; but there is a continuity of narrative and dramatic and idyllic interest in the tale, unequalled in Miller's other prose fic-

tion. The authors enter with genuine enthusiasm into the exhibition of the white man's inhumanity, the virtues of the "noble savage," the chivalry of the Prince, the heroic fidelity of Paquita, the yellow-haired poetic renegade and his dusky bride, and the romantic and melancholy charm of life on the forested slopes of Mt. Shasta. There is a wavering thread of autobiographical fact running through the romance; but the romance is here far more significant than the thread of fact; all that Miller, as a poetic dreamer, longed to have been, all that he could not be, inextricably fused with what he was, is here projected, beautifully, by his imagination. He so long encouraged the acceptance of the book as "history" that perhaps in his later years he actually lost the ability, never notable in him, to distinguish what he had done from what he had dreamed. In 1874 this book, with the title *Unwritten History: Life Among the Modocs*, was brought out in a subscription edition by the American Publishing Company, and in the advertising pages of this edition is third in a list beginning with Mark Twain's *The Gilded Age* and Josh Billings's *Everybody's Friend*.

In *Memorie And Rime*, Miller says that he returned to London in November, 1874, from his long wanderings in Europe. Apparently, however, he had returned to England in the preceding year, perhaps partly to enjoy the *réclame* of his two new books. In 1873, at any rate, he made his acquaintance with that poet and patron of the arts and great organizer of literary breakfasts, Lord Houghton. In Reid's *Life of Lord Houghton* little record remains of this friendship, except a letter of August 5, 1873, addressed to Gladstone, in which Miller is commended as "most interesting as poet and man, I have known and asked nothing as to his private life." Augustus Hare (*The Story of My Life*, vol. iv) makes a supercilious reference to the poet's appearance at one of these breakfasts: "Joaquin Miller would have been thought insufferably vulgar if he had not been a notoriety: as it was, every one paid court to him." But various letters and refer-

ences in Traubel's *With Walt Whitman in Camden* show that Miller returned Lord Houghton's courtesies in America, in 1875, and attempted to bring about a meeting between his English friend and Whitman. Furthermore Miller speaks of traveling with Lord Houghton in Greece; and in a note of the *Bear* edition (vol. iv., p. 154) he gives interesting hints at the sort of figure that he himself made in English country life:

“Born to the saddle and bred by a chain of events to ride with the wind until I met the stolid riders of England, I can now see how it was that Anthony Trollope, Lord Houghton and others of the saddle and ‘meet’ gave me ready place in their midst. . . . In all our hard riding I never had a scratch. One morning Trollope hinted that my immunity was due to my big Spanish saddle, which I had brought from Mexico City. I threw my saddle on the grass and rode without so much as a blanket. And I rode neck to neck; and then left them all behind and nearly every one unhorsed. Prince Napoleon was of the party that morning; and as the gentlemen pulled themselves together on the return he kept by my side, and finally proposed a tour through Notts and Sherwood Forest on horseback. And so it fell out that we rode together much.”

With so much cordiality manifesting itself abroad and so little at home, it is not strange that Miller, after this second visit to England, should have entertained for a time the notion of fixing his residence in a foreign land. It behooved him, furthermore, as a faithful follower of Lord Byron, to dwell in Italy. He says, with customary indefiniteness as to dates, that, in the footsteps of his hero, he “lived long enough at Genoa to find that his life there, along with the Shelleys, was simple, sincere, and clean. From Genoa I went to Florence, as the guest of our Consul General, Lorimer Graham. I wanted to live with Mr. Graham because he and his most amiable lady lived in the house occupied by Byron and the Shelleys, when they made their home in Florence. At Venice, under the guidance of Browning, who had left

Florence to live in this latter place, after the death of his gifted wife, I found only the same story of industry, sobriety and devotion to art." Charles Warren Stoddard gives a glimpse of Miller's secretive life in Rome, picturing him driving out with the "Pink Countess," and declares that Miller's Italian novel, *The One Fair Woman*, 1876, with its epigraphs from Byron, Browning, Swinburne, and Hay, "embodies" much of Miller's Roman life, and is "one of the truest tales he ever told." Additional light on this period is thrown by *Songs of Italy*, 1878, a collection manifestly produced under the influence of Browning. *The Ship in the Desert*, published in book form in 1875, is preceded by an eloquent prose inscription to his parents, dated August, 1874, at Lake Como. At about this time Miller bought some land near Naples and, in company with an English poet, meditated settling there; but malarial fever attacked them both, his friend died, and the Italian chapter of his life was ended.

In November, 1875, Miller dated at Chicago an introductory allegorical poem, prefixed to Mary Murdock Mason's little Italian novel *Mae Madden*, published in 1876. In the course of the next decade he roved widely, as was his wont, but this is, in general, the period of his experiments at living in eastern cities, including Boston, New York, and Washington, where he built himself a log cabin, and, in his frontier costume, became the picturesque publicity man for the "western school." Bret Harte and Mark Twain, now at the height of their production, were creating a lively demand for the tales of the pioneers; and Miller perhaps perceived that if he was to have his due profit of the popular interest he must renounce his Italian and Oriental inclinations and return to his native fields. In 1876, at any rate, he published *First Fam'lies of the Sierras*, a prose tale of the Forty-Niners, marked by that chivalric sentiment for women and by that idealization of the noble men in red shirts, which are distinctive "notes" of this literary movement. In *The Baroness of New York*, 1877, a long romantic medley in verse, he dismally

failed in his attempt to extend the adventures of his western heroine into the society of the metropolis. A presentation copy of this book, now in the possession of the University of Chicago, bears the author's own veracious comment that it "isn't worth a damn." Though he salvaged a portion of it in "The Sea of Fire," the original title disappeared from his collective edition. Soon after his return to America, he began to be visited by dramatic aspirations; and in 1881 he achieved considerable success with *The Danites in the Sierras*. The three other plays which he preserved—*Forty-Nine*, *Tally-Ho*, and *An Oregon Idyl*—are like *The Danites* in presenting incidents in the story of the frontier. In 1881, he published also *The Shadows of Shasta*, a prose tale anticipating Helen Hunt Jackson's *Ramona* in indignation at our treatment of the Indians. In 1884 falls the interesting but very fragmentary autobiographical miscellany called *Memorie And Rime*. With *The Destruction of Gotham*, 1886, a sensational novel of class-conflict in New York City, Miller somewhat significantly terminated his search for fortune and glory in the eastern states.

He had been a sentimental pilgrim in England, a poetic refugee in Italy, and a picturesque visitor—an ambassador from the Sierras—even in New York and Washington. Though he had enjoyed playing all these parts, perhaps by 1886 he felt that he and his public were beginning to lose their zest for one another. Furthermore he had now married again and at least entertained the thought of settling down. The loss of considerable money in Wall Street speculations had shaken his faith in "capitalistic society" and had weakened the Babylonian attractions of metropolitan life. He remembered the mountains and the seas of the West. He remembered also Sir Walter Scott's castle and estate at Abbotsford as a general model of the fashion in which a great poet should live. Mingled with these memories, in the background of his mind there was a curious accumulation of Utopian and Arcadian dreams which from his boyhood he had vaguely desired to realize. And so at last the prophet returned to his own

country, and entering upon a tract of land upon the hills looking over Oakland to San Francisco Bay, he built there a house for his wife which he called The Abbey (commemorating at once her name and Dryburgh and Newstead Abbeys), a second cottage for his old mother, a third "bower" for his daughter, and a little guest house for whatever visitor, white, black, or yellow, cared to occupy it. There, too, he planted thousands of trees in the shape of a gigantic cross, and beneath them on the crest of the hill he built for himself a funeral pyre of the rough cobble, and he erected three monuments of stone to three heroes: General Frémont, Robert Browning, and Moses.

Miller says that his choice of this retreat on the hills was determined by the relative cheapness of the land; but he was not a practical man, and he must soon have forgotten this practical consideration in the more characteristic reflection that The Hights was just the right setting for a man like him. His primary purpose there was not to follow any gainful occupation but to live as all poetic Utopians have held that a man should live, toiling a couple of hours each day at honest labor of the hands and devoting the rest of life to love, friendship, and art. The literary expression of his dream appears in *The Building of the City Beautiful*, 1893, a Utopian romance obviously related to the writings of Ruskin and William Morris but apparently inspired directly by Miller's conversations with a Jewish radical in Palestine. He had it in mind also to gather around him likeminded workers and friends, who should give to the world below them an illustration of the felicity in store for humanity when the base passions which now govern society are eradicated. Several young poets and artists came to him and tarried for a time in his guest house, moved by curiosity or the hopes of youth—among them several Japanese, including Yone Noguchi. And students from the University in Berkeley and travelers from remoter places made little pilgrimages up into the hills to visit this romantically costumed poet and seer who had fought with Indians and now

preached universal love and peace. To his disciples and lovers he lectured in a somewhat oracular tone on the laws of the new American poetry, on the conduct of life, and on the new religious spirit which is to embrace all mankind.

Miller's visitors did not always, however, find him preaching peace. His pacificism, like the popular American variety, was tempered by hatred of oppression and readiness to fight "on the side of the Lord." He accepted the "idealistic" interpretation of the Spanish-American war, and chanted lustily his encouragement of the struggle to free the Cubans from the tyranny of Spain. On the other hand, in his *Chants for the Boer*, 1900, he protested indignantly against the British imperial policy in South Africa; and his strong pro-English sympathies give a certain moral quality to his indignation. "Find here," he cries, "not one ill word for brave old England; my first, best friends were English. But for her policy, her politicians, her speculators, what man with a heart in him can but hate and abhor these? England's best friends to-day are those who deplore this assault on the farmer Boers, so like ourselves a century back."

There was an interesting element of inconsistency between the popular American humanitarianism which Miller had gradually adopted as his religion and his strongest poetical impulses, which were adventurous and imperialistic. In these later years the fire of his fighting youth slumbered in the veins of the white-bearded seer, but it was never extinguished, and, every now and then, it flashed out. In such seasons pilgrims to The Hights found that he was not at home. He was a restless soul—like most Utopists, ill adapted to the permanency of a Paradise. There was, moreover, a steadily disquieting feature in the prospect from his hills. At his feet, the great ships rode at anchor. But before his eyes daily they lifted anchor and spread their wings and sailed away, out through the shining Golden Gate into the Pacific, and disappeared on pathless ways over the rim of the world. For him, even at the age of sixty, the attraction of unknown places

was magical. He followed "the gleam" to the islands of the South Seas, to Japan, to Alaska. In 1897-8 he was correspondent of the *New York Journal* in the Klondike. Trying to pass from the Klondike to the Bering Sea by way of the Yukon, he finds the river closed at the edge of the Arctic Circle. "It was nearly two thousand miles to the sea, all ice and snow, with not so much as a dog-track before me and only midnight round about me. There was nothing to do but to try to get back to my cabin on the Klondike. In the line of my employment I kept a journal of the solitary seventy-two days and nights—mostly night—spent in the silent and terrible ascent of the savage sea of ice." The imaginative harvest of these later adventures was first gathered up in *As It Was in the Beginning*, 1903, a curious poetical fantasy, oddly brought forth in San Francisco in pamphlet form with a cover decorated by a figure of a stork bearing in his bill the infant Roosevelt in spectacles. In 1907, worked over and shorn of its more grotesque features, the poem reappeared in dignified form as *Light*, with the interesting prefatory avowal: "My aspiration is and ever has been, in my dim and uncertain way, to be a sort of Columbus—or Cortez." (In the collective edition the title is changed once more to *A Song of Creation*.)

When Miller finally reviewed his own work and prepared his collective edition, he saw that much of his verse had been hastily written, journalistic, prolix, lacking in form and concentration; and he manfully discarded many long passages of it. At the same time he felt as never before the importance of his own position in American poetry. He had not really achieved a distinctive poetical style. He had not been a thinker. He had been a pathfinder of the imagination; like Whitman, he had blazed a way into new territories. He had brought something of beauty and splendor into American literature. He exulted in the wide lands and seas which he first had annexed to the provinces of song. He had sung the exodus across the plains. He had pictured the great American desert. He had celebrated the forested heights of the

Sierras, the giant trees of the Mariposa Grove, and the falls of the Yosemite. He had been a myth-maker and had sown with poetic legends all his western land from the Yukon and the snowy peaks of Mt. Rainier and Mt. Shasta through the golden poppy fields of the central valleys to San Diego Bay, Nicaragua, and the Amazon River. He had made captive for romance the outlaws of old Spanish California, the priests and bandits of Mexico, the scouts of Frémont, dusky Indian heroines, and the motley multitude of the gold-seekers. He had been the champion of oppressed peoples—the Southern Confederacy, the native American tribes, the Jews of Russia and Palestine, the Cubans, the Boers, the yellow men and the Mexicans in California. And then, to widen his horizon at sunset, he had threaded the golden straits and had sailed “on and on” to the Arctic Seas, to Hawaii, to the Orient, chanting as he sailed, ever ready for fresh adventure, ever in love with light, color, and movement, ever himself the romantic troubadour, the picturesque incarnation of the spirit which pervades his poems.

WHEN LITTLE SISTER CAME

WHEN LITTLE SISTER CAME

We dwelt in the woods of the Tippe-
canoe,
In a lone, lost cabin, with never a
view
Of the full day's sun for a whole year
through.
With strange half hints through the
russet corn
We three were hurried one night.
Next morn
There was frost on the trees, and a
sprinkle of snow
And tracks on the ground. We
burst through the door,
And a girl baby cried—and then we
were four.

We were not sturdy, and we were not
wise,
In the things of the world, and the
ways men dare;
A pale-browed mother with a
prophet's eyes,
A father that dreamed and looked
anywhere,
Three brothers—wild blossoms, tall
fashioned as men
And we mingled with none, but we
lived as when
The pair first lived, ere they knew the
fall;
And loving all things we believed in
all.

FROM *JOAQUIN, ET AL.*, 1869

IS IT WORTH WHILE?

Is it worth while that we jostle a
brother

Bearing his load on the rough road
of life?

Is it worth while that we jeer at each
other

In blackness of heart?—that we
war to the knife?

God pity us all in our pitiful strife.

God pity us all as we jostle each
other;

God pardon us all for the triumphs
we feel

When a fellow goes down 'neath his
load on the heather,

Pierced to the heart: words are
keener than steel,

And mightier far for woe or for weal.

Were it not well in this brief little
journey

Over the isthmus down into the tide,

We give him a fish instead of a ser-
pent

Ere folding hands to be and abide

For ever and aye in dust at his side?

Look at the roses saluting each other;

Look at the herds all at peace on
the plain—

Man, and man only, makes war on
his brother,

And dotes in his heart on his peril
and pain—

Shamed by the brutes that go down
on the plain.

Is it worth while we should in the
dust humble

Our fellows with whispers of guile
and mistrust?

God pity us all! Time eft-soon will
tumble

All of us together like leaves in a
gust,

Humbled indeed, down into the
dust.

Why should we envy a moment of
pleasure

Some poor fellow-mortal has wrung
from it all?

Oh! could you look into his life's
broken measure—

Look at the dregs—at the worm-
wood and gall—

Look at his heart hung with crape
like a pall—

Look at the skeletons down by his
hearthstone—

Look at his cares in their merciless
sway,

I know you would go and say ten-
derly lowly,

Brother—my brother, for aye and
for aye,

Lo! Lethe is washing the blackness
away.

ZANARA

No! It was not well, Zanara,
 While the fever held its riot—
 When the doctors bid be quiet—
 That you came to my bed-side
 In the middle of the night,
 With your two hands on your heart—
 That you pressed on my bed-side
 In the absence of my bride,
 And so pressed upon your heart
 That the blood all thick and black-
 ened,
 When your long white fingers slack-
 ened,
 Oozed between them to the floor.
 Oh! This mouldy, gory floor!

Then your linen it was moulded,
 And streaked yellow where it folded,
 And your bosom it was bare,
 Which you know was nothing fair
 In the absence of my bride,
 Then your heavy, slimy hair,
 Creeping, clinging round your
 bosom—
 Clammy bosom, blue and bare,
 Which you did not try to hide.

Then your eyes had such a glare,
 And the smell of death was there,
 And the spirits that were with you
 Whistled through the mossy door,
 And they danced upon my bosom,
 And they tangled up my hair,
 And made crosses on the floor.
 No! All this was nothing fair

While the fever held its riot—
 When the doctors bid be quiet.

It was not my fault, remember,
 All this life of black disasters—
 All this life of dark December—
 All this heart-sickness and sadness,
 Though we both did have our mas-
 ters,
 Yours was Love and mine Ambition—
 Mine is driving me to—madness,
 Yours has drove you to perdition.

But some time, if you so will it,
 When this hot brain is less rabid—
 When our masters both are sleeping—
 When the storm the stars is keeping,
 Leave the darkness where they laid
 you—

Leave the dampness you inhabit—
 Leave that yellow, moulded linen—
 That dull, sullen, frozen stare,
 And the cold death in your hair;
 Then I will no more upbraid you.
 I will meet you just one minute
 By the oak-tree, you remember,
 With the grape-vine tangled in it—
 Meet you, while my bride is sleep-
 ing—

While the storm the stars is keeping.
 I will press your bosom gory—
 I will tell you one sweet story,
 With sweet balm and healing in it.
 But remember, now remember,
 I can stay there but one minute.

IN EXILE

Alone on this desolate border—

On this ruggedest, rim'd frontier,
Where the hills huddle up in disorder
Like a fold in mortal fear—

Where the mountains are out at the
elbow,

And their yellow coats seedy and
sere—

Where the river runs sullen and yellow
This dismalest day of the year.

I go up and down on the granite,
Like an unholy ghost under bans.

Oh, Christ! for the eloquent quiet!

For the final folding of hands!

What am I? Where am I going?

I look at the lizard that glides

Over the mossy boulder

With green epaulets on his sides.

My feet are in dust to the ankles,

My heart, it is dustier still;

Will never the dust be levelled

Till the heart is laid under the hill?

Why this yearning and longing?

This dull desolation and void?

Pussy cat seeking a corner?

Alone! yet for ever annoyed?

I look at the sun shining over,

A cloud is swinging on hinges

And is trying his glory to cover.

But see! his beams in the fringes

Are tangled and fastened in falling,

And a sailor above us is calling

“Untangle the ravels and fringes.”

In grim battle lines above us

Gray, oarless ships are wheeling—

A flash—a crash appalling—

A hurling of red-hot spears—

Hark to the thunder calling
In fierce infernal chorus.

Now silver sails are falling
Like silver sheens before us.

What Nelson to fame aspires
In the chartless bluer deep

Where navies and armies track?

Lo! I have seen their fires

At night as they bivouac;

And they battle, and bleed, and weep,

For this rain is warm as tears.

Oh! why was I ever a dreamer?

Better a brute on the plain,

Or one who believes his redeemer

Is greed, and gold, and gain,

Or one who can riot and revel,

Than be pierced with intolerable
pain

Of poesy darling, in travail,

That will not be born from the brain.

O bride by the breathing ocean

With lustrous and brimming eye,

Pour out the Lethean potion

Till a lustrum rolleth by,

Lulling a soul's commotion,

Plashing against the sky—

Calming a living spectre

With its two hands tossed on high.

Are sea winds mild and mellow

Where my sun-browned babies are,

A-weaving silk and yellow

Seamed sunbeams in their hair?

Go on and on in disorder

O cloud with the silver rim,

While tangled up in your border

The glinting sunbeams swim.

TO THE BARDS OF S. F. BAY

I am as one unlearned, uncouth,
 From country come to join the
 youth
 Of some sweet town in quest of truth;
 A skillless northern Nazarene—
 From whence no good can ever come.
 I stand apart as one that's dumb.
 I hope—I fear—I hasten home.
 I plunge into my wilds again.

I catch your dulcet symphonies,
 I drink the low sweet melodies
 That stream through these dark
 feathered trees
 Like echoes from some far church-
 bell,
 Or music on the water spilled
 Beneath the still moon's holy spell,
 And life is sweeter—all is well—
 The soul is fed. The heart is filled.

I move among these frowning firs,
 Black bats wheel by in rippled whirs,
 While naught else living breathes or
 stirs.
 I peep—I lift the boughs apart—

I tiptoe up—I try to rise—
 I strive to gaze into the eyes
 Of charmers charming thus so wise—
 I coin your faces on my heart.

I greet you on your brown bent hills
 Discoursing with the beaded rills,
 While over all the full moon spills
 His flood in gorgeous plenilune.
 White skilful hands sweep o'er the
 strings,
 I heed as when a seraph sings,
 I learn to catch the whisperings,
 I list into the night's sweet noon.

I see you by the streaming strand,
 A singing sea-shell in each hand,
 And silk locks tossing as you stand,
 And tangled in the toying breeze.
 And lo! the sea with salty tears,
 While white hands toss, then disap-
 pear,
 Doth plead that you for years and
 years
 Will stay and sing unto the seas.

MERINDA

And this then is all of the sweet life
 she promised!
 And this then is all of the fair life I
 painted!
 Dead, ashen fruit, of the dark Dead
 Sea border!
 Ah yes, and worse by a thousand
 numbers,
 Since that can be cast away at willing,

While desolate life with its dead hope
 buried
 Clings on to the clay, though the
 soul despise it.

Back, backward, to-night, is memory
 traversing,
 Over the desert my weary feet
 travelled—

Thick with the wrecks of my dear
heart-idols—
And toppling columns of my ambi-
tion—
Red with the best of my hot heart's
purple.

Down under the hill and under the
fir-tree,
By the spring, and looking far out in
the valley,
She stands as she stood in the glori-
ous Olden,
Swinging her hat in her right hand
dimpled.
The other hand toys with a honey-
suckle
That has tiptoed up and tried to kiss
her.
Her dark hair is twining her neck and
her temples
Like tendrils some beautiful Parian
marble.

'O eyes of lustre and love and passion!
O radiant face with the sea-shell
tinted!
White cloud with the sunbeams
tangled in it!'
I cried, as I stood in the dust beneath
her,
And gazed on the God my boy-heart
worshipped
With a love and a passion a part of
madness.
'Dreamer,' she said, and a tinge of
displeasure
Swept over her face that I should dis-
turb her,
'All of the fair world is spread out
before you;

Go down and possess it, with love
and devotion,
And heart ever tender and touching
as woman's,
And life shall be sweet as the first
kiss of morning.'

I turned down the pathway, blinded
no longer;
Another was coming, tall, manly,
and bearded.
I built me a shrine in the innermost
temple—
In the innermost rim of the red puls-
ing heart
And placed her therein, sole pos-
sessor and priestess,
And carved all her words on the walls
of my heart.

They say that he wooed her there
under the fir-tree
And won her one eve, when the katy-
dids mocked her.
Well, he may have a maiden and call
her Merinda;
But mine is the one that stands there
for ever
Leisurely swinging her hat by the
ribbons.

They say she is wedded. No, not my
Merinda,
For mine stands for ever there under
the fir-tree
Gazing and swinging her hat by the
ribbons.
They tell me her children reach up to
my shoulder.
'Tis false. I did see her down under
the fir-tree

When the stars were all busy a-weav-
ing thin laces

Out of their gold and the moon's
yellow tresses,

Swinging her hat as in days of the
Olden.

True, I didn't speak to or venture to
touch her—

Touch her! I sooner would pluck the
sweet Mary,

The mother of Jesus, from arms of
the priesthood

As they kneel at the altar in holy
devotion.

And was it for this that my heart was
kept tender?

Fashioned for thine, O sacristan
maiden!—

That coarse men could pierce my
warm heart to the purple?

That vandals could enter and burn
out its freshness?

That rude man could trample it into
the ashes?

O was it for this that my heart was
kept open?

I looked in a glass, not the heart of
man-mortal.

Whose was the white soul I seen there
reflecting?

But trample the grape that the wine
may flow freely!

Beautiful priestess, mine, mine only,
for ever!

You still are secure. They know not
your temple.

They never can find it, or pierce it, or
touch it,

Because in their hearts they know no
such a temple.

I turn my back on them like Enos the
Trojan.

Much indeed leaving in wild desola-
tion,

But bearing one treasure alone that
is dearer

Than all they possess or have fiercely
torn from me;

A maiden that stands looking far
far down the valley

Swinging her hat by its long purple
ribbons.

NEPENTHE

I have a world, a world which is all
my own,

Which you, nor foe, nor friend, nor
kith, nor kin,

Nor even my own fiery soul, when
churlish grown,

Has entered, or shall ever pass
therein;

But when all of care and strife aside
are thrown

And I am free, then I am there, and
am not alone.

No, not alone, for standing there in-
viting me

On the threshold is God's image
made of pearl,

And I relive the elden time with
that purity—

There with a queenly shrined and
sainted girl,
I press the green beneath the ancient
tree,
And vow the vows and redream the
mystery.

What though the real did happen
years ago!

What though our lives are wide,
and still diverge?
And both of us are wed? Admit it's
so.

Then sitting here to-night, will
you, sir, urge
We dare not live that past in all its
glorious glow?

Well! you may be good, but there
are things you do not know.

To-day I fight the manly pitted fight
of life,
I give back deftly hard dealt blow
for blow,

To-day is she the mother and the
patient wife,
Taking life a fact from fates that
made it so;

But lo! to-night I quit the struggling
strife,
She is young again, heart-full, and
lips are rife.

The long tilled turf is rich again and
green—
The long felled oak extends its
hugest bough,

And we are there as lang syne we have
been,
Giving troth for troth, and plighting
vow for vow—

Holy vows for aye upon that belted
green,
Where no gray ghosts dare thrust
themselves between.

Yet in the morn, amid the reckless
rush of life,
First in the duties and foremost in
the scene,

She, the fond mother and most loyal
wife—
She the peerless of all that's goodly
will be seen;

And girded, I shall marshal for the
strife
Without a thought of the glorious
'might have been.'

And you do star-ward point and bid
me twine
The hopes and promise round the
crumbling heart.

Well, I have tried, wept and watched
to read the sign,
But heaven, my friend,—nay, now,
do not start—

But heaven—my heaven at least, is in
that sweet lang syne—
There in that world so solely and so
completely mine.

UNDER THE OAKS

Oaks of the voiceless ages!
 Precepts! Poems! Pages!
 Lessons! Leaves and volumes!
 Arches! Pillars! Columns
 In the corridors of ages!
 Grand patriarchal sages!

Their Druid beards are drifting
 And shifting to and fro,
 Down to their waists in zephyrs,
 That bat-like come and go;
 The while the moon is sifting
 A sheen of shining snow
 On all these blossoms lifting
 Their blue eyes from below.

The night has cast his mantle
 Down on the day's remains;
 For he lies dead before us.
 I seen his red blood stains
 At twilight drifting o'er us
 And these oaks chant above him
 In stately, solemn strains,

For ah! these Druids love him,
 That knightly day that's slain,
 And they will robe in sable
 Till he shall rise again.

I have no tears or sighing,
 For he was not kind to me—
 This dead day here before us,
 O mossy Druid tree
 With dark brow bending o'er us!
 He was not kind to me,
 I will not wail his dying.

No. It is not green leaves rustling
 That you hear lispings there,
 But bearded, mossy Druids
 Counting beads in prayer.
 No. Not a night-bird singing,
 Nor breeze a green bough swinging:
 But that bough holds a censer
 And swings it to and fro;
 'Tis Sunday eve, remember,
 That's why they chant so low.

DIRGE

'The silver cord loosed,
 The golden bowl broken,'
 The sunbeam has fallen,
 The Saviour has spoken.

The yew and the cypress,
 By Lethe's dark tide,
 Are sweeping to-day—
 A miner has died!

'The white sands have crumbled
 Away from his tread,'

By eternity's ocean—
 A miner is dead!

His lamp has gone out;
 What else can be done
 Than lay him to sleep
 Till the light of the sun?

Pine slabs! what of it?
 Marble is dust,
 Cold and as silent—
 And iron is rust.

VALE

To those who have known my mad
life's troubles

I leave these lines—'tis all I have to
leave

Save faults and follies; the dreams
and bubbles

Of my young life; and O I grieve
In tears of blood I could not
worthier weave.

True, 'tis a farewell piece but poorly
spoken,

It is an adieu song but harshly
sung;

For the heart beats dull and the
harp is broken,

And the hand that o'er the keys is
flung

Is nerveless now, and the chords
unstrung.

The round red sun is set for me for
ever,

And nebulous darkness is rolling
from afar;

And I stand adown by death's dark
river

Calmly and alone, for the thoughts
that war

Have died, or dimly burn, as you
sweet star.

'Tis well I stand by the rushing river,
Up to my knees in the blackened
tide;

The sounding waters will drown for
ever

The critic's jeers and paynim
pride,—

And reviews are not ferried to the
other side.

So life is but a day of weary fretting
As a sickly babe for its mother gone;
And I fold my hands, only this
regretting:

That I have writ no thought, or
thing, not one,

That lives, or earns a cross or
cryptic stone.

ULTIME

They tell me, ere the maple leaves
grow brown once more,

And the wild deer don their great
overcoats of gray,

That I must cross the stony threshold
of death's door,

And leave this body like a pair of
overalls worn a day

Outside the hall, or hung on some
nail out of the way.

It seems odd, and yet I think, yea do
know, I do feel

As little fear as any trodden dust, or
dull cold clay,

To hear my Doc., Death's clerk, and
attorney for my weal,

Say I am convicted and that there
is no appeal.

Yet, while I have no fear, I feel a
touch of deep regret—

Regrets that burn like red-hot iron
in the soul,

That my day is but begun as my sun
is set.

But there was that in my young
life I could not control,

And now, to-night, as recollections
o'er me roll,

I know no time that I loitered by the
way;

But with a proud eye fixed on a
lofty goal,

Pressed on, nor stopped, or turned
aside a single day

To rest, or toy with aught that in my
rough route lay.

And yet one time, but one, I do
remember well,

My life's way lay by oaks, and
talking streams, and flowers;

And there were birds, and singing
bees, and a holy spell

Of dreamy wonder in the air and
hallowed hours;

And from afar fair maids did
beckon from their bowers.

I looked and loved. But lo! the
leprous stain

Of penury, that so much of life's
sweetness sours,

Was mine, and I pushed on in peril
and deep pain,

Saying, Sweet scenes, when fame is
mine we meet again.

Toiling for ever, chasing a phantom
hope to earn

A place with men of mind and a
moment's peace;

With the fevered soul on fire with
thoughts that burn;

And revelling in rainbow beauties
that I could not seize,

Or subdue, or reduce to shape or
words; and these

Did unfit me for the stormy struggle
with the real.

Vibrating like some insect pendent
in the breeze

Between these varied visions and my
worldly weal

I have gained neither the real nor the
sweet ideal.

Quoting Seneea, who wrote on his
desk of gold:

Dear sir! what is the use of wealth?
you naively say.

Sir! in your life's craft with its well
stocked hold,

Your money is the white oak planks
that lay

Between you and the howling
waves; these away,

And you are in the sea without
friends or a pretence,

Then keep your head above the
water if you may.

Besides, the days of Diogenes are
over now, and hence

Philosophers in tubs are kept at
the State's expense.

.

None have known me, nor have I my-
self the least part known

Until prisoned here by him of the
sable shore

Till he can transport me to quarters
of his own.

Here I have reflected and ran my
fierce life o'er.

Ah! truly, much indeed have I to deplore,
 Yet not one single act of malicious ill.
 I meant well in all. Who could have done more?
 And have I not tamed my hot and imperious will?
 Have I not made my impulsive heart be still? so still!

Why have I been pursued in this small, low way;
 Why have I been crossed in my every honest aim;
 From my childhood on, even down to this dark day?
 I claimed not much of men, and less, far less, of fame.
 Was it because I could not, or that I would not, tame
 And tone my cloud-born soul in suppliance to bow
 Me down to dolts, and knaves, and clowns, that did proclaim
 Them wise, and great, and good?
 Ah! even yet I trow
 My spirit lives. I would not, could not, I will not now.

'Know thyself!' What had I to do with strife and war?
 I smote, then held him to my heart and wept until he died.
 And did I fear? this deep facial arrow's scar,
 And a list of lesser ones have aye the thought belied,
 And yet I do remember me I have turned aside
 To avoid the hart I had sought the whole day long.

And why in stormy courts have I so zealous plied,
 And plead, dark-browed, and hurled invective strong,
 Then wept at night to think I might have done some wrong?

'Know thyself!' Had I known less of strife and flint-like men—
 Had I been content to live on the leafy borders of the scene
 Communing with the neglected dwellers of the fern-grown glen,
 And glorious storm-stained peaks, with cloud-knit sheen,
 And sullen iron brows, and belts of boundless green,
 A peaceful, flowery path, content, I might have trod,
 And carolled melodies that perchance might have been
 Read with love and a sweet delight.
 But I kiss the rod.
 I have done as best I knew. The rest is with my God.

Come forward here to me, ye who have a fear of death,
 Come down, far down, even to the dark waves' rim,
 And take my hand, and feel my calm, low breath
 How peaceful all! How still and sweet! The sight is dim,
 And dreamy as a distant sea. And melodies do swim
 Around us here as a far-off vesper's holy hymn.
 This is death. With folded hands I wait and welcome him;

And yet a few, so few, were kind, I
 would live and be known,
 That their sweet deeds might be
 bread on the waters thrown.

I go, I know not where, but know I
 will not die,
 And know I will be gainer going to
 that somewhere;
 For in that hereafter, afar beyond
 the bended sky,
 Bread and butter will not figure in
 the bill of fare,
 Nor will the soul be judged by
 what the flesh may wear.
 But with all my time my own, once
 in the dapple skies,
 I will collect my fancies now float-
 ing in the air
 And arrange them, a jewel set, that
 in a show-case lies
 And when you come will show you
 them in a sweet surprise.

It was my boy-ambition to be read
 beyond the brine,
 But this you know was when life
 looked fair and tall,
 Erewhile this occidental rim was my
 dream's confine,
 And now at last I make no claim
 to be read at all,
 And write with this wild hope, and
 e'en that is small,
 That when the last pick-axe lies rust-
 ing in the ravine,
 And its green bent hill-sides echo
 the shepherd's call,
 Some curious wight will thumb this
 through, saying, 'Well, I ween

He was not a poet, but yet, and yet,
 he might have been.'

Above all on this green earth a
 grumbler I do despise,
 Pouring o'er all a sea of tears and
 untimely groans,
 As if he alone had stood upon the
 bridge of sighs;
 And yet I wail. But mind you my
 murmurs and low moans,
 (Not heard till I am gone) are not
 of you, or Smith, or Jones,
 But fate. Good folks. The world
 the best I ever trod.
 Yet lapidaries tell of flaws in the
 fairest stones,
 And maybe after all, my crosses, my
 losses, and the rod,
 Are but rounds in a ladder leading me
 thus soon to God.

But to conclude. Do not stick me
 down in the cold wet mud,
 As if I wished to hide, or was
 ashamed of what I had done,
 Or my friends wanted to plant me
 like an Irish spud.
 No, when this the first short
 quarter of my life is run,
 Let me ascend in clouds of smoke
 up to the sun.
 And as for these lines, they are a
 rough, wild-wood bouquet,
 Plucked from my mountains in the
 dusk of life, as one
 Without taste or time to select, or
 put in good array
 Grasps at once rose, leaf, briar, on the
 brink, and hastes away.

SONGS OF THE SIERRAS, 1871

TO MAUD

Because the skies were blue, because
The sun in fringes of the sea
Was tangled, and delightfully
Kept dancing on as in a waltz,
And tropic trees bowed to the seas
And bloomed and bore years through
and through,
And birds in blended gold and blue
Were thick and sweet as swarming
bees,
And sang as if in Paradise
And all that Paradise was spring—
Did I too sing with lifted eyes,
Because I could not choose but sing.

With garments full of sea winds blown
From isles beyond of spice and balm,
Beside the sea, beneath her palm,
She waits, as true as chiseled stone,
My childhood's child, my June in
May,

So wiser than thy father is,
These lines, these leaves, and all of
this
Are thine—a loose, uncouth bouquet—
So, wait and watch for sail or sign,
A ship shall mount the hollow seas
Blown to thy place of blossomed trees,
And birds, and song, and summer-
shine.

I throw a kiss across the sea,
I drink the winds as drinking wine,
And dream they are all blown from
thee—
I catch the whispered kiss of thine.
Shall I return with lifted face,
Or head held down as in disgrace
To hold thy two brown hands in
mine?

England, 1871

WALKER IN NICARAGUA

CHANT I

I

*That man who lives for self alone
Lives for the meanest mortal known.*

I celebrate no man of strife,
I eat no bread with blood upon.

'Twere braver far to live unknown,
To live alone and die alone
Than owe sweet song, aye owe sweet
life,
Or sweeter fame, to saber drawn.

II

Wreathe ye who may the victor's
bay,

Fill book on book with battles, then
 Fill every public park you may
 With iron-fashioned fighting men
 Begirt with blade and cannon ball,
 With not one woman's plinth mid all.

But she who rocks the cradle, she
 Who croons and rocks all day, all
 night,
 And knows no public place or name
 Makes far the better, braver fight,
 Deserves a nobler, fairer fame
 Than all bronze men of historie.

The foot that rocks the babe to
 rest
 Keeps step, keeps song with singing
 dawn.
 The hand that holds the babe to
 breast
 Is sceptered as King Solomon.
 And yet, for all she does, has done,
 Has not one monument, not one!

III

And he who guides the good plow-
 share,
 Binds golden sheaves, unnamed,
 unknown,
 Who harvests what his hand hath
 sown,
 Does more for God, for man, his
 own—
 Dares more than all mad heroes dare.

IV

And like to him the man who
 keeps
 Calm watch on Freedom's outer wall,

Who sees the great moon rise and fall
 Yet sleeps and rests and rests and
 sleeps—

The man who knows, the man who
 sees

God in the grass, God in the trees,
 Sees good in all, sees God in all—
 Gets more, gives more, does more
 true weal

Than all your storied men of steel.

V

But nobler still the man who leads
 Far out the deadly firing line
 To hew the way, subdue, refine
 By dauntless and unselfish deeds;
 Who lays aside his student's book
 And gathers up his knotted thews
 And, facing westward, hews and hews
 The way for plowshare, pruning hook
 And scarce recks if he win or lose;
 Who sees white duty over all,
 Fair duty, halo-topt and tall,
 Far pointing where his pathway lies,
 And dares not falter, rest, repine,
 But forward, forward, wins and—
 dies.

VI

I sing this man who sought man's
 good,
 Who fought for peace, unselfish
 fought,
 Who silent fell and murmured not,
 This man whom no man understood,
 This great man so well-nigh forgot,
 This man who led, who faltered not,
 This student, soldier, president,

Who chose the weaker side and sent
Such spirit through his fearless few
As only Khartoum Gordon knew.

VII

I sing those children of the sun
Because I love them and because
I would that you should love them,
 too,
As tenderly as he had done
Ere Fate laid her cold finger to
His bounding pulse and bade him
 pause.

VIII

A man to love, a land to love;
A land of gold, of sapphire seas,
Such blue below, such blue above,
Such fruits and ever-flowered trees—
The fairest Eden-land that is,
And I am joyed that it is his;
He won it, holds, with dust-full
 hands—
This soldier born, born and not made,
Who scorned to make rude war a
 trade.

IX

A soldier born, let this be said
Above my brave, dishonored dead;
I ask no more, this is not much,
Yet I disdain a colder touch
To memory as dear as his;
For he was true as steel, or star,
And brave as Yuba's grizzlies are,
Yet gentle as a panther is

Mouthing her young in her first
fierce kiss.

X

A dash of sadness in his air,
Born, may be, of his over care,
And may be, born of a despair
In early love—I never knew;
I question not, as many do,
Of things as sacred as this is;
I only know that he to me
Was all a father, friend, could be;
I sought to know no more than this
Of history of him or his.

A piercing eye, a princely air,
A presence like a chevalier,
Half angel and half Lucifer;
Sombrero black, with plume of snow
That swept his careless locks below;
A red serape with bars of gold,
All heedless falling, fold on fold,
A sash of silk, where flashing swung
A sword as swift as serpent's tongue,
In sheath of silver chased in gold;
Great Spanish spurs with bells of
 steel
That dash'd and dangled at the heel;
A face of blended pride and pain,
Of mingled pleading and disdain,
With shades of glory and of grief—
The famous filibuster chief
Stood front his men among the trees
That top the fierce Cordilleras,
With bent arm arched above his
 brow;—
Stood still, he stands, a picture,
 now—
Long gazing down his inland seas.

XI

What strange, strong, bearded
men were these
He led above his tropic seas!
Men sometimes of uncommon birth,
Men rich in stories all untold,
Who boasted not, though more than
bold,
Blown from the four parts of the
earth.
Men mighty-thewed, as Sampson
was,
That had been kings in any cause,
A remnant of the races past;
Dark-browed, as if in iron cast,
Broad-breasted as twin gates of
brass,—
Men strangely brave and fiercely
true,
Who dared the West when giants
were,
Who erred, yet bravely dared to err—
A remnant of that dauntless few
Who held no crime or curse or vice
As dark as that of cowardice;
With blendings of the worst and best
Of faults and virtues that have blest
Or cursed or thrilled the human
breast.

XII

They rode, a troop of bearded men,
Rode two and two out from the town,
And some were blonde and some were
brown,
And all as brave as Sioux; but when
From warlike Leon south, the line
That bound them in the laws of man

Was passed, and peace stood mute
behind
And streamed a banner to the wind
The world knew not, there was a
sign
Of awe, of silence, rear and van.

XIII

Men thought who scarce had
thought before;
I heard the clang and clash of steel
From sword at hand and spur at heel
And iron feet, but nothing more.

XIV

Some thought of Texas, some of
Maine,
But one of wood-set Tennessee.
And one of Avon thought, and one
Thought of an isle beneath the sun,
And one, a dusky son of Spain,
Soft hummed his señorita's air,

Half laughed, shook back his heavy
hair
And then—he would not think again,
And one of Wabash thought, and he
Thought tenderly, thought tearfully;
And one turned sadly to the Spree.

XV

Defeat meant something more than
death;
The world was ready, keen to smite,
As stern and still beneath its ban
With iron will and bated breath,
Their hands against their fellow-man,
They rode—each man an Ishmaelite.

XVI

But when we topped the hills of
 pine,
 These men dismounted, doffed their
 cares,
 Talk'd loud and laugh'd old love
 affairs,
 And on the grass took meat and wine,
 And never gave a thought again
 To land or life that lay behind,
 Or love, or care of any kind
 Beyond the present cross or pain.

XVII

And I, a waif of stormy seas,
 A child among such men as these,
 Was blown along this savage surf
 And rested with them on the turf,
 And took delight below the trees.

XVIII

I did not question, did not care
 To know the right or wrong. I saw
 That savage freedom had a spell,
 And loved it more than word can tell.
 I snapped my fingers at the law,
 And dared to laugh, and laughed to
 dare.

XIX

I bear my burden of the shame,—
 I shun it not, and naught forget,
 However much I may regret;
 I claim some candor to my name,
 And courage cannot change or die,—
 Did they deserve to die? they died!
 Let justice then be satisfied,
 And as for me, why, what am I?

XX

The standing side by side till death,
 The dying for some wounded friend,
 The faith that failed not to the end,
 The strong endurance till the breath
 And body took their ways apart,
 I only know. I keep my trust.
 Their vices! earth has them by heart:
 Their virtues! they are with the dust.

XXI

How we descended, troop on troop,
 As wide-winged eagles downward
 swoop!
 How wound we through the fragrant
 wood,
 With all its broad boughs hung in
 green,
 With sweeping mosses trailed be-
 tween!
 How waked the spotted beasts of
 prey,
 Deep sleeping from the face of day,
 And dashed them, like a dashing
 flood,
 Down deep defile and densest wood!

XXII

What snakes! long, lithe and beau-
 tiful
 As green and graceful boughed
 bamboo.
 How they did twine them through
 and through
 Green boughs that hung red-fruited
 full!
 One, monster-sized, above me hung,

Close eyed me with his bright pink
 eyes,
 Then raised his folds, and swayed
 and swung,
 And licked like lightning his red
 tongue,
 Then oped his wide mouth with
 surprise;
 He writhed and curved and raised
 and lowered
 His folds, like liftings of the tide,
 Then sank so low I touched his side,
 As I rode by, with my boy's sword.
 The trees shook hands high overhead,
 And bowed and intertwined across
 The narrow way, while leaves and
 moss
 And luscious fruit, gold-hued and red,
 Through all the canopy of green,
 Let not one sun-shaft shoot between.

XXIII

Birds hung and swung, green-robed
 and red,
 Or drooped in curved lines dreamily,
 Rainbows reversed, from tree to tree,
 Or sang low hanging overhead—
 Sang low, as if they sang and slept,
 Sang faint like some far waterfall,
 And took no note of us at all,
 Though nuts that in the way were
 spread
 Did crash and crackle where we stepped.

XXIV

Wild lilies, tall as maidens are,
 As sweet of breath, as purely fair,
 As fair as faith, as true as truth,
 Fell thick before our iron tread,

In fragrant sacrifice of ruth.
 Rich ripened fruit a fragrance shed
 And hung in hand-reach overhead,
 In nest of blossoms on the shoot,
 The very shoot that bore the fruit.

XXV

How ran lithe monkeys through
 the leaves!
 How rush'd they through, brown clad
 and blue,
 Like shuttles hurried through and
 through
 The threads a hasty weaver weaves!
 How quick they cast us fruits of gold,
 Then loosened hand and all foothold,
 And hung, limp, limber, as if dead,
 Hung low and listless overhead;
 And all the time with half-oped eyes
 Bent full on us in mute surprise—
 Looked wisely too, as wise hens do
 That watch you with the head askew.

XXVI

The long day through, from blos-
 somed trees,
 There came the sweet song of sweet
 bees,
 With chorus tones of cockatoo
 That slid his beak along the bough
 And walked and talked and hung and
 swung,
 In crown of gold and coat of blue,
 The wisest fool that ever sung,
 Or wore a crown or held a tongue.

XXVII

Oh! when we broke the somber
 wood

And pierced at last a sunny plain,
How wild and still with wonder stood
The proud mustangs with bannered
mane

And necks that never knew a rein,
And nostrils lifted high, and blown,
Fierce breathing as a hurricane:
Yet by their leader held the while
In solid column, square and file,
And ranks more martial than our
own!

XXVIII

Some one above the common kind,
Some one to look to, lean upon,
May be, is much a woman's mind;
But it was mine, and I had drawn
A rein beside the chief while we
Rode down the mesa leisurely.
Then he grew kind and questioned me
Of kindred, home, and home affair,
Of how I came to wander there,
And had my father herds and land
And men in hundreds at command?

At which I, silent, shook my head,
Then, timid, met his eyes and said:
"Not so. Where sunny foothills run
Down to the North Pacific sea,
And where Willamette meets the sun
In many angles, patiently
My father tends some flocks of snow,
And turns alone the mellow sod
And sows some fields not over broad,
And mourns my long delay in vain,
Nor bids one serve man come or go;
While mother from her wheel or
churn,
And maybe from the milking shed,

Oft lifts an humbled wearied head
To watch and wish her boy's return
Across the camas' blossomed plain."

XXIX

He held his bent head very low,
A sudden sadness in his air;
Then reached and touched my yellow
hair
And tossed the long locks in his hand,
Toyed with them, sudden let them go,
Then thrummed about his saddle bow
As thought ran swift across his face;
Then turning instant in his place,
He gave some short and quick com-
mand.
They brought the best steed of the
band,
They swung a carbine at my side,
He bade me mount and by him ride,
And from that hour to the end
I never felt the need of friend.

XXX

Far in a wildest quinine wood
We found a city old—so old
Its very walls were turned to mould
And stately trees upon them stood.
No history has mentioned it,
No map has given it a place;
The last dim trace of tribe and race—
The world's forgetfulness is fit.

XXXI

It held one structure grand and
moss'd,
Mighty as any castle sung,

And old when oldest Ind was young,
 With threshold Christian never
 crossed;
 A temple builded to the sun,
 Along whose somber altar-stone
 Brown, bleeding virgins had been
 strown
 Like leaves, when leaves are crisp and
 dun,
 In ages ere the Sphynx was born,
 Or Babylon knew night, or morn.

XXXII

My chief swift up the marble stept—
 He ever led, through that wild land—
 When down the stones, with double
 hand
 To his machete, a Sun priest leapt.
 Hot bent to barter life for life,
 A Texan drave his Bowie knife
 Full through his thick and broad
 breast bone,
 And broke the point against the
 stone,
 The dark stone of the temple wall.
 I saw him loose all hold and fall
 Full length with head hung down the
 stone;
 I saw run down a ruddy flood
 Of smoking, pulsing human blood.
 Then from the dusk there crept a
 crone
 And kissed the gory hands and face,
 And smote herself. Then one by one
 Some dusk priests crept and did the
 same,
 Then bore the dead man from the
 place.
 Down darkened aisles the brown
 priests came,

So picture-like, with sandaled feet
 And long, gray, dismal, grass-wove
 gowns,
 So like the pictures of old time,
 And stood all still and dark of frowns,
 At blood upon the stone and street.
 Stern men laid ready hand to sword
 And boldly spake some bitter word;
 But they were stubborn still and
 stood
 Fierce frowning as a winter wood,
 And mutt'ring something of the
 crime
 Of blood upon their temple stone,
 As if the first that it had known!

XXXIII

We strode on through each massive
 door
 With clash of steel at heel, and with
 Some swords all red and ready drawn.
 I traced the sharp edge of my sword
 Along both marble wall and floor
 For crack or crevice; there was none.
 From one vast mount of marble stone
 The mighty temple had been cored
 By nut-brown children of the sun,
 When stars were newly bright and
 blithe
 Of song along the rim of dawn,
 A mighty marble monolith!

CHANT II

I

*So old, so new and yet how old
 This forest's green, that mesa's gold!*
 Rank, wild oats, waving in wild
 strength—

The lion's tawny mane and length!
 Rank Artemesia, odorous
 And gray with bald antiquity—
 The rough arroyo swallowed us
 As we rode down by two, by three,
 The braying ass, the neighing stud—
 And now the mesa, broad and free;
 Tall cacti blooms, as tipt with blood:
 And here a burning bush, and there
 The red night-blooming cereus
 Kneeled low, as if saluting us—
 Kneeled as some red-robed monk at
 prayer,
 High up the gleaming steeps of snow
 Of Zacatecas, Mexico.

To left such green wood, and such
 green!
 To right brown mesa, bald and bare:
 But where we rode, the two between—
 Such crimson, crimson everywhere!
 Aye, earth was gaily garmented;
 The great, green robe spread far
 away,
 So far no man would dare to say,
 And this great, green robe fringed
 with red,
 Lay trackless, lifeless as the dead.
 The yellow lion's skin behind,
 The wild oats waving in the wind;
 But that dense, silent wold of death
 Drew not a breath, knew not a
 breath!

II

From Oro Yarè toward the sea
 Slow rounding down the river's
 source,
 Red men, brown men, foot, cavalry,
 We marched, a mottled, maniac
 force—

We rode so close to this dense wood
 So somber, silent, deep and lorn,
 That when at last we slow drew rein
 The heat was as a choking pain.
 The chief stood in his stirrups; stood
 With set lips lifted up in scorn
 To thus be baffled by a wood
 And looked and looked that sultry
 morn:
 The while our allies looked away
 As if in dread to say or stay.

Far, far afield from out the night
 Of silent blackness burst a cone
 Of comely fashion, marble white,
 And lone as God, as white and lone
 As God upon the great white throne.

He beck'd some brown men, bade
 them say:
 Then slow, a sandaled, nude old man,
 As if not daring to say nay
 Began, fast pointing far away—
 Then two, then three, then all began.

III

Such stories as our allies said
 Of such strange people meshed and
 hid
 That drear, deep wilderness amid—
 Their very name they spoke with
 dread!
 They were not white men, brown
 men, red,
 Not Spanish blood, not native blood,
 Not Toltec, Aztec, but a race
 Of cruel men who claimed to trace
 Their fathers back beyond the flood—
 Beyond the time when they alone
 Took refuge on their rock-ribb'd cone.

Such stories as our allies told
 Of gold, of river-beds of gold
 Far in that lost land's wood-walled
 heart
 That lay below the comely cone
 As made our filibusters start
 And think of this and this alone:
 The while the silent chief looked down
 Upon their zeal with sullen frown.

Such stories of red gold at morn
 When savage rivers, sudden born
 Of thunder, had swept on and on—
 Such seams of gold that lay upon
 White beds of quartz, bright as the
 sun
 When night and sudden storm were
 done:
 Free gold for all who deemed it fit
 To stoop, take up and husband it.

Such stories as our allies told
 Of armlets, wristlets, wrought in gold
 So massive that the arms grew long
 And sinewy and over strong
 For battle from the very weight
 Of gold; of gold-wrought arrowheads,
 Of gold in shallow brooklet beds
 As plentiful as yellow corn
 Sown ere the blackbirds swoop at
 morn
 To storm the thrifty farmer's gate:

IV

Such stories as our allies told
 Of how, in armored days of old,
 The Spaniard here had dared and
 died
 In all his splendid strength and pride,
 In maddened greed for this red gold:

How, many times in after years,
 Troop after troop went forth again,
 The Spanish Don, the dauntless son,
 To dare the dread obsidian spears,
 The gold-wrought arrowheads like
 rain—
 But never one returned, not one!

Such stories as our allies said
 Of tall, dusk women, garmented
 Like unto fairest flowered trees;
 Of busy women, like to bees,
 Who chased the purple butterfly
 Far up the gray steeps of the sky
 And plucked his little silken nest
 To spin and weave the gorgeous vest,
 The yellow robe, raboso red:

Such stories as our allies told
 Of temples builded to the sun,
 Of human sacrifice and how,
 Like stealthy panthers, even now,
 These beauteous, sultry, moonlight
 nights,
 Hard men steal down, just as of old,
 And seize fair maidens for their rites
 That this was why the land lay bare:
 Of flock or field or maiden fair,
 All up and down, for leagues away—
 That even now, this very day,
 Their yonder homeward trail was
 plain
 With little footprints made in pain:
 Torn feet that turn not back again.

V

You ask me what my chieftain
 said?
 He rarely said, he simply did.
 Dismounting where the lame feet led,

Shut in as shuts a coffin lid,
 He chose his choicest at a sign
 And silent led right on and on;
 Right on all day, right on all night,
 And not one foot set left or right,
 And not one faltered yea or nay
 Or turned his head to see or say
 Until, at sudden burst of dawn,
 A smell of water was and then
 That ugly, growling bulldog drum!
 It turned the very leaves one side
 The while it howled, "They come!
 They come!"

VI

And they, too, came, came as a
 blast
 Of twisting March winds, gust on
 gust,
 Whirl red leaves, dead leaves, ashes,
 dust—
 A cyclone scarce could sweep so fast,
 Scant time to choose a friendly tree,
 Scarce time to drop a bended knee,
 To catch quick carbine to its place
 And fall hard fighting, face to face.

Was ever such hot place of death!
 Scarce room was there to draw full
 breath:
 Red vines climbed up, green boughs
 hung down,
 Red-pepsin, green-leaved rubber-tree,
 Black banyan in black density!
 I dared a precious second's pause
 To choose my tree: I chose because
 Great ivy vines climbed high, climbed
 higher
 All crimson to its very crown—
 Elijah's chariot of fire!

VII

Such tangle, jungle, who could
 stand?
 Such jungle, tangle, who could see?
 What need, indeed, to see when we
 Fell instant fighting, hand to hand?
 Long bamboo lances searched us out,
 Short javelins, with points of glass,
 Great arrowheads of gold, like hail!
 Ah! it had been a sorry rout
 Had each not held his narrow pass—
 With not one left to tell the tale.

They fought in herd, they fell in
 heap,
 Rushed here, rushed there, like silly
 sheep,
 And met behind each blazing tree
 A double-barreled battery,
 A dozen deadly, leaden shot,
 Till suddenly the rush and din
 Of arrow, spear, lance, javelin,
 And all that frenzied host was not.

VIII

And yet, what scores could not
 retreat!
 'Twas pitiful! Spare me the pain,
 The hard, sad detail of the slain,
 The brave dead clutching to the loam
 As if to hold their ancient home
 Forever back from stranger feet!

IX

He dashed right on, but bade me
 stay;
 No time for parley or delay;
 He called his every man to come—

As ever, he was still the first—
His men were dying, dead of thirst:
And then to drive the vantage home!

X

A little time, then such a shout!
I knew the men then drank their fill,
I felt their feasting, do not doubt,
I smelled ripe plantains, rind of red
And cored like unto yellow cream;
I saw bananas bank the stream,
Ripe mangoes hanging overhead—
So dead with hunger, thirst! I seem
To see them, breathe them, taste
them still:

To see men feasting to their fill,
One hand the gun, red fruit in one,
The swift, sweet water at their feet:
And I shall see, shall feel them eat
And drink and drink till life is done.

I heard a cautious low-bird call.
He came, and with him came just one:
Canteen, machete, ripe mangoes, gun,
And I must eat, drink, share with all.

XI

Just then a child, her sweet face red
With blood, crept from a heap of
dead.
I leaned down, drew her to my knee,
Bathed her sweet face, then hurriedly
To where a dying comrade lay
Beside his war-torn battle tree;
And lo! the poor girl followed me
And tried to help, to soothe, to say.

The chief had chased the frenzied
throng

On o'er the stream a short half mile;
Had watched it melt into the isle
And then, as if ten thousand strong
Stood at his back in bold guard line,
Had placed his every man, save one—
Then up and down, machete and gun,
They paced and passed the counter-
sign,
And laughed their city, Chantalè,
Laughed gold-strewn, gory Chantalè
Dim seen through copse of banyan
tree.

And light of step, as jaunty, gay
As on some happy holiday
They stepped with head high in the
air,
And sang, sang loud and saucily.
And now and then a shot rang out
At interval of song and shout
Tow'rd gold-strewn, gory Chantalè
And tore through island vine and tree.

XII

Gods! what a dauntless, daring
sight!
Why, these strange men had fought
all day!
Why, these strong men had marched
all night;
Why, they had scarcely ate or slept,
Yet still with saucy pride they stept
And still each step was spank and
gay.

XIII

Dusk came, such solemn, stately
dusk!
Black clouds blocked up a sky of red,

The hot wood had a smell of musk—
Of dying roses for the dead.

Then lightning was, and thunder
low,
Low rumbling lion-like and slow,
Then that dread drum began to beat
A bow-shot front us amid the isle!
Why, they had made a mad retreat—
Were they not marshaling mean-
while?

XIV

That bull-dog drum was like a chill;
It made night monstrous; men stood
still
And looked their brave chief in the
face.
Why, had God filled the fiery skies
With thunder, lightning, had He
filled
The earth with every fighting race
That knows the ugly trade of death
And asked their lives in sacrifice
These men had scarcely cared a
breath,
Yet now they stood unnerved and
chilled.

Would it but miss a single note,
Pause but to take a single breath,
As any bull-dog's breath is drawn,
'Twere not so worse to bear than
death!
But no, that belching bull-dog throat
Belched on, belched on, right on and
on.

XV

He saw their dread then slowly
said

"How many? and when will they
come?"

"Pass me the guard line, chief," I
said,

"Pass me the guard and you shall
know

What says, what means that chilling
drum:

Night gathers, and the ghostly dead
Are not more noiseless where they go
Than I shall go, go, come again;
Or, silent, join the happier slain."

XVI

He wrote, wrote calmly; they must
feel
His confidence, his nerve of steel,
His sure possession to the last.
I thrust the thin script down my boot,
Stept back, stood firm, made slow
salute,
Turned on my heel and hastened past.

XVII

The dappled sky now darkened till
The moon came out, and then was
gone,
And all was black and wild and wide.
I should have lost my way and died
Had not that drum beat on and on.
The warm wave swept above my
waist;
I pushed right on in eager haste.
I felt a light touch suddenly,
Looked down in dread and lo! 'twas
she.

And how could she have passed
the line?

And why? I thought her surely crazed;
 Or, may be, sadly hurt and dazed,
 And took her little hand in mine.
 I led her up the shallow sand
 Against the somber, wooded land
 To where the mango, tamarind
 And blaek, wide-rooted banyan tree
 Reached out to warn and welcome
 me.

I was so worn, so weak and worn,
 My dripping hands hung down as
 lead.
 I could not lift my sinking head;
 I heard the widowed mothers mourn,
 Still heard that hoarse dog bark and
 beat
 And knew they would not now
 retreat.

XVIII

And yet I could not lift a hand,
 But drooped and sank upon the sand.
 I tried, I tried, I could not rise,
 I could not open my dull eyes.
 And all the time that dog kept on,
 A dog that never would be gone!

It made me sleep, it made me
 dream—
 That drum seemed some deep
 orchestra
 Where I could see sweet players play,
 Low-voiced; then sudden all did
 seem
 A coarse and cruel tragedy.
 Red lightning lit the ample stage;
 Blaek thunder thrust italies through
 The bloody text, then in his rage,
 As if not knowing what to do,

Turned back and hewed with such
 mad stroke
 My mighty trees that I awoke.

How I had slept! just clay and clod.
 For all the living, all the dead,
 The might, the majesty of God,
 The hideous, haunting death, the
 dread—

I could but hear that monodin,
 That monster alligator skin
 Right on, right on, dog-like and deep,
 And sleep right on, and sleep and
 sleep!

I thrust, thrust hard out either
 hand:
 And still, all chill! I was alone!
 And she had sold me, my command!
 At sun the saerificial stone;
 And then no more that horrid drum—
 Why had she gone? where had she
 gone?

I tried to hope she yet might come—
 The while that drum beat on and on!

A finger to her lip, then sand
 She plucked and let it sift and run
 And pointed sunward, ere the sun!
 So many? and they come so soon?
 The sky was spotted, rain and moon,
 But with the first cloud we were gone;
 The while that bull-dog barked right
 on!

He waiting, leaned and caught her
 hand,
 She stooped, took up, let fall the sand,
 Then pointed sunward, ere the sun—
 A sign, and that brave, worn, guard
 line,

Swift, single file, still as the dead,
 They passed with mournful, martial
 tread,
 Paced back that midnight track
 again,
 A pious line of blood and pain:
 Yet not one man there to repine,
 Not one impatient word, not one.

XIX

He paused, the last man to retreat,
 When all had silent passed the dead,
 He stood with bowed, uncovered
 head,
 Devoutest hero of defeat.
 And then he turned, hat still in hand,
 And bowed before her, low, so low
 He almost touched her sandaled feet,
 And gently beckoned she should go:
 She stirred not and he spake com-
 mand.

I had not known she was so tall,
 Knew not that she was nobly born
 Until I saw her black eyes burn
 And instant take command of all
 In that long, sudden, sad return,
 So silent, drooping and forlorn.

She beckoned him and he obeyed,
 Kneeled only as brave men can kneel,
 Up rose; and then the clank of steel,
 The eager clutching of a blade—
 And then the sullen tread and tread:
 That baying dog behind—the dead!

XX

She stripped the gold hoops from
 each hand,

From wrists, from arms and nothing
 said,
 But laid them gently by the dead:
 Then beckoned quiet, quick com-
 mand.

“Pass on, on, on, at any cost,
 Not one brief moment to be lost!”
 Then on, on, on, fast and more fast,
 And she, alone, the very last,
 Until, just at the break of day—
 Were ever bugle notes so clear?
 Was ever dinner-horn so dear?
 We heard, we heard our horses neigh!

CHANT III

I

More marches through brown
 mesa, wood.
 More marches through too much
 blood,
 And then at last sweet inland seas.
 A city there, white-walled, and brown
 With age, in nest of orange trees;
 And this we won and many a town
 And rancho reaching up and down,
 Then rested long, sweet, sultry days
 Beneath the blossom'd orange trees,
 Made drowsy with the hum of bees,
 And drank in peace the south-sea
 breeze,
 Made sweet with sweeping bough of
 bays.

II

.
 Aye, she was shy, so shy at first,
 And then, ere long, not over shy,

Yet pure of soul and proudly chare.
 No love on earth has such an eye!
 No land there is, is bless'd or curs'd
 With such a limb or grace of face,
 Or gracious form or genial air!
 In all the bleak North-land not one
 Hath been so warm of soul to me
 As coldest soul by that warm sea,
 Beneath the bright, hot-centered sun.

III

No lands where northern ices are
 Approach, or even dare compare
 With warm loves born beneath the
 sun—
 The one so near, the one so far!
 The one the cold, white, steady star,
 The yellow, shifting sun the one.

IV

I grant you fond, I grant you fair,
 I grant you honor, trust and truth,
 And years as beautiful as youth,
 And many years beneath the sun,
 And faith as fixed as any star;
 But all the North-land hath not one
 So warm of soul as sun-maids are.

V

I was but in my boyhood then—
 Nor knew the coarse, hard ways of
 men.
 I count my fingers over so,
 And find it years and years ago;
 But I was tall and lithe and fair,
 With rippled tide of yellow hair,
 And prone to mellowness of heart,
 While she was tawny-red like wine,

With black hair boundless as the
 night.

As for the rest, I learned my part,
 At least was apt, and willing quite
 To learn, to listen, and incline
 To teacher warm and wise as mine.

VI

O bright, bronzed maidens of the
 Sun!

So fairer far to look upon
 Than curtains of King Solomon,
 Or Kedar's tents, or any one,
 Or any thing beneath the Sun!
 What followed then? What has been
 done,
 And said, and writ, and read, and
 sung?

What will be writ and read again,
 While love is life and life remain,
 While maids will heed and men have
 tongue?

VII

What followed then? But let that
 pass.

I hold one picture in my heart,
 Hung curtain'd, and not any part
 Of all its blood tint ever has
 Been looked upon by any one
 Beneath the broad, all-seeing sun.

VIII

Love well who will, love wise who
 can,
 But love, be loved, for God is love;
 Love pure, as cherubim above;

Love maid, and hate not any man.
 Sit as sat we by orange tree,
 Beneath the broad bough and grape-
 vine

Top-tangled in the tropic shine,
 Close face to face, close to the sea,
 And full of the red-centered sun,
 With sweet sea-songs upon the soul,
 Rolled melody on melody,
 As echoes of deep organ's roll,
 And love, nor question any one.

IX

If God is love, is love not God?
 As high priests say, let prophets sing,
 Without reproach or reckoning;
 This much I say, knees knit to sod,
 And low voice lifted, questioning.

X

Let hearts be pure, let love be true.
 Let lips be luscious, love be red,
 Let earth in gold be garmented
 And tented in her tent of blue;
 Let goodly rivers glide between
 Their leaning willow walls of green,
 Let all things be filled of the sun,
 And full of warm winds of the sea,
 And I beneath my vine and tree
 Take rest, nor war with any one;
 Then I will thank God with full
 cause,
 Say this is well, is as it was.

XI

Let lips be red, for God has said
 Love is as one gold-garmented,
 And made them so for such a time,

Therefore let lips be red, therefore
 Let love be ripe in ruddy prime,
 Let hope beat high, let hearts be true,
 And you be wise thereat, and you
 Drink deep and ask not any more.

XII

Let red lips lift, proud curl'd to
 kiss,
 And round limbs lean and lift and
 reach
 In love too passionate for speech,
 Too full of blessedness and bliss
 For anything but this and this;
 Let pure lips lean warm, kind to kiss;
 Swoon in sweet love, while all the air
 Is redolent with balm of trees,
 And mellow with the song of bees,
 While birds sit singing everywhere—
 And you will have not any more
 Than I in boyhood, by that shore
 Of olives, had in years of yore.

XIII

Let men unclean think things
 unclean;
 I swear tip-toed, with lifted hand,
 That we were pure as sea-wash'd
 sand,
 That not one coarse thought came
 between;
 Believe or disbelieve who will,
 Unto the pure all things are pure,
 As for the rest, love can endure
 Alike your good will or your ill.

XIV

Aye, she was rich in blood and
 gold—

More rich in love, grown over-bold
From its own consciousness of
strength.

How warm! Oh, not for any cause
Could I declare how warm she was,
In her brown beauty and hair's
length.

XV

We loved in the sufficient sun,
We lived in elements of fire,
For love is fire, not fierce desire;
Yet lived as pure as priest and nun.

XVI

We lay slow rocking by the bay
In slim canoe beneath the crags
Thick-topp'd with palms, like sweep-
ing flags
Between us and the burning day.
The alligator's head lay low
Or lifted from his rich rank fern,
And watch'd us and the tide by turn,
As we slow cradled to and fro.

XVII

And slow we cradled on till night,
And told the old tale, overtold,
As misers in recounting gold
Each time to take a new delight.

XVIII

With her pure passion-given grace
She drew her warm self close to me;
And her two brown hands on my
knee,
And her two black eyes in my face,

She then grew sad and guessed at ill,
And in the future seemed to see
With woman's ken and prophecy,
Yet proffer'd her devotion still.

XIX

And plaintive so she gave a sign,
A token cut of virgin gold,
That all her tribe should ever hold
Its wearer as some one divine,
Nor touch him with unkindly hand.
And I in turn gave her a blade,
A dagger, worn as well by maid
As man, in that hot-temper'd land.

XX

It had a massive silver hilt,
It had a keen and cunning blade,
A gift of chief and comrades made
For blood at Rivas reckless spilt.

XXI

"Show this," said I, "too well 'tis
known,
And worth a hundred lifted spears,
Should ill beset your sunny years;
There is not one in Walker's band,
But at the sight of this alone,
Will reach a brave and ready hand
And make your right, or wrong, his
own."

XXII

Love while 'tis day; night cometh
soon,
Wherein no man or maiden may;
Love in the strong young prime of
day;

Drink drunk with love in ripe red
 noon,
 Red noon of love and life and sun;
 Walk in love's light as in sunshine,
 Drink in that sun as drinking wine,
 Drink swift, nor question any one;
 For fortunes change, like man, or
 moon,
 And wane like warm full day of June.

XXIII

Oh Love, so fair of promises,
 Bend here thy bow, blow here thy
 kiss,
 Bend here thy bow above the storm
 But once, if only this once more!
 Comes there no patient Christ to
 save,
 Touch and reanimate thy form
 Long three days dead and in the
 grave?
 Yea, spread ye now thy silken net;
 Since fortunes change, turn and for-
 get,
 Since man must fall for some sharp
 sin,
 Be thou the pit that I fall in;
 I seek no safer fall than this.

XXIV

You lift your face to ask of her,
 This wine-hued woman, warm sun-
 maid,
 This wine-hued woman warm as
 wine,
 So purely and so surely mine,
 Who loved, who dared, was not
 afraid—

Or Princess? Priestess? Prisoner?
 I never knew or sought to know;
 I cared not what she might have been;
 I only knew she was such queen
 As only death could overthrow.

XXV

Aye, lover, would you love with
 zest,
 Win, hold, and hold her fast and
 well?
 Believe, believe the best the best
 Though she have singed her skirts in
 hell!
 Hold not one doubt, house just this
 thought—
 That she is all in all you sought.

I loved, loved purely, loved pro-
 found,
 I raised love's temple, round by
 round.
 I built my temple heavens high,
 Then shut the door, and she and I
 Forgot all things, all things save one,
 Beneath the hot path of the sun.

XXVI

I would I could forget, and yet
 I would not to my death forget.
 I reared my temple to the sky,
 That glad full moon, and laughed
 that I
 Could toy with lightning, till I found,
 Like some poor fool who toys with
 fire,
 And counts him stronger than desire,
 My temple burning to the ground.

XXVII

Aye, I had knelt, as priest might
 kneel
 Before his saint's shrine, all that day;
 Had dared to count me strong as steel
 To stand for aye, clean, tall and
 white.
 Yet I broke in that very night,
 And stole shewbread and wine away.

XXVIII

I would forget that scene, that
 place,
 I would forget that pleading face,
 Yet hide it deepest in my heart,
 As coffin in the heart of earth—
 Alas! a heart so little worth—
 Locked iron doors and somber lid!
 Yea, I would have my shrine so hid,
 So sacred and so set apart,
 That only I might enter in,
 Each sleepless, penitential night,
 And, kneeling, burn my lorn love
 light
 To burn away my bitter sin.

XXIX

Love lifts on white wings to the
 gates
 Of Paradise and enters in:
 Lust has for wings two leaden weights
 That sink into the lake of sin.
 Lust squats, toad-like, his loathsome
 cell,
 Love seeks the light, on, on, above;
 Love is as God, as God is love,
 But lust is Lucifer in hell.

XXX

Ills come not singly, birds of prey
 Flock not more closely on than they;
 Ill comes disguised in many forms;
 Fair winds are but a prophecy.
 Of foulest winds full soon to be—
 The brighter these, the blacker they;
 The brightest night has darkest day
 And brightest days bring blackest
 storms.

XXXI

A land-lost sea with sable bredes,
 Save where some bastions still are
 seen,
 A river stealing through the reeds,
 Dark, silent, sinuous, serpentine,
 In sullen haste toward the sun—
 Such lonesome land, such lonesome
 sea,
 Such wine-hued women at the oar,
 In silent pairs along the shore!
 But not one man in sight, not one
 To draw machete or bear a gun.

XXXII

A shaft of flame, a lifted torch,
 Leaps sudden from this midland sea,
 As if to light the very porch
 Of God's high house eternally.
 It drops its ashen embers slow
 And slantwise, like belated snow,
 On granite columns, gods of stone
 Hewn ere the gods of Baal were
 known.

XXXIII

Some sweet brown hills, like
Galilee,
Group here or there this dark, still
sea,
Some costly woods, mahogany,
Red cedar, like to Lebanon,
Broad olives, like Gethsemane;
But silence sits all things upon,
As in some dark, hushed house of
death.
You look behind, you would turn
back,
You question if you yet take breath.
The blackness of this silent sea
Is oiled and burnished ebony—
The very silence turns to black.

XXXIV

The silence is as when your dead
Lies waiting, candles foot and head,
When mourners turn them slowly
back
With all their sad, sweet prayers
said.
The sea is black, the shore is black
Below Granada's storied steep,
Save where red trumpet blossoms
blow
And trumpet, trumpet night and day,
For brave brown soldiers far away
In battle for this dreamful deep
Where silent women come and go.

XXXV

Such wine-hued women! such soft
eyes!
What need one single word be said?

A fool might talk and talk all day,
Talk, talk and talk until he dies,
And yet, for all his hard, loud lies,
Will never make one inch advance,
Will never say, year and a day,
So much as she in one warm glance.

XXXVI

I see sad mothers here and there
Sit by and braid their heavy hair,
The while they watch their babes at
play.
I note no fear, I hear no sigh,
Not even hear a baby cry;
But Oh! Madonna, mother, bride,
Dark mourning with your ebon tide,
My heart is with you here today,
As yours is with him far away.

XXXVII

Yet is this sea not always so:
I've seen him laughing in the sun,
Seen soft brown wavelets leap and
flow,
Seen opal dimples come and go,
Seen argent billows rise and run,
Seen fleets of gay boats lifting, borne
Along his leaping, laughing tide
In all their semi-savage pride.
But list! the sea, the shore, is black
For those who passed and came not
back—
He mourns because his daughters
mourn.

XXXVIII

Yon solitary cone of flame
That lifts mid-sea to light the skies?

I nothing know, scarce know the
name,
Of yon lost, buried town that lies
Beneath its ashes, yet I know
The story is, a pretty town,
With people passing up and down,
Lies just beyond, and deep, so deep
That never plummet breaks its sleep.

XXXIX

And, too, the tale is we are dead
And cast forth unto burning hell,
While they, down there, live, laugh
instead;
That with them, down there, all is
well,
The while they dance all night, all
day—
While we are dead and cast in hell.

XL

Aye, idle talk, and yet the town
Is there, and perfect, to this day.
Row out, far out, and peer you down,
A half mile down, some sultry noon,
And see shapes passing up and down,
As dancers dancing to a tune
On some fair, happy day in May.

XLI

Aye, idle talk, and maybe these,
The dancers, be but kelp adrift
With undertow of under-seas—
Strange under-seas that fall or lift
And voiceless ever ebb and flow
Beneath the burning crater's plain
Through unknown channels to the
main;

I only note the things I know
And loved and lived long years ago.

XLII

Then came reverses to our arms;
I saw the signal light's alarms
All night red-crescenting the bay.
The foe poured down a flood next
day
As strong as tides when tides are high,
And drove us to the open sea,
In such wild haste of flight that we
Had hardly time to arm and fly.

XLIII

Far tossed upon the broadest sea,
I lifted my two hands on high,
With wild soul plashing to the sky,
And cried, "O more than crowns to
me,
Farewell at last to love and thee!"

I walked the deck, I kissed my
hand
Back to the far and fading shore,
And bent a knee as to implore,
Until the last dark head of land
Slid down behind the dimpled sea.
At last I sank in troubled sleep,
A very child, rocked by the deep,
Sad questioning the fate of her
Before the cruel conqueror.

XLIV

The loss of comrades, power, place,
A city walled, cool, shaded ways,
Cost me no care at all, somehow,

I only saw her sad, sweet face,
And—I was younger then than now.

XLV

Red flashed the sun across the
deek,
Slow flapped the idle sail, and slow
The black ship eradled to and fro.
Afar my city lay, a speck
Of white against a line of blue;
Hard by, half-lounging on the deek,
Some comrades chatted, two by two.
I held a new-filled glass of wine,
And with the mate talked as in play
Of fieree events of yesterday,
To coax his light life into mine.

XLVI

He jerked the wheel, as slow he
said,
Low laughing with averted head,
And so half sad: "You bet, they'll
fight;
They followed in eanim, canoe,
A perfect fleet, that on the blue
Lay dancing till the mid of night.
Would you believe! one little euss—
(He turned his hard head slow side-
wise
And 'neath his hat-rim took the
skies)—
"In petticoats did follow us
The livelong night, and at the dawn
Her boat lay rocking in the lee,
Scarce one short pistol-shot from me."
This said the mate, half mournfully,
Then pecked at us; for he had drawn,
By bright light heart and homely wit,
A knot of men around the wheel,

Which he stood whirling like a reel,
For the still ship reck'd not of it.

XLVII

"And where's she now?" one care-
less said,
With eyes slow lifting to the brine,
Swift swept the instant far by mine,
The bronze mate listed, shook his
head,
Spirted a stream of ambier wide
Across and over the ship side,
Jerked at the wheel and slow replied:
"She had a dagger in her hand,
She rose, she raised it, tried to
stand,
But fell, and so upset herself;
Yet still the poor brown, pretty elf,
Each time the long, light wave would
toss
And lift her form from out the sea,
Would shake a sharp, bright blade at
me,
With rich hilt chased a cunning cross.
At last she sank, but still the same
She shook her dagger in the air,
As if to still defy or dare,
And sinking seemed to call your
name."

XLVIII

I let the wine glass crashing fall,
I rushed across the deck, and all
The sea I swept and swept again,
With lifted hand, with eye and glass,
But all was idle and in vain.
I saw a red-billed sea bird pass,
A petrel sweeping 'round and 'round,
I heard the far, white sea-surf sound,

But no sign could I hear or see
Of one so more than all to me.

XLIX

I cursed the ship, the shore, the sea,
The brave brown mate, the bearded
men;
I had a fever then, and then
Ship, shore and sea were one to me:
And weeks we on the dead waves lay,
And I more truly dead than they.

L

At last some rested on an isle;
The few strong-breasted, with a smile,
Returning to the hostile shore,
Scarce counting of the pain or cost,
Scarce reeking if they won or lost;
They sought but action, asked no
more;
They counted life but as a game,
With full per cent against them, and
Staked all upon a single hand,
And lost or won, content the same.

LI

I never saw my chief again,
I never sought again the shore,
Or saw the wood-walled city more.
I could not bear the more than pain
At sight of blossom'd orange trees,
Or blended song of birds and bees,
The sweeping shadows of the palm
Or spicy breath of bay and balm.

LII

And, striving to forget the while,
I wandered through a dreary isle,

Here black with juniper, and there
Made white with goats in shaggy
coats,

The only things that anywhere
We found with life in all the land,
Save birds that ran, long-bill'd and
brown,

Long-legg'd and still as shadows
are,

Like dancing shadows, up and down
The sea-rim on the swelt'ring sand.

LIII

The warm sea laid his dimpled face,
With all his white locks smoothed in
place,

As if asleep against the land;
Great turtles slept upon his breast,
As thick as eggs in any nest;
I could have touched them with my
hand.

LIV

I would some things were dead and
hid,
Well dead and buried deep as hell,
With recollection dead as well,
And resurrection God-forbid.
They irk me with their weary spell
Of fascination, eye to eye,
And hot, mesmeric, serpent-hiss,
Through all the dull, eternal days.
Let them turn by, go on their ways,
Let them depart or let me die;
For life is but a beggar's lie,
And as for death, I grin at it;
I do not care one whiff or whit
Whether it be or that or this.

LV

I give my hand; the world is wide;
Then farewell, memories of yore!
Between us let strife be no more;
Turn as you choose to either side;
Say Fare-you-well, shake hands and
say—

Speak fair, and say with stately grace,
Hand clutching hand, face bent to
face—

Farewell, forever and a day!

LVI

O passion-toss'd and piteous past,
Part now, part well, part wide apart,
As ever ships on ocean slid
Down, down the sea, hull, sail and
mast;

And in the album of your heart
Let hide the pictures of your face,
With other pictures in their place,
Slid over, like a coffin's lid.

LVII

The days and grass grow long to-
gether;

They now fell short and crisp again,
And all the fair face of the main
Grew dark and wrinkled as the
weather.

Through all the summer sun's decline
Fell news of triumphs and defeats,
Of hard advances, hot retreats—
Then days and days and not a line.

LVIII

At last one night they came. I
knew,

Ere yet the boat had touched the
land,

That all was lost; they were so few
I near could count them on one hand;
But he, the leader, led no more.

The proud chief still disdained to fly,
But like one wrecked, clung to the
shore,

And struggled on, and struggling fell
From power to a prison cell,
And only left that cell to die.

LIX

My recollection, like a ghost,
Goes from this sea to that sea-side,
Goes and returns, as turns the tide,
Then turns again unto the coast.
I know not which I mourn the most,
My chief or my unwedded wife.
The one was as the lordly sun,
To joy in, bask in and admire;
The twilight star was as the one
To love, to look to and desire,
And both a part of my young life.

LX

* * * * *

Years after, sheltered from the sun
Beneath a Sacramento bay,
A black Muchacho by me lay
Along the long grass crisp and dun,
His brown mule browsing by his side,
And told with all a peon's pride
How he once fought; how long and
well,

Brave breast to breast, red hand to
hand,

Against a foe for his fair land,
And how the fierce invader fell;

And, artless, told me how he died;
 How walked he from the prison-wall,
 Serene, prince-like, as for parade,
 And made no note of man or maid,
 But gazed out calmly over all—
 How looked he far, half paused, and
 then
 Above the mottled sea of men
 Slow kissed his thin hand to the sun;
 Then smiled so proudly none had
 known
 But he was stepping to a throne.

LXI

A nude brown beggar Peon child,
 Encouraged as the captive smiled,
 Looked up, half scared, half pitying;
 He stopped, he caught it from the
 sand,
 Put bright coins in its two brown
 hands,
 Then strode on like another king.

LXII

Two deep, a musket's length they
 stood
 Afront, in sandals, grim and dun
 As death and darkness wove in one,
 Their thick lips thirsting for his blood.
 He took each black hand, one by one,
 And, bowing with a patient grace,
 Forgave them all and took his place.

LXIII

He bared his broad brow
 pleasantly,
 Gave one long, last look to the sky,

The white-winged clouds that hurried
 by,
 The olive hills in orange hue;
 A last list to the cockatoo
 That hung by beak from mango-
 bough
 Hard by and hung and cried as
 though
 He never was to call again,
 Hung all red-crowned and robed in
 green,
 With belts of gold and blue be-
 tween.—

* * * * *
 * * * * *

A bow, a touch of heart, a pall
 Of purple smoke, a crash, a thud,
 A warrior's raiment rolled in blood,
 A face in dust and—that was all.

Success had made him more than
 king;
 Defeat made him the vilest thing
 In name, contempt or hate can bring;
 So much the leaden dice of war
 Do make or mar of character.

LXIV

Speak ill who will of him, he died
 In all disgrace, say of the dead
 His heart was black, his hands were
 red—
 Say this much and be satisfied;
 Gloat over it all undenied.
 I simply say he was my friend
 When strong of hand and fair of
 fame:
 Dead and disgraced, I stand the same
 To him, and so shall to the end.

LXV

I lay this crude wreath on his dust,
 Inwove with sad, sweet memories
 Recall'd here by these colder seas.
 I leave the wild bird with his trust,
 To sing and say him nothing wrong;
 I wake no rivalry of song.

LXVI

He lies low in the level'd sand,
 Unshelter'd from the tropic sun,
 And now, of all he knew, not one
 Will speak him fair in that far land.
 Perhaps 'twas this that made me
 seek,
 Disguised, his grave one winter-tide,
 A weakness for the weaker side,
 A siding with the helpless weak.

LXVII

His warm Hondurian seas are
 warm,
 Warm to the heart, warm all the time;
 Huge sea-beasts wallow in their slime
 And slide, claw foot and serpent form,
 Slow down the bank, and bellow deep
 And pitiful, as if it were
 A very pain to even stir,
 So close akin to death they keep.

LXVIII

The low sea bank is worn and torn,
 All things seem old, so very old;
 All things are gray with moss and
 mould,
 The very seas seem old and worn.

Life scarce bides here in any form,
 The very winds wake not nor say,
 But sleep all night and sleep all day
 Nor even dream of stress or storm.

LXIX

The Carib sea comes in so slow!
 It stays and stays, as loath to go,
 A sense of death is in the air,
 A sense of listless, dull despair,
 As if Truxillo, land and tide,
 And all things, died when Walker
 died.

LXX

A palm not far held out a hand,
 Hard by a long green bamboo swung,
 And bent like some great bow un-
 strung,
 And quiver'd like a willow wand;
 Perched on its fruit that crooked
 hang,
 Beneath a broad banana's leaf,
 A bird in rainbow splendor sang
 A low, sad song of temper'd grief.

LXXI

No sod, no sign, no cross nor stone,
 But at his side a cactus green
 Upheld its lances long and keen;
 It stood in sacred sands alone,
 Flat-palmed and fierce with lifted
 spears;
 One bloom of crimson crowned its
 head,
 A drop of blood, so bright, so red,
 Yet redolent as roses' tears.

LXXII

In my left hand I held a shell,
 All rosy-lipp'd and pearly red;
 I laid it by his lowly bed,
 For he did love so passing well
 The grand songs of his solemn sea.
 O shell! sing well, wild, with a will,
 When storms blow loud and birds be
 still,
 The wildest sea-song known to thee!

LXXIII

I said some things with folded
 hands,
 Soft whisper'd in the dim sea-sound,
 And eyes held humbly to the ground,
 And frail knees sunken in the sands.
 He had done more than this for me,
 And yet I could not well do more;
 I turned me down the olive shore,
 And set a sad face to the sea.

THE TALE OF THE TALL ALCALDE

*Shadows that shroud the tomorrow,
 Glist from the life that's within,
 Traces of pain and of sorrow,
 And maybe a trace of sin,
 Reachings for God in the darkness,
 And for—what should have been.*

*Stains from the gall and the worm-
 wood,
 Memories bitter like myrrh,
 A sad brown face in a fir wood,
 Blotches of heart's blood here,
 But never the sound of a wailing,
 Never the sign of a tear.*

Where mountains repose in their blue-
 ness,
 Where the sun first lands in his
 newness,
 And marshals his beams and his
 lances,
 Ere down to the vale he advances
 With visor erect, and rides swiftly
 On the terrible night in his way,
 And slays him, and, dauntless and
 deftly,

Hews out the beautiful day
 With his flashing sword of silver,—
 Lay nestled the town of Renalda,
 Far famed for its stately Alcalde,
 The iron judge of the mountain
 mine,
 With heart like the heart of woman,
 Humanity more than human;—
 Far famed for its gold and silver,
 Fair maids and its mountain wine.

* * * * *

The feast was full and the guests
 afire,
 The shaven priest and the portly
 squire,
 The solemn judge and the smiling
 dandy,
 The duke and the don and the
 commandante,
 All, save one, shouted or sang divine,
 Sailing in one great sea of wine;
 Till roused, red-crested knight
 Chanticleer
 Answer'd and echo'd their song and
 cheer.

Some boasted of broil, encounter
in battle,
Some boasted of maidens most clever-
ly won,
Boasted of duels most valiantly
done,
Of leagues of land and of herds of
cattle,
These men at the feast up in fair
Renalda.
All boasted but one, the calm Al-
calde:
Though hard they press'd from first
of the feast,
Press'd commandanté, press'd poet
and priest,
And steadily still an attorney press'd,
With lifted glass and his face aglow,
Heedless of host and careless of
guest—
“A tale! the tale of your life, so
ho!
For not one man in all Mexico
Can trace your history two decade.”
A hand on the rude one's lip was
laid:
“Sacred, my son,” the priest went
on,
“Sacred the secrets of every onc,
Inviolat as an altar-stone.
Yet what in the life of one who must
Have lived a life that is half divine—
Have been so pure to be so just,
What can there be, O advocate,
In the life of one so desolate
Of luck with matron, or love with
maid,
Midnight revel or escapade,
To stir the wonder of men at wine?
But should the Alcalde choose, you
know,”—

(And here his voice fell soft and low,
As he set his wine-horn in its place,
And look'd in the judge's care-worn
face)—

“To weave us a tale that points a
moral
Out of his vivid imagination,
Of lass or of love, or lover's quarrel,
Naught of his fame or name or
station
Shall lose in luster by its relation.”

Softly the judge set down his
horn,
Kindly look'd on the priest all
shorn,
And gazed in the eyes of the advocate
With a touch of pity, but none of
hate;
Then look'd he down in the brimming
horn,
Half defiant and half forlorn.

Was it a tear? Was it a sigh?
Was it a glance of the priest's black
eye?
Or was it the drunken revel-cry
That smote the roek of his frozen
heart
And foreed his pallid lips apart?
Or was it the weakness like to
woman
Yearning for sympathy
Through the dark years,
Spurning the secrecy,
Burning for tears,
Proving him human,—
As he said to the men of the silver
mine,
With their eyes held up as to one
divine,

With his eyes held down to his un-
touch'd wine:

"It might have been where moon-
beams kneel

At night beside some rugged steep;
It might have been where breakers
reel,

Or mild waves cradle men to sleep;
It might have been in peaceful life,
Or mad tumult and storm and
strife,

I drew my breath; it matters not.
A silvered head, a sweetest cot,
A sea of tamarack and pine,
A peaceful stream, a balmy elime,
A cloudless sky, a sister's smile,
A mother's love that sturdy Time
Has strengthen'd as he strengthens
wine,

Are mine, are with me all the while,
Are hung in memory's sounding
halls,

Are graven on her glowing walls.
But rage, nor rack, nor wrath of
man,

Nor prayer of priest, nor price, nor
ban

Can wring from me their place or
name,

Or why, or when, or whence I came;
Or why I left that childhood home,
A child of form yet old of soul,
And sought the wilds where tempests
roll

O'er snow peaks white as driven
foam.

"Mistaken and misunderstood,
I sought a deeper wild and wood.
A girlish form, a childish face,

A wild waif drifting from place to
place.

"Oh for the skies of rolling blue,
The balmy hours when lovers woo,
When the moon is doubled as in
desire,

And the lone bird eries in his erness of
fire,

Like vespers calling the soul to bliss
In the blessed love of the life above,
Ere it has taken the stains of this!

"The world afar, yet at my feet,
Went steadily and sternly on;
I almost fancied I could meet
The crush and bustle of the street,
When from my mountain I look'd
down.

And deep down in the cañon's
mouth

The long-tom ran and pick-ax rang,
And pack-trains coming from the
south

Went stringing round the mountain
high

In long gray lines, as wild geese fly,
While mul'teers shouted hoarse and
high,

And dusty, dusky, mul'teers sang—
'Señora with the liquid eye!

No floods can ever quench the flame,
Or frozen snows my passion tame,

O Juanna with the coalblack eye!
O señorita, bide a bye!

"Environed by a mountain wall,
That caped in snowy turrets stood;
So fierce, so terrible, so tall,
It never yet had been defiled
By track or trail, save by the wild

Free children of the wildest wood;
 An unkiss'd virgin at my feet,
 Lay my pure, hallow'd, dreamy vale,
 Where breathed the essence of my
 tale;

Lone dimple in the mountain's face,
 Lone Eden in a boundless waste—
 It lay so beautiful! so sweet!

“There in the sun's decline I
 stood
 By God's form wrought in pink and
 pearl,
 My peerless, dark-eyed Indian girl;
 And gazed out from a fringe of
 wood,
 With full-fed soul and feasting
 eyes,
 Upon an earthly paradise.
 Inclining to the south it lay,
 And long league's southward roll'd
 away,
 Until the sable-feather'd pines
 And tangled boughs and amorous
 vines
 Closed like besiegers on the scene,
 The while the stream that inter-
 twined
 Had barely room to flow between.
 It was unlike all other streams,
 Save those seen in sweet summer
 dreams;
 For sleeping in its bed of snow,
 Nor rock or stone was ever known,
 But only shining, shifting sands,
 Forever sifted by unseen hands.
 It curved, it bent like Indian bow,
 And like an arrow darted through,
 Yet uttered not a sound nor breath,
 Nor broke a ripple from the start;
 It was as swift, as still as death,

Yet was so clear, so pure, so sweet,
 It wound its way into your heart
 As through the grasses at your feet.

“Once through the tall untangled
 grass,
 I saw two black bears careless pass,
 And in the twilight turn to play;
 I caught my rifle to my face,
 She raised her hand with quiet
 grace
 And said: ‘Not so, for us the day,
 The night belongs to such as they.’”

“And then from out the shadow'd
 wood
 The antler'd deer came stalking
 down
 In half a shot of where I stood;
 Then stopp'd and stamp'd im-
 patiently,
 Then shook his head and antlers
 high,
 And then his keen horns backward
 threw
 Upon his shoulders broad and
 brown,
 And thrust his muzzle in the air,
 Snuff'd proudly; then a blast he
 blew
 As if to say: ‘No danger there,’
 And then from out the sable wood
 His mate and two sweet dappled
 fawns
 Stole forth, and by the monarch
 stood,
 Such bronzes, as on kingly lawns;
 Or seen in picture, read in tale.
 Then he, as if to reassure
 The timid, trembling and demure,
 Again his antlers backward threw,

Again a blast defiant blew,
Then led them proudly down the
vale.

“I watch’d the forms of darkness
come
Slow stealing from their sylvan
home,
And pierce the sunlight drooping
low
And weary, as if loth to go.
Night stain’d the lanes as he bled,
And, bleeding and pursued, he fled
Across the vale into the wood.
I saw the tall grass bend its head
Beneath the stately martial tread
Of Shades, pursuer and pursued.

“‘Behold the clouds,’ Winnema
said,
‘All purple with the blood of day;
The night has conquer’d in the fray,
The shadows live, and light is dead.’

“She turn’d to Shasta gracefully,
Around whose hoar and mighty head
Still roll’d a sunset sea of red,
While troops of clouds a space
below
Were drifting wearily and slow,
As seeking shelter for the night
Like weary sea-birds in their flight;
Then curv’d her right arm graeefully
Above her brow, and bow’d her
knee,
And chanted in an unknown tongue
Words sweeter than were ever sung.

“‘And what means this?’ I gently
said.
‘I prayed to God, the Yopitone,

Who dwells on yonder snowy throne,’
She softly said with drooping head;
‘I bow’d to God. He heard my
prayer,
I felt his warm breath in my hair,
He heard me all my wishes tell,
For God is good, and all is well.’

“The dappled and the dimpled
skies,
The timid stars, the spotted moon,
All smiled as sweet as sun at noon.
Her eyes were like the rabbit’s eyes,
Her mien, her manner, just as mild,
And though a savage war-chief’s
child,
She would not harm the lowliest
worm.
And, though her beaded foot was
firm,
And though her airy step was true,
She would not crush a drop of dew.

“Her love was deeper than the
sea,
And stronger than the tidal rise,
And clung in all its strength to me.
A face like hers is never seen
This side the gates of paradise,
Save in some Indian Summer scene,
And then none ever sees it twice—
Is seen but once, and seen no more,
Seen but to tempt the skeptic soul,
And show a sample of the whole
That Heaven has in store.

“You might have plucked beams
from the moon,
Or torn the shadow from the pine
When on its dial track at noon,
But not have parted us one hour,

She was so wholly, truly mine.
 And life was one unbroken dream
 Of purest bliss and calm delight,
 A flow'ry-shored, untroubled stream
 Of sun and song, of shade and bower
 A full-moon'd serenading night.

"Sweet melodics were in the air,
 And tame birds caroll'd everywhere.
 I listened to the lisp'ing grove
 And cooing pink-eyed turtle dove,
 I loved her with the holiest love;
 Believing with a brave belief
 That everything beneath the skies
 Was beautiful and born to love,
 That man had but to love, believe,
 And earth would be a paradise
 As beautiful as that above.
 My goddess, Beauty, I adored,
 Devoutly, fervid, her alone;
 My Priestess, Love, unceasing
 pour'd
 Pure incense on her altar-stone.

"I carved my name in coarse
 design
 Once on a birch down by the way,
 At which she gazed, as she would
 say,
 'What does this say? What is this
 sign?'
 And when I gaily said, 'Some day
 Some one will come and read my
 name,
 And I will live in song and fame,
 Entwined with many a mountain
 tale,
 As he who first found this sweet
 vale,
 And they will give the place my
 name,'

She was most sad, and troubled
 much,
 And looked in silence far away;
 Then started trembling from my
 touch,
 And when she turn'd her face again,
 I read unutterable pain.

"At last she answered through her
 tears,
 'Ah! yes; this, too, foretells my
 fears:
 Yes, they will come—my race must
 go
 As fades a vernal fall of snow;
 And you be known, and I forgot
 Like these brown leaves that rust and
 rot
 Beneath my feet; and it is well:
 I do not seek to thrust my name
 On those who here, hereafter, dwell,
 Because I have before them dwelt;
 They too will have their talcs to tell,
 They too will have their time and
 fame.

"'Yes, they will come, come even
 now;
 The dim ghosts on yon mountain's
 brow,
 Gray Fathers of my tribe and race,
 Do beckon to us from their place,
 And hurl red arrows through the air
 At night, to bid our braves beware.
 A footprint by the clear McCloud,
 Unlike aught ever seen before,
 Is seen. The crash of rifles loud,
 Is heard along its farther shore.'

"What tall and tawny men were
 these,

As somber, silent, as the trees
 They moved among! and sad some
 way
 With temper'd sadness, ever they,—
 Yet not with sorrow born of fear.
 The shadow of their destinies
 They saw approaching year by year,
 And murmur'd not. They saw the
 sun
 Go down; they saw the peaceful
 moon
 Move on in silence to her rest,
 Saw white streams winding to the
 west;
 And thus they knew that oversoon,
 Somehow, somewhere, for every one
 Was rest beyond the setting sun.
 They knew not, never dream'd of
 doubt,
 But turn'd to death as to a sleep,
 And died with eager hands held out
 To reaching hands beyond the
 deep,—
 And died with choicest bow at hand,
 And quiver full, and arrow drawn
 For use, when sweet tomorrow's
 dawn
 Should waken in the Spirit Land.

“What wonder that I linger'd
 there
 With Nature's children! Could I
 part
 With those that met me heart to
 heart,
 And made me welcome, spoke me
 fair,
 Were first of all that understood
 My waywardness from others' ways,
 My worship of the true and good,
 And earnest love of Nature's God?

Go court the mountains in the
 clouds,
 And clashing thunder, and the
 shrouds
 Of tempests, and eternal shocks,
 And fast and pray as one of old
 In earnestness, and ye shall hold
 The mysteries; shall hold the rod
 That passes seas, that smites the
 rocks
 Where streams of melody and song
 Shall run as white streams rush and
 flow
 Down from the mountains' crests of
 snow,
 Forever; to a thirsting throng.

“Between the white man and the
 red
 There lies no neutral, halfway
 ground.
 I heard afar the thunder sound
 That soon should burst above my
 head,
 And made my choice; I laid my
 plan,
 And childlike chose the weaker side;
 And ever have, and ever will,
 While might is wrong and wrongs
 remain,
 As careless of the world as I
 Am careless of a cloudless sky.
 With wayward and romantic joy
 I gave my pledge like any boy,
 But kept my promise like a man,
 And lost; yet with the lesson still
 Would gladly do the same again.

““They come! they come! the pale-
 face come!”

The chieftain shouted where he
stood,
Sharp watching at the margin wood,
And gave the war-whoop's treble
yell,
That like a knell on fond hearts
fell
Far watching from my rocky home.

“No nodding plumes or banners
fair
Unfurl'd or fretted through the air;
No screaming fife or rolling drum
Did challenge brave of soul to come;
But, silent, sinew-bows were strung,
And, sudden, heavy quivers hung
And, swiftly, to the battle sprung
Tall painted braves with tufted hair,
Like death-black banners in the air.

“And long they fought, and firm
and well
And silent fought, and silent fell,
Save when they gave the fearful
yell
Of death, defiance, or of hate.
But what were feathered flints to
fate?
And what were yells to seething
lead?
And what the few and untrained
feet
To troops that came with martial
tread,
And moved by wood and hill and
stream
As thick as people in a street,
As strange as spirits in a dream?

“From pine and poplar, here and
there,

A cloud, a flash, a crash, a thud,
A warrior's garments roll'd in blood,
A yell that rent the mountain air
Of fierce defiance and despair,
Told all who fell, and when and
where.

Then tighter drew the coils around,
And closer grew the battle-ground,
And fewer feather'd arrows fell,
And fainter grew the battle yell,
Until upon that hill was heard
The short, sharp whistle of the bird:
Until that blood-soaked battle hill
Was still as death, so more than still.

“The calm, that cometh after all,
Look'd sweetly down at shut of
day,
Where friend and foe commingled lay
Like leaves of forest as they fall.
Afar the somber mountains frown'd,
Here tall pines wheel'd their shadows
round,
Like long, slim fingers of a hand
That sadly pointed out the dead.
Like some broad shield high over-
head
The great white moon led on and on,
As leading to the better land.
All night I heard black cricket's
trill,
A night-bird calling from the hill—
The place was so profoundly still.

“The mighty chief at last was
down,
A broken gate of brass and pride!
His hair all dust, and this his crown!
His firm lips were compress'd in
hate
To foes, yet all content with fate;

While, circled round him thick, the
 foe
 Had folded hands in dust, and
 died.

His tomahawk lay at his side,
 All blood, beside his broken bow.
 One arm stretch'd out, still over-
 bold,
 One hand half doubled hid in dust,
 And clutch'd the earth, as if to hold
 His hunting grounds still in his
 trust.

“Here tall grass bow'd its tassel'd
 head
 In dewy tears above the dead,
 And there they lay in crook'd fern,
 That waved and wept above by
 turn:
 And further on, by somber trees,
 They lay, wild heroes of wild deeds,
 In shrouds alone of weeping weeds,
 Bound in a never-to-be-broken peace.

“No trust that day had been
 betrayed;
 Not one had falter'd, not one brave
 Survived the fearful struggle, save
 One—save I the renegade,
 The red man's friend, and—they
 held me so
 For this alone—the white man's foe.

“They bore me bound for many a
 day
 Through fen and wild, by foamy
 flood,
 From my dear mountains far away,
 Where an adobé prison stood
 Beside a sultry, sullen town,
 With iron eyes and stony frown;

And in a dark and narrow cell,
 So hot it almost took my breath,
 And seem'd but some outpost of
 hell,

They thrust me—as if I had been
 A monster, in a monster's den.
 I cried aloud, I courted death,
 I call'd unto a strip of sky,
 The only thing beyond my cell
 That I could see, but no reply
 Came but the echo of my breath.
 I paced—how long I cannot tell—
 My reason fail'd, I knew no more,
 And swooning, fell upon the floor.
 Then months went on, till deep one
 night,
 When long thin bars of cool moon-
 light
 Lay shimmering along the floor,
 My senses came to me once more.

“My eyes look'd full into her
 eyes—
 Into her soul so true and tried,
 I thought myself in paradise,
 And wonder'd when she too had
 died.
 And then I saw the striped light
 That struggled past the prison bar,
 And in an instant, at the sight,
 My sinking soul fell just as far
 As could a star loosed by a jar
 From out the setting in a ring,
 The purpled semi-circled ring
 That seems to circle us at night.

“She saw my senses had return'd,
 Then swift to press my pallid face—
 Then, as if spurn'd, she sudden
 turn'd
 Her sweet face to the prison wall;

Her bosom rose, her hot tears fell
 Fast as drip moss-stones in a well,
 And then, as if subduing all
 In one strong struggle of the soul
 Be what they were of vows or fears,
 With kisses and hot tender tears,
 There in the deadly, loathsome place,
 She bathed my pale and piteous
 face.

“I was so weak I could not speak
 Or press my pale lips to her cheek;
 I only looked my wish to share
 The secret of her presence there.
 Then looking through her falling
 hair,
 She press'd her finger to her lips,
 More sweet than sweets the brown
 bee sips.
 More sad than any grief untold,
 More silent than the milk-white
 moon,
 She turned away. I heard unfold
 An iron door, and she was gone.

“At last, one midnight, I was free;
 Again I felt the liquid air
 Around my hot brow like a sea,
 Sweet as my dear Madonna's prayer,
 Or benedictions on the soul;
 Pure air, which God gives free to
 all,
 Again I breathed without control—
 Pure air that man would fain en-
 thrall;
 God's air, which man hath seized and
 sold
 Unto his fellow-man for gold.

“I bow'd down to the bended sky,
 I toss'd my two thin hands on high,

I call'd unto the crooked moon,
 I shouted to the shining stars,
 With breath and rapture uncon-
 troll'd,
 Like some wild school-boy loosed at
 noon,
 Or comrade coming from the wars,
 Hailing his companiers of old.

“Short time for shouting or
 delay,—
 The cock is shrill, the east is gray,
 Pursuit is made, we must away.
 They cast me on a sinewy steed,
 And bid me look to girth and
 guide—
 A caution of but little need.
 I dash the iron in his side,
 Swift as the shooting stars I ride;
 I turn, I see, to my dismay,
 A silent rider red as they;
 I glance again—it is my bride,
 My love, my life, rides at my side.

“By gulch and gorge and brake and
 all,
 Swift as the shining meteors fall,
 We fly, and never sound nor word
 But ringing mustang hoof is heard,
 And limbs of steel and lungs of
 steam
 Could not be stronger than theirs
 seem.
 Grandly as in some joyous dream,
 League on league, and hour on hour,
 Far, far from keen pursuit, or power
 Of sheriff or bailiff, high or low,
 Into the bristling hills we go.

“Into the tumbled, clear McCloud,
 White as the foldings of a shroud;

We dash into the dashing stream,
 We breast the tide, we drop the rein,
 We clutch the streaming, tangled
 mane—

And yet the rider at my side
 Has never look nor word replied.

“Out in its foam, its rush, its roar,
 Breasting away to the farther shore;
 Steadily, bravely, gain'd at last,
 Gain'd where never a dastard foe
 Has dared to come, or friend to go.
 Pursuit is baffled and danger pass'd.

“Under an oak whose wide arms
 were

Lifting aloft, as if in prayer,
 Under an oak where the shining
 moon

Like feather'd snow in a winter
 noon

Quiver'd, sifted, and drifted down
 In spars and bars on her shoulders
 brown:

And yet she was as silent still
 As block stones toppled from the
 hill—

Great basalt blocks that near us lay,
 Deep nestled in the grass untrod
 By aught save wild beasts of the
 wood—

Great, massive, squared, and chisel'd
 stone,

Like columns that had toppled down
 From temple dome or tower crown,
 Along some drifted, silent way
 Of desolate and desert town
 Built by the children of the sun.
 And I in silence sat on one,
 And she stood gazing far away

To where her childhood forests lay,
 Still as the stone I sat upon.

“I sought to catch her to my
 breast

And charm her from her silent
 mood;

She shrank as if a beam, a breath,
 Then silently before me stood,
 Still, coldly, as the kiss of death,
 Her face was darker than a pall,
 Her presence was so proudly tall,
 I would have started from the stone
 Where I sat gazing up at her,
 As from a form to earth unknown,
 Had I possess'd the power to stir.

“‘O touch me not, no more, no
 more;

'Tis past, and my sweet dream is
 o'er.

Impure! Impure! Impure!’ she
 cried,

In words as sweetly, weirdly wild
 As mingling of a rippled tide,
 And music on the waters spill'd. . . .

‘But you are free. Fly! Fly alone.
 Yes, you will win another bride
 In some far clime where nought is
 known

Of all that you have won or lost,
 Or what your liberty has cost;
 Will win you name, and place, and
 power,

And ne'er recall this face, this hour,
 Save in some secret, deep regret,
 Which I forgive and you'll forget.

Your destiny will lead you on
 Where, open'd wide to welcome you,
 Rich, ardent hearts and bosoms are,
 And snowy arms, more purely fair,

And breasts—who dare say breasts
more true?

“ ‘They said you had deserted me,
Had rued you of your wood and
wild.

I knew, I knew it could not be,
I trusted as a trusting child.
I cross'd yon mountains bleak and
high

That curve their rough backs to the
sky,

I rode the white-maned mountain
flood,

And track'd for weeks the trackless
wood.

The good God led me, as before,
And brought me to your prison-door.

“ ‘That madden'd call! that fever'd
moan!

I heard you in the midnight call
My own name through the massive
wall,

In my sweet mountain-tongue and
tone—

And yet you call'd so feebly wild,
I near mistook you for a child.

“ ‘The keeper with his clinking
keys

I sought, implored upon my knees
That I might see you, feel your
breath,

Your brow, or breathe you low
replies

Of comfort in your lonely death.

His red face shone, his redder eyes
Were like a fiend's that feeds on lies.

Again I heard your feeble moan,
I cried—unto a heart of stone.

Ah! why the hateful horrors tell?
Enough! I crept into your cell.

“ ‘I nursed you, lured you back to
life,

And when you knew, and called me
wife

And love, with pale lips rife
With love and feeble loveliness,

I turn'd away, I hid my face,
In mad reproach and such distress,

In dust down in that loathsome
place.

“ ‘And then I vow'd a solemn vow
That you should live, live and be
free.

And you have lived—are free; and
now

Too slow yon red sun comes to see
My life or death, or me again.

Oh, death! the peril and the pain
I have endured! the dark, dark
stain

That I did take on my fair soul,
All, all to save you, make you free,

Are more than mortal can endure;
But flame can make the foulest
pure.

“ ‘Behold this finished funeral
pyre,

All ready for the form and fire,
Which these, my own hands, did
prepare

For this last night; then lay me
there.

I would not hide me from my God
Beneath the cold and sullen sod,

But, wrapped in fiery shining shroud,
Ascend to Him, a wreathing cloud.'

"She paused, she turn'd, she lean'd
apace

Her glance and half-regretting face,
As if to yield herself to me;
And then she cried, 'It cannot be,
For I have vow'd a solemn vow,
And, God help me to keep it now!'

"I stood with arms extended
wide

To catch her to my burning breast;
She caught a dagger from her side
And, ere I knew to stir or start,
She plunged it in her bursting heart,
And fell into my arms and died—
Died as my soul to hers was press'd.
Died as I held her to my breast,
Died without one word or moan,
And left me with my dead—alone.

"I laid her warm upon the pile,
And underneath the lispig oak
I watch'd the columns of dark
smoke

Embrace her sweet lips, with a
smile
Of frenzied fierceness, while there
came

A gleaming column of red flame,
That grew a grander monument
Above her nameless noble mould
Than ever bronze or marble lent
To king or conqueror of old.

"It seized her in its hot embrace.
And leapt as if to reach the stars.
Then looking up I saw a face
So saintly and so sweetly fair,
So sad, so pitying, and so pure,
I nigh forgot the prison bars,

And for one instant, one alone,
I felt I could forgive, endure.

"I laid a circlet of white stone,
And left her ashes there alone.
Years after, years of storm and pain,
I sought that sacred ground again.
I saw the circle of white stone
With tall, wild grasses overgrown.
I did expect, I know not why,
From out her sacred dust to find
Wild pinks and daisies blooming
fair;

And when I did not find them there
I almost deem'd her God unkind,
Less careful of her dust than I.

"But why the dreary tale pro-
long?

And deem you I confess'd me wrong,
That I did bend a patient knee
To all the deep wrongs done to me?
That I, because the prison mould
Was on my brow, and all its chill
Was in my heart as chill as night,
Till soul and body both were cold,
Did curb my free-born mountain will
And sacrifice my sense of right?

"No! no! and had they come that
day

While I with hands and garments
red

Stood by her pleading, patient clay,
The one lone watcher by my dead,
With cross-hilt dagger in my hand,
And offer'd me my life and all
Of titles, power, or of place,
I should have spat them in the face,
And spurn'd them every one.
I live as God gave me to live,

I see as God gave me to see.
 'Tis not my nature to forgive,
 Or cringe and plead and bend my
 knee
 To God or man in woe or weal,
 In penitence I cannot feel.

“I do not question school nor
 creed
 Of Christian, Protestant, or Priest;
 I only know that creeds to me
 Are but new names for mystery,
 That good is good from east to east,
 And more I do not know nor need
 To know, to love my neighbor well.
 I take their dogmas, as they tell,
 Their pictures of their Godly good,
 In garments thick with heathen blood
 Their heaven with his harp of gold,
 Their horrid pictures of their hell—
 Take hell and heaven undenied,
 Yet were the two placed side by
 side,
 Placed full before me for my choice,
 As they are pictured, best and worst,
 As they are peopled, tame and bold,
 The canonized, and the accursed
 Who dared to think, and thinking
 speak,
 And speaking act, bold cheek to
 cheek,
 I would in transports choose the first,
 And enter hell with lifted voice.

“Go read the annals of the North
 And records there of many a wail,
 Of marshaling and going forth
 For missing sheriffs, and for men
 Who fell and none knew how or
 when,—

Who disappear'd on mountain trail,
 Or in some dense and narrow vale.
 Go, traverse Trinity and Scott,
 That curve their dark backs to the
 sun:
 Go, prowl them all. Lo! have they
 not
 The chronicles of my wild life?
 My secret on their lips of stone,
 My archives built of human bone?
 Go, range their wilds as I have done,
 From snowy crest to sleeping vales,
 And you will find on every one
 Enough to swell a thousand tales.

* * * * *

“The soul cannot survive alone,
 And hate will die, like other things;
 I felt an ebbing in my rage;
 I hunger'd for the sound of one,
 Just one familiar word,—
 Yearn'd but to hear my fellow
 speak,
 Or sound of woman's mellow tone,
 As beats the wild, imprisoned bird,
 That long nor kind nor mate has
 heard,
 With bleeding wings and panting
 beak
 Against its iron cage.

“I saw a low-roof'd rancho lie,
 Far, far below, at set of sun,
 Along the foot-hills crisp and dun—
 A lone sweet star in lower sky;
 Saw children passing to and fro,
 The busy housewife come and go,
 And white cows come at her com-
 mand,
 And none look'd larger than my
 hand.

Then worn and torn, and tann'd and
brown,
And heedless all, I hasten'd down;
A wanderer, wandering lorn and late,
I stood before the rustic gate.

“Two little girls, with brown feet
bare,
And tangled, tossing, yellow hair,
Play'd on the green, fantastic
dress'd,
Around a great Newfoundland
brute
That lay half-resting on his breast,
And with his red mouth open'd
wide
Would make believe that he would
bite,
As they assail'd him left and right,
And then sprang to the other side,
And fill'd with shouts the willing
air.

Oh, sweeter far than lyre or lute
To my then hot and thirsty heart,
And better self so wholly mute,
Were those sweet voices calling there.

“Though some sweet scenes my
eyes have seen,
Some melody my soul has heard,
No song of any maid, or bird,
Or splendid wealth of tropic scene,
Or scene or song of anywhere,
Has my impulsive soul so stirr'd,
As those young angels sporting
there.

“The dog at sight of me arose,
And nobly stood with lifted nose,
Afront the children, now so still,
And staring at me with a will.

‘Come in, come in,’ the rancher
cried,
As here and there the housewife
hied;
‘Sit down, sit down, you travel late.
What news of politics or war?
And are you tired? Go you far?
And where you from? Be quick, my
Kate,
This boy is sure in need of food.’
The little children close by stood,
And watch'd and gazed inquiringly,
Then came and climbed upon my
knee.

“‘That there's my Ma,’ the eldest
said,
And laugh'd and toss'd her pretty
head;
And then, half bating of her joy,
‘Have you a Ma, you stranger boy?
And there hangs Carlo on the wall
As large as life; that mother drew
With berry stains upon a shred
Of tattered tent; but hardly you
Would know the picture his at all,
For Carlo's black, and this is red.’
Again she laugh'd and shook her
head,
And shower'd curls all out of place;
Then sudden sad, she raised her face
To mine, and tenderly she said,
‘Have you, like us, a pretty home?
Have you, like me, a dog and toy?
Where do you live, and whither
roam?
And where's your Pa, poor stranger
boy?’

“It seem'd so sweetly out of
place

Again to meet my fellow-man,
I gazed and gazed upon his face
As something I had never seen.
The melody of woman's voice
Fell on my ear as falls the rain
Upon the weary, waiting plain.
I heard, and drank and drank again,
As earth with crack'd lips drinks the
rain,

In green to revel and rejoice.
I ate with thanks my frugal food,
The first return'd for many a day.
I had met kindness by the way!
I had at last encounter'd good!

"I sought my couch, but not to
sleep;
New thoughts were coursing strong
and deep
My wild, impulsive passion-heart;
I could not rest, my heart was
moved,
My iron will forgot its part,
And I wept like a child reproved.

"I lay and pictured me a life
Afar from peril, hate, or pain;
Enough of battle, blood, and strife,
I would take up life's load again;
And ere the breaking of the morn
I swung my rifle from the horn,
And turned to other scenes and lands
With lighten'd heart and whiten'd
hands.

"Where orange blossoms never die,
Where red fruits ripen all the year
Beneath a sweet and balmy sky,
Far from my language or my land,
Reproach, regret, or shame or fear,
I came in hope, I wander'd here—

Yes, here; and this red, bony hand
That holds this glass of ruddy
cheer—"

"'Tis he!" hiss'd the crafty
advocate.
He sprang to his feet, and hot with
hate
He reach'd his hands, and he call'd
aloud,
"'Tis the renegade of the red
McCloud!"

Slowly the Alcalde rose from his
chair;
"Hand me, touch me, him who
dare!"
And his heavy glass on the board of
oak
He smote with such savage and
mighty stroke
It ground to dust in his bony hand,
And heavy bottles did clink and
tip
As if an earthquake were in the
land.

He tower'd up, and in his ire
Seem'd taller than a church's spire.
He gazed a moment—and then, the
while
An icy cold and defiant smile
Did curve his thin and livid lip,
He turn'd on his heel, he strode
through the hall
Grand as a god, so grandly tall,
Yet white and cold as a chisel'd
stone;
He passed him out the adobé door
Into the night, and he passed alone,
And never was known or heard of
more.

THE ARIZONIAN

*Come to my sunland! Come with me
To the land I love; where the sun and
sea
Are wed for ever; where the palm and
pine
Are fill'd with singers; where tree
and vine
Are voiced with prophets! O come,
and you
Shall sing a song with the seas that
swirl
And kiss their hands to that cold
white girl,
To the maiden moon in her mantle of
blue.*

“And I have said, and I say it
ever,
As the years go on and the world goes
over,
'Twere better to be content and
clever,
In the tending of cattle and tossing of
clover,
In the grazing of cattle and growing
of grain,
Than a strong man striving for fame
or gain;
Be even as kine in the red-tipped
clover:
For they lie down and their rests are
rests,
And the days are theirs, come sun,
come rain,
To rest, rise up, and repose again;
While we wish, yearn, and do pray in
vain,
And hope to ride on the billows of
bosoms,

And hope to rest in the haven of
breasts,
Till the heart is sicken'd and the fair
hope dead—
Be even as clover with its crown of
blossoms,
Even as blossoms ere the bloom is shed,
Kiss'd by the kine and the brown
sweet bee—
For these have the sun, and moon,
and air,
And never a bit of the burthen of care:
Yet with all of our caring what more
have we?

“I would court content like a lover
lonely,
I would woo her, win her, and wear
her only.
I would never go over the white sea
wall
For gold or glory or for aught at all.”

He said these things as he stood
with the Squire
By the river's rim in the field of
clover,
While the stream flow'd on and the
clouds flew over,
With the sun tangled in and the
fringes afire.

So the Squire lean'd with a kindly
glory
To humor his guest, and to hear his
story;
For his guest had gold, and he yet
was clever,
And mild of manner; and, what was
more, he,

In the morning's ramble had praised
the kine,
The clover's reach and the meadows
fine,
And so made the Squire his friend
forever.

His brow was brown'd by the sun
and weather,
And touch'd by the terrible hand of
time;
His rich black beard had a fringe of
rime,
As silk and silver inwove together.
There were hoops of gold all over his
hands,
And across his breast in chains and
bands,
Broad and massive as belts of leather.

And the belts of gold were bright in
the sun,
But brighter than gold his black eyes
shone
From their sad face-setting so swarth
and dun—
Brighter than beautiful Santan stone,
Brighter even than balls of fire,
As he said, hot-faced, in the face of
the Squire:—

“The pines bow'd over, the stream
bent under,
The cabin was cover'd with thatches
of palm
Down in a cañon so deep, the wonder
Was what it could know in its clime
but calm:
Down in a cañon so cleft asunder
By sabre-stroke in the young world's
prime,

It look'd as if broken by bolts of
thunder,
And burst asunder and rent and
riven
By earthquakes driven that turbulent
time
The red cross lifted red hands of
heaven.

“And this in that land where the
sun goes down,
And gold is gather'd by tide and by
stream,
And the maidens are brown as the
cocoa brown,
And life is a love and a love is a
dream;
Where the winds come in from the far
Cathay
With odor of spices and balm and
bay,
And summer abideth with man
always,
Nor comes in a tour with the stately
June,
And comes too late and returns too
soon.

“She stood in the shadows as the
sun went down,
Fretting her hair with her fingers
brown,
As tall as the silk-tipp'd tassel'd
corn—
Stood watching, dark brow'd, as I
weighed the gold
We had wash'd that day where the
river roll'd;
And her proud lip curl'd with a sun-
clime scorn,

As she ask'd, 'Is she better, or fairer
than I?—

She, that blonde in the land
beyond,

Where the sun is hid and the seas are
high—

That you gather in gold as the years
go by,

And hoard and hide it away for her
As the squirrel burrows the black
pine-burr?'

"Now the gold weigh'd well, but
was lighter of weight

Than we two had taken for days of
late,

So I was fretted, and brow a-frown,
I said, half-angered, with head held
down—

'Well, yes she is fairer; and I loved her
first:

And shall love her last, come worst to
the worst.'

"Her lips grew livid, and her eyes
afire

As I said this thing; and higher and
higher

The hot words ran, when the booming
thunder

Peal'd in the crags and the pine-tops
under,

While up by the cliff in the murky
skies

It look'd as the clouds had caught the
fire—

The flash and fire of her wonderful
eyes!

"She turn'd from the door and
down to the river,

And mirror'd her face in the whimsi-
cal tide,

Then threw back her hair as one
throwing a quiver,

As an Indian throws it back far from
his side

And free from his hands, swinging
fast to the shoulder

When rushing to battle; and, turning,
she sigh'd

And shook, and shiver'd as aspens
shiver.

Then a great green snake slid into
the river,

Glistening green, and with eyes of fire;
Quick, double-handed she seized a
boulder,

And cast it with all the fury of
passion,

As with lifted head it went curving
across,

Swift darting its tongue like a fierce
desire,

Curving and curving, lifting higher
and higher,

Bent and beautiful as a river moss;
Then, smitten, it turn'd, bent, broken
and doubled

And lick'd, red-tongued, like a forked
fire,

Then sank and the troubled waters
bubbled

And so swept on in the old swift
fashion.

"I lay in my hammock: the air was
heavy

And hot and threat'ning; the very
heaven

Was holding its breath; and bees in a
bevy

Hid under my thatch; and birds were
driven
In clouds to the rocks in a hurried
whirr
As I peer'd down by the path for her.

“She stood like a bronze bent over
the river,
The proud eyes fix'd, the passion
unspoken.
Then the heavens broke like a great
dyke broken;
And ere I fairly had time to give
her
A shout of warning, a rushing of
wind
And the rolling of clouds and a deaf-
ening din
And a darkness that had been black
to the blind
Came down, as I shouted ‘Come in!
Come in!
Come under the roof, come up from
the river,
As up from a grave—come now, or
come never!’”
The tassel'd tops of the pines were as
weeds,
The red-woods rock'd like to lake-
side reeds,
And the world seemed darken'd and
drown'd forever,
While I crouched low; as a beast that
bleeds.

“One time in the night as the black
wind shifted,
And a flash of lightning stretch'd
over the stream,
I seemed to see her with her brown
hands lifted—

Only seem'd to see as one sees in a
dream—
With her eyes wide wild and her pale
lips press'd,
And the blood from her brow, and the
flood to her breast;
When the flood caught her hair as
flax in a wheel,
And wheeling and whirling her round
like a reel;
Laugh'd loud her despair, then leapt
like a steed,
Holding tight to her hair, folding
fast to her heel,
Laughing fierce, leaping far as if
spurr'd to its speed!

“Now mind, I tell you all this did
but seem—
Was seen as you see fearful scenes in a
dream;
For what the devil could the lightning
show
In a night like that, I should like to
know?

“And then I slept, and sleeping I
dream'd
Of great green serpents with tongues
of fire,
And of death by drowning, and of
after death—
Of the day of judgment, wherein it
seem'd
That she, the heathen, was bidden
higher,
Higher than I; that I clung to her
side,
And clinging struggled, and strug-
gling cried,

And crying, wakened all weak of my
breath.

“Long leaves of the sun lay over
the floor,
And a chipmunk chirp'd in the open
door,
While above on his crag the eagle
scream'd,
Scream'd as he never had scream'd
before.
I rush'd to the river: the flood had
gone
Like a thief, with only his tracks
upon
The weeds and grasses and warm wet
sand,
And I ran after with reaching hand,
And call'd as I reach'd, and reach'd as
I ran,
And ran till I came to the cañon's
van,
Where the waters lay in a bent
lagoon,
Hook'd and crook'd like the horned
moon.

“And there in the surge where the
waters met,
And the warm wave lifted, and the
winds did fret
The wave till it foam'd with rage on
the land,
She lay with the wave on the warm
white sand;
Her rich hair trailed with the trailing
weeds,
While her small brown hands lay
prone or lifted
As the waves sang strophes in the
broken reeds,

Or paused in pity, and in silence
sifted
Sands of gold, as upon her grave.

“And as sure as you see yon brows-
ing kine,
And breathe the breath of your
meadows fine,
When I went to my waist in the warm
white wave
And stood all pale in the wave to my
breast,
And reach'd my hands in her rest and
unrest,
Her hands were lifted and reach'd
to mine.

“Now mind, I tell you, I cried,
'Come in!
Come into the house, come out from
the hollow,
Come out of the storm, come up from
the river!'
Aye, cried, and call'd in that desolate
din,
Though I did not rush out, and in
plain words give her
A wordy warning of the flood to
follow,
Word by word, and letter by letter;
But she knew it as well as I, and
better;
For once in the desert of New Mexico
When we two sought frantically far
and wide
For the famous spot where Apaches
shot
With bullets of gold their buffalo,
And she stood faithful to death at my
side,
I threw me down in the hard hot sand

Utterly famish'd and ready to die;
 Then a speck arose in the red-hot
 sky—
 A speck no larger than a lady's
 hand—
 While she at my side bent tenderly
 over,
 Shielding my face from the sun as a
 cover,
 And wetting my face, as she watch'd
 by my side,
 From a skin she had borne till the
 high noontide,
 (I had emptied mine in the heat of the
 morning)
 When the thunder mutter'd far over
 the plain
 Like a monster bound or a beast in
 pain:
 She sprang the instant, and gave the
 warning,
 With her brown hand pointed to the
 burning skies,
 For I was too weak unto death to
 rise.
 But she knew the peril, and her iron
 will,
 With a heart as true as the great
 North Star,
 Did bear me up to the palm-tipp'd
 hill,
 Where the fiercest beasts in a brother-
 hood,
 Beasts that had fled from the plain
 and far,
 In perfectest peace expectant stood,
 With their heads held high, and their
 limbs a-quiver.
 Then ere she barely had time to
 breathe
 The boiling waters began to scethe

From hill to hill in a booming river,
 Beating and breaking from hill to
 hill—

Even while yet the sun shot fire,
 Without the shield of a cloud above—
 Filling the canon as you would fill
 A wine-cup, drinking in swift desire,
 With the brim new-kiss'd by the lips
 you love!

“So you see she knew—knew per-
 fectly well,
 As well as I could shout and tell,
 That the mountain would send a flood
 to the plain,
 Sweeping the gorge like a hurricane
 When the fire flashed and the thunder
 fell.

“Therefore it is wrong, and I say
 therefore
 Unfair, that a mystical, brown-
 wing'd moth
 Or midnight bat should forevermore
 Fan past my face with its wings of
 air,
 And follow me up, down, every-
 where,
 Flit past, pursue me, or fly before,
 Dimly limning in each fair place
 The full fixed eyes and the sad, brown
 face,
 So forty times worse than if it were
 wrath!

“I gather'd the gold I had hid in
 the earth,
 Hid over the door and hid under the
 hearth:
 Hoarded and hid, as the world went
 over,

For the love of a blonde by a sun-
brown'd lover,
And I said to myself, as I set my
face
To the East and afar from the deso-
late place,
'She has braided her tresses, and
through her tears
Look'd away to the West for years,
the years
That I have wrought where the sun
tans brown;
She has waked by night, she has
watch'd by day,
She has wept and wonder'd at my
delay,
Alone and in tears, with her head held
down,
Where the ships sail out and the seas
whirl in,
Forgetting to knit and refusing to
spin.
'She shall lift her head, she shall
see her lover,
She shall hear his voice like a sea that
rushes,
She shall hold his gold in her hands of
snow,
And down on his breast she shall hide
her blushes,
And never a care shall her true heart
know,
While the clods are below, or the
clouds are above her.'

"On the fringe of the night she
stood with her pitcher
At the old town fountain: and oh!
passing fair.
'I am riper now,' I said, 'but am
richer,'

And I lifted my hand to my beard
and hair;
'I am burnt by the sun, I am brown'd
by the sea;
I am white of my beard, and am bald,
may be;
Yet for all such things what can her
heart care?'
Then she moved; and I said, 'How
marvelous fair!'
She look'd to the West, with her arm
arch'd over;
'Looking for me, her sun-brown'd
lover,'
I said to myself, and my heart grew
bold,
And I stepp'd me nearer to her
presence there,
As approaching a friend; for 'twas
here of old
Our troths were plighted and the tale
was told.

"How young she was and how fair
she was!
How tall as a palm, and how pearly
fair,
As the night came down on her glori-
ous hair!
Then the night grew deep and my
eyes grew dim,
And a sad-faced figure began to swim
And float by my face, flit past, then
pause,
With her hands held up and her head
held down,
Yet face to my face; and that face
was brown!

"Now why did she come and con-
front me there,

With the flood to her face and the
moist in her hair,
And a mystical stare in her marvelous
eyes?

I had call'd to her twice, 'Come in!
come in!

Come out of the storm to the calm
within!

Now, that is the reason I do make
complaint,

That for ever and ever her face should
rise,

Facing face to face with her great sad
eyes.

"I said then to myself, and I say it
again,

Gainsay it you, gainsay it who will,
I shall say it over and over still,

And will say it ever; for I know it
true,

That I did all that a man could do
(Some men's good doings are done in
vain)

To save that passionate child of the
sun,

With her love as deep as the doubled
main,

And as strong and fierce as a troubled
sea—

That beautiful bronze with its soul of
fire,

Its tropical love and its kingly ire—

That child as fix'd as a pyramid,

As tall as a tule and pure as a nun—

And all there is of it, the all I did,

As often happens was done in vain.

So there is no bit of her blood on me.

"'She is marvelous young and won-
derful fair,'

I said again, and my heart grew
bold,

And beat and beat a charge for my
feet.

'Time that defaces us, places, and
replaces us,

And trenches our faces in furrows for
tears,

Has traced here nothing in all these
years.

'Tis the hair of gold that I vex'd of
old,

The marvelous flowing, gold-flower of
hair,

And the peaceful eyes in their sweet
surprise

That I have kiss'd till the head swam
round.

And the delicate curve of the dimpled
chin,

And the pouting lips and the pearls
within

Are the same, the same, but so young,
so fair!

My heart leapt out and back at a
bound,

As a child that starts, then stops,
then lingers.

'How wonderful young!' I lifted my
fingers

And fell to counting the round years
down

That I had dwelt where the sun tans
brown.

"Four full hands, and a finger
over!

'She does not know me, her truant
lover,'

I said to myself, for her brow was
a-frown

As I stepp'd still nearer, with my
 head held down,
 All abash'd and in blushes my brown
 face over;
 'She does not know me, her long lost
 lover,
 For my beard's so long and my skin
 so brown
 That I well might pass myself for
 another.'
 So I lifted my voice and I spake
 aloud:
 'Annette, my darling! Annette Mac-
 lcod!'
 She started, she stopped, she turn'd
 amazed,
 She stood all wonder, her eyes wild-
 wide,
 Then turn'd in terror down the dusk
 wayside,
 And cried as she fled, 'The man he is
 crazed,
 And he calls the maiden name of my
 mother!'

"Let the world turn over, and over,
 and over,
 And toss and tumble like beasts in
 pain,
 Crack, quake, and tremble, and turn
 full over
 And die, and never rise up again;
 Let her dash her peaks through the
 purple cover,
 Let her splash her seas in the face of
 the sun—
 I have no one to love me now, not
 one,
 In a world as full as a world can
 hold;
 So I will get gold as I erst have done,

I will gather a coffin top-full of
 gold;
 To take to the door of Death, to
 buy—
 Buy what, when I double my hands
 and die?

"Go down, go down to your fields
 of clover,
 Go down with your kine to the pas-
 tures fine,
 And give no thought, or care, or
 labor
 For maid or man, good name or
 neighbor;
 For I gave all as the years went
 over—
 Gave all my youth, my years and
 labor,
 And a heart as warm as the world is
 cold,
 For a beautiful, bright, and delusive
 lie:
 Gave youth, gave years, gave love for
 gold;
 Giving and getting, yet what have I?

"The red ripe stars hang low over-
 head,
 Let the good and the light of soul
 reach up,
 Pluck gold as plucking a butter-cup:
 But I am as lead, and my hands are
 red.

"So the sun climbs up, and on, and
 over,
 And the days go out and the tides
 come in,
 And the pale moon rubs on her purple
 cover

Till worn as thin and as bright as
tin;
But the ways are dark and the days
are dreary,
And the dreams of youth are but dust
in age,
And the heart grows harden'd and the
hands grow weary,
Holding them up for their heritage.

“For we promise so great and we
gain so little;
For we promise so great of glory and
gold,
And we gain so little that the hands
grow cold,
And the strained heart-strings wear
bare and brittle,
And for gold and glory we but gain
instead
A fond heart sicken'd and a fair hope
dead.

“So I have said, and I say it
over,
And can prove it over and over
again,
That the four-footed beasts in the
red-crown'd clover,
The piéd and hornéd beasts on the
plain
That lie down, rise up, and repose
again,
And do never take care or toil or
spin,
Nor buy, nor build, nor gather in
gold,
As the days go out and the tides
come in,
Are better than we by a thousand-
fold;
For what is it all, in the words of
fire,
But a vexing of soul and a vain
desire?”

THE LAST TASCHASTAS

*The hills were brown, the heavens were
blue,
A woodpecker pounded a pine-top shell,
While a partridge whistled the whole
day through
For a rabbit to dance in the chaparral,
And a grey grouse drumm'd, “All's
well, all's well.”*

I

Wrinkled and brown as a bag of
leather,
A squaw sits moaning long and low.
Yesterday she was a wife and mother,

Today she is rocking her to and fro,
A childless widow, in weeds and woe.

An Indian sits in a rocky cavern
Chipping a flint in an arrow head;
His children are moving as still as
shadows,
His squaw is moulding some balls of
lead,
With round face painted a battle-red.

An Indian sits in a black-jack jungle,
Where a grizzly bear has rear'd her
young,

Whetting a flint on a granite
boulder.

His quiver is over his brown back
hung—

His face is streak'd and his bow is
strung.

An Indian hangs from a cliff of
granite,

Like an eagle's nest built in the air,
Looking away to the east, and
watching

The smoke of the cabins curling
there,
And eagle's feathers are in his hair.

In belt of wampum, in battle fashion
An Indian watches with wild desire.
He is red with paint, he is black with
passion;

And grand as a god in his savage
ire,
He leans and listens till stars are
a-fire.

All somber and sullen and sad, a
chieftain

Now looks from the mountain far
into the sea.

Just before him beat in the white
billows,

Just behind him the toppled tall
tree

And woodmen chopping, knee
buckled to knee.

II

All together, all in council,
In a cañon wall'd so high
That nothing could ever reach them

Save some stars dropp'd from the
sky.

And the brown bats sweeping by:

Tawny chieftains thin and wiry,
Wise as brief, and brief as bold;
Chieftains young and fierce and
fiery,

Chieftains stately, stern and old,
Bronzed and battered—battered
gold.

Flamed the council-fire brighter,
Flash'd black eyes like diamond
beads,

When a woman told her sorrows,
While a warrior told his deeds,
And a widow tore her weeds.

Then was lit the pipe of council
That their fathers smoked of old,
With its stem of manzanita,
And its bowl of quartz and gold,
And traditions manifold.

How from lip to lip in silence
Burn'd it round the circle red,
Like an evil star slow passing
(Sign of battles and bloodshed)
Round the heavens overhead.

Then the silence deep was broken
By the thunder rolling far,
As gods muttering in anger,
Or the bloody battle-car
Of some Christian king at war.

“'Tis the spirits of my Fathers
Mutt'ring vengeance in the skies;
And the flashing of the lightning

Is the anger of their eyes,
Bidding us in battle rise,"

Cried the war-chief, now uprising,
Naked all above the waist,
While a belt of shells and silver
Held his tamoos to its place,
And the war-paint streaked his face.

Women melted from the council,
Boys crept backward out of sight,
Till alone a wall of warriors
In their paint and battle-plight
Sat reflecting back the light.

"O my Fathers in the storm-
cloud!"

(Red arms tossing to the skies,
While the massive walls of granite
Seem'd to shrink to half their size,
And to mutter strange replies)—

"Soon we come, O angry Fathers,
Down the darkness you have cross'd:
Speak for hunting-grounds there for
us;

Those you left us we have lost—
Gone like blossoms in a frost.

"Warriors!" (and his arms fell folded
On his tawny, swelling breast,
While his voice, now low and plain-
tive

As the waves in their unrest,
Touching tenderness confess'd).

"Where is Wrotto, wise of counsel,
Yesterday here in his place?
A brave lies dead down in the
valley,

Last brave of his line and race,
And a Ghost sits on his face.

"Where his boy the tender-hearted,
With his mother yesternorn?
Lo! a wigwam door is darken'd,
And a mother mourns forlorn,
With her long locks toss'd and torn.

"Lo! our daughters have been
gather'd
From among us by the foe,
Like the lilies they once gather'd
In the spring-time all aglow
From the banks of living snow.

"Through the land where we for
ages
Laid the bravest, dearest dead,
Grinds the savage white man's plow-
share
Grinding sire's bones for bread—
We shall give them blood instead.

"I saw white skulls in a furrow,
And around the cursed plowshare
Clung the flesh of my own children,
And my mother's tangled hair
Trailed along the furrow there.

"Warriors! braves! I cry for ven-
geance!
And the dim ghosts of the dead
Unavenged do wail and shiver
In the storm cloud overhead,
And shoot arrows battle-red."

Then he ceased and sat among
them,
With his long locks backward strown;
They as mute as men of marble,

He a king upon the throne,
And as still as any stone.

Then uprose the war chief's daughter,
Taller than the tassell'd eorn,
Sweeter than the kiss of morning,
Sad as some sweet star of morn,
Half defiant, half forlorn.

Robed in skins of striped panther
Lifting loosely to the air
With a face a shade of sorrow
And blaek eyes that said, Beware!
Nestled in a storm of hair;

With her striped robes around her,
Fasten'd by an eagle's beak,
Stood she by the stately chieftain,
Proud and pure as Shasta's peak,
As she ventured thus to speak:

"Must the tomahawk of battle
Be unburied where it lies,
O, last war ehief of Tasehastas?
Must the smoke of battle rise
Like a storm eloud in the skies?"

"True, some wretch has laid a
brother
With his swift feet to the sun,
But because one bough is broken,
Must the broad oak be undone?
All the fir trees fell'd as one?"

"True, the braves have faded,
wasted
Like ripe blossoms in the rain,
But when we have spent the arrows,
Do we twang the string in vain,
And then snap the bow in twain?"

Like a vessel in the tempest
Shook the warrior, wild and grim,
As he gazed out in the midnight,
As to things that beekon'd him,
And his eyes were moist and dim.

Then he turn'd, and to his bosom
Battle-searr'd, and strong as brass,
Tenderly the warrior press'd her
As if she were made of glass,
Murmuring, "Alas! alas!"

"Loua Ellah! Spotted Lily!
Streaks of blood shall be the sign,
On their cursed and mystie pages,
Representing me and mine!
By Tonatiu's fiery shrine!"

"When the grass shall grow un-
trodden
In my warpath, and the plow
Shall be grinding through this eañon
Where my braves are gather'd now,
Still shall they record this vow:

"War and vegeanee! rise, my war-
riors,
Rise and shout the battle sign,
Ye who love revenge and glory!
Ye for peace, in silence pine,
And no more be braves of mine."

Then the war yell roll'd and cehoed
As they started from the ground,
Till an eagle from his eedar
Starting, answer'd baek the sound,
And flew eireling round and round.

"Enough, enough, my kingly
father,"
And the glory of her eyes

Flash'd the valor and the passion
That may sleep but never dies,
As she proudly thus replies:

"Can the cedar be a willow,
Pliant and as little worth?
It shall stand the king of forests,
Or its fall shall shake the earth,
Desolating heart and hearth!"

III

From cold east shore to warm west
sea
The red men followed the red sun,
And faint and failing fast as he,
They knew too well their race was
run.

This ancient tribe, press'd to the
wave,
There fain had slept a patient
slave,
And died out as red embers die
From flames that once leapt hot and
high;

But, roused to anger, half arose
Around that chief, a sudden flood,
A hot and hungry cry for blood;
Half drowsy shook a feeble hand,
Then sank back in a tame repose,
And left him to his fate and foes,
A stately wreck upon the strand.

His eye was like the lightning's
wing,
His voice was like a rushing flood;
And when a captive bound he stood

His presence look'd the perfect
king.

'Twas held at first that he should
die:

I never knew the reason why
A milder counsel did prevail,
Save that we shrank from blood, and
save
That brave men do respect the
brave.

Down sea sometimes there was a
sail,

And far at sea, they said, an isle,
And he was sentenced to exile;
In open boat upon the sea
To go the instant on the main,
And never under penalty
Of death to touch the shore again.

A troop of bearded bucksinn'd
men

Bore him hard-hurried to the wave,
Placed him swift in the boat; and
then

Swift pushing to the gristling sea,
His daughter rush'd down suddenly,
Threw him his bow, leapt from the
shore

Into the boat beside the brave,
And sat her down and seized the
oar,

And never question'd, made replies,
Or moved her lips, or raised her
eyes.

His breast was like a gate of
brass,

His brow was like a gather'd storm;
There is no chisell'd stone that
has

So stately and complete a form,

In sinew, arm, and every part,
In all the galleries of art.

Gray, bronzed, and naked to the
waist,
He stood half halting in the prow,
With quiver bare and idle bow,
The warm sea fondled with the
shore,
And laid his white face to the sands,
His daughter sat with her sad face
Bent on the wave, with her two
hands
Held tightly to the dripping oar;
And as she sat, her dimpled knee
Bent lithe as wand or willow tree,
So round and full, so rich and free,
That no one would have ever
known
That it had either joint or bone.

Her eyes were black, her face was
brown,
Her breasts were bare and there fell
down
Such wealth of hair, it almost hid
The two, in its rich jetty fold—
Which I had sometime fain forbid,
They were so richer, fuller far
Than any polish'd bronzes are,
And richer hued than any gold.
On her brown arms and her brown
hands
Were bars of gold and golden bands,
Rough hammer'd from the virgin
ore,
So heavy, they could hold no more.

I wonder now, I wonder'd then,
That men who fear'd not gods nor
men

Laid no rude hands at all on her,—
I think she had a dagger slid
Down in her silver'd wampum belt;
It might have been, instead of hilt,
A flashing diamond hurry-hid
That I beheld—I could not know
For certain, we did hasten so;
And I know now less sure than
then;
And years drown memories of men.
Some things have happened since—
and then
This happen'd years and years ago.

“Go, go!” the captain cried, and
smote
With sword and boot the swaying
boat,
Until it quiver'd as at sea
And brought the old chief to his
knee.
He turn'd his face, and turning rose
With hand raised fiercely to his
foes:
“Yes, I will go, last of my race,
Push'd by you robbers ruthlessly
Into the hollows of the sea,
From this my last, last resting
place.
Traditions of my fathers say
A feeble few reach'd for this land,
And we reach'd them a welcome
hand
Of old, upon another shore;
Now they are strong, we weak as
they,
And they have driven us before
Their faces, from that sea to this:
Then marvel not if we have sped
Sometime an arrow as we fled,
So keener than a serpent's kiss.”

He turn'd a time unto the sun
That lay half hidden in the sea,
As in his hollows rock'd asleep,
All trembled and breathed heavily;
Then arch'd his arm, as you have
done,
For sharp masts piercing through the
deep.

No shore or kind ship met his eye,
Or isle, or sail, or anything,
Save white sea gulls on dipping wing,
And mobile sea and molten sky.

"Farewell!—push seaward, child!"
he cried,

And quick the paddle-strokes replied.
Like lightning from the panther-skin,
That bound his loins round about
He snatch'd a poison'd arrow out,
That like a snake lay hid within,
And twang'd his bow. The captain
fell

Prone on his face, and such a yell
Of triumph from that savage rose
As man may never hear again.
He stood as standing on the main,
The topmost main, in proud repose,
And shook his clench'd fist at his
foes,
And call'd, and cursed them every
one.

He heeded not the shouts and shot
That follow'd him, but grand and
grim

Stood up against the level sun;
And, standing so, seem'd in his ire
So grander than some ship on fire.

And when the sun had left the
sea,
That laves Abrup, and Blanco laves,
And left the land to death and me,
The only thing that I could see
Was, ever as the light boat lay
High lifted on the white-back'd
waves,
A head as gray and toss'd as they.

We raised the dead and from his
hands
Pick'd out some shells, clutched as he
lay,
And two by two bore him away,
And wiped his lips of blood and
sands.

We bent and scooped a shallow home,
And laid him warm-wet in his
blood,
Just as the lifted tide a-flood
Came charging in with mouth a-
foam:
And as we turn'd, the sensate thing
Reached up, lick'd out its foamy
tongue,
Lick'd out its tongue and tasted
blood;
The white lips to the red earth
clung
An instant, and then loosning
All hold just like a living thing,
Drew back sad-voiced and shuddering,
All stained with blood, a striped
flood.

JOAQUIN MURIETTA

*Glintings of day in the darkness,
Flashings of flint and steel,
Blended in gossamer texture
The ideal and the real,
Limn'd like the phantom ship shadow
Crowding up under the keel.*

I stand beside the mobile sea,
And sails are spread, and sails are
furl'd;
From farthest corners of the world,
And fold like white wings wearily.
Some ships go up, and some go
down
In haste, like traders in a town.

Afar at sea some white ships flee,
With arms stretch'd like a ghost's to
me,
And cloud-like sails are blown and
curl'd,
Then glide down to the under world.
As if blown bare in winter blasts
Of leaf and limb, tall naked masts
Are rising from the restless sea.
I seem to see them gleam and shine
With clinging drops of dripping
brine.
Broad still brown wings flit here and
there,
Thin sea-blue wings wheel every-
where,
And white wings whistle through the
air;
I hear a thousand sea gulls call.
And San Francisco Bay is white
And blue with sail and sea and light.

.

Behold the ocean on the beach
Kneel lowly down as if in prayer,
I hear a moan as of despair,
While far at sea do toss and reach
Some things so like white pleading
hands

The ocean's thin and hoary hair
Is trail'd along the silver'd sands,
At every sigh and sounding moan.
The very birds shriek in distress
And sound the ocean's monotone.
'Tis not a place for mirthfulness,
But meditation deep, and prayer,
And kneelings on the salted sod,
Where man must own his littleness,
And know the mightiness of God.

Dared I but say a prophecy,
As sang the holy men of old,
Of rock-built cities yet to be
Along these shining shores of gold,
Crowding athirst into the sea,
What wondrous marvels might be
told!
Enough, to know that empire here
Shall burn her loftiest, brightest
star;
Here art and eloquence shall reign,
As o'er the wolf-rear'd realm of old;
Here learn'd and famous from afar,
To pay their noble court, shall come,
And shall not seek or see in vain,
But look and look with wonder
dumb.

Afar the bright Sierras lie
A swaying line of snowy white,
A fringe of heaven hung in sight
Against the blue base of the sky.

I look along each gaping gorge,
I hear a thousand sounding strokes
Like giants rending giant oaks,
Or brawny Vulcan at his forge;
I see pickaxes flash and shine;
Hear great wheels whirling in a
mine.

Here winds a thick and yellow
thread,
A moss'd and silver stream instead;
And trout that leap'd its rippled
tide
Have turn'd upon their sides and
died.

Lo! when the last pick in the mine
Lies rusting red with idleness,
And rot yon cabins in the mold,
And wheels no more croak in distress,
And tall pines reassert command,
Sweet bards along this sunset shore
Their mellow melodies will pour;
Will charm as charmers very wise,
Will strike the harp with master
hand,
Will sound unto the vaulted skies,
The valor of these men of old—
These mighty men of 'Forty-nine;
Will sweetly sing and proudly say,
Long, long ago there was a day
When there were giants in the land.

.

Now who rides rushing on the sight
Hard down yon rocky long defile,
Swift as an eagle in his flight,
Fierce as winter's storm at night
Blown from the bleak Sierra's
height?
Such reckless rider!—I do ween
No mortal man his like has seen.

And yet, but for his long serape
All flowing loose, and black as crape,
And long silk locks of blackest hair
All streaming wildly in the breeze,
You might believe him in a chair,
Or chatting at some country fair,
He rides so grandly at his ease.

But now he grasps a tighter rein,
A red rein wrought in golden chain,
And in his tapidaros stands,
Turns, shouts defiance at his foe.
And now he calmly bares his brow
As if to challenge fate, and now
His hand drops to his saddle-bow
And clutches something gleaming
there
As if to something more than darc.

The stray winds lift the raven curls,
Soft as a fair Castilian girl's,
And bare a brow so manly, high,
Its every feature does belie
The thought he is compell'd to fly;
A brow as open as the sky
On which you gaze and gaze again
As on a picture you have seen
And often sought to see in vain;
A brow of blended pride and pain,
That seems to hold a talc of woe
Or wonder, that you fain would
know
A boy's brow, cut as with a knife,
With many a dubious deed in life.

Again he grasps his glitt'ring rein,
And, wheeling like a hurricane,
Defying wood, or stone, or flood,
Is dashing down the gorge again.
Oh, never yet has prouder steed
Borne master nobler in his need!

There is a glory in his eye
That seems to dare and to defy
Pursuit, or time, or space, or race.
His body is the type of speed,
While from his nostril to his heel
Are muscles as if made of steel.

What crimes have made that red
hand red?
What wrongs have written that
young face
With lines of thought so out of
place?
Where flies he? And from whence
has fled?
And what his lineage and race?
What glitters in his heavy belt,
And from his furr'd cantenas
gleam?
What on his bosom that doth seem
A diamond bright or dagger's hilt?
The iron hoofs that still resound
Like thunder from the yielding
ground
Alone reply; and now the plain,
Quick as you breathe and gaze
again,
Is won, and all pursuit is vain.

I stand upon a mountain rim,
Stone-paved and pattern'd as a
street;
A rock-lipped cañon plunging south,
As if it were earth's open'd mouth,
Yawns deep and darkling at my
feet;
So deep, so distant, and so dim
Its waters wind, a yellow thread,
And call so faintly and so far,
I turn aside my swooning head.

I feel a fierce impulse to leap
Adown the beetling precipice,
Like some lone, lost, uncertain star;
To plunge into a place unknown,
And win a world, all, all my own;
Or if I might not meet such bliss,
At least escape the curse of this.

I gaze again. A gleaming star
Shines back as from some mossy well
Reflected from blue fields afar.
Brown hawks are wheeling here and
there,
And up and down the broken wall
Cling clumps of dark green chaparral,
While from the rent rocks, grey and
bare,
Blue junipers hang in the air.

Here, cedars sweep the stream and
here,
Among the boulders moss'd and
brown
That time and storms have toppled
down
From towers undefiled by man,
Low cabins nestle as in fear,
And look no taller than a span.
From low and shapeless chimneys rise
Some tall straight columns of blue
smoke,
And weld them to the bluer skies;
While sounding down the somber
gorge
I hear the steady pickax stroke,
As if upon a flashing forge.

Another scene, another sound!—
Sharp shots are fretting through the
air,

Red knives are flashing everywhere,
 And here and there the yellow flood
 Is purpled with warm smoking blood.
 The brown hawk swoops low to the
 ground,
 And nimble chipmunks, small and
 still,
 Dart striped lines across the sill
 That manly feet shall press no more.
 The flume lies warping in the sun,
 The pan sits empty by the door,
 The pickax on its bedrock floor
 Lies rusting in the silent mine.
 There comes no single sound nor
 sign
 Of life, beside yon monks in brown
 That dart their dim shapes up and
 down
 The rocks that swelter in the sun;
 But dashing down yon rocky spur,
 Where scarce a hawk would dare to
 whirr,
 A horseman holds his reckless flight.
 He wears a flowing black capote,
 While over all do flow and float
 Long locks of hair as dark as night,
 And hands are red that erst were
 white.

All up and down the land today
 Black desolation and despair
 It seems have set and settled there,
 With none to frighten them away.
 Like sentries watching by the way
 Black chimneys topple in the air,
 And seem to say, Go back, beware!
 While up around the mountain's
 rim
 Are clouds of smoke, so still and
 grim
 They look as they are fasten'd there.

A lonely stillness, so like death,
 So touches, terrifies all things,
 That even rooks that fly o'erhead
 Are hush'd, and seem to hold their
 breath,
 To fly with sullen, muffled wings,
 And heavy as if made of lead.
 Some skulls that crumble to the
 touch,
 Some joints of thin and chalk-like
 bone,
 A tall black chimney, all alone,
 That leans as if upon a crutch,
 Alone are left to mark or tell,
 Instead of cross or cryptic stone,
 Where Joaquin stood and brave men
 fell.

.

The sun is red and flush'd and dry,
 And fretted from his weary beat
 Across the hot and desert sky,
 And swollen as from overheat,
 And failing too; for see, he sinks
 Swift as a ball of burnish'd ore:
 It may be fancy, but methinks
 He never fell so fast before.

I hear the neighing of hot steeds,
 I see the marshaling of men
 That silent move among the trees
 As busily as swarming bees
 With step and stealthiness profound,
 On carpetings of spindled weeds,
 Without a syllable or sound
 Save clashing of their burnish'd arms,
 Clinking dull, deathlike alarms—
 Grim bearded men and brawny men
 That grope among the ghostly trees.
 Were ever silent men as these?
 Was ever somber forest deep

And dark as this? Here one might
 sleep
 While all the weary years went
 round,
 Nor wake nor weep for sun or sound.

A stone's throw to the right, a
 rock
 Has rear'd his head among the
 stars—
 An island in the upper deep—
 And on his front a thousand scars
 Of thunder's crash and earthquake's
 shock
 Are seam'd as if by sabre's sweep
 Of gods, enraged that he should rear
 His front amid their realms of air.

What moves along his beetling
 brow,
 So small, so indistinct and far,
 This side yon blazing evening star,
 Seen through that redwood's shifting
 bough?
 A lookout on the world below?
 A watcher for the friend—or foe?
 This still troop's sentry it must be,
 Yet seems no taller than my knee.

But for the grandeur of this gloom,
 And for the chafing steeds' alarms,
 And brown men's sullen clash of
 arms,
 This were but as a living tomb.
 These weeds are spindled, pale and
 white,
 As if nor sunshine, life, nor light
 Had ever reach'd this forest's heart.
 Above, the redwood boughs entwine
 As dense as copse of tangled vine—
 Above, so fearfully afar,

It seems as 'twere a lesser sky,
 A sky without a moon or star,
 The moss'd boughs are so thick and
 high.

At every lisp of leaf I start!
 Would I could hear a cricket trill,
 Or hear yon sentry from his hill,
 The place does seem so deathly still.
 But see a sudden lifted hand
 From one who still and sullen
 stands,
 With black serape and bloody hands,
 And coldly gives his brief command.

They mount—away! Quick on his
 heel
 He turns and grasps his gleaming
 steel—

Then sadly smiles, and stoops to kiss
 An upturn'd face so sweetly fair,
 So sadly, saintly, purely rare,
 So rich in blessedness and bliss!
 I know she is not flesh and blood,
 But some sweet spirit of this wood;
 I know it by her wealth of hair,
 And step on the unyielding air;
 Her seamless robe of shining white,
 Her soul-deep eyes of darkest night;
 But over all and more than all
 That can be said or can befall,
 That tongue can tell or pen can
 trace,
 That wondrous witchery of face.

Between the trees I see him stride
 To where a red steed fretting stands
 Impatient for his lord's commands;
 And she glides noiseless at his side.

One hand toys with her waving
 hair,

Soft lifting from her shoulders bare;
 The other holds the loosen'd rein,
 And rests upon the swelling mane
 That curls the curved neck o'er and
 o'er,
 Like waves that swirl along the
 shore.

He hears the last retreating sound
 Of iron on volcanic stone,
 That echoes far from peak to plain,
 And 'neath the dense wood's sable
 zone,
 He peers the dark Sierras down.

His hand forsakes her raven hair,
 His eyes have an unearthly glare;
 She shrinks and shudders at his side,
 Then lifts to his her moisten'd eyes,
 And only looks her sad replies.
 A sullenness his soul enthralls,
 A silence born of hate and pride:
 His fierce volcanic heart so deep
 Is stirr'd, his teeth, despite his will,
 Do chatter as if in a chill;
 His very dagger at his side
 Does shake and rattle in its sheath,
 As blades of brown grass in a gale
 Do rustle on the frosted heath:
 And yet he does not bend or weep,
 But sudden mounts, then leans him
 o'er
 To breathe her hot breath but once
 more.

I do not mark the prison'd sighs,
 I do not meet the moisten'd eyes,
 The while he leans him from his
 place
 Down to her sweet uplifted face.

A low sweet melody is heard
 Like cooing of some Balize bird,

So fine it does not touch the air,
 So faint it stirs not anywhere;
 Faint as the falling of the dew,
 Low as a pure unutter'd prayer,
 The meeting, mingling, as it were,
 In that one long, last, silent kiss
 Of souls in paradisaal bliss.

“You must not, shall not, shall not
 go!

To die and leave me here to die!
 Enough of vengeance, Love and I?
 I die for home and—Mexico.”

He leans, he plucks her to his
 breast,
 As plucking Mariposa's flower,
 And now she crouches in her rest
 As resting in some rosy bower.

Erect, again he grasps the rein!
 I see his black steed plunge and poise
 And beat the air with iron feet,
 And curve his noble glossy neck,
 And toss on high his swelling mane,
 And leap—away! he spurns the rein!
 He flies so fearfully and fleet,
 But for the hot hoofs' ringing noise
 'Twould seem as if he were on wings.

And they are gone! Gone like a
 breath,
 Gone like a white sail seen at night
 A moment, and then lost to sight;
 Gone like a star you look upon,
 That glimmers to a bead, a speck,
 Then softly melts into the dawn,
 And all is still and dark as death,
 And who shall sing, for who may
 know
 That mad, glad ride to Mexico?

BITS FROM INA, A DRAMA

*Sad song of the wind in the
mountains
And the sea wave of grass on the plain,
That breaks in bloom foam by the
fountains,
And forests, that breaketh again
On the mountains, as breaketh a main.*

*Bold thoughts that were strong as the
grizzlies,
Now weak in their prison of words;
Bright fancies that flash'd like the
glaciers,
Now dimm'd like the luster of birds,
And butterflies huddled as herds.*

*Sad symphony, wild and unmeasured,
Weed warp, and woof woven in
strouds,
Strange truths that a stray soul had
treasured,
Truths seen as through folding of
shrouds
Or as stars though the rolling of clouds.*

SCENE I.

*A Hacienda near Tezcuco, Mexico.
Young DON CARLOS alone look-
ing out on the moonlit mountain.*

DON CARLOS.

Popocatepetl looms lone like an
island,
Above white cloud-waves that break
up against him;
Around him white buttes in the
moonlight are flashing

Like silver tents pitch'd in the fair
fields of heaven;
While standing in line, in their snows
everlasting,
Flash peaks, as my eyes into heaven
are lifted,
Like mile-stones that lead to the city
Eternal.

Ofttime when the sun and the sea
lay together,
Red-welded as one, in their red bed of
lovers,
Embracing and blushing like loves
newly wedded,
I have trod on the trailing crape
fringes of twilight,
And stood there and listen'd, and
lean'd with lips parted,
Till lordly peaks wrapp'd them, as
chill night blew over,
In great cloaks of sable, like proud
somber Spaniards,
And stalk'd from my presence down
night's corridors.

When the red-curtain'd West has
bent red as with weeping
Low over the couch where the prone
day lay dying,
I have stood with brow lifted, con-
fronting the mountains
That held their white faces of snow in
the heavens,
And said, "It is theirs to array them
so purely,
Because of their nearness to the
temple eternal":

And childlike have said, "They are
fair resting places
For the dear weary dead on their way
up to heaven."

But my soul is not with you to-
night, mighty mountains:
It is held to the levels of earth by an
angel
Far more than a star, earth fallen or
unfall'n,
Yet fierce in her follies and head-
strong and stronger
Than streams of the sea running in
with the billows.

Very well. Let him woo, let him
thrust his white whiskers
And lips pale and purple with death,
in between us;
Let her wed, as she wills, for the gold
of the graybeard.
I will set my face for you, O moun-
tains, my brothers,
For I yet have my honor, my con-
science and freedom,
My fleet-footed mustang, and pistols
rich silver'd;
I will turn as the earth turns her back
on the sun,
But return to the light of her eyes
never more,
While noons have a night and white
seas have a shore.

INA, *approaching*.

INA.

"I have come, dear Don Carlos, to
say you farewell,

I shall wed with Don Castro at dawn
of to-morrow,
And be all his own—firm, honest and
faithful.

I have promised this thing; that I
will keep my promise
You who do know me care never to
question.

I have mastered myself to say this
thing to you;
Hear me: be strong, then, and say
adieu bravely;
The world is his own who will brave
its bleak hours.

Dare, then, to confront the cold days
in their column;
As they march down upon you, stand,
hew them to pieces,
One after another, as you would a
fierce foeman,
Till not one abideth between two true
bosoms."

[DON CARLOS, *with a laugh of scorn,*
flies from the veranda, mounts
horse, and disappears.]

INA (*looking out into the night, after a*
long silence).

How doleful the night hawk screams
in the heavens,
How dismally gibbers the gray coy-
ote!

Afar to the south now the turbulent
thunder,

Mine equal, my brother, my soul's
one companion,

Talks low in his sleep like a giant deep
troubled;

Talks fierce in accord with my own
stormy spirit.

SCENE II.

Sunset on a spur of Mount Hood.
LAMONTE contemplates the scene.

LAMONTE.

A flushed and weary messenger a-
west
Is standing at the half-closed door of
day,
As he would say, Good night; and
now his bright
Red cap he tips to me and turns his
face,
Were it an unholy thing to say, an
angel now
Beside the door stood with uplifted
seal?
Behold the door seal'd with that
blood red seal
Now burning, spreading o'er the
mighty West.
Never again shall that dead day
arise
Therefrom, but must be born and
come anew.

The tawny, solemn Night, child of
the East,
Her mournful robe trails o'er the dis-
tant woods,
And comes this way with firm and
stately step.
Afront, and very high, she wears a
shield,
A plate of silver, and upon her brow
The radiant Venus burns a pretty
lamp.
Behold! how in her gorgeous flow of
hair

Do gleam a million mellow yellow
gems,
That spill their molten gold upon the
dewy grass.
Now throned on boundless plains,
and gazing down
So calmly on the red-seal'd tomb of
day,
She rests her form against the Rocky
Mountains,
And rules with silent power a peaceful
world.

'Tis midnight now. The bent and
broken moon,
All batter'd, black, as from a thou-
sand battles,
Hangs silent on the purple walls of
heaven.
The angel warrior, guard of the gates
eternal,
In battle-harness girt, sleeps on the
field:
But when tomorrow comes, when
wicked men
That fret the patient earth are all
astir,
He will resume his shield, and, facing
earthward,
The gates of heaven guard from sins
of earth.

'Tis morn. Behold the kingly day
now leaps
The eastern wall of earth, bright sword
in hand,
And clad in flowing robe of mellow
light,
Like to a king that has regain'd his
throne,

He warms his drooping subjects into
joy,
That rise renewed to do him fealty,
And rules with pomp the universal
world.

DON CARLOS *ascends the mountain,
gesticulating and talking to himself.*

DON CARLOS.

Oh, for a name that black-eyed
maids would sigh
And lean with parted lips at mention
of;
That I should seem so tall in minds of
men
That I might walk beneath the arch
of heaven,
And pluck the ripe red stars as I
pass'd on,
As favor'd guests do pluck the purple
grapes
That hang above the humble entrance
way
Of palm-thatch'd mountain inn of
Mexico.

Oh, I would give the green leaves of
my life
For something grand, for real and
undream'd deeds!
To wear a mantle, broad and richly
gemm'd
As purple heaven fringed with gold at
sunset;
To wear a crown as dazzling as the
sun,
And, holding up a scepter lightning-
charged,

Stride out among the stars as I once
strode
A barefoot boy among the buttercups.

Alas! I am so restless. There is
that

Within me doth rebel and rise against
The all I am and half I see in others;
And were't not for contempt of cow-
ard act

Of flying all defeated from the world,
As if I feared and dared not face its
ills,

I should ere this have known, known
more or less

Than any flesh that frets this sullen
earth.

I know not where such thoughts will
lead me to:

I have had fear that they would drive
me mad,

And then have flattered my weak self,
and said

The soul's outgrown the body—yea,
the soul

Aspires to the stars, and in its strug-
gles upward

Makes the dull flesh quiver as an
aspen.

LAMONTE.

What waif is this cast here upon my
shore,
From seas of subtle and most selfish
men?

DON CARLOS.

Of subtle and most selfish men!—
ah, that's the term!

And if you be but earnest in your spleen,
 And other sex across man's shoulders
 lash,
 I'll stand beside you on this crag and
 howl
 And hurl my clenched fists down upon
 their heads,
 Till I am hoarse as yonder cataract.

LAMONTE.

Why, no, my friend, I'll not consent to that.
 No true man yet has ever woman
 cursed.
 And I—I do not hate my fellow man,
 For man by nature bears within
 himself
 Nobility that makes him half a god;
 But as in somewise he hath made
 himself,
 His universal thirst for gold and
 pomp,
 And purchased fleeting fame and
 bubble honors,
 Forgetting good, so mocking helpless
 age,
 I hold him but a sorry worm indeed;
 And so have turn'd me quietly
 aside
 To know the majesty of peaceful
 woods.

DON CARLOS (*as if alone*).

The fabled font of youth led many
 fools,
 Zealous in its pursuit, to hapless
 death;

And yet this thirst for fame, this hot
 ambition,
 This soft-toned syren-tongue, en-
 chanting Fame,
 Doth lead me headlong on to equal
 folly,
 Like to a wild bird charm'd by shin-
 ing coils
 And swift mesmeric glance of deadly
 snake:
 I would not break the charm, but win
 a world
 Or die with curses blistering my
 lips.

LAMONTE.

Give up ambition, petty pride—
 By pride the angels fell.

DON CARLOS.

By pride they reached a place from
 whence to fall.

LAMONTE.

You startle me! I am unused to
 hear
 Men talk these fierce and bitter
 thoughts; and yet
 In closed recesses of my soul was
 once
 A dark and gloomy chamber where
 they dwelt.
 Give up ambition—yea, crush such
 thoughts
 As you would crush from hearth a
 scorpion brood;

For, mark me well, they'll get the
mastery,
And drive you on to death—or worse,
across
A thousand ruin'd homes and broken
hearts.

DON CARLOS.

Give up ambition! Oh, rather
than to die
And glide a lonely, nameless, shiver-
ing ghost
Down time's dark tide of utter
nothingness,
I'd write a name in blood and or-
phans' tears.
The temple-burner wiser was than
kings.

LAMONTE.

And would you dare the curse of
man and—

DON CARLOS.

Dare the curse of man!
I'd dare the fearful curse of God!
I'd build a pyramid of whitest skulls,
And step therefrom unto the spotted
moon,
And thence to stars, and thence to
central suns.
Then with one grand and mighty leap
would land
Unhinder'd on the shining shore of
heaven,
And, sword in hand, unbarred and
unabash'd,

Would stand bold forth in presence of
the God
Of gods, and on the jewel'd inner
side
The walls of heaven, carve with keen
Damascus steel
And highest up, a grand and titled
name
That time nor tide could touch or
tarnish ever.

LAMONTE.

Seek not to crop above the heads of
men
To be a better mark for envy's
shafts.
Come to my peaceful home, and leave
behind
These stormy thoughts and daring
aspirations.
All earthly power is but a thing
comparative.
Is not a petty chief of some lone
isle,
With half a dozen nude and starving
subjects,
As much a king as he the Czar of
Rusk?
In yonder sweet retreat and balmy
place
I'll abdicate, and you be chief
indeed.
There you will reign and tell me of
the world,
Its life and lights, its sins and sickly
shadows.
The pheasant will reveille beat at
morn,
And rouse us to the battle of the
day.

My swarthy subjects will in circle
sit,
And, gazing on your noble presence,
deem
You great indeed, and call you chief
of chiefs:
And, knowing no one greater than
yourself
In all the leafy borders of your
realm,
'Gainst what can pride or poor ambi-
tion chafe?

'Twill be a kingdom without king,
save you,
More broad than that the cruel Cortes
won,
With subjects truer than he ever
knew,
That know no law but only nature's
law,
And no religion know but that of
love.
There truth and beauty are, for there
is Nature,
Serene and simple. She will be our
priestess,
And in her calm and uncomplaining
face
We two will read her rubric and be
wise. . . .

DON CARLOS.

Why, truly now, this fierce and
broken land,
Seen through your eyes, assumes a
fairer shape.
Lead up, for you are nearer God than
I.

SCENE III.

INA, *in black, alone. Midnight.*

INA.

I weep? I weep? I laugh to
think of it!
I lift my dark brow to the breath of
the ocean,
Soft kissing me now like the lips of
my mother,
And laugh low and long as I crush
the brown grasses,
To think I should weep! Why, I
never wept—never,
Not even in punishments dealt me in
childhood!
Yea, all of my wrongs and my bitter-
ness buried
In my brave baby heart, all alone and
unfriended.
And I pitied, with proud and disdain-
fulest pity,
The weak who would weep, and I
laugh'd at the folly
Of those who could laugh and make
merry with playthings.

Nay, I will not weep now over that
I desired.
Desired? Yes: I to myself dare
confess it,
Ah, too, to the world should it ques-
tion too closely,
And bathe me and sport in a deep sea
of candor.

Let the world be deceived; it insists
upon it:

Let it bundle me round in its black
woe-garments;
But I, self with self—my free soul
fearless—
Am frank as the sun, nor the toss of a
copper

Care I if the world call it good or
evil.

I am glad tonight, and in new-born
freedom

Forget all earth with my old
companions,—

The moon and the stars and the moon-
clad ocean.

I am face to face with the stars that
know me,

And gaze as I gazed in the eyes of my
mother,

Forgetting the city and the coarse
things in it;

For there's naught but God in the
shape of mortal,

Save one—my wandering, wild boy-
lover—

That I esteem worth a stale banana.

The hair hangs heavy and is warm on
my shoulder,

And is thick with the odors of balm
and of blossom,

The great bay sleeps with the ships on
her bosom;

Through the Golden Gate, to the left
hand yonder,

The white sea lies in a deep sleep,
breathing,

The father of melody, mother of
measure.

SCENE IV.

*A wood by a rivulet on a spur of
Mount Hood, overlooking the
Columbia. LAMONTE and DON
CARLOS, on their way to the camp,
are reposing under the shadow of
the forest. Some deer are observed
descending to the brook, and DON
CARLOS seizes his rifle.*

LAMONTE.

Nay, nay, my friend, strike not
from your covert,

Strike like a serpent in the grass well
hidden?

What, steal into their homes, and,
when they, thirsting,

And all unsuspecting, come down in
couples

And dip brown muzzles in the mossy
brink,

Then shoot them down without
chance to fly—

The only means that God has given
them,

Poor, unarm'd mutes, to baffle man's
cunning?

Ah, now I see you had not thought of
this!

The hare is fleet, and is most quick at
sound,

His coat is changed with the changing
fields;

Yon deer turn brown when the leaves
turn brown;

The dog has teeth, the cat has
talons,

A man has craft and sinewy arms:

All things that live have some means
of defense
All, all—save only fair lovely woman.

DON CARLOS.

Nay, she has her tongue; is armed
to the teeth.

LAMONTE.

Thou Timon, what can 'scape your
bitterness?
But for this sweet content of Nature
here,
Upon whose breast we now recline
and rest,
Why, you might lift your voice and
rail at her!

DON CARLOS.

Oh, I am out of patience with your
faith!
What! She content and peaceful,
uncomplaining?
I've seen her fretted like a lion
caged,
Chafe like a peevish woman cross'd
and churl'd,
Tramping and champing like a whelp-
less bear;
Have seen her weep till earth was wet
with tears,
Then turn all smiles—a jade that won
her point?
Have seen her tear the hoary hair of
ocean,
While he, himself full half a world,
would moan

And roll and toss his clumsy hands all
day
To earth like some great helpless
babe,
Rude-rock'd and cradled by an un-
kind nurse,
Then stain her snowy hem with salt-
sea tears;
And when the peaceful, mellow moon
came forth,
To walk and meditate among the
blooms
That make so blest the upper purple
fields,
This wroth dyspeptic sea ran after
her
With all his soul, as if to pour him-
self,
All sick and helpless, in her snowy
lap.
Content! Oh, she has cracked the
ribs of earth
And made her shake poor trembling
man from off
Her back, e'en as a grizzly shakes the
hounds;
She has upheaved her rocky spine
against
The flowing robes of the eternal God.

LAMONTE.

There once was one of nature like
to this:
He stood a barehead boy upon a cliff
Pine-crown'd, that hung high o'er a
bleak north sea.
His long hair stream'd and flashed
like yellow silk,
His sea-blue eyes lay deep and still as
lakes

O'erhung by mountains, arch'd in
 virgin snow;
 And far astray, and friendless and
 alone,
 A tropic bird blown through the north
 frost wind,
 He stood above the sea in the cold
 white moon,
 His thin face lifted to the flashing
 stars.
 He talk'd familiarly and face to face
 With the eternal God, in solemn
 night,
 Confronting Him with free and flip-
 pant air
 As one confronts a merchant o'er his
 counter,
 And in vehement blasphemy did
 say:
 "God, put aside this world—show me
 another!
 God, this world's but a cheat—hand
 down another!
 I will not buy—not have it as a
 gift.
 Put this aside and hand me down
 another—
 Another, and another, still another,
 Till I have tried the fairest world that
 hangs
 Upon the walls and broad dome of
 your shop.
 For I am proud of soul and regal
 born,
 And will not have a cheap and cheat-
 ing world."

DON CARLOS.

The noble youth! So God gave
 him another?

LAMONTE.

A bear, as in old time, came from
 the woods
 And tare him there upon that storm-
 swept cliff—
 A grim and grizzled bear, like unto
 hunger.
 A tall ship sail'd adown the sea next
 morn,
 And, standing with his glass upon the
 prow,
 The captain saw a vulture on a cliff,
 Gorging, and pecking, stretching his
 long neck
 Bracing his raven plumes against the
 wind,
 Fretting the tempest with his sable
 feathers.

*A Young POET ascends the mountain
 and approaches.*

DON CARLOS.

Ho! ho! whom have we here?
 Talk of the devil,
 And he's at hand. Say, who are you,
 and whence?

POET.

I am a poet, and dwell down by the
 sea.

DON CARLOS.

A poet! a poet, forsooth! A hun-
 gry fool!
 Would you know what it means to be
 a poet now?

It is to want a friend, to want a
home,
A country, money,—ay, to want a
meal.

It is not wise to be a poet now,
For, oh, the world it has so modest
grown

It will not praise a poet to his face,
But waits till he is dead some hundred
years,

Then uprears marbles cold and stupid
as itself.

[POET rises to go.]

DON CARLOS.

Why, what's the haste? You'll
reach there soon enough.

POET.

Reach where?

DON CARLOS.

The inn to which all earthly roads
do tend:

The "neat apartments furnish'd—see
within";

The "furnish'd rooms for quiet, single
gentlemen";

The narrow six-by-two where you
will lie

With cold blue nose up-pointing to
the grass,

Labell'd and box'd, and ready all for
shipment.

POET (*loosening hair and letting fall a
mantle*).

Ah me! my Don Carlos, look kindly
upon me!

With my hand on your arm and my
dark brow lifted

Full level to yours, do you not now
know me?

'Tis I, your INA, whom you loved by
the ocean,

In the warm-spiced winds from the
far Cathay.

DON CARLOS (*bitterly*).

With the smell of the dead man still
upon you!

Your dark hair wet from his death-
damp forehead!

You are not my Ina, for she is a
memory,

A marble chisell'd, in my heart's dark
chamber

Set up for ever, and naught can
change her;

And you are a stranger, and the gulf
between us

Is wide as the plains, and as deep as
Pacific.

And now, good night. In your
serape folded

Hard by in the light of the pine-knot
fire,

Sleep you as sound as you will be
welcome;

And on the morrow—now mark me,
madam—

When tomorrow comes, why, you will
turn you

To the right or left as did Father
Abram.

Good night, for ever and for aye,
good by;
My bitter is sweet and your truth is a
lie.

INA (*letting go his arm and stepping
back*).

Well, then! 'tis over, and 'tis well
thus ended;
I am well escaped from my life's
devotion.
The waters of bliss are a waste of
bitterness;
The day of joy I did join hands
over,
As a bow of promise when my years
were weary,
And set high up as a brazen serpent
To look upon when I else had
fainted
In burning deserts, while you sipp'd
ices
And snowy sherbets, and roam'd
unfetter'd,
Is a deadly asp in the fruit and
flowers
That you in your bitterness now bear
to me;

But its fangs unfasten and it glides
down from me,
From a Cleopatra of cold white
marble.

I have but done what I would do
over,
Did I find one worthy of so much
devotion;
And, standing here with my clean
hands folded
Above a bosom whose crime is
courage,
The only regret that my heart dis-
covers
Is that I should do and have dared so
greatly
For the love of one who deserved so
little.

Nay! say no more, nor attempt to
approach me!
This ten feet line lying now between
us
Shall never be less while the land has
measure.
See! night is forgetting the east in the
heavens;
The birds pipe shrill and the beasts
howl answer.

EVEN SO

*Sierras, and eternal tents
Of snow that flash o'er battlements
Of mountains! My land of the sun,
Am I not true? have I not done
All things for thine, for thee alone,
O sun-land, sea-land, thou mine own?
Be my reward some little place
To pitch my tent, some tree and vine
Where I may sit with lifted face,*

*And drink the sun as drinking wine:
Where sweeps the Oregon, and where
White storms carouse on perfumed
air.*

In the shadows a-west of the sunset
mountains,
Where old-time giants had dwelt and
peopled,

And built up cities and castled battle-
 ments,
 And rear'd up pillars that pierced the
 heavens,
 A poet dwelt of the book of Na-
 ture—
 An ardent lover of the pure and
 beautiful,
 Devoutest lover of the true and
 beautiful,
 Profoundest lover of the grand and
 beautiful—
 With heart all impulse, and intensest
 passion,
 Who believed in love as in God eter-
 nal—
 A dream while the waken'd world
 went over,
 An Indian summer of the singing
 seasons;
 And he sang wild songs like the wind
 in cedars,
 Was tempest-toss'd as the pines, yet
 ever
 As fix'd in faith as they in the moun-
 tains.

He had heard of a name as one
 hears of a princess,
 Her glory had come unto him in
 stories;
 From afar he had look'd as entranced
 upon her;
 He gave her name to the wind in
 measures,
 And he heard her name in the deep-
 voiced cedars,
 And afar in the winds rolling on like
 the billows,
 Her name in the name of another for
 ever

Gave all his numbers their grandest
 strophes;
 Enshrined her image in his heart's
 high temple,
 And saint-like held her, too sacred
 for mortal.

.
 He came to fall like a king of the
 forest
 Caught in the strong storm arms of
 the wrestler;
 Forgetting his songs, his crags and his
 mountains,
 And nearly his God, in his wild deep
 passion;
 And when he had won her and turn'd
 him homeward,
 With the holiest pledges love gives its
 lover,
 The mountain route was as strewn
 with roses.

Can high love then be a thing un-
 holy,
 To make us better and bless'd su-
 premely?
 The day was fix'd for the feast and
 nuptials;
 He crazed with impatience at the
 tardy hours;
 He flew in the face of old Time as a
 tyrant;
 He had fought the days that stood
 still between them,
 Fought one by one, as you fight with a
 foeman,
 Had they been animate and sensate
 beings.

At last then the hour came coldly
 forward.

When Mars was trailing his lance on
 the mountains
 He rein'd his steed and look'd down
 in the cañon
 To where she dwelt, with a heart of
 fire.
 He kiss'd his hand to the smoke slow
 curling,
 Then bow'd his head in devoutest
 blessing.
 His spotted courser did plunge and
 fret him
 Beneath his gay silken-fringed carona
 And toss his neck in a black mane
 banner'd;
 Then all afoam, plunging iron-footed,
 Dash'd him down with a wild im-
 patience.

A coldness met him, like the breath
 of a cavern,
 As he joyously hasten'd across the
 threshold.
 She came, and coldly 'she spoke and
 scornful,
 In answer to warm and impulsive
 passion.
 All things did array them in shapes
 most hateful,
 And life did seem but a jest intolerable.
 He dared to question her why this
 estrangement:
 She spoke with a strange and stiff
 indifference,
 And bade him go on all alone life's
 journey.

Then stern and tall he did stand up
 before her,
 And gaze dark-brow'd through the
 low narrow casement,

For a time, as if warring in thought
 with a passion;
 Then, crushing hard down the hot
 welling bitterness,
 He folded his form in a sullen silent-
 ness,
 And turned for ever away from her
 presence;
 Bearing his sorrow like some great
 burden,
 Like a black nightmare in his hot
 heart muffled;
 With his faith in the truth of woman
 broken.

.
 'Mid Theban pillars, where sang
 the Pindar,
 Breathing the breath of the Grecian
 islands,
 Breathing in spices and olive and
 myrtle,
 Counting the caravans, curl'd and
 snowy,
 Slow journeying over his head to
 Mecca
 Or the high Christ land of most holy
 memory,
 Counting the clouds through the
 boughs above him,
 That brush'd white marbles that time
 had chisel'd
 And rear'd as tombs on the great
 dead city,
 Letter'd with solemn but unread
 moral—
 A poet rested in the red-hot summer.
 He took no note of the things about
 him,
 But dream'd and counted the clouds
 above him;

His soul was troubled, and his sad
heart's Mecca
Was a miner's home far over the
ocean,
Banner'd by pines that did brush
blue heaven.

When the sun went down on the
bronzed Morea,
He read to himself from the lines of
sorrow
That came as a wail from the one he
worshipp'd,
Sent over the seas by an old compan-
ion:
They spoke no word of him, or re-
membrance.
And he was most sad, for he felt for-
gotten,
And said: "In the leaves of her fair
heart's album
She has cover'd my face with the
face of another.
Let the great sea lift like a wall be-
tween us,
High-back'd, with his mane of white
storms for ever—
I shall learn to love, I shall wed my
sorrow,
I shall take as a spouse the days that
are perish'd;
I shall dwell in a land where the
march of genius
Made tracks in marble in the days of
giants;
I shall sit in the ruins where sat the
Marius,
Gray with the ghosts of the great
departed."
And then he said in the solemn
twilight . . .

"Strangely wooing are yon worlds
above us,
Strangely beautiful is the Faith of
Islam,
Strangely sweet are the songs of
Solomon,
Strangely tender are the teachings of
Jesus,
Strangely cold is the sun on the moun-
tains,
Strangely mellow is the moon on old
ruins,
Strangely pleasant are the stolen
waters,
Strangely lighted is the North night
region,
Strangely strong are the streams in
the ocean,
Strangely true are the tales of the
Orient,
But stranger than all are the ways of
women."

His head on his hands and his hands
on the marble,
Alone in the midnight he slept in the
ruins;
And a form was before him white
mantled in moonlight,
And bitter he said to the one he had
worshipp'd—

"Your hands in mine, your face,
your eyes
Look level into mine, and mine
Are not abashed in anywise
As eyes were in an elden syne.
Perhaps the pulse is colder now,
And blood comes tamer to the brow
Because of hot blood long ago . . .

Withdraw your hand? . . . Well,
 be it so,
 And turn your bent head slow side-
 wise,
 For recollections are as seas
 That come and go in tides, and these
 Are flood tides filling to the eyes.

“How strange that you above the
 vale
 And I below the mountain wall
 Should walk and meet! . . . Why,
 you are pale! . . .
 Strange meeting on the mountain
 fringe! . . .
 More strange we ever met
 at all!
 Tides come and go, we know their
 time;
 The moon, we know her wane or
 prime;
 But who knows how the heart may
 hinge?

“You stand before me here to-
 night,
 But not beside me, not beside—
 Are beautiful, but not a bride.
 Some things I recollect aright,
 Though full a dozen years are done
 Since we two met one winter night—
 Since I was crush'd as by a fall;
 For I have watch'd and pray'd
 through all
 The shining circles of the sun.

“I saw you where sad cedars wave;
 I sought you in the dewy eve
 When shining crickets thrill and
 grieve;
 You smiled, and I became a slave.

A slave! I worshipp'd you at night,
 When all the blue field blossom'd red
 With dewy roses overhead
 In sweet and delicate delight.
 I was devout. I knelt that night
 To Him who doeth all things well.
 I tried in vain to break the spell;
 My prison'd soul refused to rise
 And image saints in Paradise,
 While one was here before my eyes.

“Some things are sooner marr'd
 than made.
 A frost fell on a soul that night,
 And one was black that erst was white.
 And you forget the place—the night!
 Forget that aught was done or said—
 Say this has pass'd a long decade—
 Say not a single tear was shed—
 Say you forget these little things!
 Is not your recollection loth?
 Well, little bees have bitter stings,
 And I remember for us both.

“No, not a tear. Do men com-
 plain?
 The outer wound will show a stain,
 And we may shriek at idle pain;
 But pierce the heart, and not a word,
 Or wail, or sign, is seen or heard.

“I did not blame—I do not blame,
 My wild heart turns to you the same,
 Such as it is; but oh, its meed
 Of faithfulness and trust and truth,
 And earnest confidence of youth,
 I caution, you, is small indeed.

“I follow'd you, I worshipp'd you
 And I would follow, worship still;
 But if I felt the blight and chill

Of frosts in my uncheerful spring,
 And show it now in riper years
 In answer to this love you bring—
 In answer to this second love,
 This wail of an unmated dove,
 In cautious answer to your tears—
 You, you know who taught me dis-
 dain.

But deem you I would deal you pain?
 I joy to know your heart is light,
 I journey glad to know it thus,
 And could I dare to make it less?
 Yours—you are day, but I am night.

“God knows I would descend to-
 day
 Devoutly on my knees, and pray
 Your way might be one path of peace
 Through bending boughs and blos-
 som'd trees,
 And perfect bliss through roses fair;
 But know you, back—one long de-
 cade—
 How fervently, how fond I pray'd?—
 What was the answer to that prayer?

“The tale is old, and often told
 And lived by more than you suppose—
 The fragrance of a summer rose
 Press'd down beneath the stubborn
 lid,
 When sun and song are hush'd and
 hid,
 And summer days are gray and old.

“We parted so. Amid the bays
 And peaceful palms and song and
 shade
 Your cheerful feet in pleasure stray'd
 Through all the swift and shining
 days.

“You made my way another way,
 You bade it should not be with thine—
 A fierce and cheerless route was mine:
 But we have met, tonight—today.

“You talk of tears—of bitter
 tears—
 And tell of tyranny and wrong,
 And I re-live some stinging jeers,
 Back, far back, in the leaden years.
 A lane without a turn is long,
 I muse, and whistle a reply—
 Then bite my lips and crush a sigh.

“You sympathize that I am sad,
 I sigh for you that you complain,
 I shake my yellow hair in vain,
 I laugh with lips, but am not glad.

.
 . . . “His was a hot love of the
 hours,
 And love and lover both are flown;
 Now you walk, like a ghost, alone.
 He sipp'd your sunny lips, and he
 Took all their honey; now the bee
 Bends down the heads of other flowers
 And other lips lift up to kiss. . . .
 . . . I am not cruel, yet I find
 A savage solace for the mind
 And sweet delight in saying this. . . .
 Now you are silent, white, and you
 Lift up your hands as making sign,
 And your rich lips lie thin and blue
 And ashen . . . and you writhe,
 and you
 Breathe quick and tremble . . . is
 it true
 The soul takes wounds, sheds blood
 like wine?

... "You seem so most uncommon tall

Against the lonely ghostly moon,
That hurries homeward oversoon,
And hides behind you and the pines;
And your two hands hang cold and small,

And your two thin arms lie like vines,
Or winter moonbeams on a wall.

... What if you be a weary ghost,
And I but dream, and dream I wake?
Then wake me not, and my mistake
Is not so bad; let's make the most
Of all we get, asleep, awake—
And waste not one sweet thing at all.

God knows that, at the best, life brings

The soul's share so exceeding small
We weary for some better things,
And hunger even unto death.
Laugh loud, be glad with ready breath,
For after all are joy and grief
Not merely matters of belief?
And what is certain after all,
But death, delightful, patient death?
The cool and perfect, peaceful sleep,
Without one tossing hand, or deep
Sad sigh and catching in of breath!

"Be satisfied. The price of breath
Is paid in toll. But knowledge is
Bought only with a weary care,

And wisdom means a world of pain. . .
Well, we have suffered, will again,
And we can work and wait and bear,
Strong in the certainty of bliss.
Death is delightful: after death
Breaks in the dawn of perfect day.
Let question he who will: the May
Throws fragrance far beyond the wall.

"Death is delightful. Death is dawn.

Fame is not much, love is not much,
Yet what else is there worth the touch
Of lifted hand with dagger drawn?
So surely life is little worth:
Therefore I say, Look up; therefore
I say One little star has more
Bright gold than all the earth of earth.

"Yea, we must labor, plant to reap—
Life knows no folding up of hands—
Must plow the soul, as plowing lands,
In furrows fashion'd strong and deep.
Life has its lesson. Let us learn
The hard, long lesson from the birth,
And be content; stand breast to breast,

And bear and battle till the rest.
Yet I look to yon stars, and say:
Thank Christ, ye are so far away
That when I win you I can turn
And look, and see no sign of earth.

.

MYRRH

*Life knows no dead so beautiful
As is the white cold coffin'd past;
This I may love nor be betray'd:*

*The dead are faithful to the last.
I am not spouseless—I have wed
A memory—a life that's dead.*

Farewell! for here the ways at last
Divide—diverge, like delta'd Nile,
Which after desert dangers pass'd
Of many and many a thousand mile,
As constant as a column stone,
Seeks out the sea, divorced—alone.

And you and I have buried Love,
A red seal on the coffin's lid;
The clerk below, the court above,
Pronounce it dead: the corpse is hid
And I who never cross'd your will
Consent . . . that you may have it
still.

Farewell! a sad word easy said
And easy sung, I think, by some. . .
. . . I clutch'd my hands, I turn'd
my head
In my endeavor and was dumb;
And when I should have said, Fare-
well,
I only murmur'd, "This is hell."

What recks it now, whose was the
blame?
But call it mine; for better used
Am I to wrong and cold disdain,
Can better bear to be accused
Of all that wears the shape of shame,
Than have you bear one touch of
blame.

I set my face for power and place,
My soul is toned to sullenness,
My heart holds not one sign nor trace
Of love, or trust, or tenderness.
But you—your years of happiness
God knows I would not make them
less.

And you will come some summer
eve,
When wheels the white moon on her
track,
And hear the plaintive night-bird
grieve,
And heed the crickets clad in black;
Alone—not far—a little spell,
And say, "Well, yes, he loved me
well";

And sigh, "Well, yes, I mind me
now,
None were so bravely true as he;
And yet his love was tame somehow,
It was so truly true to me;
I wish'd his patient love had less
Of worship and of tenderness:

"I wish it still, for thus alone
There comes a keen reproach or pain,
A feeling I dislike to own;
Half yearnings for his voice again,
Half longing for his earnest gaze,
To know him mine always—always."

I make no murmur; steady, calm,
Sphinx-like I gaze on days ahead.
No wooing word, no pressing palm,
No sealing love with lips seal-red,
No waiting for some dusk or dawn,
No sacred hour . . . all are gone.

I go alone, no little hands
To lead me from forbidden ways,
No little voice in other lands
To cheer through all the weary days,
Yet these are yours, and that to me
Is much indeed. . . . So let it
be . . .

. . . . A last look from my moun-
tain wall. . . .

I watch the red sun wed the sea
Beside your home . . . the tides
will fall

And rise, but nevermore shall we
Stand hand in hand and watch them
flow,

As we once stood. . . . Christ!
this is so!

But, when the stately sea comes in
With measured tread and mouth
afoam,

My darling cries above the din,
And asks, "Has father yet come
home?"

Then look into the peaceful sky,
And answer, gently, "By and by."

.

One deep spring in a desert sand,
One moss'd and mystic pyramid,
A lonely palm on either hand,
A fountain in a forest hid,
Are all my life has realized
Of all I cherish'd, all I prized:

Of all I dream'd in early youth
Of love by streams and love-lit ways,
While my heart held its type of truth
Through all the tropic golden days,
And I the oak, and you the vine,
Clung palm in palm through cloud or
shine.

Some time when clouds hang over-
head,
(What weary skies without one
cloud!)

You may muse on this love that's dead,
Muse calm when not so cold or proud,

And say, "At last it comes to me,
That none was ever true as he."

My sin was that I loved too much—
But I enlisted for the war,
Till we the deep-sea shore should
touch,
Beyond Atlanta—near or far—
And truer soldier never yet
Bore shining sword or bayonet.

I did not blame you—do not blame.
The stormy elements of soul
That I did scorn to tone or tame,
Or bind down unto dull control
In full fierce youth, they are all yours,
With all their folly and their force.

God keep you pure, oh, very pure,
God give you grace to dare and do;
God give you courage to endure
The all He may demand of you,—
Keep time-frosts from your raven
hair,
And your young heart without a care.

I make no murmur nor complain;
Above me are the stars and blue
Alluring far to grand refrain;
Before, the beautiful and true,
To love or hate, to win or lose;
Lo! I will now arise, and choose.

But should you sometime read a
sign,
In isles of song beyond the brine,
Then you will think a time, and you
Will turn and say, "He once was
mine,
Was all my own; his smiles, his tears
Were mine—were mine for years and
years."

BURNS

*Eld Druid oaks of Ayr,
Precepts! Poems! Pages!
Lessons! Leaves, and Volumes!
Arches! Pillars! Columns
In corridors of ages!
Grand patriarchal sages
Lifting palms in prayer!*

*The Druid bears are drifting
And shifting to and fro,
In gentle breezes lifting,
That bat-like come and go.
The while the moon is sifting
A sheen of shining snow
On all these blossoms lifting
Their blue eyes from below.*

*No, 'tis not phantoms walking
That you hear rustling there,
But bearded Druids talking,
And turning leaves in prayer.
No, not a night-bird singing
Nor breeze the broad bough swinging,
But that bough holds a censer,
And swings it to and fro.
'Tis Sunday eve, remember,
That's why they chant so low.*

I linger in the autumn noon,
I listen to the partridge call,
I watch the yellow leaflets fall
And drift adown the dimpled Doon.
I lean me o'er the ivy-grown
Auld brig, where Vandal tourists'
tools
Have ribb'd out names that would be
known,
Are known—known as a herd of fools.

Down Ailsa Craig the sun declines,
With lances level'd here and there—
The tinted thorns! the trailing vines!
O braes of Doon! so fond, so fair!
So passing fair, so more than fond!
The Poet's place of birth beyond,
Beyond the mellow bells of Ayr!

I hear the milk-maid's twilight
song
Come bravely through the storm-
bent oaks;
Beyond, the white surf's sullen
strokes
Beat in a chorus deep and strong;
I hear the sounding forge afar,
And rush and rumble of the car,
The steady tinkle of the bell
Of lazy, leaden, home-bound cows
That stop to bellow and to browse;
I breathe the soft sea-wind as well.

O Burns! where bid? where bide
ye now?
Where rest you in this night's full
noon,
Great master of the pen and plow?
Might you not on yon slanting beam
Of moonlight kneeling to the Doon,
Descend once to this hallow'd stream?
Sure yon stars yield enough of light
For heaven to spare your face one
night.

O Burns! another name for song,
Another name for passion—pride;
For love and poesy allied;
For strangely blended right and
wrong.

I picture you as one who kneel'd
 A stranger at his own hearthstone;
 One knowing all, yet all unknown,
 One seeing all, yet all conceal'd;
 The fitful years you linger'd here
 A lease of peril and of pain;
 And I am thankful yet again
 The gods did love you, plowman!
 peer!

In all your own and other lands,
 I hear your touching songs of cheer;
 The lowly peasant, lordly peer,
 Above your honor'd dust strike hands.

A touch of tenderness is shown
 In this unselfish love of Ayr,
 And it is well, you earn'd it fair;
 For all unhelmeted, alone,
 You proved a plowman's honest
 claim

To battle in the lists of fame;
 You earn'd it as a warrior earns
 His laurels fighting for his land,
 And died—it was your right to go.
 O eloquence of silent woe!
 The Master leaning, reach'd a hand,
 And whisper'd, "It is finish'd, Burns!"

O sad, sweet singer of a Spring!
 Yours was a chill, uncheerful May,
 And you knew no full days of June;
 You ran too swiftly up the way,
 And wearied soon, so over-soon!
 You sang in weariness and woe;
 You falter'd, and God heard you sing,
 Then touch'd your hand and led you
 so,
 You found life's hill-top low, so low,
 You cross'd its summit long ere noon.
 Thus sooner than one would suppose
 Some weary feet will find repose.

BYRON

*In men whom men condemn as ill
 I find so much of goodness still,
 In men whom men pronounce divine
 I find so much of sin and blot,
 I do not dare to draw a line
 Between the two, where God has not.*

O cold and cruel Nottingham!
 In disappointment and in tears,
 Sad, lost, and lonely, here I am
 To question, "Is this Nottingham
 Of which I dream'd for years and
 years?"
 I seek in vain for name or sign
 Of him who made this mold a shrine,
 A Mecca to the fair and fond
 Beyond the seas, and still beyond.

Where white clouds crush their
 drooping wings
 Against my snow-crown'd battle-
 ments,
 And peaks that flash like silver
 tents;
 Where Sacramento's fountain springs,
 And proud Columbia frets his shore
 Of somber, boundless wood and wold,
 And lifts his yellow sands of gold
 In plaintive murmurs evermore;
 Where snowy dimpled Tahoe smiles,
 And where white breakers from the
 sea,
 In solid phalanx knee to knee,
 Surround the calm Pacific Isles,
 Then run and reach unto the land

And spread their thin palms on the
sand,—
Is he supreme—there understood:
The free can understand the free;
The brave and good the brave and
good.

Yea, he did sin; who hath reveal'd
That he was more than man, or less?
Yet sinn'd no more; but less conceal'd
Than they who cloak'd their follies
o'er,
And then cast stones in his distress.
He scorn'd to make the good seem
more,
Or make the bitter sin seem less.
And so his very manliness
The seeds of persecution bore.

When all his songs and fervid love
Brought back no olive branch or dove,
Or love or trust from any one,
Proud, all unpitied and alone
He lived to make himself unknown,
Disdaining love and yielding none.
Like some high-lifted sea-girt stone
That could not stoop, but all the days,
With proud brow fronted to the
breeze,
Felt seas blown from the south, and
seas
Blown from the north, and many
ways,
He stood—a solitary light
In stormy seas and settled night—
Then fell, but stirr'd the seas as far
As winds and waves and waters are.

The meek-eyed stars are cold and
white
And steady, fix'd for all the years;

The comet burns the wings of night,
And dazzles elements and spheres,
Then dies in beauty and a blaze
Of light, blown far through other
days.

The poet's passion, sense of pride,
His boundless love, the wooing throng
Of sweet temptations that betide
The warm and wayward child of song,
The world knows not: I lift a hand
To ye who know, who understand.

The ancient Abbey's breast is
broad,
And stout her massive walls of stone;
But let him lie, repose alone
Ungather'd with the great of God,
In dust, by his fierce fellow man.
Some one, some day, loud voiced will
speak
And say the broad breast was not
broad,
The walls of stone were all too weak
To hold his proud dust, in their plan;
The hollow of God's great right hand
Receives it; let it rest with God.

In sad but beautiful decay
Gray Hucknall kneels into the dust,
And, cherishing her sacred trust,
Does blend her clay with lordly clay.

No sign or cryptic stone or cross
Unto the passing world has said,
"He died, and we deplore his loss."
No sound of sandal'd pilgrim's tread
Disturbs the pilgrim's peaceful rest,
Or frets the proud, impatient breast,
The bat flits through the broken pane.

The black swift swallow gathers moss,
And builds in peace above his head,
Then goes, then comes, and builds
again.

And it is well; not otherwise
Would he, the grand sad singer, will.

The serene peace of paradise
He sought—'tis his—the storm is
still.

Secure in his eternal fame,
And blended pity and respect,
He does not feel the cold neglect,—
And England does not fear the shame.

KIT CARSON'S RIDE

*Room! room to turn round in, to breathe
and be free,
To grow to be giant, to sail as at sea
With the speed of the wind on a steed
with his mane
To the wind, without pathway or route
or a rein.*

*Room! room to be free where the white
border'd sea*

*Blows a kiss to a brother as boundless
as he;*

*Where the buffalo come like a cloud on
the plain,*

*Pouring on like the tide of a storm-
driven main,*

*And the lodge of the hunter to friend or
to foe*

*Offers rest; and unquestion'd you come
or you go.*

*My plains of America! Seas of wild
lands!*

*From a land in the seas in a raiment of
foam,*

*That has reached to a stranger the wel-
come of home,*

*I turn to you, lean to you, lift you my
hands.*

Run? Run? See this flank, sir, and
I do love him so!

But he's blind, badger blind. Whoa,
Pache, boy, whoa.

No, you wouldn't believe it to look at
his eyes,

But he's blind, badger blind, and it
happen'd this wise:

“We lay in the grass and the sun-
burnt clover

That spread on the ground like a great
brown cover

Northward and southward, and west
and away

To the Brazos, where our lodges lay,
One broad and unbroken level of
brown.

We were waiting the curtains of night
to come down

To cover us trio and conceal our flight
With my brown bride, won from an
Indian town

That lay in the rear the full ride of a
night.

“We lounged in the grass—her eyes
were in mine,

And her hands on my knee, and her
hair was as wine

In its wealth and its flood, pouring on
and all over

Her bosom wine red, and press'd
 never by one.
 Her touch was as warm as the tinge
 of the clover
 Burnt brown as it reach'd to the kiss
 of the sun.
 Her words they were low as the lute-
 throated dove,
 And as laden with love as the heart
 when it beats
 In its hot, eager answer to earliest
 love,
 Or the bee hurried home by its bur-
 then of sweets.

“We lay low in the grass on the
 broad plain levels,
 Old Revels and I, and my stolen
 brown bride;
 ‘Forty full miles if a foot, and the
 devils
 Of red Cómanches are hot on the
 track
 When once they strike it. Let the sun
 go down
 Soon, very soon,’ muttered bearded
 old Revels
 As he peer'd at the sun, lying low on
 his back,
 Holding fast to his lasso. Then he
 jerk'd at his steed
 And he sprang to his feet, and glanced
 swiftly around,
 And then dropp'd, as if shot, with an
 ear to the ground;
 Then again to his feet, and to me, to
 my bride,
 While his eyes were like flame, his
 face like a shroud,
 His form like a king, and his beard
 like a cloud,

And his voice loud and shrill, as both
 trumpet and reed,—
 ‘Pull, pull in your lassoes, and bridle
 to steed,
 And speed you if ever for life you
 would speed.
 Aye, ride for your lives, for your lives
 you must ride!
 For the plain is aflame, the prairie on
 fire,
 And the feet of wild horses hard flying
 before
 I heard like a sea breaking high on the
 shore,
 While the buffalo come like a surge of
 the sea,
 Driven far by the flame, driving fast
 on us three
 As a hurricane comes, crushing palms
 in his ire.’

“We drew in the lassoes, seized
 saddle and rein,
 Threw them on, cinched them on,
 cinched them over again,
 And again drew the girth; and spring
 we to horse,
 With head to the Brazos, with a sound
 in the air
 Like the surge of a sea, with a flash in
 the eye,
 From that red wall of flame reaching
 up to the sky;
 A red wall of flame and a black rolling
 sea
 Rushing fast upon us, as the wind
 sweeping free
 And afar from the desert blown hol-
 low and hoarse.

“Not a word, not a wail from a lip
 was let fall,

We brcke not a whisper, we breathed
 not a prayer,
 There was work to be done, there was
 death in the air,
 And the chance was as one to a thou-
 sand for all.

"Twenty miles! . . . thirty miles!
 . . . a dim distant speck . . .
 Then a long reaching line, and the
 Brazos in sight!
 And I rose in my seat with a shout of
 delight.
 I stood in my stirrup, and look'd to
 my right—
 But Revels was gone; I glanced by
 my shoulder
 And saw his horse stagger; I saw his
 head drooping
 Hard down on his breast, and his
 naked breast stooping
 Low down to the mane, as so swifter
 and boider
 Ran reaching out for us the red-footed
 fire.
 He rode neck to neck with a buffalo
 bull,
 That made the earth shake where he
 came in his course,
 The monarch of millions, with shaggy
 mane full
 Of smoke and of dust, and it shook
 with desire

Of battle, with rage and with bellow-
 ing hoarse.
 His keen, crooked horns, through the
 storm of his mane,
 Like black lances lifted and lifted
 again;
 And I looked but this once, for the
 fire licked through,
 And Revels was gone, as we rode two
 and two.

"I look'd to my left then—and
 nose, neck, and shoulder
 Sank slowly, sank surely, till back to
 my thighs,
 And up through the black blowing veil
 of her hair
 Did beam full in mine her two mar-
 velous eyes,
 With a longing and love yet a look of
 despair
 And of pity for me, as she felt the
 smoke fold her,
 And flames leaping far for her glorious
 hair.
 Her sinking horse falter'd, plunged,
 fell and was gone
 As I reach'd through the flame and I
 bore her still on.
 On! into the Brazos, she, Pache and I—
 Poor, burnt, blinded Pache. I love
 him
 That's why."

FALLEN LEAVES, 1873

*Some fugitive lines that allure us no more,
Some fragments that fell to the sea out of time;
Unfinish'd and guiltless of thought as of rhyme,
Thrown now on the world like waifs on the shore.*

PALM LEAVES

Thatch of palm and a patch of
clover,

Breath of balm in a field of brown,
The clouds blew up and the birds flew
over,

And I look'd upward; but who
look'd down?

Who was true in the test that tried
us?

Who was it mock'd? Who now
may mourn

The loss of a love that a cross denied
us,

With folded hands and a heart
forlorn?

God forgive us when the fair forget us.
The worth of a smile, the weight of
a tear,

Why, who can measure? The fates
beset us.

We laugh a moment; we mourn a
year.

THOMAS OF TIGRE

King of Tigre, comrade true,
Where in all thine isles art thou?
Sailing on Fonseca blue?
Nearing Amapala now?
King of Tigre, where art thou?

Battling for Antilles' queen?
Saber hilt, or olive bough?
Crown of dust, or laurel green?
Roving love, or marriage vow?
King and comrade, where art thou?

Sailing on Pacific seas?
Pitching tent in Pimo now?
Underneath magnolia trees?
Thatch of palm, or cedar bough?
Soldier singer, where art thou?

Coasting on the Oregon?
Saddle bow, or birchen prow?
Round the Isles of Amazon?
Pampas, plain, or mountain brow?
Prince of rovers, where art thou?

YOSEMITE

Sound! sound! sound!
O colossal walls and crown'd
In one eternal thunder!
Sound! sound! sound!
O ye oceans overhead,
While we walk, subdued in wonder,
In the ferns and grasses, under
And beside the swift Merced!

Fret! fret! fret!
Streaming, sounding banners, set
On the giant granite castles
In the clouds and in the snow!
But the foe he comes not yet,—
We are loyal, valiant vassals,
And we touch the trailing tassels
Of the banners far below.

Surge! surge! surge!
 From the white Sierra's verge,
 To the very valley blossom.
 Surge! surge! surge!
 Yet the song-bird builds a home,
 And the mossy branches cross them,
 And the tasselled trec-tops toss them
 In the clouds of falling foam.

Sweep! sweep! sweep!
 O ye heaven-born and deep,
 In one dread, unbroken chorus!
 We may wonder or may weep,—

We may wait on God before us;
 We may shout or lift a hand,—
 We may bow down and deplore us,
 But may never understand.

Beat! beat! beat!
 We advance, but would retreat
 From this restless, broken breast
 Of the earth in a convulsion.
 We would rest, but dare not rest,
 For the angel of expulsion
 From this Paradise below
 Waves us onward and . . . we go.

DEAD IN THE SIERRAS

His footprints have failed us,
 Where berries are red,
 And madroños are rankest.
 The hunter is dead!

The grizzly may pass
 By his half-open door;
 May pass and repass
 On his path, as of yore;

The panther may crouch
 In the leaves on his limb;
 May scream and may scream,—
 It is nothing to him.

Prone, bearded, and breasted
 Like columns of stone:
 And tall as a pine—
 As a pine overthrown!

His camp-fires gone,
 What else can be done
 Than let him sleep on
 Till the light of the sun?

Ay, tombless! what of it?
 Marble is dust,
 Cold and repellent;
 And iron is rust.

IN SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

Where the cocoa and cactus are neigh-
 bors,
 Where the fig and the fir-tree are
 one;
 Where the brave corn is lifting bent
 sabres
 And flashing them far in the sun;

Where maidens blush red in their
 tresses
 Of night, and retreat to advance,
 And the dark, sweeping eyelash ex-
 presses
 Deep passion, half hush'd in a
 trance;

Where the fig is in leaf, where the
blossom

Of orange is fragrant as fair,—
Santa Barbara's balm in the bosom,
Her sunny, soft winds in the hair;

Where the grape is most luscious;
where laden

Long branches bend double with
gold;
Los Angelos leans like a maiden,
Red, blushing, half shy, and half
bold.

Where passion was born, and where
poets

Are deeper in silence than song,

A love knows a love, and may know
its

Reward, yet may never know
wrong.

Where passion was born and where
blushes

Gave birth to my songs of the
South,

And a song is a love-tale, and rushes,
Unchid, through the red of the
mouth;

Where an Adam in Eden reposes,
I repose, I am glad, and take wine

In the clambering, redolent roses,
And under my fig and my vine.

WHO SHALL SAY?

A sinking sun, a sky of red,
In bars and banners overhead,
And blown apart like curtains drawn;
Afar a-sea a blowing sail
That shall go down before the dawn;
And they are passion-toss'd and
pale,

The two that stand and look alone
And silent, as two shafts of stone
Set head and foot above the dead.

They watch the ship, the weary sun,
The banner'd streamers every one,
Till darkness hides them in her hair.

The winds come in as cold as death,
And not a palm above the pair
To lift a lance or break a breath.

The hollow of the ocean fills
Like sounding hollow halls of stone,
And not a banner streams above;
The sea is set in snowy hills.

The ship is lost. The winds are blown
Unheeded now; yet who shall say:
"We had been wiser so than they
Who wept and watch'd the parting
sail

In silence; mute with sorrow, pale
With weeping for departed love"?

A LOVE SONG

If earth is an oyster, love is the pearl,
As pure as pure caresses;
Then loosen the gold of your hair, my
girl,
And hide my pearl in your tresses.

So, coral to coral and pearl to
pearl,

And a cloud of curls above me,
O bury me deep, my beautiful girl,
And then confess you love me.

The world goes over my beautiful
girl
In glitter and gold and odor of roses,
In eddies of splendor, in oceans of
pearl,
But here the heaven reposes. . . .

The world is wide; men go their ways,
But love it is wise, and of all the
hours,
And of all the beautiful sun-born days,
It sips their sweets as the bees sip
flowers.

IN SAN FRANCISCO

Lo! here sit we mid the sun-down seas
And the white sierras. The swift,
sweet breeze
Is about us here; and a sky so fair
Is bending above in its azaline
hue,
That you gaze and you gaze in
delight, and you
See God and the portals of heaven
there.

Yea, here sit we where the white
ships ride
In the morn, made glad and forget-
ful of night,
The white and the brown men side by
side
In search of the truth, and be-
trothed to the right;
For these are the idols, and only these,
Of men that abide by the sun-down
seas.

The brown brave hand of the har-
vester,
The delicate hand of the prince un-
tried,
The rough hard hand of the carpenter,
They are all upheld with an equal
pride;
And the prize it is his to be crown'd or
blest,
Prince or peon, who bears him best.

Yea, here sit we by the golden gate,
Not demanding much, but inviting
you all,
Nor publishing loud, but daring to
wait,
And great in much that the days
deem small;
And the gate it is God's, to Cathay,
Japan,—
And who shall shut it in the face of
man?

SHADOWS OF SHASTA

In the place where the grizzly reposes,
Under peaks where a right is a
wrong,
I have memories richer than roses,
Sweet echoes more sweet than a
song;

Sounds sweet as the voice of a
singer
Made sacred with sorrows unsaid,
And a love that implores me to linger
For the love of dead days and their
dead.

But I turn, throwing kisses, returning
To strife and to turbulent men,

As to learn to be wise, as unlearning
All things that were manliest
then.

AT SEA

We part as ships on a pathless
main,
Gayly enough, for the sense of pain
Is asleep at first: but ghosts will arise
When we would repose, and the
forms will come
And walk when we walk, and will
not be dumb,
Nor yet forget with their wakeful
eyes.

Some hand will reach from the
dark, and keep
The curtains drawn and the pillows
toss'd
Like a tide of foam; and one will say
At night,—O, Heaven, that it were
day!
And one by night through the
misty tears
Will say,—O, Heaven, the days
are years,
And I would to Heaven that the
waves were cross'd.

When we most need rest, and the
perfect sleep,

A MEMORY OF SANTA BARBARA

Yea, Santa Barbara is fair;
A sunny clime and sweet to touch,
For tamer men of gentler mien,
But as for me—another scene.
A land below the Alps I know,
Set well with grapes and girt with
much
Of woodland beauty; I shall share
My rides by night below the light
Of Mauna Loa, ride below
The steep and starry Hebron height;
Shall lift my hands in many lands,
See South Sea palm, see Northland
fir,
See white-wing'd swans, see red-bill'd
doves;
See many lands and many loves,
But never more the face of her.

And what her name or where the
place
Of her who makes my Mecca's prayer,
Concerns you not; not any trace
Of entrance to my temple's shrine
Remains. The memory is mine,
And none shall pass the portals there.

The present! take it, hold it thine,
But that one hour out from all
The years that are, or yet shall fall,
I pluck it out, I name it mine,
And whistle by the rest, and laugh
To see it blown about as chaff;
That hour bound in sunny sheaves,
With tassell'd shocks of golden shine,
That hour, wound in scarlet leaves,
Is mine. I stretch a hand and swear

An oath that breaks into a prayer;
By heaven, it is wholly mine!

I see the gold and purple gleam
Of autumn leaves, a reach of seas,
A silent rider like a dream
Moves by, a mist of mysteries,
And these are mine, and only these,
Yet they be more in my esteem,
Than silver'd sails on coral'd seas.

Let red-leaf'd boughs sweet fruits
bestow,
Let fame of foreign lands be mine,
Let blame of faithless men befall;
It matters nothing; over all,
One hour arches like a bow
Of promise bent in many hues,
That tide nor time shall bid de-
cline;
Or storms of all the years refuse.

SUMMER FROSTS

Frosts of an hour! Fruits of a
season!
Who foresees them? Slain in a
day,
The loves of a lustrum. Who shall
say
The heart has sense or the soul has
reason?

. . . One not knowing and one not
caring.
. . . Leaves in their pathway.
Let them part;
She with the gifts of a gracious bear-
ing,
He with the pangs of a passionate
heart.

SIERRAS ADIOS

With the buckler and sword into
battle
I moved, I was matchless and
strong;
I stood in the rush and the rattle
Of shot, and the spirit of song
Was upon me; and youthful and
splendid
My armor flashed far in the sun
As I sang of my land. It is ended,
And all has been done, and undone.
I descend with my dead in the
trenches,
To-night I bend down on the plain

In the dark, and a memory wrenches
The soul; I turn up to the rain
The cold and beautiful faces,
Ay, faces forbidden for years,
Turn'd up to my face with the traces
Of blood to the white rain of
tears.
Count backward the years on your
fingers,
While forward rides yonder white
moon,
Till the soul turns aside, and it lingers
By a grave that was born of a
June;

By the grave of a soul, where the
grasses
Are tangled as witch-woven hair;
Where footprints are not, and where
passes
Not any thing known anywhere;

By a grave without tombstone or
token,
At a tomb where not fern leaf or
fir,
Root or branch, was once bended or
broken,
To bestow there the body of her;
For it lives, and the soul perish'd
only,
And alone in that land, with these
hands,
Did I lay the dead soul, and all lonely
Does it lie to this day in the sands.

Lo! a wild little maiden with tresses
Of gold on the wind of the hills;
Ay, a wise little maiden that guesses
Some good in the cruelest ills;
And a babe with its baby-fists
doubled,
And thrust to my beard, and with-
in,
As he laughs like a fountain half-
troubled,
When my finger chucks under his
chin.

Should the dead not decay, when the
culture
Of fields be resumed in the May?

Lo! the days are dark-wing'd as the
vulture!

Let them swoop, then, and bear
them away:

By the walks let me cherish red
flowers,

By the wall teach one tendril to
run;

Lest I wake, and I watch all the hours
I shall ever see under the sun.

It is well, may be so, to bear losses,
And to bend and bow down to the
rod;

If the scarlet bars and the crosses
Be but rounds up the ladder to
God.

But this mocking of men! Ah, that
enters

The marrow! the murmurs that
swell

To reproach for my song-love, that
centres,

Vast land, upon thee, are not well.

And I go, thanking God in my going,
That an ocean flows stormy and
deep,

And yet gentler to me is its flowing
Than the storm that forbids me to
sleep.

And I go, thanking God, with hands
lifted,

That a land lies beyond where the
free

And the gentle of heart and the gifted
Of soul have a home in the sea.

BY THE SUN-DOWN SEAS, 1873

OYE-AGUA: OREGON

*My brave world-builders of the West!
Why, who doth know ye? Who shall
know
But I, that on thy peaks of snow
Bake bread the first? Who loves ye
best?
Who holds ye still, of more stern worth
Then all proud peoples of the earth?*

*Yea, I, the rhymer of wild rhymes,
Indifferent of blame or praise,
Still sing of ye, as one who plays
The same sweet air in all strange
climes—
The same wild, piercing highland
air,
Because—because, his heart is there.*

SIERRA GRANDE DEL NORTE

Like fragments of an uncompleted
world,
From bleak Alaska, bound in ice and
spray,
To where the peaks of Darien lie
curl'd
In clouds, the broken lands loom bold
and gray.
The seamen nearing San Francisco Bay
Forget the compass here; with sturdy
hand
They seize the wheel, look up, then
bravely lay
The ship to shore by rugged peaks
that stand
The stern and proud patrician fathers
of the land.

They stand white stairs of heaven,
—stand a line
Of lifting, endless, and eternal white.
They look upon the far and flashing
brine,

Upon the boundless plains, the broken
height
Of Kamiakin's battlements. The
flight
Of time is underneath their untopp'd
towers.
They seem to push aside the moon at
night,
To jostle and to loose the stars. The
flowers
Of heaven fall about their brows in
shining showers.

They stand in line of lifted snowy
isles
High held above the toss'd and
tumbled sea,—
A sea of wood in wild unmeasured
miles:
White pyramids of Faith where man
is free;
White monuments of Hope that yet
shall be

The mounts of matchless and immortal song . . .

I look far down the hollow days; I see
The bearded prophets, simple-soul'd
and strong,
That strike the sounding harp and
thrill the heeding throng.

Serene and satisfied! supreme! as
lone
As God, they loom like God's arch-
angels churl'd;

They look as cold as kings upon a
throne;

The mantling wings of night are
crush'd and curl'd
As feathers curl. The elements are
hurl'd

From off their bosoms, and are bidden
go,

Like evil spirits, to an under-world.
They stretch from Cariboo to Mexico,
A line of battle-tents in everlasting
snow.

EXODUS FOR OREGON

A tale half told and hardly under-
stood;

The talk of bearded men that chanced
to meet,

That lean'd on long quaint rifles in
the wood,

That look'd in fellow faces, spoke
discreet

And low, as half in doubt and in
defeat

Of hope; a tale it was of lands of gold
That lay below the sun. Wild-
wing'd and fleet

It spread among the swift Missouri's
bold

Unbridled men, and reach'd to where
Ohio roll'd.

Then long chain'd lines of yoked
and patient steers;

Then long white trains that pointed
to the west,

Beyond the savage west; the hopes
and fears

Of blunt, untutor'd men, who hardly
guess'd

Their course; the brave and silent
women, dress'd

In homely spun attire, the boys in
bands,

The cheery babes that laugh'd at all,
and bless'd

The doubting hearts, with laughing
lifted hands! . . .

What exodus for far untraversed
lands!

The Plains! The shouting drivers
at the wheel;

The crash of leather whips; the crush
and roll

Of wheels; the groan of yokes and
grinding steel

And iron chain, and lo! at last the
whole

Vast line, that reach'd as if to touch
the goal,

Began to stretch and stream away
and wind

Toward the west, as if with one con-
trol;

Then hope loom'd fair, and home lay
far behind;
Before, the boundless plain, and
fiercest of their kind.

At first the way lay green and
fresh as seas,
And far away as any reach of wave;
The sunny streams went by in belt of
trees;
And here and there the tassell'd
tawny brave
Swept by on horse, look'd back,
stretch'd forth and gave
A yell of warn, and then did wheel
and rein
Awhile, and point away, dark-brow'd
and grave,
Into the far and dim and distant plain
With signs and prophecies, and then
plunged on again.

Some hills at last began to lift and
break;
Some streams began to fail of wood
and tide,
The somber plain began betime to
take
A hue of weary brown, and wild and
wide
It stretch'd its naked breast on every
side.
A babe was heard at last to cry for
bread
Amid the deserts; cattle low'd and
died,
And dying men went by with broken
tread,
And left a long black serpent line of
wreck and dead.

Strange hunger'd birds, black-
wing'd and still as death,
And crown'd of red with hooked
beaks, blew low
And close about, till we could touch
their breath—
Strange unnamed birds, that seem'd
to come and go
In circles now, and now direct and
slow,
Continual, yet never touch the earth;
Slim foxes slid and shuttled to and
fro
At times across the dusty weary
dearth
Of life, look'd back, then sank like
crickets in a hearth.

Then dust arose, a long dim line
like smoke
From out of riven earth. The wheels
went groaning by,
Ten thousand feet in harness and in
yoke,
They tore the ways of ashen alkali,
And desert winds blew sudden, swift
and dry.
The dust! it sat upon and fill'd the
train!
It seem'd to fret and fill the very sky.
Lo! dust upon the beasts, the tent,
the plain,
And dust, alas! on breasts that rose
not up again.

They sat in desolation and in dust
By dried-up desert streams; the
mother's hands
Hid all her bended face; the cattle
thrust

Their tongues and faintly call'd across
the lands.

The babes, that knew not what this
way through sands

Could mean, did ask if it would end
today . . .

The panting wolves slid by, red-eyed,
in bands

To pools beyond. The men look'd
far away,

And, silent, saw that all a boundless
desert lay.

They rose by night; they struggled
on and on

As thin and still as ghosts; then here
and there

Beside the dusty way before the dawn,
Men silent laid them down in their
despair,

And died. But woman! Woman,
frail as fair

May man have strength to give to
you your due;

You falter'd not, nor murmured any-
where,

You held your babes, held to your
course, and you

Bore on through burning hell your
double burdens through.

Men stood at last, the decimated
few,

Above a land of running streams, and
they?

They push'd aside the boughs, and
peering through

Beheld afar the cool, refreshing bay;
Then some did curse, and some bend
hands to pray;

But some look'd back upon the
desert, wide

And desolate with death, then all the
day

They mourned. But one, with noth-
ing left beside

His dog to love, crept down among
the ferns and died.

THE HEROES OF OREGON

I stand upon the green Sierra's
wall;

Against the east, beyond the yellow
grass,

I see the broken hill-tops lift and fall,
Then sands that shimmer like a sea
of glass . . .

There lies the nation's great high road
of dead.

Forgotten eye, unnumbered, and,
alas!

Unchronicled in deed or death;
instead,

The new aristocrat lifts high a lordly
head.

My brave and unremember'd
heroes, rest;

You fell in silence, silent lie and
sleep.

Sleep on unsung, for this, I say, were
best:

The world today has hardly time to
weep;

The world today will hardly care to
keep

In heart her plain and unpretending
brave.

The desert winds, they whistle by
and sweep

About you; brown'd and russet
grasses wave

Along a thousand leagues that lie one
common grave.

The proud and careless pass in
palace car

Along the line you blazon'd white
with bones;

Pass swift to people, and possess and
mar

Your lands with monuments and
letter'd stones

Unto themselves. Thank God! this
waste disowns

Their touch. His everlasting hand
has drawn

A shining line around you. Wealth
bemoans

The waste your splendid grave em-
ploys. Sleep on,

No hand shall touch your dust this
side of God and dawn.

I let them stride across with grasp-
ing hands

And strive for brief possession; mark
and line

With lifted walls the new divided
lands,

And gather growing herds of lowing
kine.

I could not covet these, could not
confine

My heart to one; all seem'd to me the
same,

And all below my mountain home,
divine

And beautiful, held in another's
name,

As if the herds and lands were mine,
All mine, or his, all beautiful the

same.

I have not been, shall not be,
understood;

I have not wit, nor will, to well
explain,

But that which men call good I find
not good.

The lands the savage held, shall hold
again,

The gold the savage spurn'd in proud
disdain

For centuries; go, take them all; build
high

Your gilded temples; strive and strike
and strain

And crowd and controvert and curse
and lie

In church and State, in town and
citadel, and . . . die.

And who shall grow the nobler
from it all?

The mute and unsung savage loved
as true—

He felt, as grateful felt, God's bless-
ings fall

About his lodge and tawny babes as
you

In temples,—Moslem, Christian, in-
fidel, or Jew.

. . . The sea, the great white,
braided, bounding sea,

Is laughing in your face; the arching
blue

Remains to God; the mountains still
are free,
A refuge for the few remaining tribes
and me.

Your cities! from the first the hand
of God
Has been against them; sword and
flood and flame,
The earthquake's march, and pesti-
lence, have trod

To undiscerning dust the very
name
Of antique capitals; and still the
same
Sad destiny besets the battle-fields
Of Mammon and the harlot's house
of shame.
Lo! man with monuments and lifted
shields
Against his city's fate. A flame! his
city yields.

WHERE ROLLS THE OREGON

.
See once these stately scenes, then
roam no more;
No more remains on earth to eager
eyes;
The cataract comes down, a broken
roar,
The palisades defy approach, and rise
Green moss'd and dripping to the
clouded skies.
The cañon thunders with its full of
foam,
And calls loud-mouth'd, and all the
land defies;
The mounts make fellowship and
dwell at home
In snowy brotherhood beneath their
purpled dome.

The rainbows swim in circles round,
and rise
Against the hanging granite walls till
lost
In drifting dreamy clouds and dappled
skies,
A grand mosaic intertwined and
toss'd

Along the mighty cañon, bound and
cross'd
By storms of screaming birds of sea
and land;
The salmon rush below, bright red
and boss'd
In silver. Tawny, tall, on either
hand
You see the savage spearman nude
and silent stand.

Here sweep the wide wild waters cold
and white
And blue in their far depths; divided
now
By sudden swift canoe as still and
light
As feathers nodding from the painted
brow
That lifts and looks from out the
imaged prow.
Ashore you hear the papoose shout at
play;
The curl'd smoke comes from under-
neath the bough
Of leaning fir: the wife looks far
away

And sees a swift slim bark divide the
dashing spray.

Slow drift adown the river's level'd
deep,
And look above; lo, columns! woods!
the snow!
The rivers rush upon the brink and
leap
From out the clouds three thousand
feet below,
And land afoam in tops of firs that
grow
Against your river's rim: they splash,
they play
In clouds, now loud and now subdued
and slow,
A thousand thunder tones; they swing
and sway
In idle winds, long leaning shafts of
shining spray.

An Indian summer-time it was,
long past,
We lay on this Columbia, far below
The stormy water falls, and God had
cast
Us heaven's stillness. Dreamily and
slow
We drifted as the light bark chose to
go.
An Indian girl with ornaments of
shell
Began to sing. . . . The stars may
hold such flow
Of hair, such eyes, but rarely earth.
There fell
A sweet enchantment that possess'd
me as a spell.

We saw an elk forsake the sable
wood,
Step quick across the rim of shining
sand,
Breast out unscared against the flash-
ing flood,
Then brisket deep with lifted antlers
stand,
And ears alert, look sharp on either
hand,
Then whistle shrill to dam and doubt-
ing fawn
To cross, then lead with black nose
from the land.
They cross'd, they climb'd the heav-
ing hills, were gone,
A sturdy charging line with crooked
sabers drawn.

Then black swans cross'd us slowly
low and still;
Then other swans, wide-wing'd and
white as snow,
Flew overhead and topp'd the
timber'd hill,
And call'd and sang afar, coarse-
voiced and slow,
Till sounds roam'd lost in somber firs
below . . .
Then clouds blew in, and all the sky
was cast
With tumbled and tumultuous clouds
that grow
Red thunderbolts. . . . A flash!
A thunderblast!
The clouds were rent, and lo! Mount
Hood hung white and vast.

.

PICTURE OF A BULL

Once, morn by morn, when snowy
 mountains flamed
 With sudden shafts of light that shot
 a flood
 Into the vale like fiery arrows aim'd
 At night from mighty battlements,
 there stood
 Upon a cliff high-limn'd against
 Mount Hood,
 A matchless bull, fresh forth from
 sable wold,
 And standing so seem'd grander
 'gainst the wood
 Than winged bull that stood with tips
 of gold
 Beside the brazen gates of Nineveh
 of old.

A time he toss'd the dewy turf, and
 then
 Stretch'd forth his wrinkled neck,
 and loud
 He call'd above the far abodes of men
 Until his breath became a curling
 cloud
 And wreathed about his neck a misty
 shroud.
 He then as sudden as he came pass'd
 on

With lifted head, majestic and most
 proud,
 And lone as night in deepest wood
 withdrawn
 He roamed in silent rage until an-
 other dawn.

What drove the hermit from the
 valley herd,
 What cross of love, what cold neglect
 to kind,
 Or scorn of unpretending worth had
 stirr'd
 The stubborn blood and drove him
 forth to find
 A fellowship in mountain cloud and
 wind,
 I ofttime wonder'd much; and oft-
 time thought
 The beast betray'd a royal monarch's
 mind
 To lift above the low herd's common
 lot
 And make them hear him still when
 they had fain forgot.

.

VAQUERO

His broad-brimm'd hat push'd
 back with careless air,
 The proud vaquero sits his steed as
 free
 As winds that toss his black abundant
 hair.
 No rover ever swept a lawless sea

With such a haught and heedless air
 as he
 Who scorns the path, and bounds
 with swift disdain
 Away, a peon born, yet born to be
 A splendid king; behold him ride,
 and reign.

How brave he takes his herds in
branding days,
On timber'd hills that belt about the
plain;
He climbs, he wheels, he shouts
through winding ways
Of hiding ferns and hanging fir; the
rein
Is loose, the rattling spur drives swift;
the mane
Blows free; the bullocks rush in
storms before;
They turn with lifted heads, they
rush again,
Then sudden plunge from out the
wood, and pour
A cloud upon the plain with one
terrific roar.

Now sweeps the tawny man on
stormy steed,
His gaudy trappings toss'd about and
blown
About the limbs as lithe as any reed;
The swift long lasso twirl'd above is
thrown
From flying hand; the fall, the fearful
groan
Of bullock toil'd and tumbled in the
dust—
The black herds onward sweep, and
all disown
The fallen, struggling monarch that
has thrust
His tongue in rage and roll'd his red
eyes in disgust.

.
.

THE GREAT EMERALD LAND

A morn in Oregon! The kindled
camp
Upon the mountain brow that broke
below
In steep and grassy stairway to the
damp
And dewy valley, snapp'd and flamed
aglow
With knots of pine. Above, the
peaks of snow,
With under-belts of sable forest, rose
And flash'd in sudden sunlight. To
and fro
And far below, in lines and winding
rows,
The herders drove their bands, and
broke the deep repose.

I heard their shouts like sounding
hunter's horn,
The lowing herds made echoes far
away;
When lo! the clouds came driving in
with morn
Toward the sea, as fleeing from the
day.
The valleys fill'd with curly clouds.
They lay
Below, a levell'd sea that reach'd and
roll'd
And broke like breakers of a stormy
bay
Against the grassy shingle fold on fold,
So like some splendid ocean, snowy
white and cold.

The peopled valley lay a hidden world,
 The shouts were shouts of drowning men that died,
 The broken clouds along the border curl'd,
 And bent the grass with weighty freight of tide.
 A savage stood in silence at my side,
 Then sudden threw aback his beaded strouds
 And stretch'd his hand above the scene, and cried,
 As all the land lay dead in snowy shrouds:
 "Behold! the sun bathes in a silver sea of clouds."

Here lifts the land of clouds!
 Fierce mountain forms,
 Made white with everlasting snows,
 look down
 Through mists of many cañons,
 mighty storms
 That stretch from Autumn's purple,
 drench and drown
 The yellow hem of Spring. Tall cedars frown
 Dark-brow'd, through banner'd clouds that stretch and stream
 Above the sea from snowy mountain crown.
 The heavens roll, and all things drift or seem
 To drift about and drive like some majestic dream.

In waning Autumn time, when purpled skies
 Begin to haze in indolence below
 The snowy peaks, you see black forms arise,
 In rolling thunder banks above, and throw
 Quick barricades about the gleaming snow.
 The strife begins! The battling seasons stand
 Broad breast to breast. A flash! Contentions grow
 Terrific. Thunders crash, and lightnings brand
 The battlements. The clouds possess the conquered land.

Then, clouds blow by, the swans take loftier flight,
 The yellow blooms burst out upon the hill,
 The purple camas comes as in a night,
 Tall spiked and dripping of the dews that fill
 The misty valley. Sunbeams break and spill
 Their glory till the vale is full of noon.
 Then roses belt the streams, no bird is still.
 The stars, as large as lilies, meet the moon
 And sing of summer, born thus sudden full and soon.

.

TO REST AT LAST

What wonder that I swore a
 prophet's oath
 Of after days. . . . I push'd the
 boughs apart,
 I stood, look'd forth, and then look'd
 back, all loath
 To leave my shadow'd wood. I
 gathered heart
 From very fearfulness; with sudden
 start
 I plunged in the arena; stood a wild
 Uncertain thing, all artless, in all
 art. . . .
 The brave approved, the fair lean'd
 fair and smiled,—
 True lions touch with velvet-touch a
 timid child.

But now enough of men. Enough.
 brief day
 Of tinsel'd life. The court, the castle
 gate
 That open'd wide along the pleasant
 way,
 The gracious converse of the kingly
 great
 Had made another glad and well elate
 With all. A word of thanks; but I
 am grown
 Aweary. . . . I am not of this
 estate;
 The poor, the plain brave border-men
 alone
 Were my first love, and these I will
 not now disown.

I know a grassy slope above the
 sea,

The utmost limit of the westmost
 land.
 In savage, gnarl'd, and antique
 majesty
 The great trees belt about the place,
 and stand
 In guard, with mailéd limb and lifted
 hand,
 Against the cold approaching civic
 pride.
 The foamy brooklets seaward leap;
 the bland
 Still air is fresh with touch of wood
 and tide,
 And peace, eternal peace, possesses,
 wild and wide.

Here I return, here I abide and
 and rest;
 Some flocks and herds shall feed
 along the stream;
 Some corn and climbing vines shall
 make us blest
 With bread and luscious fruit. . . .
 The sunny dream
 Or wampum men in moccasins that
 seem
 To come and go in silence, girt in
 shell,
 Before a sun-clad cabin-door, I deem
 The harbinger of peace. Hope
 weaves her spell
 Again about the wearied heart, and
 all is well.

Here I shall sit in sunlit life's
 decline
 Beneath my vine and somber verdant
 tree.

To Rest at Last

Some tawny maids in other tongues
 than mine
 Shall minister. Some memories shall
 be
 Before me. I shall sit and I shall see,
 That last vast day that dawn shall
 reinspire,

The sun fall down upon the farther
 sea,
 Fall wearied down to rest, and so
 retire,
 A splendid sinking isle of far-off
 fading fire.

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SONGS OF THE SUNLANDS

ISLES OF THE AMAZONS

PART I

*Primeval forests! virgin sod!
That Saxon has not ravish'd yet,
Lo! peak on peak in stairways set—
In stepping stairs that reach to God!*

*Here we are free as sea or wind,
For here are set Time's snowy tents
In everlasting battlements
Against the march of Saxon mind.*

Far up in the hush of the Amazon
River,
And mantled and hung in the
tropical trees,
There are isles as grand as the isles
of seas.
And the waves strike strophes, and
keen reeds quiver,
As the sudden canoe shoots past them
and over
The strong, still tide to the opposite
shore,
Where the blue-eyed men by the
sycamore
Sit mending their nets 'neath the
vine-twined cover;
Sit weaving the threads of long,
strong grasses;
They wind and they spin on the
clumsy wheel,

Into hammocks red-hued with the
cochineal,
To trade with the single black ship
that passes,
With foreign old freightage of curious
old store,
And still and slow as if half
asleep,—
A cunning old trader that loves to
creep
Cautious and slow in the shade of the
shore.

And the blue-eyed men that are mild
as the dawns—
Oh, delicate dawns of the grand
Andes!
Lift up soft eyes that are deep like
seas,
And mild yet wild as the red-white
fawns';

And they gaze into yours, then weave,
then listen,
Then look in wonder, then again
weave on,
Then again look wonder that you
are not gone,
While the keen reeds quiver and the
bent waves glisten;

But they say no word while they
weave and wonder,

Though they sometimes sing,
voiced low like the dove,
And as deep and as rich as their
tropical love,
A-weaving their net threads through
and under.

A pure, true people you may trust are
these
That weave their threads where the
quick leaves quiver;
And this is their tale of the Isles of
the river,
And the why that their eyes are so
blue like seas;

The why that the men draw water
and bear
The wine or the water in the wild
boar skin,
And do hew the wood and weave
and spin,
And so bear with the women full
burthen and share.

A curious old tale of a curious old
time,
That is told you betimes by a
quaint old crone,
Who sits on the rim of an island
alone,
As ever was told you in story or
rhyme.

Her brown, bare feet dip down to the
river,
And dabble and splash to her mono-
tone,
As she holds in her hands a strange
green stone,

And talks to the boat where the bent
reeds quiver.

And the quaint old crone has a singu-
lar way
Of holding her head to the side and
askew,

And smoothing the stone in her
palms all day
As saying "I've nothing at all for
you,"

Until you have anointed her palm,
and you

Have touched on the delicate
spring of a door

That silver has opened perhaps
before;

For woman is woman the wide world
through.

The old near truth on the far new
shore,

I bought and I paid for it; so did
you;

The tale may be false or the tale
may be true;

I give it as I got it, and who can more?

If I have made journeys to difficult
shores,

And woven delusions in innocent
verse,

If none be the wiser, why, who is
the worse?

The field it was mine, the fruit it is
yours.

A sudden told tale. You may read
as you run.

A part of it hers, some part is my
own,

Crude, and too carelessly woven
and sown,
As I sail'd on the Mexican seas in the
sun.

'Twas nations ago, when the Ama-
zons were,
That a fair young knight—says the
quaint old crone,
With her head sidewise, as she
smooths at the stone—
Came over the seas, with his golden
hair,
And a great black steed, and glitter-
ing spurs,
With a woman's face, with a manly
frown,
A heart as tender and as true as
hers,
And a sword that had come from
crusaders down.

And fairest, and foremost in love as in
war
Was the brave young knight of the
brave old days.
Of all the knights, with their
knightly ways,
That had journey'd away to this
world afar
In the name of Spain; of the splendid
few
Who bore her banner in the new-
born world,
From the sea rim up to where
clouds are curl'd,
And condors beat with black wings
the blue.

He was born, says the crone, where
the brave are fair,

And blown from the banks of the
Guadalquiver,
And yet blue-eyed, with the Celt's
soft hair,
With never a drop of the dark deep
river
Of Moorish blood that had swept
through Spain,
And splash'd the world with its tawny
stain.

He sat on his steed, and his sword was
bloody
With heathen blood: the battle
was done;
His heart rebelled and rose with pity.
For crown'd with fire, wreathed and
ruddy
Fell antique temples built up to the
sun.

Below on the plain lay the burning
city
At the conqueror's feet; the red
street strown
With dead, with gold, and with
gods overthrown.

And the heathen pour'd, in a helpless
flood,
With never a wail and with never a
blow,
At last, to even provoke a foe,
Through gateways, wet with the
pagan's blood.

“Ho, forward! smite!” but the min-
strel linger'd,
He reach'd his hand and he touch'd
the rein,
He humm'd an air, and he toy'd and
finger'd

The arching neck and the glossy
mane.

He rested the heel, he rested the hand,
Though the thing was death to the
man to dare
To doubt, to question, to falter
there,
Nor heeded at all to the hot com-
mand.

He wiped his steel on his black steed's
mane,
He sheathed it deep, then look'd at
the sun,
Then counted his comrades, one
by one,
With booty returning from the
plunder'd plain.

He lifted his face to the flashing snow,
He lifted his shield of steel as he
sang,
And he flung it away till it clang'd
and rang
On the granite rocks in the plain
below.

He cross'd his bosom. Made over-
bold,
He lifted his voice and sang, quite
low
At first, then loud in the long ago,
When the loves endured though the
days grew old.

They heard his song, the chief on the
plain
Stood up in his stirrups, and, sword
in hand,
He curs'd and he call'd with a
loud command

To the blue-eyed boy to return again;
To lift his shield again to the sky,
And come and surrender his sword
or die.

He wove his hand in the stormy mane,
He lean'd him forward, he lifted the
rein,
He struck the flank, he wheel'd and
sprang,
And gaily rode in the face of the
sun,
And bared his sword and he bravely
sang,
"Ho! come and take it!" but there
came not one.

And so he sang with his face to the
south:
"I shall go; I shall search for the
Amazon shore,
Where the curses of man they are
heard no more,
And kisses alone shall embrace the
mouth.

"I shall journey in search of the Incan
Isles,
Go far and away to traditional
land,
Where love is queen in a crown of
smiles,
And battle has never imbrued a
hand;

"Where man has never despoil'd or
trod;
Where woman's hand with a
woman's heart
Has fashion'd an Eden from man
apart,

And walks in her garden alone with
God.

"I shall find that Eden, and all my
years
Shall sit and repose, shall sing in
the sun;
And the tides may rest or the tides
may run,
And men may water the world with
tears;

"And the years may come and the
years may go,
And men make war, may slay and
be slain,
But I not care, for I never shall know
Of man, or of aught that is man's
again.

"The waves may battle, the winds
may blow,
The mellow rich moons may ripen
and fall,
The seasons of gold they may gather
or go,
The mono may chatter, the paro-
quet call,
And I shall not heed, take note, or
know,
If the Fates befriend, or if ill
befall,
Of worlds without or of worlds at
all,
Of heaven above, or of hadés below."

'Twas the song of a dream and the
dream of a singer,
Drawn fine as the delicate fibers of
gold,

And broken in two by the touch of a
finger,
And blown as the winds blow, rent
and roll'd
In dust, and spent as a tale that is
told.

Alas! for his dreams and the songs he
sung;
The beasts beset him; the serpents
they hung,
Red-tongued and terrible, over his
head.
He clove and he thrust with his
keen, quick steel,
He coax'd with his hand, he urged
with his heel,
Till his steel was broken, and his steed
lay dead.

He toil'd to the river, he lean'd intent
To the wave, and away to the
islands fair,
From beasts that pursued, and he
breathed a prayer;
For soul and body were well-nigh
spent.

'Twas the king of rivers, and the Isles
were near;
Yet it moved so strange, so still, so
strong,
It gave no sound, not even the song
Of a sea-bird screaming defiance or
fear.

It was dark and dreadful! Wide like
an ocean,
Much like a river but more like a
sea,

Save that there was naught of the
turbulent motion
Of tides, or of winds blown abaft,
or alee.

Yea, strangely strong was the wave
and slow,
And half-way hid in the dark, deep
tide,
Great turtles, they paddled them to
and fro,
And away to the Isles and the
opposite side.

The nude black boar through abun-
dant grass
Stole down to the water and buried
his nose,
And crunch'd white teeth till the
bubbles rose
As white and as bright as are globes
of glass.

Yea, steadily moved it, mile upon
mile,
Above and below and as still as the
air;
The bank made slippery here and
there
By the slushing slide of the crocodile.

The great trees bent to the tide like
slaves;
They dipp'd their boughs as the
stream swept on,
And then drew back, then dipp'd
and were gone
Away to the sea with the resolute
waves.

The land was the tide's; the shore was
undone;

It look'd as the lawless, unsatisfied
seas
Had thrust up an arm through the
tangle of trees,
And clutch'd at the citrons that grew
in the sun;

And clutch'd at the diamonds that
hid in the sand,
And laid heavy hand on the gold, and
a hand
On the redolent fruits, on the ruby-
like wine,
On the stones like the stars when the
stars are divine;

Had thrust through the rocks of the
ribb'd Andes;
Had wrested and fled; and had left
a waste
And a wide way strewn in precipi-
tate haste,
As he bore them away to the
buccaneer seas.

Oh heavens, the eloquent song of the
silence!
Asleep lay the sun in the vines, on
the sod,
And asleep in the sun lay the green
girdled islands,
As rock'd to their rest in the cradle
of God.
God's poet is silence! His song is
unspoken,
And yet so profound, so loud, and
so far,
It fills you, it thrills you with
measures unbroken,
And as still, and as fair, and as far
as a star.

The shallow seas moan. From the
first they have mutter'd,
As a child that is fretted, and weeps
at its will. . . .

The poems of God are too grand to
be utter'd:

The dreadful deep seas they are
loudest when still.

"I shall fold my hands, for this is the
river

Of death," he said, "and the sea-
green isle

Is an Eden set by the Gracious Giver
Wherein to rest." He listened the
while,

Then lifted his head, then lifted a
hand

Arch'd over his brow, and he lean'd
and listen'd,—

'Twas only a bird on a border of
sand,—

The dark stream eddied and
gleam'd and glisten'd,

And the martial notes from the
isle were gone,

Gone as a dream dies out with
the dawn.

'Twas only a bird on a border of
sand,

Slow piping, and diving it here
and there,

Slim, gray, and shadowy, light as
the air,

That dipp'd below from a point of the
land.

"Unto God a prayer and to love a
tear,

And I die," he said, "in a desert here,
So deep that never a note is heard
But the listless song of that soulless
bird.

"The strong trees lean in their love
unto trees,

Lock arms in their loves, and are so
made strong,

Stronger than armies; aye, stronger
than seas

That rush from their caves in a
storm of song.

"A miser of old, his last great treasure
Flung far in the sea, and he fell and
he died;

And so shall I give, O terrible tide,
To you my song and my last sad
measure."

He blew on a reed by the still, strong
river,

Blew low at first, like a dream, then
long,

Then loud, then loud as the keys that
quiver,

And fret and toss with their freight
of song.

He sang and he sang with a resolute
will,

Till the mono rested above on his
haunches,

And held his head to the side and was
still,—

Till a bird blown out of the night of
branches

Sang sadder than love, so sweeter
than sad,

Till the boughs did burthen and
and the reeds did fill
With beautiful birds, and the boy
was glad.

Our loves they are told by the
myriad-eyed stars,
And love it is grand in a reasonable
way,
And fame it is good in its way for a
day,
Borne dusty from books and bloody
from wars;

And death, I say, is an absolute need,
And a calm delight, and an ultimate
good;
But a song that is blown from a
watery reed
By a soundless deep from a bound-
less wood,
With never a hearer to heed or to
prize
But God and the birds and the
hairy wild beasts,
Is sweeter than love, than fame, or
than feasts,
Or any thing else that is under the
skies.

The quick leaves quiver'd, and the
sunlight danced;
As the boy sang sweet, and the
birds said, "Sweet;"
And the tiger crept close and lay
low at his feet,
And he sheathed his claws as he
listened entranced.

The serpent that hung from the sycamore
bough,

And sway'd his head in a crescent
above,
Had folded his neck to the white limb
now,
And fondled it close like a great
black love.

But the hands grew weary, the heart
wax'd faint,
The loud notes fell to a far-off plaint,
The sweet birds echo'd no more, "Oh,
sweet,"
The tiger arose and unsheathed his
claws,
The serpent extended his iron jaws,
And the frail reed shiver'd and fell at
his feet.

A sound on the tide! and he turn'd
and cried,
"Oh, give God thanks, for they
come, they come!"
He look'd out afar on the opaline
tide,
Then clasp'd his hands, and his
lips were dumb.

A sweeping swift crescent of sudden
canoes!
As light as the sun of the south and
as soon,
And true and as still as a sweet half-
moon
That leans from the heavens, and
loves and woos!

The Amazons came in their martial
pride,
As full on the stream as a studding
of stars,

All girded in armor as girded in wars,
 In foamy white furrows dividing the tide.

With a face as brown as the boatmen's are,
 Or the brave, brown hand of a harvester;
 The Queen on a prow stood splendid and tall,
 As the petulant waters did lift and fall;

Stood forth for the song, half lean'd in surprise,
 Stood fair to behold, and yet grand to behold,
 And austere in her face, and saturnine-soul'd,
 And sad and subdued, in her eloquent eyes.

And sad were they all; yet tall and serene
 Of presence, but silent, and brow'd severe;
 As for some things lost, or for some fair, green,
 And beautiful place, to the memory dear.

"O Mother of God! Thrice merciful saint!
 I am saved!" he said, and he wept outright;
 Ay, wept as even a woman might,
 For the soul was full and the heart was faint.

"Stay! stay!" cried the Queen, and she leapt to the land,

And she lifted her hand, and she lowered their spears,
 "A woman! a woman! ho! help! give a hand!

A woman! a woman! I know by the tears."

Then gently as touch of the truest of woman,
 They lifted him up from the earth where he fell,
 And into the boat, with a half hidden swell
 Of the heart that was holy and tenderly human.

They spoke low-voiced as a vesper prayer;
 They pillowed his head as only the hand
 Of woman can pillow, and push'd from the land,
 And the Queen she sat threading the gold of his hair.

PART II

*Forsake those People. What are they
 That laugh, that live, that love by rule?
 Forsake the Saxon. Who are these
 That shun the shadows of the trees;
 The perfumed forests? . . . Go thy way,
 We are not one. I will not please
 You:—fare you well, O wiser fool!*

*But ye who love me:—Ye who love
 The shaggy forests, fierce delights
 Of sounding waterfalls, of heights
 That hang like broken moons above,*

*With brows of pine that brush the sun,
Believe and follow. We are one:
The wild man shall to us be tame,
The woods shall yield their mysteries;
The stars shall answer to a name,
And be as birds above the trees.*

They swept to their Isles through the
furrows of foam;
Thy alit on the land, as love hasten-
ing home,
And below the banana, with leaf like
a tent,
They tenderly laid him, they bade
him take rest,
They brought him strange fishes
and fruits of the best,
And he ate and took rest with a
patient content.

They watched so well that he rose up
strong,
And stood in their midst, and they
said, "How fair!"
And they said, "How tall!" And
they toy'd with his hair.

And they touched his limbs and they
said, "How long
And how strong they are; and how
brave she is,
That she made her way through
the wiles of man,
That she braved his wrath, that she
broke the ban
Of his desolate life for the love of
this!"

They wrought for him armor and
cunning attire,

They brought him a sword and a
great shell shield,
And implored him to shiver the
lance on the field,
And to follow their beautiful Queen
in her ire.

But he took him apart; then the
Amazons came
And entreated of him with their
eloquent eyes
And their earnest and passionate
souls of flame,
And the soft, sweet words that are
broken of sighs,
To be one of their own, but he still
denied
And bow'd and abash'd he stole
further aside.

He stood by the Palms and he lean'd
in unrest,
And standing alone, looked out
and afar,
For his own fair land where the
castles are,
With irresolute arms on a restless
breast.

He re-lived his loves, he recall'd his
wars,
He gazed and he gazed with a soul
distress'd,
Like a far sweet star that is lost in
the west,
Till the day was broken to a dust of
stars.

They sigh'd, and they left him alone
in the care

Of faithfullest matron; they moved
to the field

With the lifted sword and the
sounding shield
High fretting magnificent storms of
hair.

And, true as the moon in her march
of stars,

The Queen stood forth in her fierce
attire

Worn as they trained or worn in the
wars,

As bright and as chaste as a flash
of fire.

With girdles of gold and of silver
cross'd,

And plaited, and chased, and
bound together,

Broader and stronger than belts of
leather,

Cunningly fashion'd and blazon'd
and boss'd—

With diamonds circling her, stone
upon stone,

Above the breast where the borders
fail,

Below the breast where the fringes
zone,

She moved in a glittering garment
of mail.

The form made hardy and the waist
made spare

From athlete sports and adven-
tures bold,

The breastplate, fasten'd with
clasps of gold,

Was clasp'd, as close as the breasts
could bear,—

And bound and drawn to a delicate
span,

It flash'd in the red front ranks of
the field—

Was fashion'd full trim in its in-
tricate plan

And gleam'd as a sign, as well as a
shield,

That the virgin Queen was unyield-
ing still,

And pure as the tides that around
her ran;

True to her trust, and strong in her
will

Of war, and hatred to the touch of
man.

The field it was theirs in storm or in
shine,

So fairly they stood that the foe
came not

To battle again, and the fair forgot
The rage of battle; and they trimm'd
the vine,

They tended the fields of the tall
green corn,

They crush'd the grape and they
drew the wine

In the great round gourds and the
bended horn—

And they lived as the gods in the
days divine.

They bathed in the wave in the
amber morn,

They took repose in the peaceful
 shade
 Of eternal palms, and were never
 afraid;
 Yet oft did they sigh, and look far
 and forlorn.

Where the rim of the wave was weav-
 ing a spell,
 And the grass grew soft where it
 hid from the sun,
 Would the Amazons gather them
 every one
 At the call of the Queen or the sound
 of her shell:

Would come in strides through the
 kingly trees,
 And train and marshal them brave
 and well
 In the golden noon, in the hush of
 peace
 Where the shifting shades of the
 fan-palms fell;

Would train till flush'd and as warm
 as wine:
 Would reach with their limbs,
 would thrust with the lance,
 Attack, retire, retreat and advance,
 Then wheel in column, then fall in
 line;
 Stand thigh and thigh with the limbs
 made hard
 And rich and round as the swift
 limb'd pard,
 Or a racer train'd, or a white bull
 caught
 In the lasso's toils, where the tame
 are not:

Would curve as the waves curve,
 swerve in line;
 Would dash through the trees,
 would train with the bow,
 Then back to the lines, now sud-
 den, then slow,
 Then flash their swords in the sun at
 a sign:

Would settle the foot right firmly
 afront,
 Then sound the shield till the sound
 was heard
 Afar, as the horn in the black boar
 hunt;
 Yet, strangest of all, say never one
 word.

When shadows fell far from the west-
 ward, and when
 The sun had kiss'd hands and set
 forth for the east,
 They would kindle campfires and
 gather them then,
 Well-worn and most merry with
 song, to the feast.

They sang of all things, but the one,
 sacred one,
 That could make them most glad,
 as they lifted the gourd
 And pass'd it around, with its rich
 purple hoard,
 From the island that lay with its
 face to the sun.

Though lips were most luscious, and
 eyes as divine
 As the eyes of the skies that bend
 down from above;

Though hearts were made glad
 and most mellow with love,
 As dripping gourds drain'd of their
 burthens of wine;
 Though brimming, and dripping, and
 bent of their shape
 Were the generous gourds from the
 juice of the grape,
 They could sing not of love, they
 could breathe not a thought
 Of the savor of life; of love sought, or
 unsought.

Their loves they were not; they had
 banished the name
 Of man, and the uttermost mention
 of love,—
 The moonbeams about them, the
 quick stars above,
 The mellow-voiced waves, they were
 ever the same,
 In sign, and in saying, of the old true
 lies;
 But they took no heed; no answer-
 ing sign,
 Save glances averted and half-hush'd
 sighs,
 Went back from the breasts with
 their loves divine.

They sang of free life with a will, and
 well,
 They had paid for it well when the
 price was blood;
 They beat on the shield, and they
 blew on the shell,
 When their wars were not, for they
 held it good
 To be glad, and to sing the flush of
 the day,

In an annual feast, when the
 broad leaves fell;
 Yet some sang not, and some
 sighed, "Ah, well!"—
 For there's far less left you to sing or
 to say,
 When mettlesome love is banish'd, I
 ween—
 To hint at as hidden, or to half
 disclose
 In the swift sword-cuts of the tongue,
 made keen
 With wine at a feast,—than one
 would suppose.

So the days wore by but they brought
 no rest
 To the minstrel knight, though the
 sun was as gold,
 And the Isles were green, and the
 great Queen blest
 In the splendor of arms, and as
 pure as bold.

He would now resolve to reveal to her
 all,
 His sex and his race in a well-timed
 song;
 And his love of peace, his hatred of
 wrong,
 And his own deceit, though the sun
 should fall.

Then again he would linger, and knew
 not how
 He could best proceed, and deferr'd
 him now
 Till a favorite day, then the fair day
 came,
 And still he delay'd, and reproached
 him the same.

And he still said nought, but, subdu-
ing his head
He wander'd one day in a dubious
spell
Of unutterable thought of the truth
unsaid,
To the indolent shore, and he
gather'd a shell,
And he shaped its point to his pas-
sionate mouth,
And he turn'd to a bank and began
to blow,
While the Amazons trained in a
troop below—
Blew soft and sweet as a kiss of the
south.

The Amazons lifted with glad sur-
prise,
Stood splendid and glad and look'd
far and fair,
Set forward a foot, and shook back
their hair,
Like clouds push'd back from the
sun-lit skies.

It stirr'd their souls, and they ceased
to train
In troop by the shore, as the tremu-
lous strain
Fell down from the hill through
the tasselling trees;
And a murmur of song, like the
sound of bees
In the clover crown of a queenly
spring,
Came back unto him, and he laid
the shell
Aside on the bank, and began to sing
Of eloquent love; and the ancient
spell

Of passionate song was his, and the
Isle,
As waked to delight from its
slumber long,
Came back in echoes; yet all this
while
He knew not at all the sin of his
song.

PART III

*Come, lovers, come, forget your pains!
I know upon this earth a spot
Where clinking coins, that clank as
chains,
Upon the souls of men, are not;
Nor man is measured for his gains
Of gold that stream with crimson stains.*

*There snow-topp'd towers crush the
clouds
And break the still abode of stars,
Like sudden ghosts in snowy shrouds,
New broken through their earthly
bars,
And condors whet their crooked beaks
On lofty limits of the peaks.*

*O men that fret as frets the main!
You irk me with your eager gaze
Down in the earth for fat increase—
Eternal talks of gold and gain,
Your shallow wit, your shallow ways,
And breaks my soul across the shoal
As breakers break on shallow seas.*

They bared their brows to the palms
above,
But some look'd level into com-
rades' eyes,

And they then remember'd that the
thought of love
Was the thing forbidden, and they
sank in sighs.

They turned from the training, to
heed in throng
To the old, old tale; and they
trained no more,
As he sang of love; and some on the
shore,
And full in the sound of the eloquent
song,

With womanly air and an irresolute
will
Went listlessly onward as gathering
shells;
Then gazed in the waters, as bound
by spells;
Then turned to the song and so sigh'd,
and were still.

And they said no word. Some tapp'd
on the sand
With the sandal'd foot, keeping
time to the sound,
In a sort of dream; some timed with
the hand,
And one held eyes full of tears to
the ground.

She thought of the days when their
wars they were not,
As she lean'd and listened to the
old, old song,
When they sang of their loves, and
she well forgot
Man's hard oppressions and a world
of wrong.

Like a pure true woman, with her
trust in tears
And the things that are true, she
relieved them in thought,
Though hush'd and crush'd in the fall
of the years;
She lived but the fair, and the false
she forgot.

As a tale long told, or as things that
are dreams
The quivering curve of the lip it
confest
The silent regrets, and the soul that
teems
With a world of love in a brave
true breast.

Then this one, younger, who had
known no love,
Nor look'd upon man but in blood
on the field,
She bow'd her head, and she leaned
on her shield.

And her heart beat quick as the wings
of a dove
That is blown from the sea, where
the rests are not
In the time of storms; and by in-
stinct taught
Grew pensive, and sigh'd; as she
thought and she thought
Of some wonderful things, and—she
knew not of what.

Then this one thought of a love for-
saken,
She thought of a brown sweet babe,
and she thought
Of the bread-fruits gather'd, of the
swift fish taken

In intricate nets, like a love well
sought.

She thought of the moons of her
maiden dawn,
Mellow'd and fair with the forms
of man;

So dearer indeed to dwell upon
Than the beautiful waves that
around her ran:

So fairer indeed than the fringes of
light
That lie at rest on the west of the
sea

In furrows of foam on the borders of
night,
And dearer indeed than the songs
to be—

Than calling of dreams from the
opposite land,
To the land of life, and of journeys
dreary,

When the soul goes over from the
form grown weary,
And walks in the cool of the trees on
the sand.

But the Queen was enraged and
would smite him at first
With the sword unto death, yet it
seemed that she durst

Not touch him at all; and she moved
as to chide,
And she lifted her face, and she
frown'd at his side,

Then she touch'd on his arm; then
she looked in his eyes
And right full in his soul, but she
saw no fear,

In the pale fair face, and with frown
severe

She press'd her lips as suppressing
her sighs.

She banish'd her wrath, she unbended
her face,

She lifted her hand and put back
his hair

From his fair sad brow, with a
penitent air,

And forgave him all with unuttered
grace.

But she said no word, yet no more was
severe;

She stood as subdued by the side
of him still,

Then averted her face with a reso-
lute will,

As to hush a regret, or to hide back a
tear.

She sighed to herself: "A stranger is
this,

And ill and alone, that knows not
at all

That a throne shall totter and the
strong shall fall,

At the mention of love and its bane-
fullest bliss.

"O life that is lost in bewildering
love—

But a stranger is sacred!" She
lifted a hand

And she laid it as soft as the breast of
a dove

On the minstrel's mouth. It was
more than the wand

Of the tamer of serpents, for she did
 no more
 Than to bid with her eyes and to
 beck with her hand,
 And the song drew away to the waves
 of the shore;
 Took wings, as it were, to the verge
 of the land.

But her heart was oppress'd. With
 penitent head
 She turned to her troop, and retiring,
 she said:
 "Alas! and alas! shall it come to pass
 That the panther shall die from a
 blade of grass?"

"That the tiger shall yield at the
 benthorn's blast?
 That we, who have conquer'd a
 world and all
 Of men and of beasts in the world
 must fall
 Ourselves at the mention of love at
 last?"

The tall Queen turn'd with her
 troop;
 She led minstrel and all to the
 innermost part
 Of the palm-crowned Isle, where
 great trees group
 In armies, to battle when black-
 storms start,
 And made a retreat from the sun by
 the trees
 That are topp'd like tents, where
 the fire-flies
 Are a light to the feet, and a fair
 lake lies,
 As cool as the coral-set center of seas.

The palm-trees lorded the scope like
 kings,
 Their tall tops tossing the indolent
 clouds
 That folded the Isle in the dawn,
 like shrouds,
 Then fled from the sun like to living
 things.

The cockatoo swung in the vines
 below,
 And muttering hung on a golden
 thread,
 Or moved on the moss'd bough to
 and fro,
 In plumes of gold and array'd in
 red.
 The lake lay hidden away from the
 light,
 As asleep in the Isle from the tropical
 noon,
 And narrow and bent like a new-
 born moon,
 And fair as a moon in the noon of the
 night.

'Twas shadow'd by forests, and
 fringed by ferns,
 And fretted anon by red fishes that
 leapt
 At indolent flies that slept or kept
 Their drowsy tones on the tide by
 turns.

And here in the dawn when the Day
 was strong
 And newly aroused from leafy
 repose,
 With dews on his feet and tints of
 the rose

In his great flush'd face was a sense
of song
That the tame old world has not
known or heard.

The soul was filled with the soft
perfumes,
The eloquent wings of the humming
bird
Beguiled the heart, they purpled
the air
And allured the eye, as so everywhere
On the rim of the wave or across it
in swings,
They swept or they sank in a sea of
blooms,
And wove and wound in a song of
wings.

A bird in scarlet and gold, made mad
With sweet delights, through the
branches slid
And kiss'd the lake on a drowsy lid
Till the ripples ran and the face was
glad;

Was glad and lovely as lights that
sweep
The face of heaven when the stars
are forth
In autumn time through the
sapphire north,
Or the face of a child when it smiles
in sleep.

And here came the Queen, in the
tropical noon,
When the wars and the world and
all were asleep,
And nothing look'd forth to betray
or to peep

Through the glories of jungle in
garments of June,
To bathe with her court in the
waters that bent
In the beautiful lake through tassel-
ing trees,
And the tangle of blooms in a burden
of bees,
As bold and as sharp as a bow
unspent.

And strangely still, and more
strangely sweet,
Was the lake that lay in its cradle
of fern,
As still as a moon with her horns
that turn
In the night, like lamps to white
delicate feet.

They came and they stood by the
brink of the tide,
They hung their shields on the
boughs of the trees,
They lean'd their lances against the
side,
Unloosed their sandals, and busy
as bees
Ungather'd their robes in the
rustle of leaves
That wound them as close as the
wine-vine weaves.

The minstrel then falter'd, and fur-
ther aside
Than ever before he averted his
head;
He pick'd up a pebble and fretted the
tide
Afar, with a countenance flushed
and red.

He feign'd him ill, he wander'd away,
 He sat him down by the waters
 alone,
 And pray'd for pardon, as a knight
 should pray,
 And rued an error not all his own.

The Amazons press'd to the girdle of
 reeds,
 Two and by two they advanced to
 the tide,
 They challenged each other, they
 laughed in their pride,
 And banter'd, and vaunted of valor-
 ous deeds.

They push'd and they parted the
 curtains of green,
 All timid at first; then looked in the
 wave
 And laugh'd; retreated, then came
 up brave
 To the brink of the water, led on by
 their Queen.

Again they retreated, again advanced,
 Then parted the boughs in a proud
 disdain,
 Then bent their heads to the waters,
 and glanced
 Below, then blush'd, and then
 laughed again.

A bird awaken'd; then all dismayed
 With a womanly sense of a beauti-
 ful shame
 That strife and changes had left
 the same
 They shrank to the leaves and the
 somber shade.

At last, press'd forward a beautiful pair
 And leapt to the wave, and laugh-
 ing they blushed
 As rich as their wines; when the
 waters rush'd
 To the dimpled limbs, and laugh'd in
 their hair.

The fair troop follow'd with shouts
 and cheers,
 They cleft the wave, and the
 friendly ferns
 Came down in curtains and curves
 by turns,
 And a brave palm lifted a thousand
 spears.

From under the ferns and away from
 the land,
 And out in the wave until lost
 below,
 There lay, as white as a bank of
 snow,
 A long and beautiful border of sand.

Here clothed alone in their clouds of
 hair
 And curtain'd about by the palm
 and fern,
 And made as their maker had made
 them, fair,
 And splendid of natural curve and
 turn;

Untrammel'd by art and untroubled
 by man
 They tested their strength, or tried
 their speed:
 And here they wrestled, and there
 they ran,
 As supple and lithe as the watery
 reed.

The great trees shadow'd the bow-
tipp'd tide,
And nodded their plumes from the
opposite side,
As if to whisper, Take care! take
care!

But the meddlesome sunshine here
and there
Kept pointing a finger right under
the trees,—
Kept shifting the branches and
wagging a hand
At the round brown limbs on the
border of sand,
And seem'd to whisper: Fie! what
are these?

The gold-barr'd butterflies to and
fro
And over the waterside wander'd
and wove
As heedless and idle as clouds that
rove
And drift by the peaks of perpetual
snow.

A monkey swung out from a bough
in the skies,
White-whisker'd and ancient, and
wisest of all
Of his populous race, when he
heard them call
And he watch'd them long, with his
head sidewise.

He wondered much and he watch'd
them all
From under his brows of amber and
brown,
All patient and silent, and never
once stirr'd

Till he saw two wrestle, and
wrestling fall;
Then he arched his brows and he
hasten'd him down
To his army below and said never
a word.

PART IV

*There is many a love in the land, my
love,
But never a love like this is;
Then kill me dead with your love, my
love,
And cover me up with kisses.*

*Yea, kill me dead and cover me deep
Where never a soul discovers;
Deep in your heart to sleep, to sleep,
In the darlingest tomb of lovers.*

The wanderer took him apart from
the place;
Look'd up in the boughs at the
gold birds there,
He envied the humming-birds fret-
ting the air,
And frowned at the butterflies fan-
ning his face.

He sat him down in a crook of the
wave
And away from the Amazons,
under the skies
Where great trees curved to a leaf-
lined cave,
And he lifted his hands and he
shaded his eyes:

And he held his head to the north
when they came

To run on the reaches of sand from
the south,
And he pull'd at his chin, and he
purs'd his mouth,
And he shut his eyes, with a sense of
shame.

He reach'd and he shaped a bamboo
reed
From the brink below, and began
to blow
As if to himself; as the sea sometimes
Does soothe and soothe in a low,
sweet song,
When his rage is spent, and the
beach swells strong
With sweet repetitions of alliterate
rhymes.

The echoes blew back from the in-
dolent land;
Silent and still sat the tropical
bird,
And only the sound of the reed was
heard,
As the Amazons ceased from their
sports on the sand.

They rose from the wave, and inclin-
ing the head,
They listened intent, with the
delicate tip
Of the finger touch'd to the pouting
lip,
Till the brown Queen turn'd in the
tide, and led
Through the opaline lake, and
under the shade,
To the shore where the chivalrous
singer played.

He bended his head and he shaded
his eyes
As well as he might with his lifted
fingers,
And ceased to sing. But in mute
surprise
He saw them linger as a child that
lingers
Allured by a song that has ceased
in the street,
And looks bewilder'd about from its
play,
For the last loved notes that fell at
its feet.

How the singer was vexed; he averted
his head;
He lifted his eyes, looked far and
wide
For a brief, little time; but they
bathed at his side
In spite of his will, or of prayers well
said.

He press'd four fingers against each
lid,
Till the light was gone; yet for all
that he did
It seem'd that the lithe forms lay and
beat
Afloat in his face and full under his
feet.

He seem'd to behold the billowy
breasts,
And the rounded limbs in the rest or
unrests—
To see them swim as the mermaid
swims,
With the drifting, dimpled delicate
limbs,

Folded or hidden or reach'd or
caress'd.

It seems to me there is more that
sees

Than the eyes in man; you may
close your eyes,

You may turn your back, and may
still be wise

In sacred and marvelous mysteries.

He saw as one sees the sun of a
noon

In the sun-kiss'd south, when the
eyes are closed—

He saw as one sees the bars of a moon
That fall through the boughs of the
tropical trees,

When he lies at length, and is all
composed,

And asleep in his hammock by the
sundown seas.

He heard the waters beat, bubble and
fret;

He lifted his eyes, yet forever they
lay

Afloat in the tide; and he turn'd
him away

And resolved to fly and for aye to
forget.

He rose up strong, and he cross'd him
twice,

He nerved his heart and he lifted
his head,

He crush'd the treacherous reed in a
trice,

With an angry foot, and he turn'd
and fled.

Yet flying, he hurriedly turn'd his
head

With an eager glance, with meddle-
some eyes,

As a woman will turn; and he saw
arise

The beautiful Queen from the
silvery bed.

She toss'd back her hair, and she
turned her eyes

With all of their splendor to his as
he fled;

Ay, all their glory, and a strange
surprise,

And a sad reproach, and a world
unsaid.

Then she struck their shields, they
rose in array,

As roused from a trance, and
hurriedly came

From out of the wave. He wander'd
away,

Still fretting his sensitive soul with
blame.

Alone he sat in the shadows at noon,

Alone he sat by the waters at night;

Alone he sang, as a woman might,

With pale, kind face to the pale, cold
moon.

He would here advance, and would
there retreat,

As a petulant child that has lost its
way

In the redolent walks of a sultry
day,

And wanders around with irresolute
feet.

He made him a harp of mahogany
wood,

He strung it well with the sounding
strings

Of a strong bird's thews, and from
ostrich wings,

And play'd and sang in a sad, sweet
rune.

He hang'd his harp in the vines,
and stood

By the tide at night, in the palms at
noon,

And lone as a ghost in the shadowy
wood.

Then two grew sad, and alone sat
she

By the great, strong stream, and
she bow'd her head,

Then lifted her face to the tide, and
said:

"O pure as a tear and as strong as a
sea,

Yet tender to me as the touch of a
dove,

I had rather sit sad and alone by thee,
Than to go and be glad, with a
legion in love."

She sat one time at the wanderer's
side

As the kingly water went wander-
ing by;

And the two once look'd, and they
knew not why,

Full sad in each other's eyes, and
they sigh'd.

She courted the solitude under the
rim

Of the trees that reach'd to the re-
solute stream,

And gazed in the waters as one in a
dream,

Till her soul grew heavy and her eyes
grew dim.

She bow'd her head with a beautiful
grief

That grew from her pity; she for-
got her arms,

And she made neglect of the battle
alarms

That threaten'd the land; the
banana's leaf

Made shelter; he lifted his harp
again,

She sat, she listen'd intent and
long,

Forgetting her care and forgetting
her pain—

Made sad for the singer, made
glad for his song.

And the women waxed cold; the
white moons waned,

And the brown Queen marshal'd
them never once more,

With sword and with shield, in the
palms by the shore;

But they sat them down to repose, or
remain'd

Apart and scatter'd in the tropic-
leaf'd trees,

As sadden'd by song, or for loves
delay'd;

Or away in the Isle in couples they
stray'd,

Not at all content in their Isles of
peace.

They wander'd away to the lakes once
 more,
 Or walk'd in the moon, or they
 sigh'd or slept,
 Or they sat in pairs by the shadowy
 shore,
 And silent song with the waters
 kept.

There was one who stood by the
 waters one eve,
 With the stars on her hair, and the
 bars of the moon
 Broken up at her feet by the
 bountiful boon
 Of extending old trees, who did
 questioning grieve;

"The birds they go over us two and
 by two;
 The mono is mated; his bride in the
 boughs
 Sits nursing his babe, and his pas-
 sionate vows
 Of love, you may hear them the whole
 day through.

"The lizard, the cayman, the white-
 tooth'd boar,
 The serpents that glide in the
 sword-leaf'd grass,
 The beasts that abide or the birds
 that pass,
 They are glad in their loves as the
 green-leaf'd shore.

"There is nothing that is that can
 yield one bliss
 Like an innocent love; the leaves
 have tongue

And the tides talk low in the reeds,
 and the young
 And the quick buds open their lips
 but for this.

"In the steep and the starry silences,
 On the stormy levels of the limit-
 less seas,
 Or here in the deeps of the dark-
 brow'd trees,
 There is nothing so much as a brave
 man's kiss.

"There is nothing so strong, in the
 stream, on the land,
 In the valley of palms, on the
 pinnacled snow,
 In the clouds of the gods, on the
 grasses below
 As the silk-soft touch of a baby's
 brown hand.

"It were better to sit and to spin on a
 stone
 The whole year through with a
 babe at the knee,
 With its brown hands reaching
 caressingly,
 Than to sit in a girdle of gold and
 alone.

"It were better indeed to be mothers
 of men,
 And to murmur not much; there
 are clouds in the sun.
 Can a woman undo what the gods
 have done?
 Nay, the things must be as the things
 have been."

They wander'd well forth, some
here and some there,

Unsatisfied some and irresolute all.

The sun was the same, the moon-
light did fall

Rich-barr'd and refulgent; the stars
were as fair

As ever were stars; the fruitful clouds
cross'd

And the harvest fail'd not; yet the
fair Isles grew

As a prison to all, and they search'd
on through

The magnificent shades as for things
that were lost.

The minstrel, more pensive, went
deep in the wood,

And oft-time delay'd him the whole
day through,

As charm'd by the deeps, or the sad
heart drew

Some solaces sweet from the solitude.

The singer forsook them at last, and
the Queen

Came seldom then forth from the
fierce deep wood,

And her warriors, dark-brow'd and
bewildering stood

In bands by the wave in the com-
plicate screen

Of overbent boughs. They would
lean on their spears

And would sometimes talk, low-
voiced and by twos,

As allured by longings they could
not refuse,

And would sidewise look, as beset by
their fears.

Once, wearied and sad, by the
shadowy trees

In the flush of the sun they sank
to their rests,

The dark hair veiling the beautiful
breasts

That rose in billows, as mists veil
seas.

Then away to the dream-world one
by one;

The great red sun in his purple was
roll'd,

And red-wing'd birds and the birds
of gold

Were above in the trees like the
beams of the sun.

Then the sun came down, on his
ladders of gold

Built up of his beams, and the
souls arose

And ascended on these, and the
fair repose

Of the negligent forms was a feast to
behold.

The round brown limbs they were
reach'd or drawn,

The grass made dark with the
fervour of hair;

And here were the rose-red lips and
there

A flush'd breast rose like a sun at a
dawn.

Then black-wing'd birds flew over in
pair,

Listless and slow, as they call'd of
the seas

And sounds came down through
the tangle of trees
As lost, and nestled, and hid in their
hair.

They started disturb'd, they sprang
as at war
To lance and to shield; but the
dolorous sound
Was gone from the wood; they
gazed around
And saw but the birds, black-wing'd
and afar.

They gazed at each other, then turn'd
them unheard,
Slow trailing their lances, in long
single line;
They moved through the forest, all
dark as the sign
Of death that fell down from the
ominous bird.

Then the great sun died, and a rose-
red bloom
Grew over his grave in a border of
gold,
And a cloud with a silver-white
rim was roll'd
Like a cold gray stone at the door of
his tomb.

Strange voices were heard, sad visions
were seen
By sentries, betimes, on the op-
posite shore,
Where broad boughs bended their
curtains of green
Far over the wave with their
tropical store.

A sentry bent low on her palms and
she peer'd
Suspiciously through; and, heavens!
a man,
Low-brow'd and wicked, looked back-
ward, and jeer'd
And taunted right full in her face
as he ran:

A low crooked man, with eyes like a
bird,—
As round and as cunning,—who came
from the land
Of lakes, where the clouds lie low
and at hand,
And the songs of the bent black swans
are heard;

Where men are most cunning and
cruel withal,
And are famous as spies, and are
supple and fleet,
And are webb'd like the water-
fowl under the feet,
And they swim like the swans, and
like pelicans call.

And again, on a night when the moon
she was not,
A sentry saw stealing, as still as a
dream,
A sudden canoe down the mid of
the stream,
Like the dark boat of death, and as
still as a thought.

And lo! as it pass'd, from the prow
there arose
A dreadful and gibbering, hairy
old man,

Loud laughing as only a maniac
 can,
 And shaking a lance at the land of his
 foes;
 Then sudden it vanish'd, as still as it
 came,
 Far down through the walls of the
 shadowy wood,
 And the great moon rose like a forest
 aflame,
 All threat'ning, sullen, and red like
 blood.

PART V

*Well, we have threaded through and
 through
 The gloaming forests, Fairy Isles,
 Afloat in sun and summer smiles,
 As fallen stars in fields of blue;
 Some futile wars with subtle love
 That mortal never vanquish'd yet,
 Some symphonies by angels set
 In wave below, in bough above,
 Were yours and mine; but here adieu.*

*And if it come to pass some days
 That you grow weary, sad, and you
 Lift up deep eyes from dusty ways
 Of mart and moneys to the blue
 And pure cold waters, isle and vine,
 And bathe you there, and then arise
 Refresh'd by one fresh thought of mine,
 I rest content: I kiss your eyes,
 I kiss your hair, in my delight:
 I kiss my hand, and say, "Good-night."*

I tell you that love is the bitterest
 sweet
 That ever laid hold on the heart of
 a man;

A chain to the soul, and to cheer as
 a ban,
 And a bane to the brain and a snare
 to the feet.

Aye! who shall ascend on the hollow
 white wings
 Of love but to fall; to fall and to
 learn,
 Like a moth, or a man, that the
 lights lure to burn,
 That the roses have thorns and the
 honey-bee stings?

I say to you surely that grief shall
 befall;
 I lift you my finger, I caution you
 true,
 And yet you go forward, laugh
 gaily, and you
 Must learn for yourself, then lament
 for us all.

You had better be drown'd than to
 love and to dream.
 It were better to sit on a moss-
 grown stone,
 And away from the sun, forever
 alone,
 Slow pitching white pebbles at trout
 in a stream.

Alas for a heart that must live forlorn!
 If you live you must love; if you
 love, regret—
 It were better, perhaps, had you
 never been born,
 Or better, at least, you could well
 forget.

The clouds are above us and snowy
 and cold,
 And what is beyond but the steel
 gray sky,
 And the still far stars that twinkle
 and lie
 Like the eyes of a love or delusions of
 gold!

Ah! who would ascend? The clouds
 are above.
 Aye! all things perish; to rise is to
 fall.
 And alack for lovers, and alas for
 love,
 And alas that we ever were born
 at all.

.

The minstrel now stood by the border
 of wood,
 But now not alone; with a resolute
 heart
 He reach'd his hand, like to one
 made strong,
 Forgot his silence and resumed his
 song,
 And aroused his soul, and assumed his
 part
 With a passionate will, in the palms
 where he stood.

"She is sweet as the breath of the
 Castile rose,
 She is warm to the heart as a world
 of wine,
 And as rich to behold as the rose that
 grows
 With its red heart bent to the tide
 of the Rhine.

"I shall sip her lips as the brown
 bees sup
 From the great gold heart of the
 buttercup!
 I shall live and love! I shall have
 my day,
 And die in my time, and who shall
 gainsay?"

"What boots me the battles that I
 have fought
 With self for honor? My brave
 resolves?
 And who takes note? The soul
 dissolves
 In a sea of love, and the wars are
 forgot.

"The march of men, and the drift of
 ships,
 The dreams of fame, and desires
 for gold,
 Shall go for aye as a tale that is
 told,
 Nor divide for a day my lips from
 her lips.

"And a knight shall rest, and none
 shall say nay,
 In a green Isle wash'd by an arm
 of the seas,
 And walled from the world by the
 white Andes:
 The years are of age and can go their
 way."

.

A sentinel stood on the farther-
 most land,
 And struck her shield, and her sword
 in hand,

She cried, "He comes with his
 silver spears,
 With flint-tipp'd arrows and bended
 bows,
 To take our blood though we give
 him tears,
 And to flood our Isle in a world of
 woes!

"He comes, O Queen of the sun-kiss'd
 Isle,
 He comes as a wind comes, blown
 from the seas,
 In cloud of canoes, on the curling
 breeze,
 With his shields of tortoise and of
 crocodile!"

.
 Sweeter than swans' are a maiden's
 graces!
 Sweeter than fruits are the kisses of
 morn!
 Sweeter than babes' is a love new-
 born,
 But sweeter than all are a love's
 embraces.

The Queen was at peace. Her terms
 of surrender
 To love, who knows? and who can
 defend her?
 She slept at peace, and the sentry's
 warning
 Could scarce awaken the love-
 conquer'd Queen;
 She slept at peace in the opaline
 Hush and blush of that tropical
 morning;

And bound about by the twining glory,
 Vine and trellis in the vernal morn,

As still and sweet as a babe new-
 born,
 The brown Queen dream'd of the old
 new story.

But hark! her sentry's passionate
 words,
 The sound of shields, and the clash
 of swords!
 And slow she came, her head on her
 breast,
 And her two hands held as to plead
 for rest.

Where, O where, were the Juno
 graces?
 Where, O where, was the glance of
 Jove,
 As the Queen came forth from the
 sacred places,
 Hidden away in the heart of the
 grove?

They rallied around as of old,—they
 besought her,
 With swords to the sun and the
 sounding shield,
 To lead them again to the glorious
 field,
 So sacred to Freedom; and, breath-
 less, they brought her
 Her buckler and sword, and her armor
 all bright
 With a thousand gems enjewell'd in
 gold.
 She lifted her head with the look of
 old
 An instant only; with all of her
 might
 She sought to be strong and majestic
 again:

She bared them her arms and her
ample brown breast;
They lifted her armor, they strove
to invest
Her form in armor, but they strove in
vain.

It could close no more, but it clang'd
on the ground,
Like the fall of a knight, with an
ominous sound,
And she shook her hair and she
cried "Alas!
That love should come and liberty
pass;"
And she cried, "Alas! to be cursed
. . . and bless'd
For the nights of love and noons of
rest."

Her warriors wonder'd; they wan-
der'd apart,
And trail'd their swords, and sub-
dued their eyes
To earth in sorrow and in hush'd
surprise,
And forgot themselves in their pity
of heart.

"O Isles of the sun," sang the blue-
eyed youth,
"O Edens new-made and let down
from above!
Be sacred to peace and to passion-
ate love,
Made happy in peace and made holy
with truth."

The fair Isle fill'd with the fierce
invader;

They form'd on the strand, they
lifted their spears,
Where never was man for years
and for years,
And moved on the Queen. She
lifted and laid her
Finger-tips to her lips. For O sweet
Was the song of love as the love
new-born,
That the minstrel blew in the virgin
morn,
Away where the trees and the soft
sands meet.

The strong men lean'd and their
shields let fall,
And slowly they came with their
trailing spears,
And heads bow'd down as if bent
with years,
And an air of gentleness over them all.

The men grew glad as the song as-
cended,
They lean'd their lances against
the palms,
They reach'd their arms as to reach
for alms,
And the Amazons came—and their
reign was ended.

.
The tawny old crone here lays her
stone
On the leaning grass and reaches a
hand;
The day like a beautiful dream has
flown,
The curtains of night come down
on the land,

And I dip to the oars; but ere I
 go,
 I tip her an extra bright pesos
 or so,

And I smile my thanks, for I think
 them due:
 But, reader, fair reader, now what
 think you?

AN INDIAN SUMMER

*The world it is wide; men go their
 ways
 But love he is wise, and of all the hours
 And of all the beautiful sun-born days,
 He sips their sweets as the bee sips
 flowers.*

The sunlight lay in gather'd
 sheaves
 Along the ground, the golden leaves
 Possess'd the land and lay in bars
 Above the lifted lawn of green
 Beneath the feet, or fell, as stars
 Fall, slantwise, shimmering and still
 Upon the plain, upon the hill,
 And heaving hill and plain between.

Some steeds in panoply were seen,
 Strong, martial trained, with manes
 in air,
 And tassell'd reins and mountings
 rare;
 Some silent people here and there,
 That gather'd leaves with listless will,
 Or moved adown the dappled green,
 Or look'd away with idle gaze
 Against the gold and purple haze.
 You might have heard red leaflets fall,
 The pheasant on the farther hill,
 A single, lonely, locust trill,
 Or sliding sable cricket call
 From out the grass, but that was all.

A wanderer of many lands
 Was I, a weary Ishmaelite,
 That knew the sign of lifted hands;
 Had seen the Crescent-mosques, had
 seen
 The Druid oaks of Aberdeen—
 Recross'd the hilly seas, and saw
 The sable pines of Mackinaw,
 And lakes that lifted cold and white.

I saw the sweet Miami, saw
 The swift Ohio bent and roll'd
 Between his woody walls of gold,
 The Wabash banks of gray pawpaw,
 The Mississippi's ash; at morn
 Of autumn, when the oak is red,
 Saw slanting pyramids of corn,
 The level fields of spotted swine,
 The crooked lanes of lowing kine,
 And in the burning bushes saw
 The face of God, with bended head.

But when I saw her face, I said,
 "Earth has no fruits so fairly red
 As these that swing above my head;
 No purpled leaf, no poppied land,
 Like this that lies in reach of hand."

And, soft, unto myself I said:
 "O soul, inured to rue and rime,
 To barren toil and bitter bread,
 To biting rime, to bitter rue,

Earth is not Nazareth; be good.
 O sacred Indian-summer time
 Of scarlet fruits, of fragrant wood,
 Of purpled clouds, of curling haze—
 O days of golden dreams, and days
 Of banish'd, vanish'd tawny men,
 Of martial songs of manly deeds—
 Be fair today, and bear me true."
 We mounted, turn'd the sudden steeds
 Toward the yellow hills and flew.

My faith, but she rode fair, and she
 Had scarlet berries in her hair,
 And on her hands white starry stones.
 The satellites of many thrones
 Fall down before her gracious air
 In that full season. Fair to see
 Are pearly shells, red, virgin gold,
 And yellow fruits, and sun-down seas,
 And babes sun-brown; but all of
 these
 And all fair things of sea besides,
 Before the matchless, manifold
 Accomplishments of her who rides
 With autumn summer in her hair,
 And knows her steed and holds her
 fair
 And stately in her stormy seat,
 They lie like playthings at her feet.

By heaven! she was more than fair,
 And more than good, and matchless
 wise,
 With all the lovelight in her eyes,
 And all the midnight in her hair.

Through leafy avenues and lanes,
 And lo! we climb'd the yellow hills,
 With russet leaves about the brows
 That reach'd from over-reaching
 trees.

With purpled briars to the knees
 Of steeds that fretted foamy thews
 We turn'd to look a time below
 Beneath the ancient arch of boughs,
 That bent above us as a bow
 Of promise, bound in many hues.

I reach'd my hand. I could refuse
 All fruits but this, the touch of her
 At such a time. But lo! she lean'd
 With lifted face and soul, and leant
 As leans devoutest worshipper,
 Beyond the branches scarlet screen'd
 And look'd above me and beyond,
 So fix'd and silent, still and fond,
 She seem'd the while she look'd to
 lose
 Her very soul in such intent.
 She look'd on other things, but I,
 I saw nor scarlet leaf nor sky;
 I look'd on her, and only her.

Afar the city lay in smokes
 Of battle, and the martial strokes
 Of Progress thunder'd through the
 land
 And struck against the yellow trees,
 And roll'd in hollow echoes on
 Like sounding limits of the seas
 That smite the shelly shores at
 dawn.

Beyond, below, on either hand
 There reach'd a lake in belt of pine,
 A very dream; a distant dawn
 Asleep in all the autumn shine,
 Some like one of another land
 That I once laid a hand upon,
 And loved too well, and named as
 mine.

She sometimes touch'd with dimpl'd
hand

The drifting mane with dreamy air,
She sometimes push'd aback her hair;
But still she lean'd and look'd afar,
As silent as the statues stand,—
For what? For falling leaf? For
star

That runs before the bride of
death? . . .

The elements were still; a breath
Stirr'd not, the level western sun
Pour'd in his arrows every one;
Spill'd all his wealth of purpled red
On velvet poplar leaf below,
On arching chestnut overhead
In all the hues of heaven's bow.

She sat the upper hill, and high.
I spurr'd my black steed to her
side;

“The bow of promise, lo!” I cried,
And lifted up my eyes to hers
With all the fervid love that stirs
The blood of men beneath the sun,
And reach'd my hand, as one undone,
In suppliance to hers above:

“The bow of promise! give me love!
I reach a hand, I rise or fall,
Henceforth from this: put forth a
hand

From your high place and let me
stand—

Stand soul and body, white and tall!
Why, I would live for you, would die
Tomorrow, but to live today,
Give me but love, and let me live
To die before you. I can pray
To only you, because I know,
If you but give what I bestow,
That God has nothing left to give.”

Christ! still her stately head was
raised,

And still she silent sat and gazed
Beyond the trees, beyond the town,
To where the dimpled waters slept,
Nor splendid eyes once bended down
To eyes that lifted up and wept.

She spake not, nor subdued her
head

To note a hand or heed a word;
And then I question'd if she heard
My life-tale on that leafy hill,
Or any fervid word I said,
And spoke with bold, vehement will.

She moved, and from her bridle
hand

She slowly drew the dainty glove,
Then gazed again upon the land.
The dimpled hand, a snowy dove
Alit, and moved along the mane
Of glossy skeins; then, overbold,
It fell across the mane, and lay
Before my eyes a sweet bouquet
Of cluster'd kisses, white as snow.
I should have seized it reaching so,
But something bade me back,—a
ban;

Around the third fair finger ran
A shining, hateful hoop of gold.

Ay, then I turn'd, I look'd away,
I sudden felt forlorn and chill;
I whistled, like, for want to say,
And then I said, with bended head,
“Another's ship from other shores,
With richer freight, with fairer stores,
Shall come to her some day instead”;
Then turn'd about,—and all was
still.

Yea, you had chafed at this, and
cried,
And laugh'd with bloodless lips, and
said

Some bitter things to sate your pride,
And toss'd aloft a lordly head,
And acted well some wilful lie,
And, most like, cursed yourself—but

I . . .

Well, you be crucified, and you
Be broken up with lances through
The soul, then you may turn to find
Some ladder-rounds in keenest rods,
Some solace in the bitter rind,
Some favor with the gods irate—
The everlasting anger'd gods—
And ask not overmuch of fate.

I was not born, was never bless'd,
With cunning ways, nor wit, nor skill
In woman's ways, nor words of love,
Nor fashion'd suppliance of will.
A very clown, I think, had guess'd
How out of place and plain I seem'd;
I, I, the idol-worshiper,
Who saw nor maple leaves nor sky
But took some touch and hue of her.

I am a pagan, heathen, lo!
A savage man, of savage lands;
Too quick to love, too slow to know
The sign that tame love understands.

.

Some heedless hoofs went sounding
down
The broken way. The woods were
brown,
And homely now; some idle talk
Of folk and town; a broken walk;

But sounding feet made song no more
For me along that leafy shore.

The sun caught up his gathered
sheaves;

A squirrel caught a nut and ran
A rabbit rustled in the leaves,
A whirling bat, black-wing'd and tan,
Blew swift between us; sullen night
Fell down upon us; mottled kine,
With lifted heads, went lowing down
The rocky ridge toward the town,
And all the woods grew dark as wine.

.

Yea, bless'd Ohio's banks are fair;
A sunny clime and good to touch,
For tamer men of gentler mien,
But as for me, another scene.
A land below the Alps I know,
Set well with grapes and girt with
much
Of woodland beauty; I shall share
My rides by night below the light
Of Mauna Loa, ride below
The steep and starry Hebron height;
Shall lift my hands in many lands,
See South Sea palm, see Northland
fir,
See white-winged swans, see red-
bill'd doves;
See many lands and many loves,
But never more the face of her.

And what her name or now the
place

Of her who makes my Mecca's prayer,
Concerns you not; not any trace
Of entrance to my temple's shrine
Remains. The memory is mine,
And none shall pass the portals there.

I see the gold and purple gleam
Of autumn leaves, a reach of seas,
A silent rider like a dream
Moves by, a mist of mysteries,
And these are mine, and only these,
Yet they be more in my esteem,
Than silver'd sails on corall'd seas.

The present! take it, hold it thine,
But that one hour out from all

The years that are, or yet shall
fall,
I pluck it out, I name it mine;
That hour bound in sunny sheaves,
With tassell'd shocks of golden shine,
That hour wound in scarlet leaves,
Is mine. I stretch a hand and
swear
An oath that breaks into a prayer;
By heaven, it is wholly mine!

FROM SEA TO SEA

*Lo! here sit we by the sun-down seas
And the White Sierras. The sweet
sea-breeze*

*Is about us here; and a sky so fair
Is bending above, so cloudless, blue,
That you gaze and you gaze and you
dream, and you
See God and the portals of heaven there.*

Shake hands! kiss hands in haste to
the sea,
Where the sun comes in, and mount
with me
The matchless steed of the strong
New World,
As he champs and chafes with a
strength untold,—
And away to the West where the
waves are curl'd,
As they kiss white palms to the capes
of gold!

A girth of brass and a breast of
steel,
A breath of flame and a flaming mane,
An iron hoof and a steel-clad heel,

A Mexican bit and a massive chain
Well tried and wrought in an iron
rein;
And away! away! with a shout and
yell
That had stricken a legion of old with
fear,
They had started the dead from their
graves whilere,
And startled the damn'd in hell as
well.

Stand up! stand out! where the
wind comes in
And the wealth of the sea pours over
you,
As its health floods up to the face like
wine,
And a breath blows up from the
Delaware
And the Susquehanna. We feel the
might
Of armies in us; the blood leaps
through
The frame with a fresh and a keen
delight

As the Alleghanies have kiss'd the
hair,
With a kiss blown far through the
rush and din,
By the chestnut burrs and through
boughs of pine.

O seas in a land! O lakes of mine!
By the love I bear and the songs I
bring
Be glad with me! lift your waves and
sing
A song in the reeds that surround
your isles!—
A song of joy for this sun that smiles,
For this land I love and this age and
sign;
For the peace that is and the perils
pass'd;
For the hope that is and the rest at
last!

O heart of the world's heart!
West! my West!
Look up! look out! There are fields
of kine,
There are clover-fields that are red as
wine;
And a world of kine in the fields take
rest,
As they ruminates in the shade of trees
That are white with blossoms or
brown with bees.

There are emerald seas of corn and
cane;
There are isles of oak on the harvest
plain,
Where brawn men bend to the bend-
ing grain;

There are temples of God and towns
new born,
And beautiful homes of beautiful
brides;
And the hearts of oak and the hands
of horn
Have fashion'd all these and a world
besides . . .

A rush of rivers and a brush of
trees,
A breath blown far from the Mexican
seas,
And over the great heart-vein of
earth!
. . . By the South-Sun-land of the
Cherokee,
By the scalp-lock-lodge of the tall
Pawnee,
And up La Platte. What a weary
dearth
Of the homes of men! What a wild
delight
Of space! of room! What a sense of
seas,
Where the seas are not! What a
salt-like breeze!
What dust and taste of quick alkali!
. . . Then hills! green, brown, then
black like night,
All fierce and defiant against the sky!

At last! at last! O steed new-born,
Born strong of the will of the strong
New World,
We shoot to the summit, with the
shafts of morn,
On the mount of Thunder, where
clouds are curl'd,
Below in a splendor of the sun-clad
seas.

A kiss of welcome on the warm west
breeze
Blows up with a smell of the fragrant
pine,
And a faint, sweet fragrance from
the far-off seas
Comes in through the gates of the
great South Pass,
And thrills the soul like a flow of wine.
The hare leaps low in the storm-bent
grass,
The mountain ram from his cliff looks
back,
The brown deer hies to the tamarack;
And afar to the South with a sound of
the main,
Roll buffalo herds to the limitless
plain. . . .

On, on, o'er the summit; and
onward again,
And down like the sea-dove the billow
enshrouds,
And down like the swallow that dips
to the sea,
We dart and we dash and we quiver
and we
Are blowing to heaven white billows
of clouds.

Thou "City of Saints!" O antique
men,
And men of the Desert as the men of
old!
Stand up! be glad! When the truths
are told,
When Time has utter'd his truths
and when
His hand has lifted the things to fame
From the mass of things to be known
no more,

A monument set in the desert sand,
A pyramid rear'd on an inland shore,
And their architects shall have place
and name.

The Humboldt desert and the
alkaline land,
And the seas of sage and of arid sand
That stretch away till the strain'd
eye carries
The soul where the infinite spaces fill,
Are far in the rear, and the fierce
Sierras
Are under our feet, and the hearts
beat high
And the blood comes quick; but the
lips are still
With awe and wonder, and all the will
Is bow'd with a grandeur that frets
the sky.

A flash of lakes through the
fragrant trees,
A song of birds and a sound of bees
Above in the boughs of the sugar-
pine.
The pick-ax stroke in the placer mine,
The boom of blasts in the gold-ribbed
hills,
The grizzly's growl in the gorge below
Are dying away, and the sound of rills
From the far-off shimmering crest of
snow,
The laurel green and the ivied oak,
A yellow stream and a cabin's smoke,
The brown bent hills and the shep-
herd's call,
The hills of vine and of fruits, and all
The sweets of Eden are here, and we
Look out and afar to a limitless
sea.

We have lived an age in a half
 moon-wane!
 We have seen a world! We have
 chased the sun
 From sea to sea; but the task is done.
 We here descend to the great white
 main—
 To the King of Seas, with its temples
 bare
 And a tropic breath on the brow and
 hair.

We are hush'd with wonder, we
 stand apart,
 We stand in silence; the heaving heart
 Fills full of heaven, and then the
 knees
 Go down in worship on the golden
 sands.
 With faces seaward, and with folded
 hands
 We gaze on the boundless, white
 Balboa seas.

THE SHIP IN THE DESERT

*A wild, wide land of mysteries,
 Of sea-salt lakes and dried up seas,
 And lonely wells and pools; a land
 That seems so like dead Palestine,
 Save that its wastes have no confine
 Till push'd against the levell'd skies.
 A land from out whose depths shall rise
 The new-time prophets. Yea, the land
 From out whose awful depths shall
 come,
 A lowly man, with dusty feet,
 A man fresh from his Maker's hand,
 A singer singing oversweet,
 A charmer charming very wise;
 And then all men shall not be dumb.
 Nay, not be dumb; for he shall say,
 "Take heed, for I prepare the way
 For weary feet." Lo! from this land
 Of Jordan streams and dead sea sand,
 The Christ shall come when next the
 race
 Of man shall look upon His face.*

I

A man in middle Aridzone
 Stood by the desert's edge alone,

And long he look'd, and lean'd and
 peer'd,
 And twirl'd and twirl'd his twist'd
 beard,
 Beneath a black and slouchy hat—
 Nay, nay, the tale is not of that.

A skin-clad trapper, toe-a-tip,
 Stood on a mountain top; and he
 Look'd long, and still, and eagerly.
 "It looks so like some lonesome ship
 That sails this ghostly, lonely sea,—
 This dried-up desert sea," said he,
 "These tawny sands of buried
 seas"—
 Avaunt! this tale is not of these!

A chief from out the desert's rim
 Rode swift as twilight swallows swim,
 And O! his supple steed was fleet!
 About his breast flapped panther
 skins,
 About his eager flying feet
 Flapp'd beaded, braided moccasins:
 He stopp'd, stock still, as still as
 stone,

He lean'd, he look'd, there glisten'd
 bright,
 From out the yellow, yielding sand,
 A golden cup with jewell'd rim.

He lean'd him low, he reach'd a
 hand,
 He caught it up, he gallop'd on,
 He turn'd his head, he saw a sight—
 His panther-skins flew to the wind,
 He rode into the rim of night;
 The dark, the desert lay behind;
 The tawny Ishmaelite was gone.

He reach'd the town, and there
 held up
 Above his head the jewell'd cup.
 He put two fingers to his lip,
 He whisper'd wild, he stood a-tip,
 And lean'd the while with lifted hand,
 And said, "A ship lies yonder dead,"
 And said, "Such things lie sown in
 sand
 In yon far desert dead and brown,
 Beyond where wave-wash'd walls
 look down,
 As thick as stars set overhead."

"'Tis from that desert ship," they
 said,
 "That sails with neither sail nor
 breeze
 The lonely bed of dried-up seas,—
 A galleon that sank below
 White seas ere Red men drew the
 bow."

By Arizona's sea of sand
 Some bearded miners, gray and old,
 And resolute in scarch of gold,
 Sat down to tap the savage land.

A miner stood beside the mine,
 He pull'd his beard, then looked away
 Across the level sea of sand,
 Beneath his broad and hairy hand,
 A hand as hard as knots of pine.
 "It looks so like a sea," said he.
 He pull'd his beard, and he did say,
 "It looks just like a dried-up sea."
 Again he pull'd that beard of his,
 But said no other thing than this.

A stalwart miner dealt a stroke,
 And struck a buried beam of oak.
 The miner twisted, twirl'd his beard,
 Lean'd on his pick-ax as he spoke:
 "'Tis that same long-lost ship," he
 said,
 "Some laden ship of Solomon
 That sail'd these lonesome seas upon
 In search of Ophir's mine, ah me!
 That sail'd this dried-up desert sea."

II

Now this the tale. Along the wide
 Missouri's stream some silent braves,
 That stole along the farther side
 Through sweeping wood that swept
 the waves
 Like long arms reach'd across the
 tide,
 Kept watch and every foe defied.

A low, black boat that hugg'd the
 shores,
 An ugly boat, an ugly crew,
 Thick-lipp'd and woolly-headed
 slaves,
 That bow'd, and bent the white-ash
 oars,
 That cleft the murky waters through,

Slow climb'd the swift Missouri's
waves.

A grand old Neptune in the prow,
Gray-hair'd, and white with touch of
time,

Yet strong as in his middle prime,
Stood up, turn'd suddenly, look'd
back

Along his low boat's wrinkled track,
Then drew his mantle tight, and now
He sat all silently. Beside
The grim old sea-king sat his bride,
A sun land blossom, rudely torn
From tropic forests to be worn
Above as stern a breast as e'er
Stood king at sea, or anywhere.

Another boat with other crew
Came swift and cautious in her track,
And now shot shoreward, now shot
back,
And now sat rocking fro and to,
But never once lost sight of her.
Tall, sunburnt, southern men were
these

From isles of blue Caribbean seas,
And one, that woman's worshiper,
Who look'd on her, and loved but her.

And one, that one, was wild as seas
That wash the far, dark Oregon.
And one, that one, had eyes to teach
The art of love, and tongue to preach
Life's hard and sober homilies,
While he stood leaning, urging on.

III

Pursuer and pursued. And who
Are these that make the sable crew;

These mighty Titans, black and nude,
Who dare this Red man's solitude?

And who is he that leads them here,
And breaks the hush of wave and
wood?

Comes he for evil or for good?
Brave Jesuit or bold buccaneer?

Nay, these be idle themes. Let
pass.

These be but men. We may forget
The wild sea-king, the tawny brave,
The frowning wold, the woody shore,
The tall-built, sunburnt man of Mars.
But what and who was she, the fair?
The fairest face that ever yet
Look'd in a wave as in a glass;
That look'd, as look the still, far
stars,

So woman-like, into the wave
To contemplate their beauty there?

I only saw her, heard the sound
Of murky waters gurgling round
In counter-currents from the shore,
But heard the long, strong stroke of
oar

Against the water gray and vast;
I only saw her as she pass'd—
A great, sad beauty, in whose eyes
Lay all the peace of Paradise.

O you had loved her sitting there,
Half hidden in her loosen'd hair;
Yea, loved her for her large dark eyes,
Her push'd out mouth, her mute sur-
prise—

Her mouth! 'twas Egypt's mouth of
old,
Push'd out and pouting full and bold

With simple beauty where she sat.
 Why, you had said, on seeing her,
 This creature comes from out the dim,
 Far centuries, beyond the rim
 Of time's remotest reach or stir;
 And he who wrought Semiramis
 And shaped the Sibyls, seeing this,
 Had kneeled and made a shrine
 thereat,
 And all his life had worshipp'd her.

IV

The black men bow'd, the long oars
 bent,
 They struck as if for sweet life's sake,
 And one look'd back, but no man
 spake,
 And all wills bent to one intent.
 On, through the golden fringe of day
 Into the deep, dark night, away
 And up the wave 'mid walls of wood
 They cleft, they climb'd, they bow'd,
 they bent,
 But one stood tall, and restless stood,
 And one sat still all night, all day,
 And gazed in helpless wonderment.

Her hair pour'd down like darkling
 wine,
 The black men lean'd a sullen line,
 The bent oars kept a steady song,
 And all the beams of bright sunshine
 That touch'd the waters wild and
 strong,
 Fell drifting down and out of sight
 Like fallen leaves, and it was night.

And night and day, and many days
 They climb'd the sullen, dark gray
 tide.

And she sat silent at his side,
 And he sat turning many ways;
 Sat watching for his wily foe.
 At last he baffled him. And yet
 His brow gloom'd dark, his lips were
 set;
 He lean'd, he peer'd through boughs,
 as though
 From heart of forests deep and dim
 Grim shapes might come confronting
 him.

A stern, uncommon man was he,
 Broad-shoulder'd, as of Gothic form,
 Strong-built, and hoary like a sea;
 A high sea broken up by storm.
 His face was brown and over-wrought
 By seams and shadows born of
 thought,
 Not over-gentle. And his eyes,
 Bold, restless, resolute and deep,
 Too deep to flow like shallow fount
 Of common men where waters
 mount;—
 Fierce, lumined eyes, where flames
 might rise
 Instead of flood, and flash and
 sweep—
 Strange eyes, that look'd unsatisfied
 With all things fair or otherwise;
 As if his inmost soul had cried
 All time for something yet unseen,
 Some long-desired thing denied.

V

Below the overhanging boughs
 The oars lay idle at the last;
 Yet long he look'd for hostile prows
 From out the wood and down the
 stream.

They came not, and he came to dream
Pursuit abandon'd, danger past.

He fell'd the oak, he built a home
Of new-hewn wood with busy hand,
And said, "My wanderings are told,"
And said, "No more by sea, by land,
Shall I break rest, or drift, or roam,
For I am worn, and I grow old."

And there, beside that surging tide,
Where gray waves meet, and wheel,
and strike,

The man sat down as satisfied
To sit and rest unto the end;
As if the strong man here had found
A sort of brother in this sea,—
This surging, sounding majesty,
Of troubled water, so profound,
So sullen, strong, and lion-like,
So lawless in its every round.

Hast seen Missouri cleave the wood
In sounding whirlpools to the sea?
What soul hath known such majesty?
What man stood by and understood?

VI

Now long the long oars idle lay.
The cabin's smoke came forth and
curl'd

Right lazily from river brake,
And Time went by the other way.
And who was she, the strong man's
pride,

This one fair woman of his world?
A captive? Bride, or not a bride?
Her eyes, men say, grew sad and dim
With watching from the river's rim,
As waiting for some face denied.

Yea, who was she? none ever knew.
The great, strong river swept around
The cabin nestled in its bend,
But kept its secrets. Wild birds flew
In bebies by. The black men found
Diversion in the chase; and wide
Old Morgan ranged the wood, nor
friend
Nor foeman ever sought his side,
Or shared his forests deep and dim,
Or cross'd his path or question'd him.

He stood as one who found and
named
The middle world. What visions
flamed
Athwart the west! What prophe-
cies
Were his, the gray old man, that day
Who stood alone and look'd away,—
Awest from out the waving trees,
Against the utter sundown seas.

Alone ofttime beside the stream
He stood and gazed as in a dream,—
As if he knew a life unknown
To those who knew him thus alone.
His eyes were gray and overborne
By shaggy brows, his strength was
shorn,
Yet still he ever gazed awest,
As one that would not, could not rest.

And had he fled with bloody hand?
Or had he loved some Helen fair,
And battling lost both land and
town?

Say, did he see his walls go down,
Then choose from all his treasures
there

This one, and seek some other land?

VII

The squirrels chatter'd in the
leaves,
The turkeys call'd from pawpaw
wood,
The deer with lifted nostrils stood,
'Mid climbing blossoms sweet with
bee,
'Neath snow-white rose of Cherokee.

Then frosts hung ices on the eaves,
Then cushion snows possess'd the
ground,
And so the seasons kept their round;
Yet still old Morgan went and came
From cabin door through forest dim,
Through wold of snows, through
wood of flame,
Through golden Indian-summer days,
Hung red with soft September haze,
And no man cross'd or questioned
him.

Nay, there was that in his stern air
That held e'en these rude men aloof;
None came to share the broad-built
roof
That rose so fortress-like beside
The angry, rushing, sullen tide,
And only black men gather'd there,
The old man's slaves in dull content,
Black, silent, and obedient.

Then men push'd westward through
his wood,
His wild beasts fled, and now he stood
Confronting men. He had endear'd
No man, but still he went and came
Apart, and shook his beard and strode
His ways alone, and bore his load,

If load it were, apart, alone.
Then men grew busy with a name
That no man loved, that many fear'd,
And rude men stoop'd, and cast a
stone,
As at some statue overthrown.

Some said, a stolen bride was she,
And that her lover from the sea
Lay waiting for his chosen wife,
And that a day of reckoning
Lay waiting for this grizzled king.

Some said that looking from her
place
A love would sometimes light her
face,
As if sweet recollections stirr'd
Like far, sweet songs that come to us,
So soft, so sweet, they are not heard,
So far, so faint, they fill the air,
A fragrance falling anywhere.

So, wasting all her summer years
That utter'd only through her tears,
The seasons went, and still she stood
Forever watching down the wood.

Yet in her heart there held a strife
With all this wasting of sweet life,
That none who have not lived—and
died—
Held up the two hands crucified
Between two ways—can understand.

Men went and came, and still she
stood
In silence watching down the wood—
Adown the wood beyond the land,
Her hollow face upon her hand,

Her **black**, abundant hair all down
About her loose, ungather'd gown.

And what her thought? her life
 unsaid?
Was it of love? of hate? of him,
The tall, dark Southerner? Her
 head
Bow'd down. The day fell dim
Upon her eyes. She bowed, she
 slept.
She waken'd then, and waking wept.

VIII

The black-eyed bushy squirrels ran
Like shadows scattered through the
 boughs;
The gallant robin chirp'd his vows,
The far-off pheasant thrumm'd his
 fan,
A thousand blackbirds kept on wing
In walnut-top, and it was Spring.

Old Morgan sat his cabin door,
And one sat watching as of yore,
But why turn'd Morgan's face as
 white
As his white beard? A bird aflight,
A squirrel peering through the trees,
Saw some one silent steal away
Like darkness from the face of day,
Saw two black eyes look back, and
 these
Saw her hand beckon through the
 trees.

Ay! they have come, the sun-
 brown'd men,
To beard old Morgan in his den.
It matters little who they are,

These silent men from isles afar;
And truly no one cares or knows
What be their merit or demand;
It is enough for this rude land—
At least, it is enough for those,
The loud of tongue and rude of
 hand—
To know that they are Morgan's foes.

Proud Morgan! More than tongue
 can tell
He loved that woman watching there,
That stood in her dark storm of hair,
That stood and dream'd as in a spell,
And look'd so fix'd and far away;
And who that loveth woman well,
Is wholly bad? be whom he may.

IX

Ay! we have seen these Southern
 men,
These sun-brownd men from island
 shore,
In this same land, and long before.
They do not seem so lithe as then,
They do not look so tall, and they
Seem not so many as of old.
But **that** same resolute and bold
Expression of unbridled will,
That even Time must half obey,
Is with them and is of them still.

They do not counsel the decree
Of court or council, where they drew
Their breath, nor law nor order knew,
Save but the strong hand of the
 strong;
Where each stood up, avenged his
 wrong,
Or sought his death all silently.

They watch along the wave and
 wood,
 They heed, but haste not. Their
 estate,
 Whate'er it be, can bide and wait,
 Be it open ill or hidden good.
 No law for them! For they have
 stood
 With steel, and writ their rights in
 blood;
 And now, whatever 't is they seek,
 Whatever be their dark demand,
 Why, they will make it, hand to hand,
 Take time and patience: Greek to
 Greek.

X

Like blown and snowy wintry pine,
 Old Morgan stoop'd his head and
 pass'd
 Within his cabin door. He cast
 A great arm out to men, made sign,
 Then turn'd to Sybal; stood beside
 A time, then turn'd and strode the
 floor,
 Stopp'd short, breathed sharp, threw
 wide the door,
 Then gazed beyond the murky tide,
 Past where the forky peaks divide.

He took his beard in his right hand,
 Then slowly shook his grizzled head
 And trembled, but no word he said.
 His thought was something more than
 pain;
 Upon the seas, upon the land
 He knew he should not rest again.

He turn'd to her; and then once
 more

Quick turn'd, and through the oaken
 door
 He sudden pointed to the west.
 His eye resumed its old command,
 The conversation of his hand
 It was enough; she knew the rest.

He turn'd, he stoop'd, and
 smooth'd her hair,
 As if to smooth away the care
 From his great heart, with his left
 hand.
 His right hand hitch'd the pistol
 'round
 That dangled at his belt. The sound
 Of steel to him was melody
 More sweet than any song of sea.
 He touch'd his pistol, push'd his lips,
 Then tapp'd it with his finger tips,
 And toy'd with it as harper's hand
 Seeks out the chords when he is sad
 And purposeless. At last he had
 Resolved. In haste he touch'd her
 hair,
 Made sign she should arise—prepare
 For some long journey, then again
 He look'd awest toward the plain;
 Against the land of boundless space,
 The land of silences, the land
 Of shoreless deserts sown with sand,
 Where Desolation's dwelling is;
 The land where, wondering, you say,
 What dried-up shoreless sea is this?
 Where, wandering, from day to day
 You say, To-morrow sure we come
 To rest in some cool resting place,
 And yet you journey on through
 space
 While seasons pass, and are struck
 dumb
 With marvel at the distances.

Yea, he would go. Go utterly
 Away, and from all living kind;
 Pierce through the distances, and find
 New lands. He had outlived his race.
 He stood like some eternal tree
 That tops remote Yosemite,
 And cannot fall. He turn'd his face
 Again and contemplated space.

And then he raised his hand to vex
 His beard, stood still, and there fell
 down
 Great drops from some unfrequent
 spring,
 And streak'd his channell'd cheeks
 sunbrown,
 And ran uncheck'd, as one who recks
 Nor joy, nor tears, nor anything.

And then, his broad breast heaving
 deep,
 Like some dark sea in troubled sleep,
 Blown round with groaning ships and
 wrecks,
 He sudden roused himself, and stood
 With all the strength of his stern
 mood,
 Then call'd his men, and bade them
 go
 And bring black steeds with banner'd
 necks,
 And strong, like burly buffalo.

XI

The bronzen, stolid, still, black men
 Their black-maned horses silent drew
 Through solemn wood. One mid-
 night when
 The curl'd moon tipp'd her horn, and
 threw

A black oak's shadow slant across
 A low mound hid in leaves and moss,
 Old Morgan cautious came and drew
 From out the ground, as from a grave,
 Great bags, all copper-bound and old,
 And fill'd, men say, with pirates' gold.
 And then they, silent as a dream,
 In long black shadow cross'd the
 stream.

XII

And all was life at morn, but one,
 The tall old sea-king, grim and gray,
 Look'd back to where his cabin lay,
 And seem'd to hesitate. He rose
 At last, as from his dream's repose,
 From rest that counterfeited rest,
 And set his blown beard to the west;
 And rode against the setting sun,
 Far up the levels vast and dun.

His steeds were steady, strong and
 fleet,
 The best in all the wide west land,
 Their manes were in the air, their feet
 Seem'd scarce to touch the flying
 sand.

They rode like men gone mad, they
 fled
 All day and many days they ran,
 And in the rear a gray old man
 Kept watch, and ever turn'd his head
 Half eager and half angry, back
 Along their dusty desert track.

And she look'd back, but no man
 spoke,
 They rode, they swallowed up the
 plain;

The sun sank low, he look'd again,
 With lifted hand and shaded eyes.
 Then far, afar, he saw uprise,
 As if from giant's stride or stroke,
 Dun dust, like puffs of battle-smoke.

He turn'd, his left hand clutched
 the rein,
 He struck hard west his high right
 hand,
 His limbs were like the limbs of oak;
 All knew too well the man's com-
 mand.
 On on they spurred, they plunged
 again,
 And one look'd back, but no man
 spoke.

They climb'd the rock-built breasts
 of earth,
 The Titan-fronted, blowy steeps
 That cradled Time. Where freedom
 keeps
 Her flag of bright, blown stars un-
 furl'd,
 They climbed and climbed. They
 saw the birth
 Of sudden dawn upon the world;
 Again they gazed; they saw the face
 Of God, and named it boundless
 space.

And they descended and did roam
 Through levell'd distances set round
 By room. They saw the Silences
 Move by and beckon; saw the forms,
 The very beards, of burly storms,
 And heard them talk like sounding
 seas.
 On unnamed heights, bleak-blown
 and brown,

And torn-like battlements of Mars,
 They saw the darknesses come down,
 Like curtains loosen'd from the dome
 Of God's cathedral, built of stars.

They pitch'd the tent where rivers
 run
 All foaming to the west, and rush
 As if to drown the falling sun.
 They saw the snowy mountains roll'd,
 And heaved along the nameless lands
 Like mighty billows; saw the gold
 Of awful sunsets; felt the hush
 Of heaven when the day sat down,
 And drew about his mantle brown,
 And hid his face in dusky hands.

The long and lonesome nights! the
 tent
 That nestled soft in sweep of grass,
 The hills against the firmament
 Where scarce the moving moon
 could pass;
 The cautious camp, the smother'd
 light,
 The silent sentinel at night!

The wild beasts howling from the
 hill;
 The savage prowling swift and still,
 And bended as a bow is bent.
 The arrow sent; the arrow spent
 And buried in its bloody place;
 The dead man lying on his face!

The clouds of dust, their cloud by
 day;
 Their pillar of unfailing fire
 The far North Star. And high, and
 higher,

They climb'd so high it seemed
 eftsoon
 That they must face the falling moon,
 That like some flame-lit ruin lay
 High built before their weary way.

They learn'd to read the sign of
 storms,
 The moon's wide circles, sunset bars,
 And storm-provoking blood and
 flame;
 And, like the Chaldean shepherds,
 came
 At night to name the moving stars.
 In heaven's face they pictured forms
 Of beasts, of fishes of the sea.
 They watch'd the Great Bear wearily
 Rise up and drag his clinking chain
 Of stars around the starry main.

XIII

And why did these worn, sun-burnt
 men
 Let Morgan gain the plain, and then
 Pursue him ever where he fled?
 Some say their leader sought but her;
 Unlike each swarthy follower.
 Some say they sought his gold alone,
 And fear'd to make their quarrel
 known
 Lest it should keep its secret bed;
 Some say they thought to best prevail
 And conquer with united hands
 Alone upon the lonesome sands;
 Some say they had as much to dread;
 Some say—but I must tell my tale.

And still old Morgan sought the
 west;
 The sea, the utmost sea, and rest.

He climb'd, descended, climb'd again,
 Until pursuit seemed all in vain;
 Until they left him all alone,
 As unpursued and as unknown,
 As some lost ship upon the main.

O there was grandeur in his air,
 An old-time splendor in his eye,
 When he had climb'd at last the high
 And rock-built bastions of the plain,
 Thrown back his beard and blown
 white hair,
 And halting turn'd to look again.

Dismounting in his lofty place,
 He look'd far down the fading plain
 For his pursuers, but in vain.
 Yea, he was glad. Across his face
 A careless smile was seen to play,
 The first for many a stormy day.

He turn'd to Sybal, dark, yet fair
 As some sad twilight; touched her
 hair,
 Stoop'd low, and kiss'd her gently
 there,
 Then silent held her to his breast;
 Then waved command to his black
 men,
 Look'd east, then mounted slow and
 then
 Led leisurely against the west.

And why should he who dared to
 die,
 Who more than once with hissing
 breath
 Had set his teeth and pray'd for
 death?
 Why fled these men, or wherefore fly
 Before them now? why not defy?

His midnight men were strong and
true,
And not unused to strife, and knew
The masonry of steel right well,
And all such signs that lead to hell.

It might have been his youth had
wrought
Some wrongs his years would now
repair,
That made him fly and still forbear;
It might have been he only sought
To lead them to some fatal snare,
And let them die by piecemeal there.

I only know it was not fear
Of any man or any thing
That death in any shape might bring.
It might have been some lofty sense
Of his own truth and innocence,
And virtues lofty as severe—
Nay, nay! what room for reasons
here?

And now they pierced a fringe of
trees
That bound a mountain's brow like
bay.
Sweet through the fragrant boughs a
breeze
Blew salt-flood freshness. Far away,
From mountain brow to desert base
Lay chaos, space; unbounded space.

The black men cried, "The sea!"
They bow'd
Black, woolly heads in hard black
hands.
They wept for joy. They laugh'd,
they broke
The silence of an age, and spoke

Of rest at last; and, grouped in bands,
They threw their long black arms
about
Each other's necks, and laugh'd
aloud,
Then wept again with laugh and
shout.

Yet Morgan spake no word, but led
His band with oft-averted head
Right through the cooling trees, till
he
Stood out upon the lofty brow
And mighty mountain wall. And
now
The men who shouted, "Lo, the sea!"
Rode in the sun; sad, silently,
Rode in the sun, and look'd below.

They look'd but once, then look'd
away,
Then look'd each other in the face.
They could not lift their brows, nor
say,
But held their heads, nor spake, for
lo!
Nor sea, nor voice of sea, nor breath
Of sea, but only sand and death,
The dread mirage, the fiend of space!

XIV

Old Morgan eyed his men, look'd
back
Against the groves of tamarack,
Then tapp'd his stirrup foot, and
stray'd
His broad left hand along the mane
Of his strong steed, and careless
play'd
His fingers through the silken skein.

And then he spurr'd him to her
side,
And reach'd his hand and leaning
wide,
He smiling push'd her falling hair
Back from her brow, and kiss'd her
there.

Yea, touch'd her softly, as if she
Had been some priceless, tender
flower;
Yet touched her as one taking leave
Of his one love in lofty tower
Before descending to the sea
Of battle on his battle eve.

A distant shout! quick oaths!
alarms!
The black men start, turn suddenly,
Stand in the stirrup, clutch their
arms,
And bare bright arms all instantly.
But he, he slowly turns, and he
Looks all his full soul in her face.
He does not shout, he does not say,
But sits serenely in his place
A time, then slowly turns, looks back
Between the trim-boughed tamarack,
And up the winding mountain way,
To where the long, strong grasses lay,
And there they came, hot on his
track!

He raised his glass in his two hands,
Then in his left hand let it fall,
Then seem'd to count his fingers o'er,
Then reached his glass, waved his
commands,
Then tapped his stirrup as before,
Stood in the stirrup stern and tall,
Then ran a hand along the mane
Half-nervous like, and that was all.

And then he turn'd and smiled
half sad,
Half desperate, then hitch'd his steel;
Then all his stormy presence had,
As if he kept once more his keel,
On pirate seas where breakers reel.

At last he tossed his iron hand
Above the deep, steep desert space,
Above the burning seas of sand,
And look'd his black men in the face.
They spake not, nor look'd back
again,
They struck the heel, they clutched
the rein,
And down the darkling plunging steep
They dropp'd into the dried-up deep.

Below! It seem'd a league below,
The black men rode, and she rode
well,
Against the gleaming, sheening haze
That shone like some vast sea
ablaze—
That seem'd to gleam, to glint, to
glow,
As if it mark'd the shores of hell.

Then Morgan reined alone, look'd
back
From off the high wall where he stood,
And watch'd his fierce approaching
foe.
He saw him creep along his track,
Saw him descending from the wood,
And smiled to see how worn and slow.

And Morgan heard his oath and
shout,
And Morgan turned his head once
more,

And wheel'd his stout steed short
about,

Then seem'd to count their numbers
o'er.

And then his right hand touch'd his
steel,

And then he tapp'd his iron heel,
And seem'd to fight with thought.

At last

As if the final die was cast,
And cast as carelessly as one

Would toss a white coin in the sun,
He touch'd his rein once more, and
then

His right hand laid with idle heed
Along the toss'd mane of his steed.

Pursuer and pursued! who knows
The why he left the breezy pine,
The fragrant tamarack and vine,
Red rose and precious yellow rose!
Nay Vasques held the vantage ground
Above him by the wooded steep,
And right nor left no passage lay,
And there was left him but that
way,—

The way through blood, or to the
deep

And lonesome deserts far profound,
That knew not sight of man, nor
sound.

Hot Vasques reined upon the rim,
High, bold, and fierce with crag and
spire.

He saw a far gray eagle swim,
He saw a black hawk wheel, retire,
And shun that desert's burning
breath

As shunning something more than
death.

Ah, then he paused, turn'd, shook
his head.

“And shall we turn aside,” he said,
“Or dare this Death?” The men
stood still

As leaning on his sterner will.
And then he stopp'd and turn'd again,
And held his broad hand to his brow,
And look'd intent and eagerly.

The far white levels of the plain
Flash'd back like billows. Even now
He thought he saw rise up 'mid sea,
'Mid space, 'mid wastes, 'mid noth-
ingness

A ship becalm'd as in distress.

The dim sign pass'd as suddenly,
And then his eager eyes grew dazed,—
He brought his two hands to his face.
Again he raised his head, and gazed
With flashing eyes and visage fierce
Far out, and resolute to pierce
The far, far, faint receding reach
Of space and touch its farther beach.
He saw but space, unbounded space;
Eternal space and nothingness.

Then all wax'd anger'd as they
gazed
Far out upon the shoreless land,
And clench'd their doubled hands and
raised

Their long bare arms, but utter'd not.
At last one rode from out the band,
And raised his arm, push'd back his
sleeve,

Push'd bare his arm, rode up and
down,
With hat push'd back. Then flush'd
and hot

He shot sharp oaths like cannon shot.

Then Vasques was resolved; his
 form
 Seem'd like a pine blown rampt with
 storm.
 He clutch'd his rein, drove spur, and
 then
 Turn'd sharp and savage to his men,
 And then led boldly down the way
 To night that knows not night or day.

XV

How broken plunged the steep
 descent!
 How barren! Desolate, and rent
 By earthquake's shock, the land lay
 dead,
 With dust and ashes on its head.

'Twas as some old world over-
 thrown
 Where Theseus fought and Sappho
 dream'd
 In æons ere they touch'd this land,
 And found their proud souls foot and
 hand
 Bound to the flesh and stung with
 pain.
 An ugly skeleton it seem'd
 Of its old self. The fiery rain
 Of red volcanoes here had sown
 The desolation of the plain.
 Ay, vanquish'd quite and overthrown,
 And torn with thunder-stroke, and
 strown
 With cinders, lo! the dead earth lay
 As waiting for the judgment day.
 Why, tamer men had turn'd and
 said,
 On seeing this, with start and dread,

And whisper'd each with gather'd
 breath,
 "We come on the abode of death."

They wound below a savage bluff
 That lifted, from its sea-mark'd base,
 Great walls with characters cut rough
 And deep by some long-perish'd race;
 And great, strange beasts unnamed,
 unknown,
 Stood hewn and limn'd upon the
 stone.

A mournful land as land can be
 Beneath their feet in ashes lay,
 Beside that dread and dried-up sea;
 A city older than that gray
 And sand sown tower builded when
 Confusion cursed the tongues of men.

Beneath, before, a city lay
 That in her majesty had shamed
 The wolf-nursed conqueror of old;
 Below, before, and far away,
 There reach'd the white arm of a bay,
 A broad bay shrunk to sand and
 stone,
 Where ships had rode and breakers
 roll'd
 When Babylon was yet unnamed,
 And Nimrod's hunting-fields un-
 known.

Where sceptered kings had sat at
 feast,
 Some serpents slid from out the grass
 That grew in tufts by shatter'd stone,
 Then hid beneath some broken mass
 That time had eaten as a bone
 Is eaten by some savage beast.

A dull-eyed rattlesnake that lay
 All loathsome, yellow-skinn'd, and
 slept
 Coil'd tight as pine-knot, in the sun,
 With flat head through the center
 run,
 Struck blindly back, then rattling
 crept
 Flat-bellied down the dusty
 way . . .
 'Twas all the dead land had to say.

Two pink-eyed hawks, wide-wing'd
 and gray,
 Scream'd savagely, and, circling
 high,
 And screaming still in mad dismay,
 Grew dim and died against the
 sky . . .
 'Twas all the heavens had to say.

Some low-built junipers at last,
 The last that o'er the desert look'd,
 Where dumb owls sat with bent bills
 hook'd
 Beneath their wings awaiting night,
 Rose up, then faded from the sight.

What dim ghosts hover on this rim:
 What stately-manner'd shadows
 swim
 Along these gleaming wastes of sands
 And shoreless limits of dead lands?

Dread Azteckee! Dead Azteckee!
 White place of ghosts, give up thy
 dead;
 Give back to Time thy buried hosts!
 The new world's tawny Ishmaelite,
 The roving tent-born Shoshonee,

Hath shunned thy shores of death, at
 night
 Because thou art so white, so dread,
 Because thou art so ghostly white,
 And named thy shores "the place of
 ghosts."

Thy white, uncertain sands are
 white
 With bones of thy unburied dead,
 That will not perish from the sight.
 They drown, but perish not—ah me!
 What dread unsightly sights are
 spread
 Along this lonesome, dried-up sea?

Old, hoar, and dried-up sea! so old
 So strown with wealth, so sown with
 gold!
 Yea, thou art old and hoary white
 With time, and ruin of all things;
 And on thy lonesome borders Night
 Sits brooding as with wounded wings.

The winds that toss'd thy waves
 and blew
 Across thy breast the blowing sail,
 And cheer'd the hearts of cheering
 crew
 From farther seas, no more prevail.
 Thy white-wall'd cities all lie prone,
 With but a pyramid, a stone,
 Set head and foot in sands to tell
 The thirsting stranger where they
 fell.

The patient ox that bended low
 His neck, and drew slow up and down
 Thy thousand freights through rock-
 built town
 Is now the free-born buffalo.

No longer of the timid fold,
 The mountain ram leaps free and
 bold
 His high-built summit, and looks
 down
 From battlements of buried town.

Thine ancient steeds know not the
 rein;
 They lord the land; they come, they
 go
 At will; they laugh at man; they blow
 A cloud of black steeds o'er the plain.
 The winds, the waves, have drawn
 away—
 The very wild man dreads to stay.

XVI

Away! upon the sandy seas
 The gleaming, burning, boundless
 plain;
 How solemn-like, how still, as when
 That mighty minded Genoese
 Drew three slim ships and led his men
 From land they might not meet
 again.

The black men rode in front by
 two,
 The fair one follow'd close, and kept
 Her face held down as if she wept;
 But Morgan kept the rear, and threw
 His flowing, swaying beard still back
 In watch along their lonesome track.

The weary Day fell down to rest,
 A star upon his mantled breast,
 Ere scarce the sun fell out of space,
 And Venus glimmer'd in his place.
 Yea, all the stars shone just as fair,

And constellations kept their round,
 And look'd from out the great pro-
 found,
 And march'd, and countermarch'd,
 and shone
 Upon that desolation there—
 Why, just the same as if proud man
 Strode up and down array'd in gold
 And purple as in days of old,
 And reckon'd all of his own plan,
 Or made at least for man alone.

Yet on push'd Morgan silently,
 And straight as strong ship on a sea;
 And ever as he rode there lay—
 To right, to left, and in his way,
 Strange objects looming in the dark,
 Some like tall mast, or ark, or bark.

And things half-hidden in the sand
 Lay down before them where they
 pass'd—
 A broken beam, half-buried mast,
 A spar or bar, such as might be
 Blown crosswise, tumbled on the
 strand
 Of some sail-crowded, stormy sea.

All night by moon, by morning
 star,
 The still, black men still kept their
 way;
 All night till morn, till burning day
 Hard Vasques follow'd fast and far.

The sun is high, the sands are hot
 To touch, and all the tawny plain
 Sinks white and open as they tread
 And trudge, with half-averted head,
 As if to swallow them in sand.
 They look, as men look back to land

When standing out to stormy sea,
But still keep pace and murmur not;
Keep stern and still as destiny.

It was a sight! A slim dog slid
White-mouth'd and still along the
sand,
The pleading picture of distress.
He stopp'd, leap'd up to lick a hand,
A hard, black hand that sudden chid
Him back, and check'd his tender-
ness.
Then when the black man turn'd his
head,
His poor, mute friend had fallen dead.

The very air hung white with heat,
And white, and fair, and far away
A lifted, shining snow-shaft lay
As if to mock their mad retreat.
The white, salt sands beneath their
feet
Did make the black men loom as
grand,
From out the lifting, heaving heat,
As they rode sternly on and on,
As any bronze men in the land
That sit their statue steeds upon.

The men were silent as men dead.
The sun hung centered overhead,
Nor seem'd to move. It molten
hung
Like some great central burner swung
From lofty beams with golden bars
In sacristy set round with stars.

Why, flame could hardly be more
hot;
Yet on the mad pursuer came
Across the gleaming, yielding ground,

Right on, as if he fed on flame,
Right on until the mid-day found
The man within a pistol-shot.

He hail'd, but Morgan answered
not;
He hail'd, then came a feeble shot,
And strangely, in that vastness there,
It seem'd to scarcely fret the air,
But fell down harmless anywhere.

He fiercely hail'd; and then there
fell
A horse. And then a man fell down,
And in the sea-sand seem'd to drown.
Then Vasques cursed, but scarce
could tell
The sound of his own voice, and all
In mad confusion seem'd to fall.

Yet on pushed Morgan, silent on,
And as he rode, he lean'd and drew
From his catenas gold, and threw
The bright coins in the glaring sun.
But Vasques did not heed a whit,
He scarcely deign'd to scowl at it.

Again lean'd Morgan. He uprose,
And held a high hand to his foes,
And held two goblets up, and one
Did shine as if itself a sun.
Then leaning backward from his
place,
He hurl'd them in his foeman's face;
Then drew again, and so kept on,
Till goblets, gold, and all were gone.

Yea, strew'd all out upon the sands
As men upon a frosty morn,
In Mississippi's fertile lands,
Hurl out great yellow ears of corn,
To hungry swine with hurried hands.

Yet still hot Vasques urges on,
 With flashing eye and flushing cheek.
 What would he have? what does he
 seek?

He does not heed the gold a whit,
 He does not deign to look at it;
 But now his gleaming steel is drawn,
 And now he leans, would hail again,—
 He opes his swollen lips in vain.

But look you! See! A lifted
 hand,
 And Vasques beckons his command.
 He cannot speak, he leans, and he
 Bends low upon his saddle-bow.
 And now his blade drops to his knee,
 And now he falters, now comes on,
 And now his head is bended low;
 And now his rein, his steel, is gone;
 Now faint as any child is he;
 And now his steed sinks to the knee.

The sun hung molten in mid-space,
 Like some great star fix'd in its place.
 From out the gleaming spaces rose
 A sheen of gossamer and danced,
 As Morgan slow and still advanced
 Before his far-receding foes.
 Right on, and on, the still, black line
 Drove straight through gleaming
 sand and shine,
 By spar and beam and mast, and
 stray
 And waif of sea and cast-away.

The far peaks faded from their
 sight,
 The mountain walls fell down like
 night,
 And nothing now was to be seen
 Except the dim sun hung in sheen /

Of gory garments all blood-red,—
 The hell beneath, the hell o'erhead.

A black man tumbled from his
 steed.
 He clutch'd in death the moving
 sands,
 He caught the hot earth in his hands,
 He gripp'd it, held it hard and
 grim—
 The great, sad mother did not heed
 His hold, but pass'd right on from
 him.

XVII

The sun seem'd broken loose at
 last.
 And settled slowly to the west,
 Half-hidden as he fell to rest,
 Yet, like the flying Parthian, cast
 His keenest arrows as he pass'd.

On, on, the black men slowly drew
 Their length like some great serpent
 through
 The sands, and left a hollow'd groove:
 They moved, they scarcely seem'd to
 move.
 How patient in their muffled tread!
 How like the dead march of the dead!

At last the slow, black line was
 check'd,
 An instant only; now again
 It moved, it falter'd now, and now
 It settled in its sandy bed,
 And steeds stood rooted to the plain.
 Then all stood still, and men some-
 how
 Look'd down and with averted head;

Look'd down, nor dared look up, nor
reck'd
Of anything, of ill or good,
But bow'd and stricken still, they
stood.

Like some brave band that dared
the fieree
And bristled steel of gather'd host,
These daring men had dared to pierce
This awful vastness, dead and gray.
And now at last brought well at bay
They stood,—but each stood to his
post.

Then one dismounted, waved a
hand,
'Twas Morgan's stern and still com-
mand.
There fell a clank, like loosen'd chain,
As men dismounting loosed the rein.

Then every steed stood loosed and
free;
And some stepp'd slow and mute
aside,
And some sank to the sands and died;
And some stood still as shadows be.

Old Morgan turn'd and raised his
hand
And laid it level with his eyes,
And looked far baek along the land.
He saw a dark dust still uprise,
Still surely tend to where he lay.
He did not curse, he did not say—
He did not even look surprise.

Nay, he was over-gentle now;
He wiped a time his Titan brow,
Then sought dark Sybal in her place,

Put out his arms, put down his faee
And look'd in hers. She reach'd her
hands,
She lean'd, she fell upon his breast;
He reach'd his arms around; she lay
As lies a bird in leafy nest.
And he look'd out across the sands
And bearing her, he strode away.

Some blaek men settled down to
rest,
But none made murmur or request.
The dead were dead, and that were
best;
The living, leaning, follow'd him,
A long dark line, a shadow dim.

The day through high mid-heaven
rode
Across the sky, the dim, red day;
And on, the war-like day-god strode
With shoulder'd shield away, away.
The savage, warlike day bent low,
As reapers bend in gathering grain,
As archer bending bends yew bow,
And flush'd and fretted as in pain.

Then down his shoulder slid his
shield,
So huge, so awful, so blood-red
And batter'd as from battle-field:
It settled, sunk to his left hand,
Sunk down and down, it touch'd the
sand;
Then day along the land lay dead,
Without one eandle, foot or head.

And now the moon wheel'd white
and vast,
A round, unbroken, marbled moon,

And touch'd the far, bright buttes of
 snow,
 Then climb'd their shoulders over
 soon;
 And there she seem'd to sit at last,
 To hang, to hover there, to grow,
 Grow grander than vast peaks of snow.

She sat the battlements of time;
 She shone in mail of frost and rime
 A time, and then rose up and stood
 In heaven in sad widowhood.

The faded moon fell wearily,
 And then the sun right suddenly
 Rose up full arm'd, and rushing came
 Across the land like flood of flame.

And now it seemed that hills up-
 rose,
 High push'd against the arching
 skies,
 As if to meet the sudden sun—
 Rose sharp from out the sultry dun,
 And seem'd to hold the free repose
 Of lands where flow'ry summits rise,
 In unfenced fields of Paradise.

The black men look'd up from the
 sands
 Against the dim, uncertain skies,
 As men that disbelieved their eyes,
 And would have laugh'd; they wept
 instead,
 With shoulders heaved, with bowing
 head
 Hid down between the two black
 hands.

They stood and gazed. Lo! like
 the call

Of spring-time promises, the trees
 Lean'd from their lifted mountain
 wall,
 And stood clear cut against the skies,
 As if they grew in pistol-shot;
 Yet all the mountains answer'd not
 And yet there came no cooling breeze,
 Nor soothing sense of wind-wet trees.

At last old Morgan, looking
 through
 His shaded fingers, let them go,
 And let his load fall down as dead.
 He groan'd, he clutch'd his beard of
 snow
 As was his wont, then bowing low,
 Took up his life, and moaning said,
 "Lord Christ! 'tis the mirage, and we
 Stand blinded in a burning sea."

XVIII

Again they move, but where or how
 It recks them little, nothing now.
 Yet Morgan leads them as before,
 But totters now; he bends, and he
 Is like a broken ship a-sea,—
 A ship that knows not any shore,
 Nor rudder, nor shall anchor more.

Some leaning shadows crooning
 crept
 Through desolation, crown'd in dust.
 And had the mad pursuer kept
 His path, and cherish'd his pursuit?
 There lay no choice. Advance, he
 must:
 Advance, and eat his ashen fruit.

Again the still moon rose and stood
 Above the dim, dark belt of wood,

Above the buttes, above the snow,
 And bent a sad, sweet face below.
 She reach'd along the level plain
 Her long, white fingers. Then again
 She reach'd, she touch'd the snowy
 sands.

Then reach'd far out until she
 touch'd

A heap that lay with doubled hands,
 Reach'd from its sable self, and
 clutch'd

With patient death. O tenderly
 That black, that dead and hollow
 face

Was kiss'd that night. . . . What
 if I say

The long, white moonbeams reach-
 ing there,

Caressing idle hands of clay,
 And resting on the wrinkled hair
 And great lips push'd in sullen pout,
 Were God's own fingers reaching out
 From heaven to that lonesome place?

XIX

By waif and stray and cast-away,
 Such as are seen in seas withdrawn,
 Old Morgan led in silence on;
 And sometimes lifting up his head,
 To guide his footsteps as he led,
 He deem'd he saw a great ship lay
 Her keel along the sea-wash'd sand,
 As with her captain's old command.

The stars were seal'd; and then a
 haze
 Of gossamer fill'd all the west,
 So like in Indian summer days,
 And veil'd all things. And then the
 moon

Grew pale and faint, and far. She
 died,

And now nor star nor any sign
 Fell out of heaven. Oversoon
 A black man fell. Then at his side
 Some one sat down to watch, to rest—
 To rest, to watch, or what you will,
 The man sits resting, watching still.

XX

The day glared through the eastern
 rim
 Of rocky peaks, as prison bars,
 With light as dim as distant stars.
 The sultry sunbeams filter'd down
 Through misty phantoms weird and
 dim,
 Through shifting shapes bat-wing'd
 and brown.

Like some vast ruin wrapp'd in
 flame
 The sun fell down before them now.
 Behind them wheel'd white peaks of
 snow,
 As they proceeded. Gray and grim
 And awful objects went and came
 Before them all. They pierced at
 last
 The desert's middle depths, and lo!
 There loom'd from out the desert
 vast
 A lonely ship, well-built and trim,
 And perfect all in hull and mast.

No storm had stain'd it any whit,
 No seasons set their teeth in it.
 Her masts were white as ghosts, and
 tall;
 Her decks were as of yesterday.

The rains, the elements, and all
 The moving things that bring decay
 By fair green lands or fairer seas,
 Had touch'd not here for centuries.
 Lo! date had lost all reckoning,
 And time had long forgotten all
 In this lost land, and no new thing
 Or old could anywise befall,
 For Time went by the other way.

What dreams of gold or conquest
 drew
 The oak-built sea-king to these seas,
 Ere earth, old earth, unsatisfied,
 Rose up and shook man in disgust
 From off her wearied breast, and
 threw
 His high-built cities down, and dried
 These unnamed ship-sown seas to
 dust?
 Who trod these decks? What cap-
 tain knew
 The straits that led to lands like
 these?

Blew south-sea breeze or north-sea
 breeze?
 What spiced-winds whistled through
 this sail?
 What banners stream'd above these
 seas?
 And what strange seaman answer'd
 back
 To other sea-king's beck and hail,
 That blew across his foamy track?

Sought Jason here the golden
 fleece?
 Came Trojan ship or ships of Greece?
 Came decks dark-mann'd from sul-
 try Ind,

Woo'd here by spacious wooing
 wind?

So like a grand, sweet woman, when
 A great love moves her soul to men?

Came here strong ships of Solomon
 In quest of Ophir by Cathay? . . .
 Sit down and dream of seas with-
 drawn,
 And every sea-breath drawn away.
 Sit down, sit down! What is the
 good

That we go on still fashioning
 Great iron ships or walls of wood,
 High masts of oak, or anything?

Lo! all things moving must go by.
 The seas lie dead. Behold, this land
 Sits desolate in dust beside
 His snow-white, seamless shroud of
 sand;
 The very clouds have wept and
 died,
 And only God is in the sky.

XXI

The sands lay heaved, as heaved by
 waves,
 As fashioned in a thousand graves:
 And wrecks of storm blown here and
 there,
 And dead men scatter'd every-
 where;
 And strangely clad they seem'd to
 be
 Just as they sank in that dread sea.

The mermaid with her golden hair
 Had clung about a wreck's beam
 there,

And sung her song of sweet despair
 The time she saw the seas with-
 drawn
 And all her pride and glory gone:
 Had sung her melancholy dirge
 Above the last receding surge,
 And, looking down the rippled tide,
 Had sung, and with her song had
 died.

The monsters of the sea lay bound
 In strange contortions. Coil'd
 around
 A mast half heaved above the sand
 The great sea-serpent's folds were
 found,
 As solid as ship's iron band;
 And basking in the burning sun
 There rose the great whale's
 skeleton.

A thousand sea things stretch'd
 across
 Their weary and bewilder'd way:
 Great unnamed monsters wrinkled
 lay
 With sunken eyes and shrunken
 form.
 The strong sea-horse that rode the
 storm
 With mane as light and white as
 floss,
 Lay tangled in his mane of moss.

And anchor, hull, and cast-away,
 And all things that the miser deep
 Doth in his darkling locker keep,
 To right and left around them lay.
 Yea, golden coin and golden cup,
 And golden cruse, and golden plate,
 And all that great seas swallow up,

Right in their dreadful pathway lay.
 The hoary sea made white with
 time,
 And wrinkled cross with many a
 crime,
 With all his treasured thefts lay
 there,
 His sins, his very soul laid bare,
 As if it were the Judgment Day.

XXII

And now the tawny night fell
 soon,
 And there was neither star nor
 moon;
 And yet it seem'd it was not night.
 There fell a phosphorescent light,
 There rose from white sands and dead
 men
 A soft light, white and strange as
 when
 The Spirit of Jehovah moved
 Upon the water's conscious face,
 And made it His abiding place.

Remote, around the lonesome
 ship,
 Old Morgan moved, but knew it
 not,
 For neither star nor moon fell
 down. . . .
 I trow that was a lonesome spot
 He found, where boat and ship did
 dip
 In sands like some half-sunken
 town.

At last before the leader lay
 A form that in the night did seem
 A slain Goliath. As in a dream,

He drew aside in his slow pace,
 And look'd. He saw a sable face!
 A friend that fell that very day,
 Thrown straight across his wearied
 way.

He falter'd now. His iron heart,
 That never yet refused its part,
 Began to fail him; and his strength
 Shook at his knees, as shakes the
 wind
 A shatter'd ship. His shatter'd
 mind
 Ranged up and down the land. At
 length
 He turn'd, as ships turn, tempest
 toss'd,
 For now he knew that he was lost!
 He sought in vain the moon, the
 stars,
 In vain the battle-star of Mars.

Again he moved. And now again
 He paused, he peer'd along the
 plain,
 Another form before him lay.
 He stood, and statue-white he stood,
 He trembled like a stormy wood,—
 It was a foeman brawn and gray.

He lifted up his head again,
 Again he search'd the great pro-
 found
 For moon, for star, but sought in
 vain.
 He kept his circle round and round
 The great ship lifting from the sand,
 And pointing heavenward like a
 hand.

And still he crept along the plain,
 Yet where his foeman dead again

Lay in his way he moved around,
 And soft as if on sacred ground,
 And did not touch him anywhere.
 It might have been he had a dread,
 In his half-crazed and fever'd brain,
 His fallen foe might rise again
 If he should dare to touch him there.

He circled round the lonesome
 ship
 Like some wild beast within a wall,
 That keeps his paces round and
 round.
 The very stillness had a sound;
 He saw strange somethings rise and
 dip;
 He felt the weirdness like a pall
 Come down and cover him. It
 seem'd
 To take a form, take many forms,
 To talk to him, to reach out arms;
 Yet on he kept, and silent kept,
 And as he lead he lean'd and slept,
 And as he slept he talk'd and
 dream'd.

Two shadows follow'd, stopp'd,
 and stood
 Bewilder'd, wander'd back again,
 Came on and then fell to the sand,
 And sinking died. Then other men
 Did wag their woolly heads and
 laugh,
 Then bend their necks and seem to
 quaff
 Of cooling waves that careless flow
 Where woods and long, strong grasses
 grow.

Yet on, wound Morgan, leaning
 low,

With her upon his breast, and slow
 As hand upon a dial plate.
 He did not turn his course or quail,
 He did not falter, did not fail,
 Turn right or left or hesitate.

Some far-off sounds had lost their
 way,
 And seem'd to call to him and pray
 For help, as if they were affright.
 It was not day, it seem'd not night,
 But that dim land that lies between
 The mournful, faithful face of night,
 And loud and gold-bedazzled day;
 A night that was not felt but seen.

There seem'd not now the ghost of
 sound,
 He stepp'd as soft as step the dead;
 Yet on he lead in solemn tread,
 Bewilder'd, blinded, round and
 round,
 About the great black ship that rose
 Tall-masted as that ship that blows
 Her ghost below lost Panama,—
 The tallest mast man ever saw.

Two leaning shadows follow'd
 him:
 Their eyes were red, their teeth shone
 white,
 Their limbs did lift as shadows
 swim.
 Then one went left and one went
 right,
 And in the night pass'd out of
 sight;
 Pass'd through the portals black,
 unknown,
 And Morgan totter'd on alone.

And why he still survived the
 rest,
 Why still he had the strength to stir,
 Why still he stood like gnarlèd oak
 That buffets storm and tempest
 stroke,
 One cannot say, save but for her,
 That helpless being on his breast.

She did not speak, she did not
 stir;
 In rippled currents over her,
 Her black, abundant hair pour'd
 down
 Like mantle or some sable gown.
 That sad, sweet dreamer; she who
 knew
 Not anything of earth at all.
 Nor cared to know its bane or bliss;
 That dove that did not touch the
 land,
 That knew, yet did not understand.
 And this may be because she drew
 Her all of life right from the hand
 Of God, and did not choose to learn
 The things that make up man's
 concern.

Ah! there be souls none under-
 stand;
 Like clouds, they cannot touch the
 land.
 Unanchored ships, they blow and
 blow,
 Sail to and fro, and then go down
 In unknown seas that none shall
 know,
 Without one ripple of renown.

Call these not fools; the test of
 worth

Is not the hold you have of earth.
 Ay, there be gentlest souls sea-
 blown
 That know not any harbor known.
 Now it may be the reason is,
 They touch on fairer shores than this.

At last he touch'd a fallen group,
 Dead fellows tumbled in the sands,
 Dead foemen, gather'd to their dead.
 And eager now the man did stoop,
 Lay down his load and reach his
 hands,
 And stretch his form and look stead-
 fast
 And frightful, and as one aghast.
 He lean'd, and then he raised his
 head,
 And look'd for Vasques, but in vain
 He peer'd along the deadly plain.

Now, from the night another face,
 The last that follow'd through the
 deep,
 Comes on, falls dead within a pace.
 Yet Vasques still survives! But
 where?
 His last bold follower lies there,
 Thrown straight across old Morgan's
 track,
 As if to check him, bid him back.
 He stands, he does not dare to stir,
 He watches by his charge asleep,
 He fears for her: but only her.
 The man who ever mock'd at death,
 He only dares to draw his breath.

XXIII

Beyond, and still as black despair,
 A man rose up, stood dark and tall,

Stretch'd out his neck, reach'd forth,
 let fall
 Dark oaths, and Death stood waiting
 there.

A tawny dead man stretch'd
 between,
 And Vasques set his foot thereon.
 The stars were seal'd, the moon was
 gone,
 The very darkness cast a shade.
 The scene was rather heard than
 seen,
 The rattle of a single blade. . . .

A right foot rested on the dead,
 A black hand reach'd and clutch'd a
 beard,
 Then neither pray'd, nor dream'd of
 hope.
 A fierce face reach'd, a black face
 peer'd. . . .
 No bat went whirling overhead,
 No star fell out of Ethiope.

The dead man lay between them
 there,
 The two men glared as tigers
 glare,—
 The black man held him by the
 beard.
 He wound his hand, he held him fast,
 And tighter held, as if he fear'd
 The man might 'scape him at the
 last.
 Whiles Morgan did not speak or
 stir,
 But stood in silent watch with her.

Not long. . . . A light blade
 lifted, thrust,

A blade that leapt and swept about,
So wizard-like, like wand in spell,
So like a serpent's tongue thrust
out. . . .

Thrust twice, thrust thrice, thrust as
he fell,
Thrust through until it touched the
dust.

Yet ever as he thrust and smote,
A black hand like an iron band
Did tighten round a gasping throat.
He fell, but did not loose his hand;
The two lay dead upon the sand.

Lo! up and from the fallen forms
Two ghosts came, dark as gathered
storms;
Two gray ghosts stood, then looking
back;
With hands all empty, and hands
clutch'd,
Strode on in silence. Then they
touch'd,
Along the lonesome, chartless track,
Where dim Plutonian darkness fell,
Then touch'd the outer rim of hell;
And looking back their great despair
Sat sadly down, as resting there.

XXIV

As if there was a strength in
death
The battle seem'd to nerve the man
To superhuman strength. He rose,
Held up his head, began to scan
The heavens and to take his breath
Right strong and lustily. He now
Resumed his part, and with his eye
Fix'd on a star that filter'd through

The farther west, push'd bare his
brow,
And kept his course with head held
high,
As if he strode his deck and drew
His keel below some lofty light
That watch'd the rocky reef at
night.

How lone he was, how patient she
Upon that lonesome sandy sea!
It were a sad, unpleasant sight
To follow them through all the
night,
Until the time they lifted hand,
And touch'd at last a water'd land.

The turkeys walk'd the tangled
grass,
And scarcely turn'd to let them pass.
There was no sign of man, nor sign
Of savage beast. 'Twas so divine,
It seem'd as if the bended skies
Were rounded for this Paradise.

The large-eyed antelope came down
From off their windy hills, and blew
Their whistles as they wander'd
through
The open groves of water'd wood;
They came as light as if on wing,
And reached their noses wet and
brown
And stamp'd their little feet and
stood
Close up before them, wondering.

What if this were that Eden old,
They found in this heart of the
new

And unnamed westmost world of
gold,
Where date and history had birth,
And man began first wandering
To go the girdle of the earth,
And find the beautiful and true?

It lies a little isle mid land,
An island in a sea of sand;
With reedy waters and the balm
Of an eternal summer air;
Some blowy pines toss here and
there;
And there are grasses long and
strong,
And tropic fruits that never fail:
The Manzanita pulp, the palm,
The prickly pear, with all the song
Of summer birds. And there the
quail
Makes nest, and you may hear her
call
All day from out the chaparral.

A land where white man never
trod,
And Morgan seems some demi-god,
That haunts the red man's spirit
land.
A land where never red man's hand
Is lifted up in strife at all,
But holds it sacred unto those
Who bravely fell before their foes,
And rarely dares its desert wall.

Here breaks nor sound of strife nor
sign;
Rare times a chieftain comes this
way,
Alone, and battle-scarr'd and gray,
And then he bends devout before

The maid who keeps the cabin-door,
And deems her something all divine.

Within the island's heart 'tis said,
Tall trees are bending down with
bread,
And that a fountain pure as Truth,
And deep and mossy-bound and fair,
Is bubbling from the forest there,—
Perchance the fabled fount of youth!
An isle where skies are ever fair,
Where men keep never date nor day,
Where Time has thrown his glass
away.

This isle is all their own. No more
The flight by day, the watch by
night.
Dark Sybal twines about the door
The scarlet blooms, the blossoms
white
And winds red berries in her hair,
And never knows the name of care.

She has a thousand birds; they
blow
In rainbow clouds, in clouds of
snow;
The birds take berries from her hand;
They come and go at her command.

She has a thousand pretty birds,
That sing her summer songs all day;
Small, black-hoof'd antelope in herds,
And squirrels bushy-tail'd and gray,
With round and sparkling eyes of
pink,
And cunning-faced as you can think.

She has a thousand busy birds:
And is she happy in her isle,

With all her feather'd friends and
herds?

For when has Morgan seen her
smile?

She has a thousand cunning birds,
They would build nestings in her hair,
She has brown antelope in herds;
She never knows the name of care;
Why, then, is she not happy there?

All patiently she bears her part;
She has a thousand birdlings there,
These birds they would build in her
hair;
But not one bird builds in her heart.

She has a thousand birds; yet
she

Would give ten thousand cheerfully,
All bright of plume and clear of
tongue,

And sweet as ever trilled or sung,
For one small flutter'd bird to come
And build within her heart, though
dumb.

She has a thousand birds; yet
one

Is lost, and, lo! she is undone.

She sighs sometimes. She looks
away,

And yet she does not weep or say.

THE SEA OF FIRE

*In a land so far that you wonder
whether*

*If God would know it should you fall
down dead;*

*In a land so far through the soft, warm-
weather*

*That the sun sinks red as a warrior
sped,—*

*Where the sea and the sky seem closing
together,*

*Seem closing together as a book that is
read;*

*'Tis the half-finished world! Yon foot-
fall retreating,—*

*It might be the Maker disturbed at
his task.*

*But the footfall of God, or the far pheas-
ant beating,*

*It is one and the same, whatever the
mask*

*It may wear unto man. The woods
keep repeating*

*The old sacred sermons, whatever
you ask.*

*It is man in his garden, scarce wakened
as yet*

*From the sleep that fell on him when
woman was made.*

*The new-finished garden is plastic and
wet*

*From the hand that has fashioned its
unpeopled shade;*

*And the wonder still looks from the fair
woman's eyes*

*As she shines through the wood like
the light from the skies.*

*And a ship now and then for this far
Ophir yore*

*Draws in from the sea. It lies close
to the bank;
Then a dull, muffled sound on the
slow shuffled plank
As they load the black ship; but you
hear nothing more,
And the dark, dewy vines, and the
tall, somber wood
Like twilight drop over the deep,
sweeping flood.*

*The black masts are tangled with
branches that cross,
The rich fragrant gums fall from
branches to deck,
The thin ropes are swinging with
streamers of moss
That mantle all things like the
shreds of a wreck;
The long mosses swing, there is never a
breath:
The river rolls still as the river of death.*

I

In the beginning,—ay, before
The six-days' labors were well o'er;
Yea, while the world lay incomplete,
Ere God had opened quite the door
Of this strange land for strong men's
feet,—
There lay against that westmost sea,
A weird, wild land of mystery.

A far white wall, like fallen moon,
Girt out the world. The forest lay
So deep you scarcely saw the day,
Save in the high-held middle noon:—
It lay a land of sleep and dreams,

And clouds drew through like shore-
less streams
That stretch to where no man may
say.

Men reached it only from the sea,
By black-built ships, that seemed to
creep
Along the shore suspiciously,
Like unnamed monsters of the deep.
It was the weirdest land, I ween,
That mortal eye has ever seen.

A dim, dark land of bird and
beast,
Black shaggy beasts with cloven
claw,—
A land that scarce knew prayer or
priest,
Or law of man, or Nature's law;
Where no fixed line drew sharp
dispute
'Twixt savage man and sullen brute.

II

It hath a history most fit
For cunning hand to fashion on;
No chronicler hath mentioned it;
No buccaneer set foot upon.
'Tis of an outlawed Spanish Don,—
A cruel man, with pirate's gold
That loaded down his deep ship's
hold.

A deep ship's hold of plundered
gold!
The golden cruse, the golden cross,
From many a church of Mexico,
From Panama's mad overthrow,
From many a ransomed city's loss,

From many a follower fierce and
bold,
And many a foeman stark and cold.

He found this wild, lost land. He
drew
His ship to shore. His ruthless
crew,
Like Romulus, laid lawless hand
On meek brown maidens of the land,
And in their bloody forays bore
Red firebrands along the shore.

III

The red men rose at night. They
came,
A firm, unflinching wall of flame;
They swept, as sweeps some fateful
sea
O'er land of sand and level shore
That howls in far, fierce agony.
The red men swept that deep, dark
shore
As threshers sweep a threshing floor.

And yet beside the slain Don's
door
They left his daughter, as they fled:
They spared her life because she
bore
Their Chieftain's blood and name.
The red
And blood-stained hidden hoards of
gold
They hollowed from the stout ship's
hold,
And bore in many a slim canoe—
To where? The good priest only
knew.

IV

The course of life is like the sea;
Men come and go; tides rise and fall;
And that is all of history.
The tide flows in, flows out today—
And that is all that man may say;
Man is, man was,—and that is all.

Revenge at last came like a
tide,—
'Twas sweeping, deep and terrible;
The Christian found the land, and
came
To take possession in Christ's name.
For every white man that had died
I think a thousand red men fell,—
A Christian custom; and the land
Lay lifeless as some burned-out
brand.

V

Ere while the slain Don's daughter
grew
A glorious thing, a flower of spring,
A something more than mortals
knew;
A mystery of grace and face,—
A silent mystery that stood
An empress in that sea-set wood,
Supreme, imperial in her place.

It might have been men's lust for
gold,—
For all men knew that lawless crew
Left hoards of gold in that ship's
hold,
That drew ships hence, and silent
drew

Strange Jasons there to love or
dare;
I never knew, nor need I care.

I say it might have been this gold
That ever drew and strangely drew
Strong men of land, strange men of
sea
To seek this shore of mystery
With all its wondrous tales untold;
The gold or her, which of the two?
It matters not to me, nor you.

But this I know, that as for me,
Between that face and the hard fate
That kept me ever from my own,
As some wronged monarch from his
throne,
All heaped-up gold of land or sea
Had never weighed one feather's
weight.

Her home was on the wooded
height,—
A woody home, a priest at prayer,
A perfume in the fervid air,
And angels watching her at night.
I can but think upon the skies
That bound that other Paradise.

VI

Below a star-built arch, as grand
As ever bended heaven spanned,
Tall trees like mighty columns
grew—
They loomed as if to pierce the blue,
They reached, as reaching heaven
through.

The shadowed stream rolled far
below,
Where men moved noiseless to and
fro
As in some vast cathedral, when
The calm of prayer comes to men,
And benedictions bless them so.

What wooded sea-banks, wild and
steep!
What trackless wood! what snowy
cone
That lifted from this wood alone!
What wild, wide river, dark and
deep!
What ships against the shore asleep!

VII

An Indian woman cautious crept
About the land the while it slept,
The relic of her perished race.
She wore rich, rudely-fashioned
bands
Of gold above her bony hands;
She hissed hot curses on the place!

VIII

Go seek the red man's last retreat!
What lonesome lands! what haunted
lands!
Red mouths of beasts, red men's red
hands;
Red prophet-priests, in mute defeat.
From Incan temples overthrown
To lorn Alaska's isles of bone
The red man lives and dies alone.

His boundaries in blood are writ!
His land is ghostland! That is his,

Whatever we may claim of this;
 Beware how you shall enter it!
 He stands God's guardian of ghost-
 lands;
 Yea, this same wrapped half-prophet
 stands
 All nude and voiceless, nearer to
 The dread, lone God than I or you.

IX

This bronzed child, by that river's
 brink,
 Stood fair to see as you can think,
 As tall as tall reeds at her feet,
 As fresh as flowers in her hair;
 As sweet as flowers over-sweet,
 As fair as vision more than fair!

How beautiful she was! How wild!
 How pure as water-plant, this
 child,—
 This one wild child of Nature here
 Grown tall in shadows.

And how near
 To God, where no man stood between
 Her eyes and scenes no man hath
 seen,—
 This maiden that so mutely stood,
 The one lone woman of that wood.

Stop still, my friend, and do not
 stir,
 Shut close your page and think of
 her.
 The birds sang sweeter for her face;
 Her lifted eyes were like a grace
 To seamen of that solitude,
 However rough, however rude.

The rippled river of her hair,
 Flowed in such wondrous waves,
 somehow
 Flowed down divided by her brow,—
 It mantled her within its care,
 And flooded all her form below,
 In its uncommon fold and flow.

A perfume and an incense lay
 Before her, as an incense sweet
 Before blithe mowers of sweet May
 In early morn. Her certain feet
 Embarked on no uncertain way.

Come, think how perfect before
 men,
 How sweet as sweet magnolia bloom
 Embalmed in dews of morning,
 when
 Rich sunlight leaps from midnight
 gloom
 Resolved to kiss, and swift to kiss
 Ere yet morn wakens man to bliss.

X

The days swept on. Her perfect
 year
 Was with her now. The sweet
 perfume
 Of womanhood in holy bloom,
 As when red harvest blooms appear,
 Possessed her soul. The priest did
 pray
 That saints alone should pass that
 way.

A red bird built beneath her roof,
 Brown squirrels crossed her cabin
 sill,
 And welcome came or went at will.

A hermit spider wove his web
Above her door and plied his trade,
With none to fright or make afraid.

The silly elk, the spotted fawn,
And all dumb beasts that came to
drink,
That stealthy stole upon the brink
By coming night or going dawn,
On seeing her familiar face
Would fearless stop and stand in place.

She was so kind, the beasts of
night
Gave her the road as if her right;
The panther crouching overhead
In sheen of moss would hear her
tread,
And bend his eyes, but never stir
Lest he by chance might frighten her.

Yet in her splendid strength, her
eyes,
There lay the lightning of the skies;
The love-hate of the lioness,
To kill the instant or caress:
A pent-up soul that sometimes grew
Impatient; why, she hardly knew.

At last she sighed, uprose, and
threw
Her strong arms out as if to hand
Her love, sun-born and all complete
At birth, to some brave lover's feet
On some far, fair, and unseen land,
As knowing not quite what to do!

XI

How beautiful she was: Why, she
Was inspiration! She was born

To walk God's sunlit hills at morn,
Nor waste her by this wood-dark sea.
What wonder, then, her soul's white
wings
Beat at its bars, like living things!

Once more she sighed! She wan-
dered through
The sea-bound wood, then stopped
and drew
Her hand above her face, and swept
The lonesome sea, and all day kept
Her face to sea, as if she knew
Some day, some near or distant
day,
Her destiny should come that way.

XII

How proud she was! How darkly
fair!
How full of faith, of love, of strength!
Her calm, proud eyes! Her great
hair's length,—
Her long, strong, tumbled, careless
hair,
Half curled and knotted any-
where,—
By brow or breast, or cheek or chin,
For love to trip and tangle in!

XIII

At last a tall strange sail was
seen:
It came so slow, so wearily,
Came creeping cautious up the sea,
As if it crept from out between
The half-closed sea and sky that lay
Tight wedged together, far away.

She watched it, wooed it. She did
 pray
 It might not pass her by but bring
 Some love, some hate, some any-
 thing,
 To break the awful loneliness
 That like a nightly nightmare lay
 Upon her proud and pent-up soul
 Until it barely brooked control.

XIV

The ship crept silent up the sea,
 And came—
 You cannot understand
 How fair she was, how sudden she
 Had sprung, full grown, to woman-
 hood.
 How gracious, yet how proud and
 grand;
 How glorified, yet fresh and free,
 How human, yet how more than
 good.

XV

The ship stole slowly, slowly on,—
 Should you in Californian field
 In ample flower-time behold
 The soft south rose lift like a shield;
 Against the sudden sun at dawn
 A double handful of heaped gold,
 Why you, perhaps, might understand
 How splendid and how queenly she
 Uprose beside that wood-set sea.

The storm-worn ship scarce seemed
 to creep
 From wave to wave. It scarce could
 keep—

How still this fair girl stood, how
 fair!
 How tall her presence as she stood
 Between that vast sea and west
 wood!
 How large and liberal her soul,
 How confident, how purely chare,
 How trusting; how untried the whole
 Great heart, grand faith, that
 blossomed there.

XVI

Ay, she was as Madonna to
 The tawny, lawless, faithful few
 Who touched her hand and knew her
 soul:
 She drew them, drew them as the
 pole
 Points all things to itself.

 She drew
 Men upward as a moon of spring
 High wheeling, vast and bosom-full,
 Half clad in clouds and white as wool,
 Draws all the strong seas following.

Yet still she moved as sad, as
 lone
 As that same moon that leans above,
 And seems to search high heaven
 through
 For some strong, all sufficient love,
 For one brave love to be her own,
 Be all her own and ever true.

Oh, I once knew a sad, sweet
 dove
 That died for such sufficient love,
 Such high, white love with wings to
 soar,

That looks love level in the face,
Nor wearies love with leaning o'er
To lift love level to her place.

XVII

How slow before the sleeping
breeze,
That stranger ship from under seas!
How like to Dido by her sea,
When reaching arms imploringly,—
Her large, round, rich, impassioned
arms,
Tossed forth from all her storied
charms—
This one lone maiden leaning stood
Above that sea, beneath that wood!

The ship crept strangely up the
seas;
Her shrouds seemed shreds, her masts
seemed trees,—
Strange tattered trees of toughest
bough
That knew no cease of storm till
now.
The maiden pitied her; she prayed
Her crew might come, nor feel
afraid;
She prayed the winds might come,—
they came,
As birds that answer to a name.

The maiden held her blowing
hair
That bound her beauteous self
about;
The sea-winds housed within her
hair;
She let it go, it blew in rout
About her bosom full and bare.

Her round, full arms were free as
air,
Her high hands clasped as clasped in
prayer.

XVIII

The breeze grew bold, the battered
ship
Began to flap her weary wings;
The tall, torn masts began to dip
And walk the wave like living things.
She rounded in, moved up the stream,
She moved like some majestic dream.

The captain kept her deck. He
stood
A Hercules among his men;
And now he watched the sea, and
then
He peered as if to pierce the wood.
He now looked back, as if pursued,
Now swept the sea with glass as
though
He fled, or feared some prowling foe.

Slow sailing up the river's mouth,
Slow tacking north, slow tacking
south,
He touched the overhanging wood;
He kept his deck, his tall black
mast
Touched tree-top mosses as he
passed;
He touched the steep shore where she
stood.

XIX

Her hands still clasped as if in
prayer,

Sweet prayer set to silentness;
Her sun-browned throat uplifted,
bare
And beautiful.

Her eager face
Illumed with love and tenderness,
And all her presence gave such grace,
That she seemed more than mortal,
fair.

XX

He saw. He could not speak.
No more
With lifted glass he swept the sea;
No more he watched the wild new
shore.
Now foes might come, now friends
might flee;
He could not speak, he would not
stir,—
He saw but her, he feared but her.

The black ship ground against the
shore
With creak and groan and rusty
clank,
And tore the mellow blossomed bank;
She ground against the bank as one
With long and weary journeys done,
That will not rise to jonrney more.

Yet still tall Jason silent stood
And gazed against that sea-washed
wood,
As one whose soul is anywhere.
All seemed so fair, so wondrous fair!
At last aroused, he stepped to land
Like some Columbus; then laid
hand

On lands and fruits, and rested
there.

XXI

He found all fairer than fair
morn
In sylvan land, where waters run
With downward leap against the
sun,
And full-grown sudden May is born.
He found her taller than tall corn
Tiptoe in tassel; found her sweet
As vale where bees of Hybla meet.

An unblown rose, an unread
book;
A wonder in her wondrous eyes;
A large, religious, steadfast look
Of faith, of trust,—the look of one
New fashioned in fair Paradise.

He read this book—read on and
on
From title page to colophon:
As in cool woods, some summer day,
You find delight in some sweet lay,
And so entranced read on and on
From title page to colophon.

XXII

And who was he that rested
there,—
This giant of a grander day,
This Theseus of a nobler Greece,
This Jason of the golden fleece?
Aye, who was he? And who were
they
That came to seek the hidden gold

Long hollowed from the pirate's
hold?

I do not know. You need not care.

They loved, this maiden and this
man,

And that is all I surely know,—

The rest is as the winds that blow,
He bowed as brave men bow to fate,
Yet proud and resolute and bold;
She shy at first, and coyly cold,
Held back and tried to hesitate,—
Half frightened at this love that ran
Hard gallop till her hot heart beat
Like sounding of swift courser's
feet.

XXIII

Two strong streams of a land must
run

Together surely as the sun
Succeeds the moon. Who shall
gainsay

The gods that reign, that wisely
reign?

Love is, love was, shall be again.
Like death, inevitable it is;
Perchance, like death, the dawn of
bliss.

Let us, then, love the perfect day,
The twelve o'clock of life, and stop
The two hands pointing to the top,
And hold them tightly while we may.

XXIV

How beautiful is love! The walks
By wooded ways; the silent talks

Beneath the broad and fragrant
bough.

The dark deep wood, the dense black
dell,

Where scarce a single gold beam
fell

From out the sun.

They rested now

On mossy trunk. They wandered
then

Where never fell the feet of men.

Then longer walks, then deeper
woods,

Then sweeter talks, sufficient sweet,
In denser, deeper solitudes,—

Dear careless ways for careless
feet;

Sweet talks of paradise for two,
And only two to watch or woo.

She rarely spake. All seemed a
dream

She would not waken from. She lay
All night but waiting for the day,
When she might see his face, and
deem

This man, with all his perils passed,
Had found sweet Lotus-land at last.

XXV

The year waxed fervid, and the
sun

Fell central down. The forest lay
A-quiver in the heat. The sea
Below the steep bank seemed to run
A molten sea of gold.

Away

Against the gray and rock-built
isles

That broke the molten watery miles
Where lonesome sea-cows called all
day,
The sudden sun smote angrily.

Therefore the need of deeper
deeps,
Of denser shade for man and maid,
Of higher heights, of cooler steeps,
Where all day long the sea-wind
stayed.

They sought the rock-reared steep.
The breeze
Swept twenty thousand miles of
seas;
Had twenty thousand things to say,
Of love, of lovers of Cathay,
To lovers 'mid these mossy trees.

XXVI

To left, to right, below the
height,
Below the wood by wave and
stream,
Plumed pampas grass did wave and
gleam
And bend their lordly plumes, and
run
And shake, as if in very fright
Before sharp lances of the sun.

They saw the tide-bound, battered
ship
Creep close below against the bank;
They saw it cringe and shrink; it
shrank
As shrinks some huge black beast
with fear,

When some uncommon dread is
near.

They heard the melting resin drip,
As drip the last brave blood-drops
when

Red battle waxes hot with men.

XXVII

Yet what to her were burning seas,
Or what to him was forest flame?

They loved; they loved the glorious
trees;

The gleaming tides might rise or
fall,—

They loved the whispering winds that
came

From sea-lost spice-set isles un-
known,

With breath not warmer than their
own;

They loved, they loved,—and that
was all.

XXVIII

Full noon! Above, the ancient
moss

From mighty boughs swang slow
across,

As when some priest slow chants a
prayer

And swings sweet smoke and per-
fumed air

From censer swinging—anywhere.

He spake of love, of boundless
love,—

Of love that knew no other land,

Or face, or place, or anything;

Of love that like the wearied dove

Could light nowhere, but kept the
 wing
 Till she alone put forth her hand
 And so received it in her ark
 From seas that shake against the
 dark!

Her proud breast heaved, her pure,
 bare breast
 Rose like the waves in their unrest
 When counter storms possess the
 seas.
 Her mouth, her arch, uplifted
 mouth,
 Her ardent mouth that thirsted so,—
 No glowing love song of the South
 Can say; no man can say or know
 Such truth as lies beneath such
 trees.

Her face still lifted up. And
 she
 Disdained the cup of passion he
 Hard pressed her panting lips to
 touch.
 She dashed it by, uprose, and she
 Caught fast her breath. She
 trembled much,
 Then sudden rose full height, and
 stood
 An empress in high womanhood:
 She stood a tower, tall as when
 Proud Roman mothers suckled men
 Of old-time truth and taught them
 such.

XXIX

Her soul surged vast as space is.
 She
 Was trembling as a courser when

His thin flank quivers, and his feet
 Touch velvet on the turf, and he
 Is all afoam, alert and fleet
 As sunlight glancing on the sea,
 And full of triumph before men.

At last she bended some her face,
 Half leaned, then put him back a
 pace,
 And met his eyes.

Calm, silently
 Her eyes looked deep into his
 eyes,—
 As maidens search some mossy well
 And peer in hope by chance to tell
 By image there what future lies
 Before them, and what face shall be
 The pole-star of their destiny.

Pure Nature's lover! Loving him
 With love that made all pathways
 dim
 And difficult where he was not,—
 Then marvel not at forms forgot.
 And who shall chide? Doth priest
 know aught
 Of sign, or holy unction brought
 From over seas, that ever can
 Make man love maid or maid love
 man
 One whit the more, one bit the less,
 For all his mummeries to bless?
 Yea, all his blessings or his ban?

The winds breathed warm as Araby;
 She leaned upon his breast, she lay
 A wide-winged swan with folded
 wing.
 He drowned his hot face in her
 hair,

He heard her great heart rise and
sing;
He felt her bosom swell.

The air

Swooned sweet with perfume of her
form.
Her breast was warm, her breath was
warm,
And warm her warm and perfumed
mouth
As summer journeys through the
south.

XXX

The argent sea surged steep below,
Surged languid in such tropic glow;
And two great hearts kept surging
so!

The fervid kiss of heaven lay
Precipitate on wood and sea.
Two great souls glowed with
ecstasy,
The sea glowed scarce as warm as
they.

XXXI

'Twas love's warm amber after-
noon.
Two far-off pheasants thrummed a
tune,
A cricket clanged a restful air.
The dreamful billows beat a rune
Like heart regrets.

Around her head

There shone a halo. Men have said
'Twas from a dash of Titian red
That flooded all her storm of hair
In gold and glory. But they knew,

Yea, all men know there ever grew
A halo round about her head
Like sunlight scarcely vanished.

XXXII

How still she was! She only
knew
His love. She saw no life beyond.
She loved with love that only lives
Outside itself and selfishness,—
A love that glows in its excess;
A love that melts pure gold, and
gives
Thenceforth to all who come to
woo
No coins but this face stamped
thereon,—
Ay, this one image stamped upon
Pure gold, with some dim date long
gone. :

XXXIII

They kept the headland high; the
ship
Below began to chafe her chain,
To groan as some great beast in
pain:
While white fear leapt from lip to
lip:
"The woods on fire! The woods in
flame!
Come down and save us in God's
name!"

He heard! he did not speak or
stir,—
He thought of her, of only her,

While flames behind, before them
lay

To hold the stoutest heart at bay!

Strange sounds were heard far up
the flood,

Strange, savage sounds that chilled
the blood!

Then sudden, from the dense, dark
wood

Above, about them where they stood
Strange, hairy beasts came peering
out;

And now was thrust a long black
snout,

And now a tusky mouth. It was
A sight to make the stoutest pause.

“Cut loose the ship!” the black
mate cried;

“Cut loose the ship!” the crew
replied.

They drove into the sea. It lay
As light as ever middle day.

And then a half-blind bitch that
sat

All slobber-mouthed, and monkish
cowled

With great, broad, floppy, leathern
ears

Amid the men, rose up and howled,
And doleful howled her plaintive
fears,

While all looked mute aghast thereat.

It was the grimmest eve, I think,
That ever hung on Hades' brink.

Great broad-winged bats possessed
the air,

Bats whirling blindly everywhere;

It was such troubled twilight eve

As never mortal would believe.

XXXIV

Some say the crazed hag lit the
wood

In circle where the lovers stood;

Some say the gray priest feared the
crew

Might find at last the hoard of gold
Long hidden from the black ship's
hold,—

I doubt me if men ever knew.

But such mad, howling, flame-lit
shore

No mortal ever knew before.

Huge beasts above that shining
sea,

Wild, hideous beasts with shaggy
hair,

With red mouths lifting in the air,
All piteous howled, and plain-
tively,—

The wildest sounds, the weirdest
sight

That ever shook the walls of night.

How lorn they howled, with lifted
head,

To dim and distant isles that lay
Wedged tight along a line of red,
Caught in the closing gates of day
'Twixt sky and sea and far away,—

It was the saddest sound to hear
That ever struck on human ear.

They doleful called; and answered
they

The plaintiff sea-cows far away,—
The great sea-cows that called from
isles,

Away across red flaming miles,

With dripping mouths and lolling
tongue,
As if they called for captured
young,—

The huge sea-cows that called the
whiles
Their great wide mouths were mouth-
ing moss;
And still they doleful called across
From isles beyond the watery miles.
No sound can half so doleful be
As sea-cows calling from the sea.

XXXV

The sun, outdone, lay down. He
lay
In seas of blood. He sinking drew
The gates of sunset sudden to,
And they in shattered fragments lay.
Then night came, moving in mad
flame;
Then full night, lighted as he came,
As lighted by high summer sun
Descending through the burning
blue.
It was a gold and amber hue,
Aye, all hues blended into onc.

The moon came on, came leaning
low.
The moon spilled splendor where she
came,
And filled the world with yellow
flame
Along the far sea-isles aglow;
She fell along that amber flood,
A silver flame in seas of blood.
It was the strangest moon, ah me!
That ever settled on God's sea.

XXXVI

Slim snakes slid down from fern
and grass,
From wood, from fen, from any-
where;
You could not step, you could not
pass,
And you would hesitate to stir,
Lest in some sudden, hurried tread
Your foot struck some unbruised
head:

It seemed like some infernal
dream;
They slid in streams into the stream;
They curved and sinuous curved
across,
Like living streams of living moss,—
There is no art of man can make
A ripple like a swimming snake!

XXXVII

Encompassed, lorn, the lovers
stood,
Abandoned there, death in the air!
That beetling steep, that blazing
wood—
Red flame! red flame, and every-
where!
Yet he was born to strive, to bear
The front of battle. He would die
In noble effort, and defy
The grizzled visage of despair.

He threw his two strong arms
full length
As if to surely test their strength;
Then tore his vestments, textile
things

That could but tempt the demon
 wings
 Of flame that girt them round
 about,
 Then threw his garments to the air
 As one that laughed at death, at
 doubt,
 And like a god stood thewed and
 bare.

She did not hesitate; she knew
 The need of action; swift she threw
 Her burning vestments by, and
 bound
 Her wondrous wealth of hair that
 fell
 An all-concealing cloud around
 Her glorious presence, as he came
 To seize and bear her through the
 flame,—
 An Orpheus out of burning hell!

He leaned above her, wound his
 arm
 About her splendor, while the noon
 Of flood tide, manhood, flushed his
 face,
 And high flames leapt the high head-
 land!—
 They stood as twin-hewn statues
 stand,
 High lifted in some storied place.

He clasped her close, he spoke of
 death,—
 Of death and love in the same
 breath.
 He clasped her close; her bosom lay
 Like ship safe anchored in some bay,
 Where never rage or rack of main
 Might even shake her anchor chain.

XXXVIII

The flames! They could not stand
 or stay;
 Beyond, the beetling steep, the sea!
 But at his feet a narrow way,
 A short steep path, pitched suddenly
 Safe open to the river's beach,
 Where lay a small white isle in
 reach,—
 A small, white, rippled isle of sand
 Where yet the two might safely land.

And there, through smoke and
 flame, behold
 The priest stood safe, yet all
 appalled!
 He reached the cross; he cried, he
 called;
 He waved his high-held cross of
 gold.
 He called and called, he bade them
 fly
 Through flames to him, nor bide and
 die!

Her lover saw; he saw, and knew
 His giant strength could bear her
 through.
 And yet he would not start or stir.
 He clasped her close as death can
 hold,
 Or dying miser clasp his gold,—
 His hold became a part of her.

He would not give her up! He
 would
 Not bear her waveward though he
 could!
 That height was heaven; the wave
 was hell.

He clasped her close,—what else had
done
The manliest man beneath the sun?
Was it not well? was it not well?

O man, be glad! be grandly glad,
And king-like walk thy ways of
death!
For more than years of bliss you
had
That one brief time you breathed her
breath,
Yea, more than years upon a throne
That one brief time you held her
fast,
Soul surged to soul, vehement,
vast,—
True breast to breast, and all your
own.

Live me one day, one narrow night,
One second of supreme delight
Like that, and I will blow like chaff
The hollow years aside, and laugh
A loud triumphant laugh, and I,
King-like and crowned, will gladly
die.

Oh, but to wrap my love with
flame!
With flame within, with flame
without!
Oh, but to die like this, nor doubt—
To die and know her still the same!
To know that down the ghostly shore
Snow-white she walks for ever more!

XXXIX

He poised her, held her high in
air,—

His great strong limbs, his great arm's
length!—
Then turned his knotted shoulders
bare
As birth-time in his splendid strength,
And strode with lordly, kingly stride
To where the high and wood-hung
edge
Looked down, far down upon the
molten tide.
The flames leaped with him to the
ledge,
The flames leapt leering at his side.

XL

He leaned above the ledge. Below
He saw the black ship grope and
cruise,—
A midge below, a mile below.
His limbs were knotted as the thews
Of Hercules in his death-throe.

The flame! the flame! the envious
flame!
She wound her arms, she wound her
hair
About his tall form, grand and
bare,
To stay the fierce flame where it
came.

The black ship, like some moonlit
wreck,
Below along the burning sea
Groped on and on all silently,
With silent pigmies on her deck.

That midge-like ship, far, far
below;

That mirage lifting from the hill!
His flame-lit form began to grow,—
To glow and grow more grandly
still.

The ship so small, that form so tall,
It grew to tower over all.

A tall Colossus, bronze and gold,
As if that flame-lit form were he
Who once bestrode the Rhodian sea,
And ruled the watery world of old:
As if the lost Colossus stood
Above that burning sea of wood.

And she! that shapely form up-
held,
Held high as if to touch the sky,
What airy shape, how shapely
high,—
What goddess of the seas of eld!

Her hand upheld, her high right
hand,
As if she would forget the land;
As if to gather stars, and heap
The stars like torches there to light
Her hero's path across the deep
To some far isle that fearful night.

XLI

The envious flame, one moment
leapt
Enraged to see such majesty,
Such scorn of death; such kingly
scorn . . .
Then like some lightning-riven tree

They sank down in that flame—and
slept.

Then all was hushed above that steep
So still that they might sleep and
sleep,
As when a Summer's day is born.

At last! from out the embers leapt
Two shafts of light above the
night,—
Two wings of flame that lifting
swept
In steady, calm, and upward
flight;
Two wings of flame against the
white
Far-lifting, tranquil, snowy cone;
Two wings of love, two wings of
light,
Far, far above that troubled night,
As mounting, mounting to God's
throne.

XLII

And all night long that upward
light
Lit up the sea-cow's bed below:
The far sea-cows still calling so
It seemed as they must call all
night.
All night! there was no night. Nay,
nay,
There was no night. The night that
lay
Between that awful eve and day,—
That nameless night was burned
away.

A SONG OF THE SOUTH

PART I

*Rhyme on, rhyme on, in reedy flow,
O river, rhymers ever sweet!
The story of thy land is meet;
The stars stand listening to know.*

*Rhyme on, O river of the earth!
Gray father of the dreadful seas,
Rhyme on! the world upon its knees
Invokes thy songs, thy wealth, thy
worth.*

*Rhyme on! the reed is at thy mouth,
O kingly minstrel, mighty stream!
Thy Crescent City, like a dream,
Hangs in the heaven of my South.*

*Rhyme on, rhyme on! these broken
strings
Sing sweetest in this warm south
wind;
I sit thy willow banks and bind
A broken harp that fitful sings.*

I

And where is my silent, sweet
blossom-sown town?
And where is her glory, and what has
she done?
By her Mexican seas in the path of
the sun,
Sit you down; in her crescent of seas,
sit you down.

Aye, glory enough by her Mexican
seas!

Aye, story enough in that battle-torn
town,
Hidden down in her crescent of seas,
hidden down
In her mantle and sheen of magnolia-
white trees.

But mine is the story of souls; of a
soul
That barter'd God's limitless kingdom
for gold,—
Sold stars and all space for a thing he
did hold
In his palm for a day; and then hid
with the mole:

Sad soul of a rose-land, of moss-
mantled oak—
Gray, Druid-old oaks; and the moss
that sways
And swings in the wind is the battle-
smoke
Of duelists dead, in her storied days:

Sad soul of a love-land, of church-
bells and chimes;
A love-land of altars and orange-
flowers;
And that is the reason for all these
rhymes—
That church-bells are ringing through
all these hours!

This sun-land has churches, has
priests at prayer,
White nuns, that are white as the far
north snow:
They go where duty may bid them
go,—

They dare when the angel of death is
there.

This love-land has ladies, so fair,
so fair,
In their Creole quarter, with great
black eyes—
So fair that the Mayor must keep
them there
Lest troubles, like troubles of Troy,
arise.

This sun-land has ladies with eyes
held down,
Held down, because if they lifted
them,
Why, you would be lost in that old
French town,
Though even you held to God's gar-
ment hem.

This love-land has ladies so fair, so
fair,
That they bend their eyes to the holy
book,
Lest you should forget yourself, your
prayer,
And never more cease to look and to
look.

And these are the ladies that no
men see,
And this is the reason men see them
not;
Better their modest, sweet mystery—
Better by far than red battle-shot.

And so, in this curious old town of
tiles,
The proud French quarter of days
long gone,

In castles of Spain and tumble-down
piles,
These wonderful ladies live on and on.

I sit in the church where they come
and go;
I dream of glory that has long since
gone;
Of the low raised high, of the high
brought low
As in battle-torn days of Napoleon.

These brass-plaited places, so rich,
so poor!
One quaint old church at the edge of
the town
Has white tombs laid to the very
church door—
White leaves in the story of life
turn'd down:

White leaves in the story of life are
these,
The low, white slabs in the long,
strong grass,
Where glory has emptied her hour-
glass,
And dreams with the dreamers
beneath the trees.

I dream with the dreamers beneath
the sod,
Where souls pass by to the great
white throne;
I count each tomb as a mute mile-
stone
For weary, sweet souls on their way
to God.

I sit all day by the vast, strong
stream,

'Mid low white slabs in the long,
 strong grass,
 Where time has forgotten for aye to
 pass,
 To dream, and ever to dream and to
 dream.

This quaint old church, with its
 dead to the door,
 By the cypress swamp at the edge of
 the town,
 So restful it seems that you want to
 sit down
 And rest you, and rest you for ever-
 more.

III

The azure curtain of God's house
 Draws back, and hangs star-pinned
 to space;
 I hear the low, large moon arouse,
 And slowly lift her languid face.

I see her shoulder up the east,
 Low-necked, and large as woman-
 hood—
 Low-necked, as for some ample
 feast
 Of gods, within yon orange-wood.

She spreads white palms, she
 whispers peace,—
 Sweet peace on earth forevermore;
 Sweet peace for two beneath the
 trees,
 Sweet peace for one within the door.

The bent stream, as God's
 scimitar,

Flashed in the sun, sweeps on and
 on,
 Till sheathed, like some great sword
 new-drawn,
 In seas beneath the Carib's star.

The high moon climbs the sapphire
 hill,
 The lone sweet lady prays within;
 The crickets keep such clang and
 din—
 They are so loud, earth is so still!

And two men glare in silence
 there!
 The bitter, jealous hate of each
 Has grown too deep for deed or
 speech—
 The lone sweet lady keeps her
 prayer.

The vast moon high through
 heaven's field
 In circling chariot is rolled;
 The golden stars are spun and
 reeled,
 And woven into cloth of gold.

The white magnolia fills the night
 With perfume, as the proud moon
 fills
 The glad earth with her ample light
 From out her awful sapphire hills.

White orange-blossoms fill the
 boughs
 Above, about the old church-door;
 They wait the bride, the bridal
 vows,—
 They never hung so fair before.

The two men glare as dark as sin!
 And yet all seem so fair, so white,
 You would not reckon it was night,—
 The while the lady prays within.

IV

She prays so very long and late,—
 The two men, weary, waiting there,—
 The great magnolia at the gate
 Bends drowsily above her prayer.

The cypress in his cloak of moss,
 That watches on in silent gloom,
 Has leaned and shaped a shadow cross
 Above the namelss, lowly tomb.

What can she pray for? What her
 sin?
 What folly of a maid so fair?
 What shadows bind the wondrous
 hair
 Of one who prays so long within?

The palm-trees guard in regiment,
 Stand right and left without the gate;
 The myrtle-moss trees wait and wait;
 The tall magnolia leans intent.

The cypress-trees, on gnarled old
 knees,
 Far out the dank and marshy deep
 Where slimy monsters groan and
 creep,
 Kneel with her in their marshy seas.

What can her sin be? Who shall
 know?
 The night flies by,—a bird on
 wing;

The men no longer to and fro
 Stride up and down, or anything.

For one, so weary and so old,
 Has hardly strength to stride or stir;
 He can but hold his bags of gold,—
 But hug his gold and wait for her.

The two stand still,—stand face to
 face.
 The moon slides on, the midnight air
 Is perfumed as a house of prayer,—
 The maiden keeps her holy place.

Two men! And one is gray, but
 one
 Scarce lifts a full-grown face as yet;
 With light foot on life's threshold
 set,—
 Is he the other's sun-born son?

And one is of the land of snow,
 And one is of the land of sun;
 A black-eyed, burning youth is one,
 But one has pulses cold and slow:

Aye, cold and slow from clime of
 snow
 Where Nature's bosom, icy bound,
 Holds all her forces, hard, profound,
 Holds close where all the South lets
 go.

Blame not the sun, blame not the
 snows,—
 God's great schoolhouse for all is
 clime;
 The great school teacher, Father
 Time,
 And each has borne as best he
 knows.

At last the elder speaks,—he cries,
He speaks as if his heart would break;
He speaks out as a man that dies,—
As dying for some lost love's sake:

“Come, take this bag of gold, and
go!

Come, take one bag! See, I have two!
Oh, why stand silent, staring so,
When I would share my gold with
you?

“Come, take this gold! See how I
pray!

See how I bribe, and beg, and buy,—
Aye, buy! and beg, as you, too, may
Some day before you come to die.

“God! take this gold, I beg, I pray!
I beg as one who thirsting cries
For but one drop of drink, and dies
In some lone, loveless desert way.

“You hesitate? Still hesitate?
Stand silent still and mock my pain?
Still mock to see me wait and wait,
And wait her love, as earth waits
rain?”

V

O broken ship! O starless shore!
O black and everlasting night!
Where love comes never any more
To light man's way with heaven's
light.

A godless man with bags of gold
I think a most unholy sight;
Ah, who so desolate at night,
Amid death's sleepers still and cold?

A godless man on holy ground
I think a most unholy sight.
I hear death trailing, like a hound,
Hard after him, and swift to bite.

VI

The vast moon settles to the west;
Yet still two men beside that tomb,
And one would sit thereon to rest,—
Aye, rest below, if there were room.

VII

What is this rest of death, sweet
friend?
What is the rising up, and where?
I say, death is a lengthened prayer,
A longer night, a larger end.

Hear you the lesson I once learned:
I died; I sailed a million miles
Through dreamful, flowery, restful
isles,—
She was not there, and I returned.

I say the shores of death and sleep
Are one; that when we, wearied, come
To Lethe's waters, and lie dumb,
'Tis death, not sleep, holds us to keep.

Yea, we lie dead for need of rest,
And so the soul drifts out and o'er
The vast still waters to the shore
Beyond, in pleasant, tranquil quest:

It sails straight on, forgetting pain,
Past isles of peace, to perfect rest,—
Now were it best abide, or best
Return and take up life again?

And that is all of death there is,
Believe me. If you find your love
In that far land, then, like the dove,
Pluck olive boughs, nor back to this.

But if you find your love not there;
Or if your feet feel sure, and you
Have still allotted work to do,—
Why, then haste back to toil and care.

Death is no mystery. 'Tis plain
If death be mystery, then sleep
Is mystery thrice strangely deep,—
For oh, this coming back again!

Austerest ferryman of souls!
I see the gleam of shining shores;
I hear thy steady stroke of oars
Above the wildest wave that rolls.

O Charon, keep thy somber ships!
I come, with neither myrrh nor balm,
Nor silver piece in open palm,—
Just lone, white silence on my lips.

VIII

She prays so long! she prays so late!
What sin in all this flower land
Against her supplicating hand
Could have in heaven any weight?

Prays she for her sweet self alone?
Prays she for some one far away,
Or some one near and dear today,
Or some poor lorn, lost soul unknown?

It seems to me a selfish thing
To pray forever for one's self;
It seems to me like heaping pelf,
In heaven by hard reckoning.

Why, I would rather stoop and bear
My load of sin, and bear it well
And bravely down to your hard hell,
Than pray and pray a selfish prayer!

IX

The swift chameleon in the gloom—
This gray morn silence so profound!—
Forsakes its bough, glides to the
ground,
Then up, and lies acrosss the tomb.

It erst was green as olive-leaf;
It then grew gray as myrtle moss
The time it slid the tomb across;
And now 't is marble-white as grief.

The little creature's hues are gone
Here in the gray and ghostly light;
It lies so pale, so panting white,—
White as the tomb it lies upon.

The two still by that nameless
tomb!
And both so still! You might have
said,
These two men, they are also dead,
And only waiting here for room.

How still beneath the orange-
bough!
How tall was one, how bowed was
one!
The one was as a journey done,
The other as beginning now.

And one was young,—young with
that youth
Eternal that belongs to truth;

And one was old,—old with the years
That follow fast on doubts and fears.

And yet the habit of command
Was his, in every stubborn part;
No common knave was he at heart,
Nor his the common coward's hand.

He looked the young man in the
face,
So full of hate, so frank of hate;
The other, standing in his place,
Stared back as straight and hard as
fate.

And now he sudden turned away,
And now he paced the path, and now
Came back beneath the orange bough,
Pale-browed, with lips as cold as clay.

As mute as shadows on a wall,
As silent still, as dark as they,
Before that stranger, bent and gray,
The youth stood scornful, proud and
tall.

He stood a clean palmetto tree
With Spanish daggers guarding it;
Nor deed, nor word, to him seemed fit
While she prayed on so silently.

He slew his rival with his eyes—
His eyes were daggers piercing deep,
So deep that blood began to creep
From their deep wounds and drop
wordwise.

His eyes so black, so bright, that
they
Might raise the dead, the living slay,

If but the dead, the living bore
Such hearts as heroes had of yore.

Two deadly arrows barbed in black,
And feathered, too, with raven's
wing;
Two arrows that could silent sting,
And with a death-wound answer back.

How fierce he was! how deadly still
In that mesmeric, searching stare
Turned on the pleading stranger there
That drew to him, despite his will!

So like a bird down-fluttering,
Down, down, beneath a snake's
bright eyes,
He stood, a fascinated thing,
That hopeless, unresisting, dies.

He raised a hard hand as before,
Reached out the gold, and offered it
With hand that shook as ague-fit,—
The while the youth but scorned the
more.

“You will not touch it? In God's
name,
Who are you, and what are you, then?
Come, take this gold, and be of men,—
A human form with human aim.

“Yea, take this gold,—she must be
mine!
She shall be mine! I do not fear
Your scowl, your scorn, your soul
austere,
The living, dead, or your dark sign.

“I saw her as she entered there;
I saw her, and uncovered stood;

The perfume of her womanhood
Was holy incense on the air.

“She left behind sweet sanctity,
Religion went the way she went;
I cried I would repent, repent!
She passed on, all unheeding me.

“Her soul is young, her eyes are
bright
And gladsome, as mine own are dim;
But oh, I felt my senses swim
The time she passed me by tonight!—

“The time she passed, nor raised
her eyes
To hear me cry I would repent,
Nor turned her head to hear my cries,
But swifter went the way she went,—

“Went swift as youth, for all these
years!
And this the strangest thing appears,
That lady there seems just the
same,—
Sweet Gladys—Ah! you know her
name?

“You hear her name and start that
I
Should name her dear name trembling
so?
Why, boy, when I shall come to die
That name shall be the last I know.

“That name shall be the last sweet
name
My lips shall utter in this life!
That name is brighter than bright
flame,—
That lady is mine own sweet wife!

“Ah, start and catch your burning
breath!

Ah, start and clutch your deadly
knife!

If this be death, then be it death,—
But that loved lady is my wife!

“Yea, you are stunned! your face
is white,
That I should come confronting you,
As comes a lorn ghost of the night
From out the past, and to pursue.

“You thought me dead? You
shake your head,
You start back horrified to know
That she is loved, that she is wed,
That you have sinned in loving so.

“Yet what seems strange, that lady
there,
Housed in the holy house of prayer,
Seems just the same for all her
tears,—
For all my absent twenty years.

“Yea, twenty years tonight, to-
night,—
Just twenty years this day, this hour,
Since first I plucked that perfect
flower,
And not one witness of the rite.

“Nay, do not doubt,— I tell you
true!
Her prayers, her tears, her constancy
Are all for me, are all for me,—
And not one single thought for you!

“I knew, I knew she would be here
This night of nights to pray for me!

And how could I for twenty year
Know this same night so certainly?

“Ah me! some thoughts that we
would drown,
Stick closer than a brother to
The conscience, and pursue, pursue,
Like baying hound, to hunt us down.

“And, then, that date is history;
For on that night this shore was
shelled,
And many a noble mansion felled,
With many a noble family.

“I wore the blue; I watched the
flight
Of shells, like stars tossed through the
air
To blow your hearth-stones—any-
where,
That wild, illuminated night.

“Nay, rage befits you not so well;
Why, you were but a babe at best;
Your cradle some sharp bursted shell
That tore, maybe, your mother’s
breast!

“Hear me! We came in honored
war.
The risen world was on your track!
The whole North-land was at our
back,
From Hudson’s bank to the North
Star!

“And from the North to palm-set
sea
The splendid fiery cyclone swept.
Your fathers fell, your mothers wept,
Their nude babes clinging to the knee.

“A wide and desolated track:
Behind, a path of ruin lay;
Before, some women by the way
Stood mutely gazing, clad in black.

“From silent women waiting there
White tears came down like still,
small rain;
Their own sons of the battle-plain
Were now but viewless ghosts of air.

“Their own dear, daring boys in
gray,—
They should not see them any more;
Our cruel drums kept telling o’er
The time their own sons went away.

“Through burning town, by burst-
ing shell—
Yea, I remember well that night;
I led through orange-lanes of light,
As through some hot outpost of hell!

“That night of rainbow shot and
shell
Sent from yon surging river’s breast
To waken me, no more to rest,—
That night I should remember well!

“That night, amid the maimed and
dead—
A night in history set down
By light of many a burning town,
And written all across in red,—

“Her father dead, her brothers
dead,
Her home in flames,—what else could
she
But fly all helpless here to me,
A fluttered dove, that night of dread?

"Short time, hot time had I to
woo

Amid the red shells battle-chime;
But women rarely reckon time,
And perils waken love anew.

"Aye, then I wore a captain's
sword;

And, too, had oftentime before
Doffed cap at her dead father's door,
And passed a lover's pleasant word.

"And then—ah, I was comely then!
I bore no load upon my back,
I heard no hounds upon my track,
But stood the tallest of tall men.

"Her father's and her mother's
shrine,
This church amid the orange-wood;
So near and so secure it stood,
It seemed to beckon as a sign.

"Its white cross seemed to beckon
me;
My heart was strong, and it was mine
To throw myself upon my knee,
To beg to lead her to this shrine.

"She did consent. Through lanes
of light
I led through this church-door that
night—
Let fall your hand! Take back your
face
And stand,—stand patient in your
place!

"She loved me; and she loves me
still.
Yea, she clung close to me that hour

As honey-bee to honey-flower,—
And still is mine through good or ill.

"The priest stood there. He spake
the prayer;
He made the holy, mystic sign,
And she was mine, was wholly
mine,—
Is mine this moment, I can swear!

"Then days, then nights of vast
delight,—
Then came a doubtful later day;
The faithful priest, nor far away,
Watched with the dying in the fight:

"The priest amid the dying, dead,
Kept duty on the battle-field,—
That midnight marriage unrevealed
Kept strange thoughts running thro'
my head.

"At last a stray ball struck the
priest;
This vestibule his chancel was;
And now none lived to speak her
cause,
Record, or champion her the least.

"Hear me! I had been bred to hate
All priests, their mummeries and all.
Ah, it was fate,—ah, it was fate
That all things tempted to my fall!

"And then the dashing songs we
sang
Those nights when rudely reveling,—
Such songs that only soldiers sing,—
Until the very tent-poles rang!

“What is the rhyme that rhymers
say,
Of maidens born to be betrayed
By epaulettes and shining blade,
While soldiers love and ride away?

“And then my comrades spake her
name
Half taunting, with a touch of shame;
Taught me to hold that lily-flower
As some light pastime of the hour.

“And then the ruin in the land,
The death, dismay, the lawlessness!
Men gathered gold on every hand,—
Heaped gold: and why should I do
less?

“The cry for gold was in the air,—
For Creole gold, for precious things;
The sword kept prodding here and
there,
Through bolts and sacred fastenings.

“‘Get gold! get gold!’ This was
the cry.
And I loved gold. What else could I
Or you, or any earnest one,
Born in this getting age, have done?

“With this one lesson taught from
youth,
And ever taught us, to get gold,—
To get and hold, and ever hold,—
What else could I have done, for-
sooth?

“She, seeing how I crazed for gold,
This girl, my wife, one late night told
Of treasures hidden close at hand,
In her dead father’s mellow land;

“Of gold she helped her brothers
hide
Beneath a broad banana-tree
The day the two in battle died,
The night she, dying, fled to me.

“It seemed too good; I laughed to
scorn
Her trustful tale. She answered not;
But meekly on the morrow morn
These two great bags of bright gold
brought.

“And when she brought this gold
to me,—
Red Creole gold, rich, rare, and old,—
When I at last had gold, sweet gold,
I cried in very ecstasy.

“Red gold! rich gold! two bags of
gold!
The two stout bags of gold she
brought
And gave, with scarce a second
thought,—
Why, her two hands could scarcely
hold!

“Now I had gold! two bags of
gold!
Two wings of gold, to fly, and fly
The wide world’s girth; red gold to
hold
Against my heart for aye and aye!

“My country’s lesson: ‘Gold! get
gold!’
I learned it well in land of snow;
And what can glow, so brightly glow,
Long winter nights of northern cold?

“Aye, now at last, at last I had
The one thing, all fair things above,
My land had taught me most to love!
A miser now! and I grew mad.

“With these two bags of gold my
own,
I soon began to plan some night
For flight, for far and sudden flight,—
For flight; and, too, for flight alone.

“I feared! I feared! My heart
grew cold,—
Some one might claim this gold of
me!
I feared her,—feared her purity—
Feared all things but my bags of gold.

“I grew to hate her face, her creed,
That face the fairest ever yet
That bowed o’er holy cross or bead,
Or yet was in God’s image set.

“I fled,—nay, not so knavish low,
As you have faneied, did I fly:
I sought her at this shrine, and I
Told her full frankly I should go.

“I stood a giant in my power,—
And did she question or dispute?
I stood a savage, selfish brute,—
She bowed her head, a lily-flower.

“And when I sudden turned to go,
And told her I should come no more,
She bowed her head so low, so low,
Her vast black hair fell pouring o’er.

“And that was all; her splendid face
Was mantled from me, and her night
Of hair half hid her from my sight,
As she fell moaning in her plaec.

“And there, through her dark night
of hair,
She sobbed, low moaning in her tears,
That she would wait, wait all the
years,—
Would wait and pray in her despair.

“Nay, did not murmur, not deny,—
She did not cross me one sweet word!
I turned and fled; I thought I heard
A night-bird’s piercing low death-
cry!”

PART II

*How soft the moonlight of my South!
How sweet the South in soft moonlight!
I want to kiss her warm, sweet mouth
As she lies sleeping here tonight.*

*How still! I do not hear a mouse.
I see some bursting buds appear:
I hear God in his garden,—hear
Him trim some flowers for His house.*

*I hear some singing stars; the mouth
Of my vast river sings and sings,
And pipes on reeds of pleasant
things,—
Of splendid promise for my South:*

*My great South-woman, soon to rise
And tiptoe up and loose her hair:
Tiptoe, and take from out the skies
God’s stars and glorious moon to wear!*

I

The poet shall create or kill,
Bid heroes live, bid braggarts die.
I look against a lurid sky,—
My silent South lies proudly still.

The fading light of burning lands
Still climbs to God's house overhead;
Mute women wring white, withered
hands;
Their eyes are red, their skies are red.

And we still boast our bitter wars!
Still burn and boast, and boast and lie
But God's white finger spins the stars
In calm dominion of the sky.

And not one ray of light the less
Comes down to bid the grasses spring;
No drop of dew nor anything
Shall fail for all our bitterness.

If man grows large, is God the less?
The moon shall rise and set the same,
The great sun spill his splendid flame,
And clothe the world in queenliness.

Yea, from that very blood-soaked
sod
Some large-souled, seeing youth shall
come
Some day, and he shall not be dumb
Before the awful court of God.

II

The weary moon had turned away,
The far North Star was turning pale
To hear the stranger's boastful tale
Of blood and flame that battle-day.

And yet again the two men glared,
Close face to face above that tomb;
Each seemed as jealous of the room
The other, eager waiting shared.

Again the man began to say,—
As taking up some broken thread,
As talking to the patient dead,—
The Creole was as still as they:

“That night we burned yon grass-
grown town,—
The grasses, vines are reaching up;
The ruins they are reaching down,
As sun-browned soldiers when they
sup.

“I knew her,—knew her constancy.
She said this night of every year
She here would come, and kneeling
here,
Would pray the livelong night for me.

“This praying seems a splendid
thing!
It drives old Time the other way;
It makes him lose all reckoning
Of years that I have had to pay.

“This praying seems a splendid
thing!
It makes me stronger as she prays—
But oh, those bitter, bitter days,
When I became a banished thing!

“I fled, took ship,—I fled as far
As far ships drive tow'rd the North
Star:
For I did hate the South, the sun
That made me think what I had done.

“I could not see a fair palm-tree
In foreign land, in pleasant place,
But it would whisper of her face
And shake its keen, sharp blades at
me.

“Each black-eyed woman would
recall
A lone church-door, a face, a name,
A coward’s flight, a soldier’s shame:
I fled from woman’s face, from all.

“I hugged my gold, my precious
gold,
Within my strong, stout buckskin
vest.
I wore my bags against my breast
So close I felt my heart grow cold.

“I did not like to see it now;
I did not spend one single piece;
I traveled, traveled without cease
As far as Russian ship could plow.

“And when my own scant hoard
was gone,
And I had reached the far North-land,
I took my two stout bags in hand
As one pursued, and journeyed on.

“Ah, I was weary! I grew gray;
I felt the fast years slip and reel,
As slip bright beads when maidens
kneel
At altars when outdoor is gay.

“At last I fell prone in the road,—
Fell fainting with my cursed load.
A skin-clad Cossack helped me bear
My bags, nor would one shilling share.

“He looked at me with proud dis-
dain,—
He looked at me as if he knew;
His black eyes burned me thro’ and
thro’;
His scorn pierced like a deadly pain.

“He frightened me with honesty;
He made me feel so small, so base,
I fled, as if a fiend kept chase,—
A fiend that claimed my company!

“I bore my load alone; I crept
Far up the steep and icy way;
And there, before a cross there lay
A barefoot priest, who bowed and
wept.

“I threw my gold right down and
sped
Straight on. And oh, my heart was
light!
A springtime bird in springtime flight
Flies scarce more happy than I fled.

“I felt somehow this monk would
take
My gold, my load from off my back;
Would turn the fiend from off my
track,
Would take my gold for sweet Christ’s
sake!

“I fled; I did not look behind;
I fled, fled with the mountain wind.
At last, far down the mountain’s base
I found a pleasant resting-place.

“I rested there so long, so well,
More grateful than all tongues can
tell.

It was such pleasant thing to hear
That valley’s voices calm and clear:

“That valley veiled in mountain
air,
With white goats on the hills at morn;
That valley green with seas of corn,

With cottage-islands here and there.

“I watched the mountain girls.
The hay
They mowed was not more sweet than
they;
They laid brown hands in my white
hair;
They marveled at my face of care.

“I tried to laugh; I could but weep.
I made these peasants one request,—
That I with them might toil or rest,
And with them sleep the long, last
sleep.

“I begged that I might battle
there,
In that fair valley-land, for those
Who gave me cheer, when girt with
foes,
And have a country loved as fair.

“Where is that spot that poets
name
Our country? name the hallowed
land?
Where is that spot where man must
stand
Or fall when girt with sword and
flame?

“Where is that one permitted spot?
Where is the one place man must
fight?
Where rests the one God-given right
To fight, as ever patriots fought?

“I say 'tis in that holy house
Where God first set us down on earth;
Where mother welcomed us at birth,

And bared her breasts, a happy
spouse.

“The simple plowboy from his
field
Looks forth. He sees God's purple
wall
Encircling him. High over all
The vast sun wheels his shining shield.

“This King, who makes earth
what it is,—
King David bending to his toil!
O Lord and master of the soil,
How envied in thy loyal bliss!

“Long live the land we loved in
youth,
That world with blue skies bent
about,
Where never entered ugly doubt!
Long live the simple, homely truth!

“Can true hearts love some far
snow-land,
Some bleak Alaska bought with gold?
God's laws are old as love is old;
And Home is something near at hand.

“Yea, change yon river's course;
estrangle
The seven sweet stars; make hate
divide
The full moon from the flowing tide,—
But this old truth ye cannot change.

“I begged a land as begging bread;
I begged of these brave mountaineers
To share their sorrows, share their
tears;
To weep as they wept with their dead.

“They did consent. The mountain
town
Was mine to love, and valley lands.
That night the barefoot monk came
down
And laid my two bags in my hands!

“On! on! And oh, the load I bore!
Why, once I dreamed my soul was
lead;
Dreamed once it was a body dead!
It made my cold, hard bosom sore.

“I dragged that body forth and
back—
O conscience, what a baying hound!
Nor frozen seas nor frosted ground
Can throw this bloodhound from his
track.

“In farthest Russia I lay down,
A dying man, at last to rest;
I felt such load upon my breast
As seamen feel, who, sinking, drown.

“That night, all chill and desper-
ate,
I sprang up, for I could not rest;
I tore the two bags from my breast,
And dashed them in the burning grate.

“I then crept back into my bed;
I tried, I begged, I prayed to sleep;
But those red, restless coins would
keep
Slow dropping, dropping, and blood-
red.

“I heard them clink, and clink, and
clink,—

They turned, they talked within that
grate.
They talked of her; they made me
think
Of one who still did pray and wait.

“And when the bags burned crisp
and black,
Two coins did start, roll to the floor,—
Roll out, roll on, and then roll back,
As if they needs must journey more.

“Ah, then I knew nor change nor
space,
Nor all the drowning years that rolled
Could hide from me her haunting
face,
Nor still that red-tongued, talking
gold!

“Again I sprang forth from my bed!
I shook as in an ague fit;
I clutched that red gold, burning red,
I clutched as if to strangle it.

“I clutched it up—you hear me,
boy?—
I clutched it up with joyful tears!
I clutched it close with such wild joy
I had not felt for years and years!

“Such joy! for I should now re-
trace
My steps, should see my land, her
face;
Bring back her gold this battle-day,
And see her, hear her, hear her pray!

“I brought it back—you hear me,
boy?
I clutch it, hold it, hold it now;

Red gold, bright gold that giveth joy
To all, and anywhere or how;

“That giveth joy to all but me,—
To all but me, yet soon to all.
It burns my hands, it burns! but she
Shall ope my hands and let it fall.

“For oh, I have a willing hand
To give these bags of gold; to see
Her smile as once she smiled on me
Here in this pleasant warm palm-
land.”

He ceased, he thrust each hard-
clenched fist,—
He threw his gold hard forth again,
As one impelled by some mad pain
He would not or could not resist.

The Creole, scorning, turned away,
As if he turned from that lost thief,—
The one who died without belief
That dark, dread crucifixion day.

III

Believe in man nor turn away.
Lo! man advances year by year;
Time bears him upward, and his
sphere
Of life must broaden day by day.

Believe in man with large belief;
The garnered grain each harvest-
time
Hath promise, roundness, and full
prime
For all the empty chaff and shcaf.

Believe in man with brave belief;
Truth keeps the bottom of her well;
And when the thief peeps down, the
thief
Peeps back at him perpetual.

Faint not that this or that man fell;
For one that falls a thousand rise
To lift white Progress to the skies:
Truth keeps the bottom of her well.

Fear not for man, nor cease to delve
For cool, sweet truth, with large
belief.
Lo! Christ himself chose only twelve,
Yet one of these turned out a thief.

IV

Down through the dark magnolia
leaves,
Where climbs the rose of Cherokee
Against the orange-blossomed tree,
A loom of morn-light weaves and
weaves,—

A loom of morn-light, weaving
clothes
From snow-white rose of Cherokee,
And bridal blooms of orange-tree,
For fairy folk housed in red rose.

Down through the mournful myrtle
crape,
Thro' moving moss, thro' ghostly
gloom,
A long, white morn-beam takes a
shape
Above a nameless, lowly tomb;

A long white finger through the
gloom
Of grasses gathered round about,—
As God's white finger pointing out
A name upon that nameless tomb.

V

Her white face bowed in her black
hair,
The maiden prays so still within
That you might hear a falling pin,—
Aye, hear her white, unuttered
prayer.

The moon has grown disconsolate,
Has turned her down her walk of
stars:
Why, she is shutting up her bars,
As maidens shut a lover's gate.

The moon has grown disconsolate;
She will no longer watch and wait.
But two men wait; and two men will
Wait on till full morn, mute and still.

Still wait and walk among the trees
Quite careless if the moon may keep
Her walk along her starry steep
Or drown her in the Southern seas.

They know no moon, or set or rise
Of sun, or anything to light
The earth or skies, save her dark eyes,
This praying, waking, watching night.

They move among the tombs apart,
Their eyes turn ever to that door;
They know the worn walks there by
heart—
They turn and walk them o'er and
o'er.

They are not wide, these little
walks
For dead folk by this crescent town:
They lie right close when they lie
down,
As if they kept up quiet talks.

VI

The two men keep their paths
apart;
But more and more begins to stoop
The man with gold, as droop and
droop
Tall plants with something at their
heart.

Now once again, with eager zest,
He offers gold with silent speech;
The other will not walk in reach,
But walks around, as round a pest.

His dark eyes sweep the scene
around,
His young face drinks the fragrant
air,
His dark eyes journey everywhere,—
The other's cleave unto the ground.

It is a weary walk for him,
For oh, he bears such weary load!
He does not like that narrow road
Between the dead—it is so dim:

It is so dark, that narrow place,
Where graves lie thick, like yellow
leaves:
Give us the light of Christ and
grace;
Give light to garner in the sheaves.

Give light of love; for gold is cold,—
Aye, gold is cruel as a crime;
It gives no light at such sad time
As when man's feet wax weak and old.

Aye, gold is heavy, hard, and cold!
And have I said this thing before?
Well, I will say it o'er and o'er,
'T were need be said ten thousand
fold.

"Give us this day our daily
bread,"—
Get this of God; then all the rest
Is housed in thine own earnest breast,
If you but lift an honest head.

VII

Oh, I have seen men tall and fair,
Stoop down their manhood with
disgust,—
Stoop down God's image to the dust,
To get a load of gold to bear:

Have seen men selling day by day
The glance of manhood that God
gave:
To sell God's image, as a slave
Might sell some little pot of clay!

Behold! here in this green grave-
yard
A man with gold enough to fill
A coffin, as a miller's till;
And yet his path is hard, so hard!

His feet keep sinking in the sand,
And now so near an opened grave!
He seems to hear the solemn wave
Of dread oblivion at hand.

The sands, they grumble so, it
seems
As if he walks some shelving brink;
He tries to stop, he tries to think,
He tries to make believe he dreams:

Why, he was free to leave the
land,—
The silver moon was white as dawn;
Why, he had gold in either hand,
Had silver ways to walk upon.

And who should chide, or bid him
stay?
Or taunt, or threat, or bid him fly?
"The world's for sale," I hear men
say,
And yet this man had gold to buy.

Buy what? Buy rest? He could
not rest!
Buy gentle sleep? He could not
sleep,
Though all these graves were wide
and deep
As their wide mouths with the
request.

Buy Love, buy faith, buy snow-
white truth?
Buy moonlight, sunlight, present,
past?
Buy but one brimful cup of youth
That true souls drink of to the last?

O God! 'twas pitiful to see
This miser so forlorn and old!
O God! how poor a man may be
With nothing in this world but
gold!

VIII

The broad magnolia's blooms were
white;
Her blooms were large, as if the moon
Quite lost her way that dreamful
night,
And lodged to wait the afternoon.

Oh, vast white blossoms, breathing
love!
White bosom of my lady dead,
In your white heaven overhead
I look, and learn to look above.

IX

The dew-wet roses wept; their
eyes
All dew, their breath as sweet as
prayer.
And as they wept, the dead down
there
Did feel their tears and hear their
sighs.

The grass uprose, as if afraid
Some stranger foot might press too
near;
Its every blade was like a spear,
Its every spear a living blade.

The grass above that nameless
tomb
Stood all arrayed, as if afraid
Some weary pilgrim, seeking room
And rest, might lay where she was laid.

X

'T was morn, and yet it was not
morn;

'T was morn in heaven, not on earth:
A star was singing of a birth,—
Just saying that a day was born.

The marsh hard by that bound the
lake,—
The great stork sea-lake, Ponchar-
train,
Shut off from sultry Cuban main,—
Drew up its legs, as half awake:

Drew long, thin legs, stork-legs
that steep
In slime where alligators creep,—
Drew long, green legs that stir the
grass,
As when the lost, lorn night winds
pass.

Then from the marsh came croak-
ings low,
Then louder croaked some sea-marsh
beast;
Then, far away against the east,
God's rose of morn began to grow.

From out the marsh against that
east,
A ghostly moss-swept cypress stood;
With ragged arms, above the wood
It rose, a God-forsaken beast.

It seemed so frightened where it
rose!
The moss-hung thing, it seemed to
wave
The worn-out garments of a grave,—
To wave and wave its old grave-
clothes.

Close by, a cow rose up and lowed
From out a palm-thatched milking-
shed;

A black boy on the river road
Fled sudden, as the night had fled:

A nude black boy,—a bit of night
That had been broken off and lost
From flying night, the time it crossed
The soundless river in its flight.

A bit of darkness, following
The sable night on sable wing,—
A bit of darkness, dumb with fear,
Because that nameless tomb was
near.

Then holy bells came pealing out;
Then steamboats blew, then horses
neighed;
Then smoke from hamlets round
about
Crept out, as if no more afraid.

Then shrill cocks here, and shrill
cocks there,
Stretched glossy necks and filled the
air;—
How many cocks it takes to make
A country morning well awake!

Then many boughs, with many
birds,—
Young boughs in green, old boughs in
gray;
These birds had very much to say,
In their soft, sweet, familiar words.

And all seemed sudden glad; the
gloom
Forgot the church, forgot the tomb;

And yet, like monks with cross and
bead,
The myrtles leaned to read and read.

And oh, the fragrance of the sod!
And oh, the perfume of the air!
The sweetness, sweetness every-
where,
That rose like incense up to God!

I like a cow's breath in sweet
spring;
I like the breath of babes new-born;
A maid's breath is a pleasant thing,—
But oh, the breath of sudden morn!—

Of sudden morn, when every pore
Of Mother Earth is pulsing fast
With life, and life seems spilling o'er
With love, with love too sweet to last:

Of sudden morn beneath the sun,
By God's great river wrapped in gray,
That for a space forgets to run,
And hides his face, as if to pray.

XI

The black-eyed Creole kept his
eyes
Turned to the door, as eyes might
turn
To see the holy embers burn
Some sin away at sacrifice.

Full dawn! but yet he knew no
dawn,
Nor song of bird, nor bird on wing,
Nor breath of rose, nor anything
Her fair face lifted not upon.

And yet he taller stood with morn;
His bright eyes, brighter than before,
Burned fast against that favored
door,
His proud lips lifting still with
scorn,—

With lofty, silent scorn for one
Who all night long had plead and
plead,
With none to witness but the dead
How he for gold had been undone.

O ye who feed a greed for gold
And barter truth, and trade sweet
youth
For cold, hard gold, behold, behold!
Behold this man! behold this truth!

Why what is there in all God's plan
Of vast creation, high or low,
By sea or land, by sun or snow,
So mean, so miserly as man?

Lo, earth and heaven all let go
Their garnered riches, year by year!
The treasures of the trackless snow,
Ah, has thou seen how very dear?

The wide earth gives, gives golden
grain,
Gives fruits of gold, gives all, gives
all!
Hold forth your hand, and these shall
fall
In your full palm as free as rain.

Yea, earth is generous. The trees
Strip nude as birth-time without fear;
And their reward is year by year
To feel their fullness but increase.

The law of Nature is to give,
To give, to give! and to rejoice
In giving with a generous voice,
And so trust God and truly live.

But see this miser at the last,—
This man who loved, who worshipped
gold,
Who grasped gold with such eager
hold,
He fain must hold forever fast:

As if to hold what God lets go;
As if to hold, while all around
Lets go and drops upon the ground
All things as generous as snow.

Let go your hold! let go or die!
Let go poor soul! Do not refuse
Till death comes by and shakes you
loose,
And sends you shamed to hell for aye!

What if the sun should keep his
gold?
The rich moon lock her silver up?
What if the gold-clad buttercup
Became such miser, mean and old?

Ah, me! the coffins are so true
In all accounts, the shrouds so thin
That down there you might sew and
sew,
Nor ever sew one pocket in.

And all that you can hold of lands
Down there, below the grass, down
there,
Will only be that little share
You hold in your two dust-full hands.

XII

She comes! she comes! The stony
 floor
 Speaks out! And now the rusty door
 At last has just one word this day,
 With mute, religious lips, to say.

She comes! she comes! And lo,
 her face
 Is upward, radiant, fair as prayer!
 So pure here in this holy place,
 Where holy peace is everywhere.

Her upraised face, her face of light
 And loveliness, from duty done,
 Is like a rising orient sun
 That pushes back the brow of night.

.

How brave, how beautiful is truth!
 Good deeds untold are like to this.
 But fairest of all fair things is
 A pious maiden in her youth:

A pious maiden as she stands
 Just on the threshold of the years
 That throb and pulse with hopes and
 fears,
 And reaches God her helpless hands.

.

How fair is she! How fond is she!
 Her foot upon the threshold there.
 Her breath is as a blossomed tree,—
 This maiden mantled in her hair!

Her hair, her black abundant hair,
 Where night inhabited, all night
 And all this day, will not take flight,
 But finds content and houses there.

Her hands are clasped, her two
 small hands:

They hold the holy book of prayer
 Just as she steps the threshold there,
 Clasped downward where she silent
 stands.

XIII

Once more she lifts her lowly face,
 And slowly lifts her large, dark eyes
 Of wonder, and in still surprise
 She looks full forward in her place.

She looks full forward on the air
 Above the tomb, and yet below
 The fruits of gold, the blooms of snow,
 As looking—looking anywhere.

She feels—she knows not what she
 feels:
 It is not terror, is not fear.
 But there is something that reveals
 A presence that is near and dear.

She does not let her eyes fall down,
 They lift against the far profound:
 Against the blue above the town
 Two wide-winged vultures circle
 round.

Two brown birds swim above the
 sea,—
 Her large eyes swim as dreamily,
 And follow far, and follow high,
 Two circling black specks in the sky.

One forward step—the closing door
 Creaks out, as frightened or in pain;
 Her eyes are on the ground again—
 Two men are standing close before.

“My love,” sighs onc, “my life, my
all!”

Her lifted foot across the sill
Sinks down,—and all things are so
still
You hear the orange-blossoms fall.

But fear comes not where duty is,
And purity is peace and rest;
Her cross is close upon her breast,
Her two hands clasp hard hold of this.

Her two hands clasp cross, book,
and she
Is strong in tranquil purity,—
Aye, strong as Samson when he laid
His two hands forth and bowed and
prayed.

One at her left, one at her right,
And she between the steps upon,—
I can but see that Syrian night,
The women there at early dawn.

XIV

The sky is like an opal sea,
The air is like the breath of kine;
But oh, her face is white, and she
Leans faint to see a lifted sign,—

To see two hands lift up and
wave,—
To see a face so white with woe,
So ghastly, hollow, white as though
It had that moment left the grave.

Her sweet face at that ghostly sign,
Her fair face in her weight of hair,
Is like a white dove drowning there,—
A white dove drowned in Tuscan
wine.

He tries to stand, to stand erect;
'T is gold, 't is gold that holds him
down!

And soul and body both must
drown,—
Two millstones tied about his neck.

Now once again his piteous face
Is raised to her face reaching there;
He prays such piteous silent prayer,
As prays a dying man for grace.

It is not good to see him strain
To lift his hands, to gasp, to try
To speak. His parched lips are so
dry
Their sight is as a living pain,

I think that rich man down in hell
Some like this old man with his
gold,—
To gasp and gasp perpetual,
Like to this minute I have told.

XV

At last the miser cries his pain,—
A shrill, wild cry, as if a grave
Just op'd its stony lips and gave
Onc sentence forth, then closed again.

“'T was twenty years last night,
last night!”
His lips still moved, but not to speak;
His outstretched hands, so trembling
weak,
Were beggar's hands in sorry plight.

His face upturned to hers; his lips
Kept talking on, but gave no sound;
His feet were cloven to the ground,
Like iron hooks his finger tips.

"Aye, twenty years," she sadly
sighed;

"I promised mother every year,
That I would pray for father here,
As she still prayed the night she
died:

"To pray as she prayed, fervently,
As she had promised she would pray
The sad night that he turned away,
For him, wherever he might be."

Then she was still; then sudden she
Let fall her eyes, and so outspake,
As if her very heart would break,
Her proud lips trembling piteously:

"And whether he comes soon or
late
To kneel beside this nameless grave,
May God forgive my father's hate
As I forgive, as she forgave!"

He saw the stone; he understood,
With that quick knowledge that will
come

Most quick when men are made most
dumb

With terror that stops still the blood.

And then a blindness slowly fell
On soul and body; but his hands
Held tight his bags, two iron bands,
As if to bear them into hell.

He sank upon the nameless stone
With oh! such sad, such piteous moan
As never man might seek to know
From man's most unforgiving foe.

He sighed at last, so long, so deep,
As one heart breaking in one's
sleep,—

One long, last, weary, willing sigh,
As if it were a grace to die.

And then his hands, like loosened
bands

Hung down, hung down, on either
side;

His hands hung down, hung open
wide:

Wide empty hung the dead man's
hands.

DAWN AT SAN DIEGO

*My city sits amid her palms;
The perfume of her twilight breath
Is something as the sacred balms
That bound sweet Jesus after death,
Such soft, warm twilight sense as lies
Against the gates of Paradise.*

*Such prayerful palms, wide palms
upreached!
This sea mist is as incense smoke,
Yon mission walls a sermon preached—*

*White lily with a heart of oak.
And O, this twilight! O the grace
Of twilight on yon lifted face!*

*I love you, twilight,—love with love
So loyal, loving fond that I
When folding these worn hands to
die,
Shall pray God lead me not above,
But leave me, twilight, sad and true,
To walk this lonesome world with you.*

*Yea, God knows I have walked with
night;
I have not seen, I have not known
Such light as beats upon His throne.
I know I could not bear such light;
Therefore, I beg, sad sister true,
To share your shadow-world with you.*

*I love you, love you, maid of night,
Your perfumed breath, your dreamful
eyes,
Your holy silences, your sighs
Of mateless longing; your delight
When night says, Hang on yon moon's
horn
Your russet gown, and rest till morn.*

The sun is dying; space and room,
Serenity, vast sense of rest,
Lie bosomed in the orange west
Of orient waters. Hear the boom
Of long, strong billows; wave on
wave,
Like funeral guns above a grave.

Now night folds all; no sign or
word;
But still that rocking of the deep—
Sweet mother, rock the world to sleep:
Still rock and rock; as I have heard
Sweet mother gently rock and rock
The while she folds the little frock.

.

Broad mesa, brown, bare moun-
tains, brown,
Bowed sky of brown, that erst was
blue;
Dark, earth-brown curtains coming
down—
Earth-brown, that all hues melt into;

Brown twilight, born of light and
shade;
Of night that came, of light that
passed. . . .

How like some lorn, majestic maid
That wares not whither way at last !

Now perfumed Night, sad-faccd
and far,
Walks up the world in somber brown.
Now suddenly a loosened star
Lets all her golden hair fall down—
And Night is dead Day's coffin-lid,
With stars of gold shot through his
pall. . . .

I hear the chorus, katydid;
A katydid, and that is all.

Some star-tipt candles foot and
head;
Some perfumes of the perfumed sea;
And now above the confined dead
Dusk draws great curtains lovingly;
While far o'er all, so dreamful far,
God's Southern Cross by faith is seen
Tipt by one single blazing star,
With spaces infinite between.

.

Come, love His twilight, the per-
fume
Of God's great trailing garment's
hem;

The sense of rest, the sense of room,
The garnered goodness of the day,
The twelve plucked hours of His tree,
When all the world has gone its way
And left perfection quite to me
And Him who, loving, fashioned
them.

I know not why that wealth and
 pride
 Win not my heart or woo my tale.
 I only know I know them not;
 I only know to cast my lot
 Where love walks noiselessly with
 night
 And patient nature; my delight
 The wild rose of the mountain side,
 The lowly lily of the vale;

To live not asking, just to live;
 To live not begging, just to be;
 To breathe God's presence in the
 dusk
 That drives out loud, assertive light—
 To never ask, but ever give;
 To love my noiseless mother, Night;
 Her vast hair moist with smell of
 musk,
 Her breath sweet with eternity.

.

I

A hermit's path, a mountain's
 perch,
 A sandaled monk, a dying man—
 A far-off, low, adobe church,
 Below the hermit's orange-trees
 That cap the clouds above the seas,
 So far, its spire seems but a span.

.

A low-voiced dove! The dying
 Don
 Put back the cross and sat dark-
 browed
 And sullen, as a dove flew out
 The bough, and circling round about,

Was bathed and gathered in a cloud,
 That, like some ship, sailed on and on.

But let the gray monk tell the tale;
 And tell it just as told to me.
 This Don was chiefest of the vale
 That banks by San Diego's sea,
 And who so just, so generous,
 As he who now lay dying thus?

But wrong, such shameless Saxon
 wrong,
 Had crushed his heart, had made him
 hate
 The sight, the very sound of man.
 He loved the lonely wood-dove's song;
 He loved it as his living mate.
 And lo! the good monk laid a ban
 And penance of continual prayer—
 But list, the living, dying there!

For now the end was, and he lay
 As day lies banked against the
 night—
 As lies some bark at close of day
 To wait the dew-born breath of night;
 To wait the ebb of tide, to wait
 The swift plunge through the Golden
 Gate:

The plunge from bay to boundless
 sea—
 From life through narrow straits of
 night,
 From time to bright eternity—
 To everlasting walks of light.
 Some like as when you sudden blow
 Your candle out and turn you so
 To sleep unto the open day:
 And thus the priest did pleading say:

“You fled my flock, and sought this
steep
And stony, star-lit, lonely height,
Where weird and unnamed creatures
keep
To hold strange thought with things
of night
Long, long ago. But now at last
Your life sinks surely to the past.
Lay hold, lay hold, the cross I bring,
Where all God’s goodly creatures
cling.

“Yea! You are good. Dark-
browed and low
Beneath your shaggy brows you look
On me, as you would read a book:
And darker still your dark brows grow
As I lift up the cross to pray,
And plead with you to walk its way.

“Yea, you are good! There is not
one,
From Tia Juana to the reach
And bound of gray Pacific Beach,
From Coronado’s palm-set isle
And palm-hung pathways, mile on
mile,
But speaks you, Señor, good and true.
But oh, my silent, dying son!
The cross alone can speak for you
When all is said and all is done.

“Come! Turn your dim, dark
eyes to me,
Have faith and help me plant this
cross
Beyond where blackest billows toss,
As you would plant some pleasant
tree:
Some fruitful orange-tree, and know

That it shall surely grow and grow,
As your own orange-trees have grown,
And be, as they, your very own.

“You smile at last, and pleasantly:
You love your laden orange-trees
Set high above your silver seas
With your own honest hand; each
tree
A date, a day, a part, indeed,
Of your own life, and walk, and
creed.

“You love your steeps, your star-
set blue:
You watch yon billows flash, and
toss,
And leap, and curve, in merry rout,
You love to hear them laugh and
shout—
Men say you hear them talk to you;
Men say you sit and look and look,
As one who reads some holy book—
My son, come, look upon the cross?

“Come, see me plant amid your
trees
My cross, that you may see and know
’T will surely grow, and grow, and
grow,
As grows some trusted little seed;
As grows some secret, small good
deed;
The while you gaze upon your
seas. . . .
Sweet Christ, now let it grow, and
bear
Fair fruit, as your own fruit is fair.

“Aye! ever from the first I knew,
And marked its flavor, freshness, hue

The gold of sunset and the gold
Of morn, in each rich orange rolled.

"I mind me now, 't was long since,
friend,
When first I climbed your path alone,
A savage path of brush and stone,
And rattling serpents without end.

"Yea, years ago, when blood and
life
Ran swift, and your sweet, faithful
wife—
What! tears at last; hot, piteous tears
That through your bony fingers creep
The while you bend your face, and
weep
As if your heart of hearts would
break—
As if these tears were your heart's
blood,
A pent-up, sudden, bursting flood—
Look on the cross, for Jesus' sake."

II

'T was night, and still it seemed not
night.
Yet, far down in the cañon deep,
Where night had housed all day, to
keep
Companion with the wolf, you
might
Have hewn a statue out of night.

The shrill coyote loosed his tongue
Deep in the dark arroyo's bed;
And bat and owl above his head
From out their gloomy caverns
swung:

A swoop of wings, a cat-like call,
A crackle sharp of chaparral!

Then sudden, fitful winds sprang
out,
And swept the mesa like a broom;
Wild, saucy winds that sang of room!
That leapt the cañon with a shout
From dusty throats, audaciously
And headlong tore into the sea,
As tore the swine with lifted snout.

Some birds came, went, then came
again
From out the hermit's wood-hung
hill;
Came swift, and arrow-like, and still,
As you have seen birds, when the
rain—
The great, big, high-born rain, leapt
white
And sudden from a cloud like night.

And then a dove, dear, nun-like
dove,
With eyes all tenderness, with eyes
So loving, longing, full of love,
That when she reached her slender
throat
And sang one low, soft, sweetest note,
Just one, so faint, so far, so near,
You could have wept with joy to hear.

The old man, as if he had slept,
Raised quick his head, then bowed
and wept
For joy, to hear once more her voice.
With childish joy he did rejoice;
As one will joy to surely learn
His dear, dead love is living still;

As one will joy to know, in turn,
He, too, is loved with love to kill.

He put a hand forth, let it fall
And feebly close; and that was all.
And then he turned his tearful eyes
To meet the priest's, and spake this
wise:—

Now mind, I say, not one more
word
That livelong night of nights was
heard
By monk or man, from dusk till dawn;
And yet that man spake on and on.

Why, know you not, soul speaks to
soul?
I say the use of words shall pass.
Words are but fragments of the glass;
But silence is the perfect whole.

And thus the old man, bowed and
wan,
And broken in his body, spake—
Spake youthful, ardent, on and on,
As dear love speaks for dear love's
sake.

“You spake of her, my wife; be-
hold!
Behold my faithful, constant love!
Nay, nay, you shall not doubt my
dove,
Perched there above your cross of
gold!

“Yea, you have books, I know, to
tell
Of far, fair heaven; but no hell

To her had been so terrible
As all sweet heaven, with its gold
And jasper gates, and great white
throne,
Had she been banished hence alone.

“I say, not God himself could keep,
Beyond the stars, beneath the deep,
Or 'mid the stars, or 'mid the sea,
Her soul from my soul one brief day,
But she would find some pretty way
To come and still companion me.

“And say, where bide your souls,
good priest?
Lies heaven west, lies heaven east?
Let us be frank, let us be fair;
Where is your heaven, good priest,
where?

“Is there not room, is there not
place
In all those boundless realms of space?
Is there not room in this sweet air,
Room 'mid my trees, room anywhere,
For souls that love us thus so well,
And love so well this beauteous world,
But that they must be headlong
hurled
Down, down, to undiscovered hell?

“Good priest, we questioned not
one word
Of all the holy things we heard
Down in your pleasant town of palms
Long, long ago—sweet chants, sweet
psalms,
Sweet incense, and the solemn rite
Above the dear, believing dead.
Nor do I question here tonight
One gentle word you may have said.

I would not doubt, for one brief hour,
Your word, your creed, your priestly
power,
Your purity, unselfish zeal,
But there be fears I scorn to feel!

“Let those who will, seek realms
above,
Remote from all that heart can love,
In their ignoble dread of hell.
Give all, good priest, in charity;
Give heaven to all, if this may be,
And count it well, and very well.

“But I—I could not leave this spot
Where she is waiting by my side.
Forgive me, priest; it is not pride;
There is no God where she is not!

“You did not know her well. Her
creed
Was yours; my faith it was the same,
My faith was fair, my lands were
broad.
Far down where yonder palm-trees
rise
We two together worshiped God
From childhood. And we grew in
deed,
Devout in heart as well as name,
And loved our palm-set paradise.

“We loved, we loved all things on
earth,
However mean or miserable.
We knew no thing that had not worth,
And learned to know no need of hell.

“Indeed, good priest, so much,
indeed,
We found to do, we saw to love,

We did not always look above
As is commanded in your creed,
But kept in heart one chiefest care,
To make this fair world still more fair.

“’T was then that meek, pale
Saxon came;
With soulless gray and greedy eyes,
A snake’s eyes, cunning, cold and wise,
And I—I could not fight, or fly
His crafty wiles at all; and I—
Enough, enough! I signed my name.

“It was not loss of pleasure, place,
Broad lands, or the serene delight
Of doing good, that made long night
O’er all the sunlight of her face.
But there be little things that feed
A woman’s sweetness, day by day,
That strong men miss not, do not
need,
But, shorn of all can go their way
To battle, and but stronger grow,
As grow great waves that gather so.

“She missed the music, missed the
song,
The pleasant speech of courteous
men,
Who came and went, a comely
throng,
Before her open window, when
The sea sang with us, and we two
Had heartfelt homage, warm and
true.

“She missed the restfulness, the
rest
Of dulcet silence, the delight
Of singing silence, when the town
Put on its twilight robes of brown;

When twilight wrapped herself in
 night
 And couched against the curtained
 west.

“But not one murmur, not one
 word
 From her sweet baby lips was heard.
 She only knew I could not bear
 To see sweet San Diego town,
 Her palm-set lanes, her pleasant
 square,
 Her people passing up and down,
 Without black hate, and deadly hate
 For him who housed within our gate,
 And so, she gently led my feet
 Aside to this high, wild retreat.

“How pale she grew, how piteous
 pale
 The while I wrought, and ceaseless
 wrought
 To keep my soul from bitter thought,
 And build me here above the vale.
 Ah me! my selfish, Spanish pride!
 Enough of pride, enough of hate,
 Enough of her sad, piteous fate:
 She died: right here she sank and
 died.

“She died, and with her latest
 breath
 Did promise to return to me,
 As turns a dove unto her tree
 To find her mate at night and rest;
 Died, clinging close against my
 breast;
 Died, saying she would surely rise
 So soon as God had loosed her eyes
 From the strange wonderment of
 death.

“How beautiful is death! and how
 Surpassing good, and true, and fair!
 How just is death, how gently just,
 To lay his sword against the thread
 Of life when life is surely dead
 And loose the sweet soul from the
 dust!

I laid her in my lorn despair
 Beneath that dove, that orange-
 bough—
 How strange your cross should stand
 just there!

“And then I waited hours, days:
 Those bitter days, they were as years.
 My soul groped through the darkest
 ways;
 I scarce could see God's face for tears.

.

“I clutched my knife, and I crept
 down,
 A wolf, to San Diego town.
 On, on, amid my palms once more,
 Keen knife in hand, I crept that night.
 I passed the gate, then fled in fright;
 Black crape hung fluttered from the
 door!

“I climbed back here, with heart
 of stone:
 I heard next morn one sweetest tone;
 Looked up, and lo! there on that
 bough
 She perched, as she sits perching now.

.

“I heard the bells peal from my
 height,
 Peal pompously, peal piously:

Saw sable hearse, in plumes of night
With not one thought of hate in me.

“I watched the long train winding
by,
A mournful, melancholy lie—
A sable, solemn, mourning mile—
And only pitied him the while.
For she, she sang that whole day
through:
Sad-voiced, as if she pitied, too.

“They said, ‘His work is done, and
well.’
They laid his body in a tomb
Of massive splendor. It lies there
In all its stolen pomp and gloom—
But list! his soul—his soul is where?
In hell! In hell! But where is hell?

“Hear me but this. Year after
year
She trained my eye, she trained my
ear;
No book to blind my eyes, or ought
To prate of hell, when hell is not.
I came to know at last, and well,
Such things as never book can tell.

“And where was that poor, dismal
soul
Ye priests had sent to paradise?
I heard the long years roll and roll,
As rolls the sea. My once dimmed
eyes
Grew keen as long, sharp shafts of
light.
With eager eyes and reaching face
I searched the stars night after night;
That dismal soul was not in space!

“Meanwhile my green trees grew
and grew;
And sad or glad, this much I knew,
It were no sin to make more fair
One spot on earth, to toil and share
With man, or beast, or bird; while
she
Still sang her soft, sweet melody.

“One day, a perfumed day in
white—
Such restful, fresh, and friendlike
day,—
Fair Mexico a mirage lay
Far-lifted in a sea of light—
Soft, purple light, so far away.
I turned yon pleasant pathway down,
And sauntered leisurely tow’rd town.

“I heard my dear love call and coo,
And knew that she was happy, too,
In her sad, sweet, and patient pain
Of waiting till I came again.

“Aye, I was glad, quite glad at last;
Not glad as I had been when she
Walked with me by yon palm-set sea,
But sadly and serenely glad:
As though ’t were twilight like, as
though
You knew, and yet you did not know
That sadness, most supremely sad
Should lay upon you like a pall,
And would not, could not pass away
Till you should pass; till perfect day
Dawns sudden on you, and the call
Of birds awakens you to morn—
A babe new-born; a soul new-born.

“Good priest, what are the birds
for? Priest,

Build ye your heaven west or east?
 Above, below, or anywhere?
 I only ask, I only say
 She sits there, waiting for the day,
 The fair, full day to guide me there.

“What, he? That creature? Ah,
 quite true!

I wander much, I weary you:
 I beg your pardon, gentle priest.
 Returning up the stone-strewn steep,
 Down in yon jungle, dank and deep,
 Where toads and venomed reptiles
 creep,
 There, there, I saw that hideous
 beast!

“Aye, there! coiled there beside my
 road,
 Close coiled behind a monstrous toad,
 A huge flat-bellied reptile hid!
 His tongue leapt red as flame; his
 eyes,
 His eyes were burning hells of lies—
 His head was like a coffin’s lid:

“Saint George! Saint George! I
 gasped for breath.
 The beast, tight coiled, swift, sud-
 den sprang
 High in the air, and, rattling, sang
 His hateful, hissing song of death!

“My eyes met his. He shrank, he
 fell,
 Fell sullenly and slow. The swell
 Of braided, brassy neck forgot
 Its poise, and every venomed spot
 Lost luster, and the coffin head
 Cowed level with the toad, and lay

Low, quivering with hate and dread:
 The while I kept my upward way.

“What! Should have killed him?
 Nay, good priest.

I know not what or where’s your hell.
 But be it west or be it east,
 His hell is there! and that is well!

“Nay, do not, do not question me;
 I could not tell you why I know;
 I only know that this is so,
 As sure as God is equity.

“Good priest, forgive me, and
 good-by,
 The stars slow gather to their fold;
 I see God’s garment hem of gold
 Against the far, faint morning sky.

“Good, holy priest, your God is
 where?
 You come to me with book and creed;
 I cannot read your book; I read
 Yon boundless, open book of air.
 What time, or way, or place I look,
 I see God in His garden walk;
 I hear Him through the thunders talk,
 As once He talked, with burning
 tongue,
 To Moses, when the world was young;
 And, priest, what more is in your
 book?

“Behold! the Holy Grail is found,
 Found in each poppy’s cup of gold;
 And God walks with us as of old.
 Behold! the burning bush still burns
 For man, whichever way he turns;
 And all God’s earth is holy ground.

“And—and—good priest, bend low
your head,
The sands are crumbling where I
tread,
Beside the shoreless, soundless sea.
Good priest, you came to pray, you
said;
And now, what would you have of
me?”

The good priest gently raised his
head,
Then bowed it low and softly said:
“Your blessing, son, despite the ban.”
He fell before the dying man;
And when he raised his face from
prayer,
Sweet Dawn, and two sweet doves
were there.

SONGS OF THE HEBREW CHILDREN

(Olive Leaves)

O BOY AT PEACE

O boy at peace upon the Delaware!

O brother mine, that fell in battle front

Of life, so braver, nobler far than I,

The wanderer who vexed all gentleness,

Receive this song; I have but this to give.

I may not rear the rich man's ghostly stone;

But you, through all my follies loving still

And trusting me . . . nay, I shall not forget.

A failing hand in mine, and fading eyes
That look'd in mine as from another land,

You said: "Some gentler things; a song for Peace.

'Mid all your songs for men one song for God."

And then the dark-brow'd mother Death, bent down

Her face to yours, and you were born to Him.

*"In the desert a fountain is springing,
In the wild waste there still is a tree."*

Though the many lights dwindle to one light,

There is help if the heavens have one."

"Change lays not her hand upon truth."

AT BETHLEHEM

With incense and myrrh and sweet
spices,
Frankincense and sacredest oil
In ivory, chased with devices
Cut quaint and in serpentine coil;
Heads bared, and held down to the
bosom;
Brows massive with wisdom and
bronzed;
Beards white as the white May in
blossom;
And borne to the breast and
beyond,—

Came the Wise of the East, bending
lowly
On staffs, with their garments girt
round
With girdles of hair, to the Holy
Child Christ, in their sandals. The
sound
Of song and thanksgiving ascended—
Deep night! Yet some shepherds afar
Heard a wail with the worshipping
blended
And they then knew the sign of the
star.

“LA NOTTE”

Is it night? And sits night at your
pillow?
Sits darkness about you like
Death?
Rolls darkness above like a billow,
As drowning men catch in their
breath?
Is it night, and deep night of dark
errors,
Of crosses, of pitfalls and bars?
Then lift up your face from your
terrors,
For heaven alone holds the stars!

Lo! shaggy-beard shepherds, the
fastness—
Lorn, desolate Syrian sod;
The darkness, the midnight, the vast-
ness—
That vast, solemn night bore a
God!
The night brought us God; and the
Savior
Lay down in a cradle to rest;
A sweet cherub Babe in behavior,
So that all baby-world might be
blest.

IN PALESTINE

O Jebus! thou mother of prophets,
Of soldiers and heroes of song;
Let the crescent oppress thee and
scoff its
Blind will, let the days do thee
wrong;

But to me thou art sacred and
splendid,
And to me thou art matchless and
fair,
As the tawny sweet twilight, with
blended
Sunlight and red stars in her hair.

Thy fair ships once came from sweet
Cyprus,
And fair ships drew in from Cyrene
With fruits and rich robes and sweet
spices
For thee and thine, eminent queen;

And camels came in with the traces
Of white desert dust in their hair
As they kneel'd in the loud market
places,
And Arabs with lances were there.

'Tis past, and the Bedouin pillows
His head where thy battlements fall,
And thy temples flash gold to the
billows,
Never more over turreted wall.

'Tis past, and the green velvet
mosses

Have grown by the sea, and now
sore

Does the far billow mourn for his
losses

Of lifted white ships to the shore.

Let the crescent uprising, let it flash
on

Thy dust in the garden of death,
Thy chastened and passionless
passion

Sunk down to the sound of a
breath;

Yet you lived like a king on a throne
and

You died like a queen of the south;
For you lifted the cup with your own
hand

To your proud and your passionate
mouth;

Like a splendid swift serpent sur-
rounded

With fire and sword, in your side
You struck your hot fangs and
confounded

Your foes; you struck deep, and so
—died.

BEYOND JORDAN

And they came to Him, mothers of
Judah,
Dark eyed and in splendor of hair,

Bearing down over shoulders of
beauty,
And bosoms half hidden, half bare;

And they brought Him their babes
and besought Him

Half kneeling, with suppliant air,
To bless the brown cherubs they
brought Him,
With holy hands laid in their hair.

Then reaching His hands He said,
lowly,
"Of such is My Kingdom"; and
then

Took the brown little babes in the
holy

White hands of the Savior of men;

Held them close to His heart and
caress'd them,

Put His face down to theirs as in
prayer,

Put their hands to His neck, and so
bless'd them

With baby hands hid in His hair.

FAITH

There were whimsical turns of the
waters,

There were rhythmical talks of the
sea,—

There were gather'd the darkest eyed
daughters
Of men, by the deep Galilee.

A blowing full sail, and a parting
From multitudes, living in Him,
A trembling of lips, and tears starting
From eyes that look'd downward
and dim.

A mantle of night and a marching
Of storms, and a sounding of seas,
Of furrows of foam and of arching
Black billows; a bending of knees;

The rising of Christ—an entreat-
ing—

Hands reach'd to the seas as He
saith,

"Have Faith!" And all seas are
repeating,

"Have Faith! Have Faith!
Have Faith!"

HOPE

What song is well sung not of
sorrow?

What triumph well won without
pain?

What virtue shall be, and not borrow
Bright luster from many a stain?

What birth has there been without
travail?

What battle well won without
blood?

What good shall earth see without
evil

Ingarner'd as chaff with the good?

Lo! the cross set in rocks by the
Roman,

And nourish'd by blood of the
Lamb,

And water'd by tears of the woman,
Has flourish'd, has spread like a
palm;

Has spread in the frosts, and far
regions
Of snows in the North, and South
sands,

Where never the tramp of his legions
Was heard, or reach'd forth his red
hands.

Be thankful; the price and the pay-
ment,
The birth, the privations and scorn,

The cross, and the parting of raiment,
Are finish'd. The star brought us
morn.

Look starward; stand far and un-
earthy,
Free soul'd as a banner unfurl'd.
Be worthy, O brother, be worthy!
For a God was the price of the
world.

CHARITY

Her hands were clasped downward
and doubled,

Her head was held down and
depress'd,

Her bosom, like white billows
troubled,

Fell fitful and rose in unrest;

Her robes were all dust and dis-
order'd

Her glory of hair, and her brow,
Her face, that had lifted and lorded,
Fell pallid and passionless now.

She heard not accusers that brought
her

In mockery hurried to Him,
Nor heeded, nor said, nor besought
her

With eyes lifted doubtful and dim.

All crush'd and stone-cast in be-
havior,

She stood as a marble would
stand,

Then the Savior bent down, and the
Savior
In silence wrote on in the sand.

What wrote He? How fondly one
lingers

And questions, what holy command
Fell down from the beautiful fingers
Of Jesus, like gems in the sand.

O better the Scian uncherish'd
Had died ere a note or device
Of battle was fashion'd, than perish'd
This only line written by Christ.

He arose and look'd on the daugh-
ter

Of Eve, like a delicate flower,
And he heard the revilers that
brought her;

Men stormy, and strong as a
tower;

And He said, "She has sinn'd; let the
blameless

Come forward and cast the first
stone!"
But they, they fled shamed and yet
shameless;
And she, she stood white and
alone.

Who now shall accuse and arraign us?
What man shall condemn and
disown?
Since Christ has said only the stain-
less
Shall cast at his fellows a stone.

For what man can bare us his
bosom,
And touch with his forefinger there,

And say, 'Tis as snow, as a
blossom?
Beware of the stainless, beware!

O woman, born first to believe us;
Yea, also born first to forget;
Born first to betray and deceive us;
Yet first to repent and regret!

O first then in all that is human,
Yea! first where the Nazarene
trod,
O woman! O beautiful woman!
Be then first in the kingdom of
God!

THE LAST SUPPER

"And when they had sung an hymn they went out unto the Mount of Olives."—Bible.

What song sang the twelve with the
Saviour
When finish'd the sacrament wine?
Were they bow'd and subdued in
behavior,
Or bold as made bold with a sign?

What sang they? What sweet song
of Zion
With Christ in their midst like a
crown?
While here sat Saint Peter, the lion;
And there like a lamb, with head
down,

Sat Saint John, with his silken and
raven
Rich hair on his shoulders, and
eyes
Lifting up to the faces unshaven
Like a sensitive child's in surprise.

Was the song as strong fishermen
swinging
Their nets full of hope to the sea?
Or low, like the ripple-wave, singing
Sea-songs on their loved Galilee?

Were they sad with foreshadow of
sorrows,
Like the birds that sing low when
the breeze
Is tip-toe with a tale of tomorrows,—
Of earthquakes and sinking of
seas?

Ah! soft was their song as the waves
are
That fall in low musical moans;
And sad I should say as the winds
are
That blow by the white grave-
stones.

A SONG FOR PEACE

I

As a tale that is told, as a vision,
 Forgive and forget; for I say
 That the true shall endure the
 derision
 Of the false till the full of the day;

II

Ay, forgive as you would be for-
 given;
 Ay, forget, lest the ill you have
 done
 Be remember'd against you in heaven
 And all the days under the sun.

III

For who shall have bread without
 labor?
 And who shall have rest without
 price?
 And who shall hold war with his
 neighbor
 With promise of peace with the
 Christ?

IV

The years may lay hand on fair
 heaven;
 May place and displace the red
 stars;
 May stain them, as blood stains are
 driven
 At sunset in beautiful bars;

V

May shroud them in black till they
 fret us
 As clouds with their showers of
 tears;
 May grind us to dust and forget us,
 May the years, O, the pitiless
 years!

VI

But the precepts of Christ are be-
 yond them;
 The truths by the Nazarene
 taught,
 With the tramp of the ages upon
 them,
 They endure as though ages were
 naught;

VII

The deserts may drink up the
 fountains,
 The forests give place to the plain,
 The main may give place to the
 mountains,
 The mountains return to the main;

VIII

Mutations of worlds and mutations
 Of suns may take place, but the
 reign
 Of Time, and the toils and vexations
 Bequeath them, no, never a stain.

IX

Go forth to the fields as one sowing,
Sing songs and be glad as you go,
There are seeds that take root without showing,
And bear some fruit whether or no.

X

And the sun shall shine sooner or later,
Though the midnight breaks ground on the morn,
Then appeal you to Christ, the Creator,
And to gray bearded Time, His first born.

TO RUSSIA

"Where wast thou when I laid the foundations of the earth?"—Bible.

Who tamed your lawless Tartar blood?
What David bearded in her den
The Russian bear in ages when
You strode your black, unbridled stud,
A skin-clad savage of your steppes?
Why, one who now sits low and weeps,
Why, one who now wails out to you—
The Jew, the Jew, the homeless Jew.

Who girt the thews of your young prime
And bound your fierce divided force?

Why, who but Moses shaped your course
United down the grooves of time?
Your mighty millions all today
The hated, homeless Jew obey.
Who taught all poetry to you?
The Jew, the Jew, the hated Jew.

Who taught you tender Bible tales
Of honey-lands, of milk and wine?
Of happy, peaceful Palestine?
Of Jordan's holy harvest vales?
Who gave the patient Christ? I say
Who gave your Christian creed?
Yea, yea,
Who gave your very God to you?
Your Jew! Your Jew! Your hated Jew!

TO RACHEL IN RUSSIA

"To bring them unto a good land and a large; unto a land flowing with milk and honey."

O thou, whose patient, peaceful blood
Paints Sharon's roses on thy cheek,
And down thy breasts played hide and seek,

Six thousand years a stainless flood,
Rise up and set thy sad face hence.
Rise up and come where Freedom waits
Within these white, wide ocean gates

To Rachel in Russia

To give thee God's inheritance;
 To bind thy wounds in this despair;
 To braid thy long, strong, loosened
 hair.

O Rachel, weeping where the
 flood
 Of icy Volga grinds and flows
 Against his banks of blood-red
 snows—
 White banks made red with children's
 blood—
 Lift up thy head, be comforted;
 For, as thou didst on manna feed,
 When Russia roamed a bear in deed,
 And on her own foul essence fed,

So shalt thou flourish as a tree
 When Russ and Cossack shall not
 be.

Then come where yellow harvests
 swell;
 Forsake that savage land of snows;
 Forget the brutal Russian's blows;
 And come where Kings of Conscience
 dwell.
 Oh come, Rebecca to the well!
 The voice of Rachel shall be sweet!
 The Gleaner rest safe at the feet
 Of one who loves her; and the spell
 Of Peace that blesses Paradise
 Shall kiss thy large and lonely eyes.

SONGS OF ITALY

THE IDEAL AND THE REAL

*And full these truths eternal
O'er the yearning spirit steal,
That the real is the ideal,
And the ideal is the real.*

She was damn'd with the dower of
beauty, she
Had gold in shower by shoulder and
brow.
Her feet!—why, her two blessed feet,
were so small,
They could nest in this hand. How
queenly, how tall,
How gracious, how grand! She was
all to me,—
My present, my past, my eternity!

She but lives in my dreams. I be-
hold her now
By shoreless white waters that flow'd
like a sea
At her feet where I sat; her lips
pushed out
In brave, warm welcome of dimple
and pout!
'Twas æons ago. By that river
that ran
All fathomless, echoless, limitless,
on,

And shoreless, and peopled with
never a man,
We met, soul to soul. . . . No land;
yet I think

There were willows and lilies that
lean'd to drink.
The stars they were seal'd and the
moons were gone.
The wide shining circles that girdled
that world,
They were distant and dim. And an
incense curl'd
In vapory folds from that river that
ran
All shoreless, with never the presence
of man.

How sensuous the night; how soft
was the sound
Of her voice on the night! How
warm was her breath
In that world that had never yet
tasted of death
Or forbidden sweet fruit! . . . In
that far profound.

We were camped on the edges of god-
land. We
Were the people of Saturn. The
watery fields,
The wide-wing'd, dolorous birds of
the sea,
They acknowledged but us. Our
brave battle shields
Were my naked white palms; our food
it was love.
Our roof was the fresco of gold belts
above.

How turn'd she to me where that
 wide river ran,
 With its lilies and willows and watery
 weeds,
 And heeded as only a true love
 heeds! . . .
 How tender she was, and how timid
 she was!
 But a black, hoofed beast, with the
 head of a man,
 Stole down where she sat at my side,
 and began
 To puff his tan cheeks, then to play,
 then to pause,
 With his double-reed pipe; then to
 play and to play
 As never played man since the world
 began,
 And never shall play till the judgment
 day.

How he puff'd! how he play'd!
 Then down the dim shore,
 This half-devil man, all hairy and
 black,
 Did dance with his hoofs in the sand,
 laughing back
 As his song died away. . . . She
 turned never more
 Unto me after that. She arose and
 she pass'd
 Right on from my sight. Then I
 followed as fast
 As true love can follow. But ever
 before
 Like a spirit she fled. How vain and
 how far
 Did I follow my beauty, red belt or
 white star!
 Through foamy white sea, unto fruit-
 laden shore.

How long did I follow! My pent
 soul of fire
 It did feed on itself. I fasted, I
 cried;
 Was tempted by many. Yet still I
 denied
 The touch of all things, and kept my
 desire . . .
 I stood by the lion of St. Mark in that
 hour
 Of Venice when gold of the sunset is
 roll'd
 From cloud to cathedral, from turret
 to tower,
 In matchless, magnificent garments
 of gold;
 Then I knew she was near; yet I had
 not known
 Her form or her face since the stars
 were sown.

We two had been parted—God
 pity us!—when
 This world was unnamed and all
 heaven was dim;
 We two had been parted far back on
 the rim
 And the outermost border of heaven's
 red bars;
 We two had been parted ere the
 meeting of men,
 Or God had set compass on spaces as
 yet;
 We two had been parted ere God had
 once set
 His finger to spinning the purple with
 stars,—
 And now at the last in the sea and
 fret
 Of the sun of Venice, we two had
 met.

Where the lion of Venice, with
 brows a-frown,
 With tossed mane tumbled, and teeth
 in air,
 Looks out in his watch o'er the watery
 town,
 With paw half lifted, with claw half
 bare,
 By the blue Adriatic, at her bath in
 the sea,—
 I saw her. I knew her, but she knew
 not me.
 I had found her at last! Why I, I
 had sail'd
 The antipodes through, had sought,
 and had hail'd
 All flags; I had climbed where the
 storm clouds curl'd
 And call'd o'er the awful arch'd dome
 of the world.

I saw her one moment, then fell
 back abash'd,
 And fill'd to the throat. . . . Then
 I turn'd me once more,
 Thanking God in my soul, while the
 level sun flashed
 Happy halos about her. . . . Her
 breast!— why, her breast
 Was white as twin pillows that lure
 you to rest.
 Her sloping limbs moved like to
 melodies told,
 As she rose from the sea, and threw
 back the gold
 Of her glorious hair, and set face to
 the shore. . . .
 I knew her! I knew her, though we
 had not met
 Since the red stars sang to the sun's
 first set!

How long I had sought her! I had
 hunger'd, nor ate
 Of any sweet fruits. I had followed
 not one
 Of all the fair glories grown under the
 sun.
 I had sought only her, believing that
 she
 Had come upon earth, and stood
 waiting for me
 Somewhere by my way. But the
 pathways of Fate
 They had led elsewhere; the round
 world round,
 The far North seas and the near
 profound
 Had fail'd me for aye. Now I stood
 by that sea
 Where she bathed in her beauty, . . .
 God, I and she!

I spake not, but caught in my
 breath; I did raise
 My face to fair heaven to give God
 praise
 That at last ere the ending of Time,
 we had met,
 Had touched upon earth at the same
 sweet place. . . .
 Yea, we never had met since creation
 at all;
 Never, since ages ere Adam's fall,
 Had we two met in that hunger and
 fret
 Where two should be one; but had
 wander'd through space;
 Through space and through spheres,
 as some bird that hard fate
 Gives a thousand glad Springs but
 never one mate.

Was it well with my love? Was she true? Was she brave
 With virtue's own valor? Was she waiting for me?
 Oh, how fared my love? Had she home? Had she bread?
 Had she known but the touch of the warm-temper'd wave?
 Was she born to this world with a crown on her head,
 Or born, like myself, but a dreamer instead? . . .
 So long it had been! So long! Why, the sea—
 That wrinkled and surly, old, time-temper'd slave—
 Had been born, had his revels, grown wrinkled and hoar
 Since I last saw my love on that uttermost shore.

Oh, how fared my love? Once I lifted my face,
 And I shook back my hair and look'd out on the sea;
 I press'd my hot palms as I stood in my place,
 And I cried, "Oh, I come like a king to your side
 Though all hell intervene!" . . .
 "Hist! she may be a bride,
 A mother at peace, with sweet babes at her knee!
 A babe at her breast and a spouse at her side!—
 Had I wander'd too long, and had Destiny
 Sat mortal between us?" I buried my face
 In my hands, and I moan'd as I stood in my place.

'Twas her year to be young. She was tall, she was fair—
 Was she pure as the snow on the Alps over there?
 'Twas her year to be young. She was queenly and tall;
 And I felt she was true, as I lifted my face
 And saw her press down her rich robe to its place,
 With a hand white and small as a babe's with a doll.
 And her feet!—why, her feet in the white shining sand
 Were so small, 'twas a wonder the maiden could stand.
 Then she push'd back her hair with a round hand that shone
 And flash'd in the light with a white starry stone.

Then my love she is rich! My love she is fair!
 Is she pure as the snow on the Alps over there?
 She is gorgeous with wealth!
 "Thank God, she has bread,"
 I said to myself. Then I humbled my head
 In gratitude deep. Then I question'd me where
 Was her palace, her parents? What name did she bear?
 What mortal on earth came nearest her heart?
 Who touch'd the small hand till it thrilled to a smart?
 'Twas her year to be young. She was rich, she was fair—
 Was she pure as the snow on the Alps over there?

Then she loosed her rich robe that
was blue like the sea,
And silken and soft as a baby's new
born.

And my heart it leap'd light as the
sunlight at morn
At the sight of my love in her proud
purity,
As she rose like a Naiad half-robed
from the sea.

Then careless and calm as an empress
can be
She loosed and let fall all the rai-
ment of blue,
As she drew a white robe in a melody
Of moving white limbs, while between
the two,
Like a rift in a cloud, shone her fair
presence through.

Soon she turn'd, reach'd a hand;
then a tall gondolier
Who had lean'd on his oar, like a long
lifted spear
Shot sudden and swift and all silently,
And drew to her side as she turn'd
from the tide.
It was odd, such a thing, and I
counted it queer
That a princess like this, whether vir-
gin or bride,
Should abide thus apart as she bathed
in the sea;
And I chafed and I chafed, and so
unsatisfied,
That I flutter'd the doves that were
perch'd close about,
As I strode up and down in dismay
and in doubt.

Swift she stept in the boat on the
borders of night

As an angel might step on that far
wonder land
Of eternal sweet life, which men mis-
name Death.

Quick I called me a craft, and I
caught at my breath
As she sat in the boat, and her white
baby hand
Held vestments of gold to her throat,
snowy white.

Then her gondola shot,—shot sharp
for the shore:
There was never the sound of a song
or of oar,
But the doves hurried home in white
clouds to Saint Mark,
Where the brass horses plunge their
high manes in the dark.

Then I cried: "Follow fast!
Follow fast! Follow fast!
Aye! thrice double fare, if you follow
her true
To her own palace door!" There
was plashing of oar
And rattle of rowlock. . . . I sat
peering through,
Looking far in the dark, peering out
as we passed
With my soul all alert, bending down,
leaning low.
But only the oaths of the fisherman's
crew
When we jostled them sharp as we
sudden shot through
The watery town. Then a deep, dis-
tant roar—
The rattle of rowlock; the rush of the
oar.

The rattle of rowlock, the rush of
the sea . . .

Swift wind like a sword at the throat
of us all!

I lifted my face, and far, fitfully
The heavens breathed lightning; did
lift and let fall

As if angels were parting God's cur-
tains. Then deep

And indolent-like, and as if half
asleep,

As if half made angry to move at
all,

The thunder moved. It confronted
me.

It stood like an avalanche poised on a
hill,

I saw its black brows. I heard it
stand still.

The troubled sea throbbed as if
rack'd with pain.

Then the black clouds arose and
suddenly rode,

As a fiery, fierce stallion that knows
no rein

Right into the town. Then the
thunder strode

As a giant striding from star to red
star,

Then turn'd upon earth and franti-
cally came,

Shaking the hollow heaven. And
far

And near red lightning in ribbon and
skein

Did seam and furrow the cloud with
flame,

And write on black heaven Jehovah's
name.

Then lightnings came weaving like
shuttlecocks,

Weaving red robes of black clouds for
death.

And frightened doves fluttered them
home in flocks,

And mantled men hied them with
gather'd breath.

Black gondolas scattered as never
before,

And drew like crocodiles up on the
shore;

And vessels at sea stood further at
sea,

And seamen haul'd with a bended
knee,

And canvas came down to left and to
right,

Till ships stood stripp'd as if stripp'd
for fight!

Then an oath. Then a prayer.

Then a gust, with rents

Through the yellow-sail'd fishers.

Then suddenly

Came sharp fork'd fire! Then again
thunder fell

Like the great first gun. Ah, then
there was rout

Of ships like the breaking of regi-
ments,

And shouts as if hurled from an upper
hell.

Then tempest! It lifted, it spun us
about,

Then shot us ahead through the hills
of the sea

As a great steel arrow shot shoreward
in wars—

Then the storm split open till I saw
the blown stars.

On! on! through the foam! through
 the storm! through the town!
 She was gone! She was lost in that
 wilderness
 Of leprous white palaces. . . .
 Black distress!
 I stood in my gondola. All up and all
 down
 We pushed through the surge of the
 salt-flood street
 Above and below. . . . 'Twas only
 the beat
 Of the sea's sad heart. . . . I
 leaned, listened; I sat . . .
 'Twas only the water-rat; nothing but
 that;
 Not even the sea-bird screaming
 distress,
 As she lost her way in that wilder-
 ness.

I listen'd all night. I caught at
 each sound;
 I clutch'd and I caught as a man that
 drown'd—
 Only the sullen, low growl of the
 sea
 Far out the flood-street at the edge of
 the ships;
 Only the billow slow licking his
 lips,
 A dog that lay crouching there watch-
 ing for me,—
 Growling and showing white teeth all
 the night;
 Only a dog, and as ready to bite;
 Only the waves with their salt-flood
 tears
 Fretting white stones of a thousand
 years.

And then a white dome in the lofti-
 ness
 Of cornice and cross and of glittering
 spire
 That thrust to heaven and held the
 fire
 Of the thunder still; the bird's
 distress
 As he struck his wings in that wilder-
 ness,
 On marbles that speak, and thrill,
 and inspire,—
 The night below and the night
 above;
 The water-rat building, the sea-lost
 dove;
 That one lost, dolorous, lone bird's
 call,
 The water-rat building,—but that
 was all.

Silently, slowly, still up and still
 down,
 We row'd and we row'd for many an
 hour,
 By beetling palace and toppling
 tower,
 In the darks and the deeps of the
 watery town.
 Only the water-rat building by
 stealth,
 Only the lone bird astray in his
 flight
 That struck white wings in the clouds
 of night,
 On spires that sprang from Queen
 Adria's wealth;
 Only one sea dove, one lost white
 dove:
 The blackness below, the blackness
 above!

Then, pushing the darkness from
 pillar to post,
 The morning came sullen and gray
 like a ghost
 Slow up the canal. I lean'd from the
 prow,
 And listen'd. Not even that dove in
 distress
 Crying its way through the wilder-
 ness;
 Not even the stealthy old water-rat
 now,
 Only the bell in the fisherman's
 tower,
 Slow tolling at sea and telling the
 hour,
 To kneel to their sweet Santa
 Barbara
 For tawny fishers at sea, and to pray.

High over my head, carved cornice,
 quaint spire.
 And ancient built palaces knock'd
 their gray brows
 Together and frown'd. Then slow-
 creeping scows
 Scraped the walls on each side.
 Above me the fire
 Of a sudden-born morning came
 flaming in bars;
 While up through the chasm I could
 count the stars.
 Oh, pity! Such ruin! The dank
 smell of of death
 Crept up the canal: I could scarce
 take my breath!
 'Twas the fit place for pirates, for
 women who keep
 Contagion of body and soul where
 they sleep. . . .

God's pity! A white hand now
 beckoned me
 From an old mouldy door, almost in
 my reach.
 I sprang to the sill as one wrecked to
 a beach;
 I sprang with wide arms: it was she!
 It was she! . . .
 And in such a damn'd place! And
 what was her trade?
 To think I had follow'd so faithful, so
 far
 From eternity's brink, from star to
 white star,
 To find her, to find her, nor wife nor
 sweet maid!
 To find her a shameless poor creature
 of shame,
 A nameless, lost body, men hardly
 dared name.

All alone in her shame, on that
 damp dismal floor
 She stood to entice me. . . . I
 bow'd me before
 All-conquering beauty. I call'd her
 my Queen!
 I told her my love as I proudly had
 told
 My love had I found her as pure as
 pure gold.
 I reach'd her my hands, as fearless, as
 clean,
 As man fronting cannon. I cried,
 "Hasten forth
 To the sun! There are lands to the
 south, to the north,
 Anywhere where you will. Dash the
 shame from your brow;
 Come with me, for ever; and come
 with me now!"

Why, I'd have turn'd pirate for her,
 would have seen
 Ships burn'd from the seas, like to
 stubble from field.
 Would I turn from her now? Why
 should I now yield,
 When she needed me most? Had I
 found her a queen,
 And beloved by the world,—why,
 what had I done?
 I had woo'd, and had woo'd, and had
 woo'd till I won!
 Then, if I had loved her with gold and
 fair fame,
 Would not I now love her, and love
 her the same?
 My soul hath a pride. I would tear
 out my heart
 And cast it to dogs, could it play a
 dog's part!

“Don't you know me, my bride of
 the wide world of yore?
 Why, don't you remember the white
 milky-way
 Of stars, that we traversed the æons
 before? . . .
 We were counting the colors, we were
 naming the seas
 Of the vaster ones. You remember
 the trees
 That swayed in the cloudy white
 heavens, and bore
 Bright crystals of sweets, and the
 sweet manna-dew?
 Why, you smile as you weep, you
 remember, and you,
 You know me! You know me!
 You know me! Yea,
 You know me as if 'twere but yester-
 day!

I told her all things. Her brow
 took a frown;
 Her grand Titan beauty, so tall, so
 serene,
 The one perfect woman, mine own
 idol queen—
 Her proud swelling bosom, it broke
 up and down
 As she spake, and she shook in her
 soul as she said,
 With her small hands held to her bent
 aching head:
 “Go back to the world! Go back,
 and alone
 Till kind Death comes and makes
 white as his own.”
 I said: “I will wait! I will wait in
 the pass
 Of death, until Time he shall break
 his glass.”

Then I cried, “Yea, here where the
 gods did love,
 Where the white Europa was won,—
 she rode
 Her milk-white bull through these
 same warm seas,—
 Yea, here in the land where huge
 Hercules,
 With the lion's heart and the heart
 of the dove,
 Did walk in his naked great strength,
 and strode
 In the sensuous air with his lion's
 skin
 Flapping and fretting his knotted
 thews;
 Where Theseus did wander, and
 Jason cruise,—
 Yea, here let the life of all lives
 begin.

"Yea! Here where the Orient
 balms breathe life,
 Where heaven is kindest, where all
 God's blue
 Seems a great gate open'd to welcome
 you,
 Come, rise and go forth, my empress,
 my wife."
 Then spake her great soul, so grander
 far
 Than I had believed on that outer-
 most star;
 And she put by her tears, and calmly
 she said,
 With hands still held to her bended
 head:
 "I will go through the doors of death
 and wait
 For you on the innermost side death's
 gate.

"Thank God that this life is but a
 day's span,
 But a wayside inn for weary, worn
 man—
 A night and a day; and, tomorrow,
 the spell
 Of darkness is broken. Now, darling,
 farewell!"
 I caught at her robe as one ready to
 die—
 "Nay, touch not the hem of my robe
 —it is red
 With sins that your cruel sex heap'd
 on my head!
 Now turn you, yes, turn! But
 remember how I
 Wait weeping, in sackcloth, the while
 I wait

Inside death's door, and watch at the
 gate."

I cried yet again, how I cried, how
 I cried,
 Reaching face, reaching hands as a
 drowning man might.
 She drew herself back, put my two
 hands aside,
 Half turned as she spoke, as one
 turned to the night:
 Speaking low, speaking soft as a wind
 through the wall
 Of a ruin where mold and night mas-
 ters all;

"I shall live my day, live patient
 on through
 The life that man hath compelled me
 to,
 Then turn to my mother, sweet
 earth, and pray
 She keep me pure to the Judgment
 Day!
 I shall sit and wait as you used to
 do,
 Will wait the next life, through the
 whole life through.
 I shall sit all alone, I shall wait
 always;
 I shall wait inside of the gate for
 you,
 Waiting, and counting the days as I
 wait;
 Yea, wait as that beggar that sat by
 the gate
 Of Jerusalem, waiting the Judgment
 Day."

A DOVE OF ST. MARK

*O terrible lion of tame Saint Mark!
Tamed old lion with the tumbled mane
Tossed to the clouds and lost in the
dark,
With teeth in the air and tail-whipp'd
back,
Foot on the Bible as if thy track
Led thee the lord of the desert again,—
Say, what of thy watch o'er the watery
town?
Say, what of the worlds walking up and
down?*

*O silent old monarch that tops Saint
Mark,
That sat thy throne for a thousand
years,
That lorded the deep, that defied all
men,—
Lo! I see visions at sea in the dark;
And I see something that shines like
tears,
And I hear something that sounds like
sighs,
And I hear something that seems as
when
A great soul suffers and sinks and dies.*

The high-born, beautiful snow
came down,
Silent and soft as the terrible feet
Of time on the mosses of ruins.
Sweet
Was the Christmas time in the watery
town.
'Twas full flood carnival swell'd the
sea
Of Venice that night, and canal and
quay

Were alive with humanity. Man and
maid,
Glad in mad revel and masquerade,
Moved through the feathery snow in
the night,
And shook black locks as they
laugh'd outright.

From Santa Maggiore, and to and
fro,
And ugly and black as if devils cast
out,
Black streaks through the night of
such soft, white snow,
The steel-prow'd gondolas paddled
about;
There was only the sound of the long
oars dip,
As the low moon sail'd up the sea like
a ship
In a misty morn. High the low moon
rose,
Rose veil'd and vast, through the
feathery snows,
As a minstrel stept silent and sad
from his boat,
His worn cloak clutched in his hand
to his throat.

Low under the lion that guards
St. Mark,
Down under wide wings on the edge
of the sea
In the dim of the lamps, on the rim of
the dark,
Alone and sad in the salt-flood town,
Silent and sad and all sullenly,
He sat by the column where the
crocodile

Keeps watch o'er the wave, far mile
upon mile. . . .
Like a signal light through the night
let down,
Then a far star fell through the dim
profound—
A jewel that slipp'd God's hand to the
ground.

The storm had blown over! Now
up and then down,
Alone and in couples, sweet women
did pass,
Silent and dreamy, as if seen in a
glass,
Half mask'd to the eyes, in their
Adrian town.
Such women! It breaks one's heart
to think.
Water! and never one drop to drink!
What types of Titian! What glory of
hair!
How tall as the sisters of Saul! How
fair!
Sweet flowers of flesh, and all
blossoming,
As if 'twere in Eden, and in Eden's
spring.

"They are talking aloud with
eloquent eyes,
Yet passing me by with never one
word.
O pouting sweet lips, do you know
there are lies
That are told with the eyes, and never
once heard
Above a heart's beat when the soul is
stirr'd?
It is time to fly home, O doves of St.
Mark!

Take boughs of the olive; bear these
to your ark,
And rest and be glad, for the seas and
the skies
Of Venice are fair. . . . What!
wouldn't go home?
What! drifting, and drifting as the
soil'd sea-foam?

"And who then are you? You,
masked and so fair?
Your half seen face is a rose full
blown,
Down under your black and abund-
ant hair? . . .
A child of the street, and unloved and
alone!
Unloved; and alone? . . . There is
something then
Between us two that is not un-
like! . . .
The strength and the purposes of
men
Fall broken idols. We aim and
strike
With high-born zeal and with proud
intent.
Yet let life turn on some acci-
dent. . . .

"Nay, I'll not preach. Time's
lessons pass
Like twilight's swallows. They chirp
in their flight,
And who takes heed of the wasting
glass?
Night follows day, and day follows
night,
And no thing rises on earth but to
fall

Like leaves, with their lessons most
sad and fit.

They are spread like a volume each
year to all;

Yet men or women learn naught of it,
Or after it all but a weariness
Of soul and body and untold distress.

“Yea, sit, lorn child, by my side,
and we,
We will talk of the world. Nay, let
my hand
Fall kindly to yours, and so, let your
face
Fall fair to my shoulder, and you shall
be
My dream of sweet Italy. Here in
this place,
Alone in the crowds of this old care-
less land,
I shall shelter your form till the morn
and then—
Why, I shall return to the world and
to men,
And you, not stain'd for one strange,
kind word
And my three last francs, for a lorn
night bird.

“Fear nothing from me, nay, never
once fear.
The day, my darling, comes after the
night.
The nights they were made to show
the light
Of the stars in heaven, though the
storms be near. . . .
Do you see that figure of Fortune up
there,
That tops the Dogana with toe
a-tip

Of the great gold ball? Her scroll
is a-trip

To the turning winds. She is light as
the air.

Her foot is set upon plenty's horn,
Her fair face set to the coming
morn.

“Well, trust we to Fortune. . . .
Bread on the wave
Turns ever ashore to the hand that
gave.
What am I? A poet—a lover of
all
That is lovely to see. Nay, naught
shall befall. . . .
Yes, I am a failure. I plot and I
plan,
Give splendid advice to my fellow-
man,
Yet ever fall short of achievement.
. . . . Ah me!
In my lorn life's early, sad after-
noon,
Say, what have I left but a rhyme or a
rune?
An empty frail hand for some soul at
sea,
Some fair, forbidden, sweet fruit to
choose,
That 'twere sin to touch, and—sin to
refuse?

“What! I go drifting with you,
girl, to-night?
To sit at your side and to call you
love?
Well, that were a fancy! To feed a
dove,
A poor soil'd dove of this dear Saint
Mark,

Too frighten'd to rest and too weary
for flight. . . .

Aye, just three francs, my fortune.
There! He

Who feeds the sparrows for this will
feed me.

Now here 'neath the lion, alone in the
dark,

And side by side let us sit, poor
dear,

Breathing the beauty as an
atmosphere. . . .

"We will talk of your loves, I write
tales of love . . .

What! Cannot read? Why, you
never heard then

Of your Desdemona, nor the daring
men

Who died for her love? My poor
white dove,

There's a story of Shylock would
drive you wild.

What! Never have heard of these
stories, my child?

Of Tasso, of Petrarch? Not the
Bridge of Sighs?

Not the tale of Ferrara? Not the
thousand whys

That your Venice was ever adored
above

All other fair lands for her stories of
love?

"What then about Shylock? T'was
gold. Yes—dead.

The lady? 'Twas love. . . . Why
yes; she too

Is dead. And Byron? 'Twas fame.
Ah, true. . .

Tasso and Petrarch? All died, just
the same. . . .

Yea, so endeth all, as you truly have
said,

And you, poor girl, are too wise; and
you,

Too sudden and swift in your hard,
ugly youth,

Have stumbled face fronting an
obstinate truth.

For whether for love, for gold, or for
fame,

They but lived their day, and they
died the same.

But let's talk not of death? Of
death or the life

That comes after death? 'Tis be-
yond your reach,

And this too much thought has a
sense of strife. . . .

Ah, true; I promised you not to
preach. . . .

My maid of Venice, or maid un-
made,

Hold close your few francs and be not
afraid.

What! Say you are hungry? Well,
let us dine

Till the near morn comes on the silver
shine

Of the lamp-lit sea. At the dawn of
day,

My sad child-woman, you can go
your way.

"What! You have a palace? I
know your town;

Know every nook of it, left and
right,

As well as yourself. Why, far up and
 down
 Your salt flood streets, lo, many a
 night
 I have row'd and have roved in my
 lorn despair
 Of love upon earth, and I know well
 there
 Is no such palace. What! and you
 dare
 To look in my face and to lie out-
 right,
 To lift your face, and to frown me
 down?
 There is no such palace in that part of
 the town!
 "You would woo me away to your
 rickety boat!
 You would pick my pockets! You
 would cut my throat,
 With help of your pirates! Then
 throw me out
 Loaded with stones to sink me
 down,
 Down into the filth and the dregs of
 your town!
 Why, that is your damnable aim, no
 doubt!
 And, my plaintive voiced child, you
 seem too fair,
 Too fair, for even a thought like
 that;
 Too fair for ever such sin to dare—
 Ay, even the tempter to whisper
 at.

"Now, there is such a thing as being
 true,
 True, even in villainy. Listen to me:
 Black-skinn'd women and low-brow'd
 men,

And desperate robbers and thieves;
 and then,
 Why, there are the pirates! . . . Ay,
 pirates reform'd—
 Pirates reform'd and unreform'd;
 Pirates for me, girl, friends for you,—
 And these are your neighbors. And
 so you see
 That I know your town, your neigh-
 bors; and I—
 Well, pardon me, dear—but I know
 you lie.

"Tut, tut, my beauty! What
 trickery now?
 Why, tears through your hair on my
 hand like rain!
 Come! look in my face: laugh, lie
 again
 With your wonderful eyes. Lift up
 your brow,
 Laugh in the face of the world, and
 lie!
 Now, come! This lying is no new
 thing.
 The wearers of laces know well how
 to lie,
 As well, ay, better, than you or I . . .
 But they lie for fortune, for fame:
 instead,
 You, child of the street, only lie for
 your bread.

. . . "Some sounds blow in from the
 distant land.
 The bells strike sharp, and as out of
 tune,
 Some sudden, short notes. To the
 east and afar,
 And up from the sea, there is lifting
 a star

As large, my beautiful child, and as
white

And as lovely to see as some lady's
white hand.

The people have melted away with
the night,

And not one gondola frets the
lagoon.

See! Away to the mountain, the
face of morn.

Hear! Away to the sea—'tis the
fisherman's horn.

"'Tis morn in Venice! My child,
adieu!

Arise, sad sister, and go your way;
And as for myself, why, much like
you,

I shall sell the story to who will
pay

And dares to reckon it true and
meet.

Yea, each of us traders, poor child of
pain;

For each must barter for bread to
eat

In a world of trade and an age of
gain;

With just this difference, waif of the
street,

You sell your body, I sell my brain.

"Poor lost little vessel, with never
a keel.

Saint Marks, what a wreck! Lo,
here you reel,

With never a soul to advise or to
care;

All cover'd with sin to the brows and
hair,

You lie like a seaweed, well a-strand;

Blown like the sea-kelp hard on the
shale,

A half-drown'd body, with never a
hand

Reach'd out to help where you falter
and fail:

Left stranded alone to starve and to
die,

Or to sell your body to who may
buy.

"My sister of sin, I will kiss you!
Yea,

I will fold you, hold you close to my
breast;

And here as you rest in your first
fair rest,

As night is push'd back from the face
of day

I will push your heavy, dark heaven
of hair

Well back from your brow, and kiss
you where

Your ruffian, bearded, black men of
crime

Have stung you and stain'd you a
thousand time;

I will call you my sister, sweet child,
and keep

You close to my heart, lest you wake
but to weep.

"I will tenderly kiss you, and I
shall not be

Ashamed, nor yet stain'd in the
least, sweet dove,—

I will tenderly kiss, with the kiss of
Love,

And of Faith, and of Hope, and of
Charity.

Nay, I shall be purer and be better
 then;
 For, child of the street, you, living or
 dead,
 Stain'd to the brows, are purer to
 me
 Ten thousand times than the world
 of men,
 Who reach you a hand but to lead you
 astray,—
 But the dawn is upon us. There!
 go your way.

“And take great courage. Take
 courage and say,
 Of this one Christmas when I am
 away,
 Roving the world and forgetful of
 you,
 That I found you as white as the snow
 and knew
 You but needed a word to keep you
 true.
 When you fall weary and so need
 rest,
 Then find kind words hidden down in
 your breast;
 And if rough men question you,—
 why, then say
 That Madonna sent them. Then
 kneel and pray,
 And pray for me, the worse of the
 two:
 Then God will bless you, sweet child,
 and I
 Shall be the better when I come to die.

“Yea, take great courage, it will be
 as bread;
 Have faith, have faith while this day
 wears through.

Then rising refresh'd, try virtue
 instead;
 Be stronger and better, poor, pitiful
 dear,
 So prompt with a lie, so prompt with
 a tear,
 For the hand grows stronger as the
 heart grows true. . . .
 Take courage my child, for I promise
 you
 We are judged by our chances of life
 and lot;
 And your poor soul may yet pass
 through
 The eye of the needle, where laces
 shall not.

“Sad dove of the dust, with tear-
 wet wings,
 Homeless and lone as the dove from
 its ark,—
 Do you reckon yon angel that tops
 St. Mark,
 That tops the tower, that tops the
 town,
 If he knew us two, if he knew all
 things,
 Would say, or think, you are worse
 than I?
 Do you reckon yon angel, now look-
 ing down,
 Far down like a star, he hangs so
 high,
 Could tell which one were the worse
 of us two?
 Child of the street—it is not you!

“If we two were dead, and laid
 side by side
 Right here on the pavement, this very
 day,

Here under the sun-flushed maiden
 sky,
 Where the morn flows in like a rosy
 tide,
 And the sweet Madonna that stands
 in the moon,
 With her crown of stars, just across
 the lagoon,
 Should come and should look upon
 you and I,—
 Do you reckon, my child, that she
 would decide
 As men do decide and as women do
 say,
 That you are so dreadful, and turn
 away?

“If angels were sent to choose this
 day
 Between us two as we rest here,
 Here side by side in this storied
 place,—
 If angels were sent to choose, I
 say,
 This very moment the best of the
 two,
 You, white with a hunger and stain'd
 with a tear,

Or I, the rover the wide world
 through,
 Restless and stormy as any sea,—
 Looking us two right straight in the
 face,
 Child of the street, he would not
 choose me.

“The fresh sun is falling on turret
 and tower,
 The far sun is flashing on spire and
 dome,
 The marbles of Venice are bursting to
 flower,
 The marbles of Venice are flower and
 foam:
 Good night and good morn; I must
 leave you now.
 There! bear my kiss on your pale, soft
 brow
 Through earth to heaven: and when
 we shall meet
 Beyond the darkness, poor waif of
 the street,
 Why, then I shall know you, my sad,
 sweet dove;
 Shall claim you, and kiss you, with
 the kiss of love.”

COMO

The lakes lay bright as bits of
 broken moon
 Just newly set within the cloven
 earth;
 The ripen'd fields drew round a
 golden girth
 Far up the steeps, and glittered in the
 noon;

And when the sun fell down, from
 leafy shore
 Fond lovers stole in pairs to ply the
 oar;
 The stars, as large as lilies, fleck'd
 the blue;
 From out the Alps the moon came
 wheeling through

The rocky pass the great Napoleon
knew.

A gala night it was,—the season's
prime.
We rode from castled lake to festal
town,
To fair Milan—my friend and I; rode
down
By night, where grasses waved in
rippled rhyme:
And so, what theme but love at such a
time?
His proud lip curl'd the while with
silent scorn
At thought of love; and then, as one
forlorn,
He sigh'd; then bared his temples,
dash'd with gray;
Then mock'd, as one outworn and
well *blasé*.

A gorgeous tiger lily, flaming
red,—
So full of battle, of the trumpets
blare,
Of old-time passion, uprear'd its
head.
I gallop'd past. I lean'd. I clutch'd
it there
From out the stormy grass. I held
it high,
And cried: "Lo! this to-night shall
deck her hair
Through all the dance. And mark!
the man shall die
Who dares assault, for good or ill
design,
The citadel where I shall set this
sign."

O, she shone fairer than the
summer star,
Or curl'd sweet moon in middle
destiny;
More fair than sun-morn climbing up
the sea,
Where all the loves of Adriana
are. . . .
Who loves, who truly loves, will
stand aloof:
The noisy tongue makes most un-
holy proof
Of shallow passion. . . . All the
while afar
From out the dance I stood and
watched my star,
My tiger lily borne, an oriflamme of
war.

Adown the dance she moved with
matchless grace.
The world—my world—moved with
her. Suddenly
I question'd whom her cavalier might
be?
'Twas he! His face was leaning to
her face!
I clutch'd my blade; I sprang, I
caught my breath,—
And so, stood leaning cold and still as
death.
And they stood still. She blushed,
then reach'd and tore
The lily as she passed, and down the
floor
She strew'd its heart like jets of gush-
ing gore. . . .

'Twas he said heads, not hearts
were made to break;

He taught her this that night in
splendid scorn.
I learn'd too well. . . . The dance
was done, ere morn
We mounted—he and I—but no
more spake. . . .
And this for woman's love! My lily
worn
In her dark hair in pride, to then be
torn
And trampled on, for this bold
stranger's sake! . . .
Two men rode silent back toward the
lake;

Two men rode silent down—but only
one
Rode up at morn to meet the rising
sun.

The red-clad fishers row and creep
Below the crags as half asleep,
Nor ever make a single sound.
The walls are steep,
The waves are deep;
And if a dead man should be found
By these same fishers in their round,
Why, who shall say but he was
drown'd?

SUNRISE IN VENICE

Night seems troubled and scarce
asleep;
Her brows are gather'd as in broken
rest.
A star in the east starts up from the
deep!
'Tis morn, new-born, with a star on
her breast,
White as my lilies that grow in the
West!
Hist! men are passing me hurriedly.
I see the yellow, wide wings of a
bark,
Sail silently over my morning star.
I see men move in the moving dark,
Tall and silent as columns are;
Great, sinewy men that are good to
see,
With hair push'd back, and with open
breasts;
Barefooted fishermen seeking their
boats,
Brown as walnuts, and hairy as
goats,—

Brave old water-dogs, wed to the
sea,
First to their labors and last to their
rests.

Ships are moving. I hear a
horn,—
Answers back, and again it calls.
'Tis the sentinel boats that watch the
town
All night, as mounting her watery
walls,
And watching for pirate or smuggler.
Down
Over the sea, and reaching away,
And against the east, a soft light
falls,
Silvery soft as the mist of morn,
And I catch a breath like the breath
of day.

The east is blossoming! Yea, a
rose,
Vast as the heavens, soft as a kiss,

Sweet as the presence of woman is,
Rises and reaches, and widens and
grows
Large and luminous up from the
sea,
And out of the sea as a blossoming
tree.

Richer and richer, so higher and
higher,
Deeper and deeper it takes its
hue;
Brighter and brighter it reaches
through

The space of heaven to the place of
stars.

Then beams reach upward as arms
from the sea;

Then lances and arrows are aimed at
me.

Then lances and spangles and spars
and bars

Are broken and shiver'd and strown
on the sea;

And around and about me tower and
spire

Start from the billows like tongues of
fire.

VALE! AMERICA

Let me rise and go forth. A far,
dim spark
Illumes my path. The light of my
day
Hath fled, and yet am I far away.
The bright, bent moon has dipp'd her
horn
In the darkling sea. High up in the
dark
The wrinkled old lion, he looks away
To the east, and impatient as if for
morn. . . .
I have gone the girdle of earth, and
say,
What have I gain'd but a temple
gray,
Two crow's feet, and a heart for-
lorn?

A star starts yonder like a soul
afraid!
It falls like a thought through the
great profound.

Fearfully swift and with never a
sound,

It fades into nothing, as all things
fade;

Yea, as all things fail. And where is
the leaven

In the pride of a name or a proud
man's nod?

Oh, tiresome, tiresome stairs to
heaven!

Weary, oh, wearysome ways to
God!

'Twere better to sit with the chin on
the palm,

Slow tapping the sand, come storm,
come calm.

I have lived from within and not
from without;

I have drunk from a fount, have fed
from a hand

That no man knows who lives upon
land;

And yet my soul it is crying out.
 I care not a pin for the praise of
 men;
 But I hunger for love. I starve, I
 die,
 Each day of my life. Ye pass me
 by
 Each day, and laugh as ye pass; and
 when
 Ye come, I start in my place as ye
 come,
 And lean, and would speak,—but my
 lips are dumb.

Yon sliding stars and the changeful
 moon. . . .
 Let me rest on the plains of Lombardy
 for aye,
 Or sit down by this Adrian Sea and
 die.
 The days that do seem as some
 afternoon
 They all are here. I am strong and
 true
 To myself; can pluck and could plant
 anew
 My heart, and grow tall; could come
 to be
 Another being; lift bolder hand
 And conquer. Yet ever will come to
 me
 The thought that Italia is not my
 land.

Could I but return to my woods
 once more,
 And dwell in their depths as I have
 dwelt,
 Kneel in their mosses as I have
 knelt,

Sit where the cool white rivers
 run,
 Away from the world and half hid
 from the sun,
 Hear winds in the wood of my storm-
 torn shore,
 To tread where only the red man
 trod,
 To say no word, but listen to God!
 Glad to the heart with listening,—
 It seems to me that I then could
 sing,
 And sing as never sung man before.

But deep-tangled woodland and
 wild waterfall,
 O farewell for aye, till the Judgment
 Day!
 I shall see you no more, O land of
 mine,
 O half-aware land, like a child at
 play!
 O voiceless and vast as the push'd-
 back skies!
 No more, blue seas in the blest
 sunshine,
 No more, black woods where the
 white peaks rise,
 No more, bleak plains where the high
 winds fall,
 Or the red man keeps or the shrill
 birds call!

I must find diversion with another
 kind:
 There are roads on the land, broad
 roads on the sea;
 Take ship and sail, and sail till I
 find
 The love that I sought from etern-
 ity;

Run away from oneself, take ship and
sail

The middle white seas; see turban'd
men,—

Throw thought to the dogs for aye.
And when

All seas are travel'd and all scenes
fail,

Why, then this doubtful, sad gift of
verse

May save me from death—or some-
thing worse.

My hand it is weary, and my harp
unstrung;

And where is the good that I pipe or
sing,

Fashion new notes, or shape any
thing?

The songs of my rivers remain
unsung

Henceforward for me. . . . But a
man shall arise

From the far, vast valleys of the
Occident,

With hand on a harp of gold, and with
eyes

That lift with glory and a proud
intent;

Yet so gentle indeed, that his sad
heartstrings

Shall thrill to the heart of your heart
as he sings.

Let the wind sing songs in the lake-
side reeds,

Lo, I shall be less than the indolent
wind!

Why should I sow, when I reap and
bind

And gather in nothing but the thistle
weeds?

It is best I abide, let what will
befall;

To rest if I can, let time roll by:

Let others endeavor to learn, while
I,

With naught to conceal, with much to
regret,

Shall sit and endeavor, alone, to
forget.

Shall I shape pipes from these
seaside reeds,

And play for the children, that shout
and call?

Lo! men they have mock'd me the
whole year through!

I shall sing no more. . . . I shall
find in old creeds,

And in quaint old tongues, a world
that is new;

And these, I will gather the sweets of
them all.

And the old-time doctrines and the
old-time signs,

I will taste of them all, as tasting old
wines.

I will find new thought, as a new-
found vein

Of rock-lock'd gold in my far, fair
West.

I will rest and forget, will entreat to
be blest;

Take up new thought and again grow
young;

Yea, take a new world as one born
again,

And never hear more mine own
mother tongue;

Nor miss it. Why should I? I
 never once heard,
 In my land's language, love's one
 sweet word.

Did I court fame, or the favor of
 man?
 Make war upon creed, or strike hand
 with clan?
 I sang my songs of the sounding
 trees,
 As careless of name or of fame as the
 seas;
 And these I sang for the love of
 these,
 And the sad sweet solace they
 brought to me.
 I but sang for myself, touch'd here,
 touch'd there,
 As a strong-wing'd bird that flies
 anywhere.

. . . How do I wander! And
 yet why not?
 I once had a song, told a tale in
 rhyme;
 Wrote books, indeed, in my proud
 young prime;
 I aim'd at the heart like a musket
 ball;
 I struck cursed folly like a cannon
 shot,—
 And where is the glory or good of it
 all?
 Yet these did I write for my land, but
 this
 I write for myself,—and it is as it
 is.

Yea, storms have blown counter
 and shaken me.

And yet was I fashion'd for strife, and
 strong
 And daring of heart, and born to
 endure;
 My soul sprang upward, my feet felt
 sure;
 My faith was as wide as a wide-
 bough'd tree.
 But there be limits; and a sense of
 wrong
 Forever before you will make you
 less
 A man, than a man at first would
 guess.

Good men can forgive—and, they
 say, forget . . .
 Far less of the angel than Indian is
 set
 In my fierce nature. And I look
 away
 To a land that is dearer than this, and
 say,
 "I shall remember, though you may
 forget.
 Yea, I shall remember for aye and a
 day
 The keen taunts thrown in a boy face,
 when
 He cried unto God for the love of
 men."

Enough, ay and more than enough,
 of this!
 I know that the sunshine must follow
 the rain;
 And if this be the winter, why spring
 again
 Must come in its season, full
 blossom'd with bliss.

I will lean to the storm, though the
winds blow strong. . . .

Yea, the winds they have blown and
have shaken me—

As the winds blow songs through a
shattered old tree,

They have blown this broken and
careless set song.

They have sung this song, be it
never so bad;

Have blown upon me and play'd upon
me,

Have broken the notes,—blown sad,
blown glad;

Just as the winds blow fierce and
free

A barren, a blighted, and a cursed fig
tree.

And if I grow careless and heed no
whit

Whether it please or what comes of
it,

Why, talk to the winds, then, and not
to me.

.

The quest of love? 'Tis the quest
of troubles;

'Tis the wind through the woods of
the Oregon.

Sit down, sit down, for the world goes
on

Precisely the same; and the rainbow
bubbles

Of love, they gather, or break, or
blow,

Whether you bother your brain or
no;

And for all your troubles and all your
tears,

'Twere just the same in a hundred
years.

By the populous land, or the lone-
some sea,

Lo! these were the gifts of the gods to
men,—

Three miserable gifts, and only
three:

To love, to forget, and to die—and
then?

To love in peril, and bitter-sweet
pain,

And then, forgotten, lie down and
die:

One moment of sun, whole seasons of
rain,

Then night is roll'd to the door of the
sky.

To love? To sit at her feet and to
weep;

To climb to her face, hide your face
in her hair;

To nestle you there like a babe in its
sleep,

And, too, like a babe, to believe—it
stings there!

To love! 'Tis to suffer, "Lie close to
my breast,

Like a fair ship in haven, O darling!"
I cried.

"Your round arms outreaching to
heaven for rest

Make signal to death." Death
came, and love died.

To forget? To forget, mount horse
and clutch sword;

Take ship and make sail to the ice-
prison'd seas,

Write books and preach lies; range
lands; or go hoard
A grave full of gold, and buy wines—
and drink lees:
Then die; and die cursing, and call it
a prayer!
Is earth but a top—a boy-god's
delight,
To be spun for his pleasure, while
man's despair
Breaks out like a wail of the damn'd
through the night?

Sit down in the darkness and weep
with me
On the edge of the world. Lo, love
lies dead!
And the earth and the sky, and the
sky and the sea,
Seem shutting together as a book that
is read.
Yet what have we learn'd? We
laugh'd with delight
In the morning at school, and kept
toying with all
Time's silly playthings. Now
wearied ere night,
We must cry for dark-mother, her
cradle the pall.

'Twere better blow trumpets
'gainst love, keep away
That traitorous urchin with fire or
shower,
Than have him come near you for one
little hour.
Take physic, consult with your doc-
tor, as you
Would fight a contagion; carry all
through

The populous day some drug that
smells loud,
As you pass on your way, or make
way through the crowd.
Talk war, or carouse; only keep off
the day
Of his coming, with every hard means
in your way.

Blow smoke in the eyes of the world
and laugh
With the broad-chested men, as you
loaf at your inn,
As you crowd to your inn from your
saddle and quaff
Red wine from a horn; while your
dogs at your feet,
Your slim spotted dogs, like the fawn,
and as fleet,
Crouch patiently by and look up at
your face,
As they wait for the call of the horn
to the chase;
For you shall not suffer, and you shall
not sin
Until peace goes out just as love
comes in.

Love horses and hounds, meet
many good men—
Yea, men are most proper, and keep
you from care.
There is strength in a horse. There
is pride in his will;
It is sweet to look back as you climb
the steep hill.
There is room. You have movement
of limb; you have air,
Have the smell of the wood, of the
grasses; and then

What comfort to rest, as you lie
 thrown full length
 All night and alone, with your fists
 full of strength!
 Go away, go away with your bitter-
 sweet pain
 Of love; for love is the story of
 troubles,

Of troubles and love, that travel to-
 gether
 The round world round. Behold the
 bubbles
 Of love! Then troubles and turbu-
 lent weather.
 Why, man had all Eden! Then love,
 then Cain!

ROME

I

Some leveled hills, a wall, a dome
 That lords its gold cross to the skies,
 While at its base a beggar cries
 For bread, and dies, and—this is
 Rome.

II

Yet Rome is Rome, and Rome she
 must
 And shall remain beside her gates,
 And tribute take of Kings and
 States,
 Until the stars have fallen to dust.

III

Yea, Time on yon Campagnan
 plain
 Has pitched in siege his battle-tents;
 And round about her battlements
 Has marched and trumpeted in
 vain.

IV

These skies are Rome! The very
 loam
 Lifts up and speaks in Roman pride;
 And Time, outfaced and still defied,
 Sits by and wags his beard at Rome.

ATTILA'S THRONE, TORCELLO

I do recall some sad days spent
 By borders of the Orient,
 'Twould make a tale. It matters not.
 I sought the loneliest seas; I sought
 The solitude of ruins, and forgot
 Mine own life and my littleness
 Before this fair land's mute distress.

Slow sailing through the reedy
 isles,

Some sunny summèr yesterdays,
 I watched the storied yellow sail,
 And lifted prow of steely mail;
 'Tis all that's left Torcello now,—
 A pirate's yellow sail, a prow.

I touch'd Torcello. Once on land,
 I took a sea-shell in my hand,
 And blew like any trumpeter.
 I felt the fig leaves lift and stir

On trees that reach from ruin'd wall
Above my head,—but that was all.
Back from the farther island shore
Came echoes trooping—nothing more.

By cattle paths grass-grown and
worn,
Through marbled streets all stain'd
and torn

By time and battle, lone I walk'd.
A bent old beggar, white as one
For better fruitage blossoming,
Came on. And as he came he talk'd
Unto himself; for there were none
In all his island, old and dim,
To answer back or question him.

I turn'd, retraced my steps once
more.

The hot miasma steam'd and rose
In deadly vapor from the reeds
That grew from out the shallow shore,
Where peasants say the sea-horse
feeds,
And Neptune shapes his horn and
blows.

Yet here stood Adria once, and
here

Attila came with sword and flame,
And set his throne of hollow'd stone
In her high mart. And it remains
Still lord o'er all. Where once the
tears

Of mute petition fell, the rains
Of heaven fall. Lo! all alone
There lifts this massive empty
throne.

I climb'd and sat that throne of
stone

To contemplate, to dream, to reign—
Ay, reign above myself; to call
The people of the past again
Before me as I sat alone
In 'all my kingdom. There were
kine
That browsed along the reedy brine,
And now and then a tusky boar
Would shake the high reeds of the
shore,
A bird blow by,—but that was all.

I watch'd the lonesome sea-gull
pass.

I did remember and forget,—
The past roll'd by; I lived alone.
I sat the shapely, chisell'd stone
That stands in tall, sweet grasses
set;

Ay, girdled deep in long, strong grass,
And green alfalfa. Very fair
The heavens were, and still and
blue,

For Nature knows no changes there.
The Alps of Venice, far away,
Like some half-risen late moon lay.

How sweet the grasses at my feet!
The smell of clover over-sweet.
I heard the hum of bees. The bloom
Of clover-tops and cherry-trees
Was being rifled by the bees,
And these were building in a tomb.
The fair alfalfa—such as has
Usurp'd the Occident, and grows
With all the sweetness of the rose
On Sacramento's sundown hills—
Is there, and that dead island fills
With fragrance. Yet the smell of
death
Comes riding in on every breath.

That sad, sweet fragrance. It had
 sense,
 And sound, and voice. It was a
 part
 Of that which had possess'd my
 heart,
 And would not of my will go hence,
 'Twas Autumn's breath; sad as the
 kiss
 Of some sweet worshipp'd woman is.

Some snails had climb'd the throne
 and writ
 Their silver monograms on it
 In unknown tongues. I sat thereon,
 I dream'd until the day was gone;
 I blew again my pearly shell,—
 Blew long and strong, and loud and
 well;

I puff'd my cheeks, I blew as when
 Horn'd satyrs piped and danced as
 men.

Some mouse-brown cows that fed
 within
 Look'd up. A cowherd rose hard by,
 My single subject, clad in skin,
 Nor yet half-clad. I caught his eye,—
 He stared at me, then turn'd and
 fled.

He frighten'd fled, and as he ran,
 Like wild beast from the face of man
 Back o'er his shoulder threw his head.
 He stopp'd, and then this subject
 true,
 Mine only one in all the isle,
 Turn'd round, and, with a fawning
 smile,
 Came back and ask'd me for a *soul*

VENICE

City at sea, thou art surely an ark,
 Sea-blown and a-wreck in the rain
 and dark,
 Where the white sea-caps are so toss'd
 and curl'd.
 Thy sins they were many—and be-
 hold the flood!
 And here and about us are beasts in
 stud.
 Creatures and beasts that creep and
 go,
 Enough, ay, and wicked enough I
 know,
 To populate, or devour, a world.

O wrinkled old lion, looking down
 With brazen frown upon mine and me,

From tower a-top of your watery
 town,
 Old king of the desert, once king of
 the sea:
 List! here is a lesson for thee to-day.
 Proud and immovable monarch, I
 say,
 Lo! here is a lesson to-day for thee,
 Of the things that were and the things
 to be.

Dank palaces held by the populous
 sea
 For the good dead men, all cover'd
 with shell,—
 We will pay them a visit some day;
 and we,

We may come to love their old
palaces well.

Bah! toppled old columns all tumbled
across,

Toss'd in the waters that lift and fall,
Waving in waves long masses of
moss,

Toppled old columns,—and that will
be all.

I know you, lion of gray Saint
Mark;

You flutter'd all seas beneath your
wing.

Now, over the deep, and up in the
dark,

High over the girdles of bright
gaslight,

With wings in the air as if for
flight,

And crouching as if about to spring
From top of your granite of Africa,—
Say, what shall be said of you some
day?

What shall be said, O grim Saint
Mark,

Savage old beast so cross'd and
churl'd,

By the after-men from the under-
world?

What shall be said as they search
along

And sail these seas for some sign or
spark

Of the old dead fires of the dear old
days,

When men and story have gone their
ways,

Or even your city and name from
song?

Why, sullen old monarch of still'd
Saint Mark,

Strange men of my West, wise-
mouth'd and strong,

Will come some day and, gazing
long

And mute with wonder, will say of
thee:

“This is the Saint! High over the
dark,

Foot on the Bible and great teeth
bare,

Tail whipp'd back and teeth in the
air—

Lo! this is the Saint, and none but
he!”

A HAILSTORM IN VENICE

The hail like cannon-shot struck
the sea

And churn'd it white as a creamy
foam;

Then hail like battle-shot struck
where we

Stood looking a-sea from a sea-girt
home—

Came shooting askance as if shot at
the head;

Then glass flew shiver'd and men fell
down

And pray'd where they fell, and the
gray old town

Lay riddled and helpless as if shot
dead.

Then lightning right full in the
eyes! and then
Fair women fell down flat on the
face,
And pray'd their pitiful Mother with
tears,
And pray'd black death as a hiding-
place;

And good priests pray'd for the sea-
bound men
As never good priests had pray'd for
years. . . .
Then God spake thunder! And then
the rain!
The great, white, beautiful, high-
born rain!

SANTA MARIA: TORCELLO

And yet again through the watery
miles
Of reeds I row'd, till the desolate
isles
Of the black-bead makers of Venice
were not.
I touch'd where a single sharp tower is
shot
To heaven, and torn by thunder and
rent
As if it had been Time's battlement.
A city lies dead, and this great grave-
stone
Stands on its grave like a ghost
alone.

Some cherry-trees grow here, and
here
An old church, simple and severe
In ancient aspect, stands alone
Amid the ruin and decay, all grown
In moss and grasses. Old and
quaint,
With antique cuts of martyr'd
saint,
The gray church stands with stooping
knees,
Defying the decay of seas.

Her pictured hell, with flames
blown high,
In bright mosaics wrought and
set
When men first knew the Nubian
art;
Her bearded saints as black as
jet;
Her quaint Madonna, dim with
rain
And touch of pious lips of pain,
So touch'd my lonesome soul, that I
Gazed long, then came and gazed
again,
And loved, and took her to my
heart.

Nor monk in black, nor Capucin,
Nor priest of any creed was seen.
A sunbrown'd woman, old and
tall,
And still as any shadow is,
Stole forth from out the mossy wall
With massive keys to show me
this:
Came slowly forth, and, following,
Three birds—and all with drooping
wing.

Three mute brown babes of hers;
 and they—
 Oh, they were beautiful as sleep,
 Or death, below the troubled deep!
 And on the pouting lips of these,
 Red corals of the silent seas,
 Sweet birds, the everlasting seal
 Of silence that the God has set
 On this dead island sits for aye.

I would forget, yet not forget
 Their helpless eloquence. They
 creep
 Somehow into my heart, and keep
 One bleak, cold corner, jewel set.
 They steal my better self away
 To them, as little birds that day
 Stole fruits from out the cherry-
 trees.

So helpless and so wholly still,
 So sad, so wrapt in mute surprise,

That I did love, despite my will.
 One little maid of ten—such eyes,
 So large and lovely, so divine!
 Such pouting lips, such pearly cheek
 Did lift her perfect eyes to mine,
 Until our souls did touch and
 speak—
 Stood by me all that perfect day,
 Yet not one sweet word could she
 say.

She turn'd her melancholy eyes
 So constant to my own, that I
 Forgot the going clouds, the sky;
 Found fellowship, took bread and
 wine:
 And so her little soul and mine
 Stood very near together there.
 And oh, I found her very fair!
 Yet not one soft word could she
 say:
 What did she think of all that day?

IN A GONDOLA

'Twas night in Venice. Then down
 to the tide,
 Where a tall and a shadowy gondo-
 lier
 Lean'd on his oar, like a lifted
 spear;—
 'Twas night in Venice; then side by
 side
 We sat in his boat. Then oar
 a-trip
 On the black boat's keel, then dip
 and dip,
 These boatmen should build their
 boats more wide,

For we were together, and side by
 side.

The sea it was level as seas of
 light,
 As still as the light ere a hand was
 laid
 To the making of lands, or the seas
 were made.
 'Twas fond as a bride on her bridal
 night
 When a great love swells in her soul
 like a sea,
 And makes her but less than divinity.

'Twas night,—The soul of the day, I
wis.

A woman's face hiding from her first
kiss.

. . Ah, how one wanders! Yet
after it all,

To laugh at all lovers and to learn to
scoff. . . .

When you really have naught of
account to say,

It is better, perhaps, to pull leaves by
the way;

Watch the round moon rise, or the red
stars fall;

And then, too, in Venice! dear, moth-
eaten town;

One palace of pictures; great frescoes
spill'd down

Outside the walls from the fullness
thereof:—

'Twas night in Venice. On o'er
the tide—

These boats they are narrow as they
can be,

These crafts they are narrow enough,
and we,

To balance the boat, sat side by
side—

Out under the arch of the Bridge of
Sighs,

On under the arch of the star-sown
skies;

We two were together on the Adrian
Sea,—

The one fair woman of the world to
me.

THE CAPUCIN OF ROME

Only a basket for fruits or bread
And the bits you divide with your
dog, which you

Had left from your dinner. The
round year through

He never once smiles. He bends his
head

To the scorn of men. He gives the
road

To the grave ass groaning beneath his
load.

He is ever alone. Lo! never a hand
Is laid in his hand through the whole
wide land,

Save when a man dies, and he shrives
him home.

And that is the Capucin monk of
Rome.

He coughs, he is hump'd, and he
hobbles about

In sandals of wood. Then a hempen
cord

Girdles his loathsome gown.
Abhorr'd!

Ay, lonely, indeed, as a leper cast
out.

One gown in three years! and—bah!
how he smells!

He slept last night in his coffin of
stone,

This monk that coughs, this skin
and bone,

This living dead corpse from the
damp, cold cells,—

Go ye where the Pincian, half-level'd
down,

Slopes slow to the south. These
 men in brown
 Have a monkery there, quaint,
 builded of stone;
 And, living or dead, 'tis the brown
 men's home,—
 These dead brown monks who are
 living in Rome!

You will hear wood sandals on the
 sanded floor;
 A cough, then the lift of a latch, then
 the door
 Groans open, and—horror! Four
 walls of stone
 All gorgeous with flowers and frescoes
 of bone!
 There are bones in the corners and
 bones on the wall;
 And he barks like a dog that watches
 his bone,
 This monk in brown from his bed of
 stone—
 He barks, and he coughs, and that is
 all.
 At last he will cough as if up from his
 cell;
 Then strut with considerable pride
 about,
 And lead through his blossoms of
 bone, and smell
 Their odors; then talk, as he points
 them out,
 Of the virtues and deeds of the gents
 who wore
 The respective bones but the year
 before.

Then he thaws at last, ere the bones
 are through,

And talks right well as he turns them
 about
 And stirs up a most unsavory smell;
 Yea, talks of his brown dead brothers,
 till you
 Wish them, as they are, no doubt, in
 —well,
 A very deep well. . . . And that may
 be why,
 As he shows you the door and bows
 good-by,
 That he bows so low for a franc or
 two,
 To shrive their souls and to get them
 out—
 These bony brown men who have
 their home,
 Dead or alive, in their cells at
 Rome.

What good does he do in the world?
 Ah! well,
 Now that is a puzzler. . . . But,
 listen! He prays.
 His life is the fast of the forty days.
 He seeks the despised; he divides the
 bread
 That he begg'd on his knees, does this
 old shavehead.
 And then, when the thief and the
 beggar fell!
 And then, when the terrible plague
 came down,
 Christ, how we cried to these men in
 brown
 When other men fled! Ah, who then
 was seen
 Stand firm to the death like the
 Capucin?

FROM SHADOWS OF SHASTA, 1881

MOUNT SHASTA

To lord all Godland! lift the brow
Familiar to the moon, to top
The universal world, to prop
The hollow heavens up, to vow
Stern constancy with stars, to
keep
Eternal watch while eons sleep;
To tower proudly up and touch
God's purple garment-hems that
sweep
The cold blue north! Oh, this were
much!

Where storm-born shadows hide and
hunt
I knew thee, in thy glorious youth,
And loved thy vast face, white as truth.
I stood where thunderbolts were wont
To smite thy Titan-fashioned front,
And heard dark mountains rock and
roll;
I saw the lighting's gleaming rod
Reach forth and write on heaven's
scroll
The awful autograph of God!

A LAND THAT MAN HAS NEWLY TROD

A land that man has newly trod,
A land that only God has known,
Through all the soundless cycles
flown.
Yet perfect blossoms bless the sod,
And perfect birds illumine the
trees
And perfect unheard harmonies
Pour out eternally to God.

A thousand miles of mighty wood
Where thunder-storms stride fire-
shod;
A thousand flowers every rod,
A stately tree on every rood;
Ten thousand leaves on every tree,
And each a miracle to me;
And yet there be men who question
God!

THE MOUNTAINS

The mountains from that fearful first
Named day were God's own house.
Behold,
'Twas here dread Sinai's thunders
burst

And showed His face. 'Twas here of
old
His prophets dwelt. Lo, it was here
The Christ did come when death drew
near.

Give me God's wondrous upper world
That makes familiar with the moon;
These stony altars, they have hurled

Oppression back, have kept the boon
Of liberty. Behold, how free
The mountains stand, and eternally.

FOR THE RIGHT

"For the Right! as God has given
Man to see the Maiden Right!"
For the Right, through thickest
night,
Till the man-brute Wrong be driven
From high places; till the Right
Shall lift like some grand beacon
light.

For the Right! Love, Right and
Duty;
Lift the world up, though you
fall
Heaped with dead before the wall;
God can find a soul of beauty
Where it falls, as gems of worth
Are found by miners dark in earth.

O, THE MOCKERY OF PITY

O, the mockery of pity!
Weep with fragrant handker-
chief,
In pompous luxury of grief,
Selfish, hollow-hearted city?

O these money-getting times!
What's a heart for? What's a
hand,
But to seize and shake the land,
Till it tremble for its crimes?

O TRANQUIL MOON

O tranquil moon! O pitying moon!
Put forth thy cool, protecting
palms,
And cool their eyes with cooling
alms,
Against the burning tears of noon.

O saintly, noiseless-footed nun!
O sad-browed patient mother, keep
Thy homeless children while they
sleep,
And kiss them, weeping, every
one.

LOG CABIN LINES

THE SOLDIERS' HOME, WASHINGTON

The monument, tipped with electric fire,
Blazed high in a halo of light below
My low cabin door in the hills that inspire;
And the dome of the Capitol gleamed like snow
In a glory of light, as higher and higher
This wondrous creation of man was sent
To challenge the lights of the firmament.

A tall man, tawny and spare as bone,
With battered old hat and with feet half bare,
With the air of a soldier that was all his own—
Aye, something more than a soldier's air—
Came clutching a staff, with a face like stone;
Limped in through my gate—and I thought to beg—
Tight clutching a staff, slow dragging a leg.

The bent new moon, like a simitar,
Kept peace in Heaven. All earth lay still.
Some sentinel stars stood watch afar,

Some crickets kept clanging along the hill,
As the tall, stern relic of blood and war
Limped in, and, with hand up to brow half raised,
Limped up, looked about, as one dazed or crazed.

His gaunt face pleading for food and rest,
His set lips white as a tale of shame,
His black coat tight to a shirtless breast,
His black eyes burning in mine-like flame;
But never a word from his set lips came
As he whipped in line his battered old leg,
And his knees made mouths, and as if to beg.

Aye! black were his eyes; but doubtful and dim
Their vision of beautiful earth, I think.
And I doubt if the distant, dear worlds to him
Were growing brighter as he neared the brink
Of dolorous seas where phantom ships swim.

For his face was as hard as the hard,
thin hand
That clutched that staff like an iron
band.

“Sir, I am a soldier!” The battered
old hat
Stood up as he spake, like to one on
parade—
Stood taller and braver as he spake
out that—
And the tattered old coat, that was
tightly laid
To the battered old breast, looked so
trim thereat
That I knew the mouths of the bat-
tered old leg
That had opened wide were not made
to beg.

“I have wandered and wandered
this twenty year,
Searched up and down for my regi-
ments.
Have they gone to that field where no
foes appear?
Have they pitched in Heaven their
cloud-white tents?
Or, tell me, my friend, shall I find
them here
On the hill beyond, at the Soldiers'
Home,
Where the weary soldiers have ceased
to roam?

“Aye, I am a soldier and a briga-
dier;
Is this the way to the Soldiers' Home?
There is plenty and rest for us all, I
hear,

And a bugler, bidding us cease to
roam,
Rides over the hill all the livelong
year—
Rides calling and calling the brave to
come
And rest and rest in that Soldier's
Home.

“Is this, sir, the way? I wandered
in here
Just as one oft will at the close of day.
Aye, I am a soldier, and a brigadier!
Now, the Soldiers' Home, sir. Is
this the way?
I have wandered and wandered this
twenty year,
Seeking some trace of my regiments
Sabered and riddled and torn to rents.

“Aye, I am a soldier and a briga-
dier!
A battered old soldier in the dusk of
his day;
But you don't seem to heed, or you
don't seem to hear,
Though, meek as I may, I ask for the
way
To the Soldiers' Home, which must
be quite near,
While under your oaks, in your easy
chair,
You sit and you sit, and you stare
and you stare.

“What battle? What deeds did I
do in the fight?
Why, sir, I have seen green fields
turn as red
As yonder red town in that marvelous
light!

Then the great blazing guns! Then
the ghastly white dead—
But, tell me, I faint, I must cease to
roam!

This battered leg aches! Then this
sabered old head—

Is—*is* this the way to the Soldiers'
Home?

“Why, I hear men say 't is a Para-
dise

On the green oak hills by the great
red town;

That many old comrades shall meet
my eyes;

That a tasseled young trooper rides
up and rides down,

With bugle horn blowing to the still
blue skies,

Rides calling and calling us to rest
and to stay

In that Soldiers' Home. Sir, is this
the way?

“My leg is so lame! Then this
sabered old head—

Ah! pardon me, sir, I never complain;
But the road is so rough, as I just
now said;

And then there is this something that
troubles my brain.

It makes the light dance from yon
Capitol's dome;

It makes the road dim as I doubtfully
tread—

And—sir, *is* this the way to the
Soldiers' Home?

“From the first to the last in that
desperate war—

Why, I did my part. If I did not fall,

A hair's breadth measure of this skull-
bone scar

Was all that was wanting; and then
this ball—

But what cared I? Ah! better by far
Have a sabered old head and a shat-
tered old kneec

To the end, than not had the praise
of Lee——

“What! What do I hear? No
home there for me?

Why, I heard men say that the war
was at end!

Oh, my head swims so: and I scarce
can see!

But a soldier's a soldier, I think, my
friend,

Wherever that soldier may chance to
be!

And wherever a soldier may chance to
roam,

Why, a Soldiers' Home is a soldier's
home!”

He turned as to go; but he sank to
the grass;

And I lifted my face to the firmament;
For I saw a sentinel white star

pass,
Leading the way the old soldier

went.

And the light shone bright from the
Capitol's dome,

Ah, brighter from Washington's
monument,

Lighting his way to the Soldiers,
Home.

THE CABIN, Washington, D. C.

OLIVE

Dove-borne symbol, olive bough;
 Dove-hued sign from God to men,
 As if still the dove and thou
 Kept companionship as then.

Dove-hued, holy branch of peace,
 Antique, all-enduring tree;
 Deluge and the floods surcease—
 Deluge and Gethsemane.

THE BATTLE FLAG AT SHENANDOAH

The tented field wore a wrinkled
 frown,
 And the emptied church from the hill
 looked down
 On the emptied road and the emptied
 town,
 That summer Sunday morning.

And here was the blue, and there
 was the gray;
 And a wide green valley rolled away
 Between where the battling armies
 lay,
 That sacred Sunday morning.

And Custer sat, with impatient
 will,
 His restless horse, 'mid his troopers
 still,
 As he watched with glass from the
 oak-set hill,
 That silent Sunday morning.

Then fast he began to chafe and to
 fret;
 "There's a battle flag on a bayonet
 Too close to my own true soldiers set
 For peace this Sunday morning!"

"Ride over, some one," he haught-
 ily said,

"And bring it to me! Why, in bars
 blood red
 And in stars I will stain it, and over-
 head
 Will flaunt it this Sunday morning!"

Then a West-born lad, pale-faced
 and slim,
 Rode out, and touching his cap to
 him,
 Swept down, swept swift as Spring
 swallows swim,
 That anxious Sunday morning.

On, on through the valley! up, up,
 anywhere!
 That pale-faced lad like a bird
 through the air
 Kept on till he climbed to the banner
 there
 That bravest Sunday morning!

And he caught up the flag, and
 around his waist
 He wound it tight, and he turned in
 haste,
 And swift his perilous route retraced
 That daring Sunday morning.

All honor and praise to the trusty
 steed!

Ah! boy, and banner, and all God
 speed!
 God's pity for you in your hour of
 need
 This deadly Sunday morning.

O, deadly shot! and O, shower of
 lead!
 O, iron rain on the brave, bare
 head!
 Why, even the leaves from the trees
 fall dead
 This dreadful Sunday morning!

But he gains the oaks! Men cheer
 in their might!
 Brave Custer is laughing in his de-
 light!

Why, he is embracing the boy outright
 This glorious Sunday morning!

But, soft! Not a word has the pale
 boy said.
 He unwinds the flag. It is starred,
 striped, red
 With his heart's best blood; and he
 falls down dead,
 In God's still Sunday morning.

So, wrap this flag to his soldier's
 breast:
 Into stars and stripes it is stained and
 blest;
 And under the oaks let him rest and
 rest
 Till God's great Sunday morning.

THE LOST REGIMENT

The dying land cried; they heard
 her death-call,
 These bent old men stopped, listened
 intent;
 Then rusty old muskets rushed down
 from the wall,
 And squirrel-guns gleamed in that
 regiment,
 And grandsires marched, old muskets
 in hand—
 The last men left in the old South-
 land.

The gray grandsires! They were
 seen to reel,
 Their rusty old muskets a wearisome
 load;
 They marched, scarce tall as the
 cannon's wheel,

Marched stooping on up the corduroy
 road;
 These gray old boys, all broken and
 bent,
 Marched out, the gallant last regi-
 ment.

But oh! that march through the
 cypress trees,
 When zest and excitement had died
 away!
 That desolate march through the
 marsh to the knees—
 The gray moss mantling the battered
 and gray—
 These gray grandsires all broken and
 bent—
 The gray moss mantling the regi-
 ment.

The gray bent men and the mosses
 gray;
 The dull dead gray of the uniform!
 The dull dead skies, like to lead that
 day,
 Dull, dead, heavy and deathly warm!
 Oh, what meant more than the cy-
 press meant,
 With its mournful moss, to that regi-
 ment?

That deadly march through the
 marshes deep!
 That sultry day and the deeds in
 vain!
 The rest on the cypress roots, the
 sleep—
 The sleeping never to rise again!
 The rust on the guns; the rust and
 the rent—
 That dying and desolate regiment!

The muskets left leaning against
 the trees,
 The cannon-wheels clogged from the
 moss o'er head,
 The cypress trees bending on obsti-
 nate knees
 As gray men kneeling by the gray
 men dead!
 A lone bird rising, long legged and
 gray,
 Slow rising and rising and drifting
 away.

The dank dead mosses gave back
 no sound,
 The drums lay silent as the drummers
 there;
 The sultry stillness it was so profound

You might have heard an unuttered
 prayer;
 And ever and ever and far away,
 Kept drifting that desolate bird in
 gray.

The long gray shrouds of that cy-
 press wood,
 Like veils that sweep where the gray
 nuns weep—
 That cypress moss o'er the dankness
 deep,
 Why, the cypress roots they were
 running blood;
 And to right and to left lay an old
 man dead—
 A mourning cypress set foot and head.

'Twas man hunting man in the
 wilderness there;
 'Twas man hunting man and hunting
 to slay,
 But nothing was found but death
 that day,
 And possibly God—and that bird in
 gray
 Slow rising and rising and drifting
 away.

Now down in the swamp where the
 gray men fell
 The fireflies volley and volley at
 night,
 And black men belated are heard to
 tell
 Of the ghosts in gray in a mimic
 —fight
 Of the ghosts of the gallant old men
 in gray
 Who silently died in the swamp that
 day.

NEWPORT NEWS

The huge sea monster, the "Merri-
mac";
The mad sea monster, the "Moni-
tor";
You may sweep the sea, peer forward
and back,
But never a sign or a sound of
war.
A vulture or two in the heavens
blue;
A sweet town building, a boatman's
call:
The far sea-song of a pleasure
crew;
The sound of hammers. And that is
all.

And where are the monsters that
tore this main?
And where are the monsters that
shook this shore?
The sea grew mad! And the shore
shot flame!
The mad sea monsters they are no
more.
The palm, and the pine, and the sea
sands brown;
The far sea songs of the pleasure
crews;
The air like balm in this building
town—
And that is the picture of Newport
News.

THE COMING OF SPRING

My own and my only Love some
night
Shall keep her tryst, shall come from
the South,
And oh, her robe of magnolia white!
And oh, and oh, the breath of her
mouth!

And oh, her grace in the grasses
sweet!
And oh, her love in the leaves new
born!
And oh, and oh, her lily-white feet
Set daintily down in the dew-wet
morn!

The drowsy cattle at night shall
kneel
And give God thanks, and shall dream
and rest;

The stars slip down and a golden seal
Be set on the meadows my Love has
blest.

Come back, my Love, come sud-
den, come soon.
The world lies waiting as the cold
dead lie;
The frightened winds wail and the
crisp-curved moon
Rides, wrapped in clouds, up the cold
gray sky.

Oh, Summer, my Love, my first,
last Love!
I sit all day by Potomac here,
Waiting and waiting the voice of the
dove;
Waiting my darling, my own, my dear.

THE CABIN, Washington, D. C.

SUMMER MOONS AT MOUNT VERNON

Such musky smell of maiden night!
 Such bridal bough, like orange tree!
 Such wondrous stars! Yon lily
 moon
 Seems like some long-lost afternoon!

More perfect than a string of pearls
 We hold the full days of the year;
 The days troop by like flower girls,
 And all the days are ours here.

Here youth must learn; here age may
 live
 Full tide each day the year can give.

No frosted wall, no frozen hasp,
 Shuts Nature's book from us today;
 Her palm leaves lift too high to clasp;
 Her college walls, the milky way.
 The light is with us! Read and lead!
 The larger book, the loftier deed!

THE POEM BY THE POTOMAC

Paine! The Prison of France!
 • Lafayette!
 The Bastile key to our Washington,
 Whose feet on the necks of tyrants
 set
 Shattered their prisons every one.
 The key hangs here on his white walls
 high,
 That all shall see, that none shall
 forget
 What tyrants have been, what they
 may be yet;
 And the Potomac rolling by.

On Washington's walls let it rust
 and rust,
 And tell its story of blood and of tears,
 That Time still holds to the Poet's
 trust,
 To people his pages for years and
 years.
 The monstrous shape on the white
 walls high,
 Like a thief in chains let it rot and
 rust—
 Its kings and adorers crowned in dust:
 And the Potomac rolling by.

WASHINGTON BY THE DELAWARE

The snow was red with patriot
 blood,
 The proud foe tracked the blood-red
 snow.
 The flying patriots crossed the flood
 A tattered, shattered band of woc.
 Forlorn each barefoot hero stood,
 With bare head bended low.

"Let us cross back! Death waits
 us here:
 Recross or die!" the chieftain said.
 A famished soldier dropped a tear—
 A tear that froze as it was shed:
 For oh, his starving babes were
 dear—
 They had but this for bread!

A captain spake: "It cannot be!
 These bleeding men, why, what could
 they?
 'Twould be as snowflakes in a sea!"
 The worn chief did not heed or say.
 He set his firm lips silently,
 Then turned aside to pray.

And as he kneeled and prayed to
 God,
 God's finger spun the stars in space;
 He spread his banner blue and broad,
 He dashed the dead sun's stripes in
 place,
 Till war walked heaven fire shod
 And lit the chieftain's face:

Till every soldier's heart was stirred,
 Till every sword shook in its sheath—
 "Up! up! Face back. But not one
 word!"

God's flag above; the ice beneath—
 They crossed so still, they only heard
 The icebergs grinding their teeth!

Ho! Hessians, hirelings at meat
 While praying patriots hunger so!
 Then, bang! Boom! Bang! Death
 and defeat!
 And blood? Ay, blood upon the
 snow!
 Yet not the blood of patriot feet,
 But heart's blood of the foe!

O ye who hunger and despair!
 O ye who perish for the sun,
 Look up and dare, for God is there;
 And man can do what man has
 done!
 Think, think of darkling Delaware!
 Think, think of Washington!

THE BRAVEST BATTLE

The bravest battle that ever was
 fought;

Shall I tell you where and when?
 On the maps of the world you will
 find it not;
 It was fought by the mothers of
 men.

Nay, not with cannon or battle shot,
 With sword or braver pen;
 Nay, not with eloquent word or
 thought,
 From mouths of wonderful men.

But deep in a woman's walled-up
 heart—

Of woman that would not yield,
 But patiently, silently bore her part—
 Lo! there in that battle-field.

No marshaling troop, no bivouac
 song;
 No banners to gleam and wave;
 And oh! these battles they last so
 long—
 From babyhood to the grave!

Yet, faithful still as a bridge of stars,
 She fights in her walled-up town—
 Fights on and on in the endless
 wars,
 Then silent, unseen—goes down.

THE ULTIMATE WEST

*My Mountains still are free!
They hurl oppression back;
They keep the boon of liberty.*

TO JUANITA

You will come my bird, Bonita?
Come! For I by steep and stone
Have built such nest for you, Juanita,
As not eagle bird hath known.

Rugged! Rugged as Parnassus!
Rude, as all roads I have trod—
Yet are steeps and stone-strewn
 passes
Smooth o'erhead, and nearest God.

Here black thunders of my cañon
Shake its walls in Titan wars!
Here white sea-born clouds com-
 panion
With such peaks as know the stars!

Here madrona, manzanita—
Here the snarling chaparral
House and hang o'er steeps, Juanita,
Where the gaunt wolf loved to dwell!

Dear, I took these trackless masses
Fresh from Him who fashioned them;
Wrought in rock, and hewed fair
 passes,
Flower set, as sets a gem.

Aye, I built in woe. God willed it;
Woe that passeth ghosts of guilt;

Yet I built as His birds builded—
Builded, singing as I built.

All is finished! Roads of flowers
Wait your loyal little feet.
All completed? Nay, the hours
Till you come are incomplete.

Steep below me lies the valley,
Deep below me lies the town,
Where great sea-ships ride and rally,
And the world walks up and down.

O, the sea of lights far streaming
When the thousand flags are furled—
When the gleaming bay lies dreaming
As it duplicates the world!

You will come, my dearest, truest?
Come my sovereign queen of ten;
My blue skies will then be bluest;
My white rose be whitest then:

Then the song! Ah, then the saber
Flashing up the walls of night!
Hate of wrong and love of neighbor—
Rhymes of battle for the Right!

THE HIGHTS, CAL.

CALIFORNIA'S RESURRECTION

The rain! The rain! The generous
rain!

All things are his who knows to
wait.

Behold the rainbow bends again

Above the storied, gloried Gate—
God's written covenant to men
In Tyrian tints on cloth of gold,
Such as no tongue or pen hath
told!

Behold brown grasses where you
pass—

A sleeping lion's tawny mane,

Brown-breasted Mother Earth in
pain

Of travail—God's forgiving grass
Long three days dead to rise again
To lead us upward, on and on—
Each blade a shining saber drawn.

Behold His Covenant is true!

Lo! California soon shall wear
About her ample breast each hue
That yonder hangs high-arched
mid air!

Behold the very grasses knew!

Behold the Resurrection is!

Behold what witness like to this?

PLEASANT TO THE SIGHT

"And God planted a garden eastward in Eden wherein He caused to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight and good for food."

Behold the tree, the lordly tree,
That fronts the four winds of the
storm,

A fearless and defiant form
That mocks wild winter merrily!
Behold the beauteous, budding tree
With censers swinging in the air,
With arms in attitude of prayer,
With myriad leaves, and every leaf
A miracle of color, mold,
More gorgeous than a house of
gold!

Each leaf a poem of God's plan,
Each leaf as from His book of old
To build, to bastion man's belief:
Man's love of God, man's love of man.

Aye, love His trees, leaf, trunk, or
root,

The comely, stately, upright grace
That greets God's rain with lifted
face;

The great, white beauteous, high-
born rain

That rides as white sails ride the main,
That wraps alike leaf, trunk or shoot,
When sudden thunder lights his
torch

And strides high Heaven's ample
porch.

Aye, love God's tree, leaf, branch and
root.

For God set first the pleasant tree;
The "good for food" came tardily.
The poor, blind hog knows but the
fruit,

And wallows in his fat and dies,
A hog, up to his very eyes.

THE TREES

The trees they lean'd in their love
unto trees,
That lock'd in their loves, and were
so made strong,

Stronger than armies; ay, stronger
than seas
That rush from their caves in a
storm of song.

A HARD ROW FOR STUMPS

You ask for manliest, martial deeds?
Go back to Ohio's natal morn—
Go back to Kentucky's fields of
corn;

Just weeds and stumps and stumps
and weeds!

Just red men blazing from stump and
tree

Where buckskin'd prophets 'midst
strife and stress

Came crying, came dying in the
wilderness,

That hard, first, cruel half-century!

What psalms they sang! what prayers
they said,

Cabin or camp, as the wheels
rolled west;

Silently leaving their bravest,
best—

Paving a Nation's path with their
dead!

What unnamed battles! what thumps
and bumps!

What saber slashes with the broad,
bright hoe!

What weeds in phalanx! what
stumps in row!

What rank vines fortified in rows
of stumps!

Just stumps and nettles and weed-
choked corn

Tiptoeing to wave but one blade in
air!

Dank milkweed here, and rank
burdock there

Besieging and storming that blade
forlorn!

Such weed-bred fevers, slow sapping
the brave—

The homesick heart and the aching
head!

The hoe and the hoe, 'till the man
lay dead

And the great west wheels rolled over
his grave.

And the saying grew, as sayings will
grow

From hard endeavor and bangs and
bumps:

"He got in a mighty hard row of
stumps;

But he tried, and died trying to hoe
his row."

O braver and brighter this ten-pound
hoe,

Than brightest, broad saber of
Waterloo!

Nor ever fell soldier more truly true

Than he who died trying to hoe his
row.

The weeds are gone and the stumps
are gone—

The huge hop-toad and the copper-
head,

And a million bent sabers flash
triumph instead

From stately, clean corn in the
diamond-sown dawn.

But the heroes have vanished, save
here and there,

Far out and afield like some storm-
riven tree,

Leans a last survivor of Ther-
mopylæ,

Leafless and desolate, lone and bare.

His hands are weary, put by the hoe;

His ear is dull and his eyes are dim.

Give honor to him and give place
for him,

For he bled and he led us, how long
ago!

And ye who inherit the fields he won,
Lorn graves where the Wabash
slips away,

Go fashion green parks where your
babes may play

Unhindered of stumps or of weeds in
sun.

I have hewn some weeds, swung a
heavy, broad hoe—

Such weeds! such a mighty hard
row for stumps!

Such up-hill struggles, such down-
hill slumps

As you, please God, may never once
know!

But the sea lies yonder, just a league
below,

All down-hill now, and I go my
way—

Not far to go, and not much to say,
Save that I tried, tried to hoe my row.

THE GOLD THAT GREW BY SHASTA TOWN

From Shasta town to Redding town

The ground is torn by miners dead;

The manzanita, rank and red,

Drops dusty berries up and down

Their grass-grown trails. Their silent
mines

Are wrapped in chaparral and vines;

Yet one gray miner still sits down

'Twixt Redding and sweet Shasta
town.

The quail pipes pleasantly. The
hare

Leaps careless o'er the golden oat

That grows below the water moat;

The lizard basks in sunlight there.

The brown hawk swims the perfumed
air

Unfrightened through the livelong
day;

And now and then a curious bear

Comes shuffling down the ditch by
night,

And leaves some wide, long tracks in
clay

So human-like, so stealthy light,

Where one lone cabin still stoops
down
'Twixt Redding and sweet Shasta
town.

That great graveyard of hopes! of
men

Who sought for hidden veins of gold;
Of young men suddenly grown old—
Of old men dead, despairing when
The gold was just within their hold!
That storied land, whereon the light
Of other days gleams faintly still;
Somelike the halo of a hill
That lifts above the falling night;
That warm, red, rich and human
land,

That flesh-red soil, that warm red
sand,
Where one gray miner still sits down!
'Twixt Redding and sweet Shasta
town!

"I know the vein is here!" he said;
For twenty years, for thirty years!
While far away fell tears on tears
From wife and babe who mourned
him dead.

No gold! No gold! And he grew
old

And crept to toil with bended head
Amid a graveyard of his dead,
Still seeking for that vein of gold.

Then lo, came laughing down the
years

A sweet grandchild! Between his
tears

He laughed. He set her by the door
The while he toiled; his day's toil o'er
He held her chubby cheeks between

His hard palms, laughed; and laugh-
ing cried.

You should have seen, have heard
and seen

His boyish joy, his stout old pride,
When toil was done and he sat down
At night, below sweet Shasta town!

At last his strength was gone. "No
more!

I mine no more. I plant me now
A vine and fig-tree; worn and old,
I seek no more my vein of gold.
But, oh, I sigh to give it o'er;
These thirty years of toil! somehow
It seems so hard; but now, no more."

And so the old man set him down
To plant, by pleasant Shasta town.
And it was pleasant; piped the quail
The full year through. The chip-
munk stole,
His whiskered nose and tossy tail
Full buried in the sugar-bowl.

And purple grapes and grapes of
gold
Swung sweet as milk. While orange-
trees

Grew brown with laden honey-bees.
Oh! it was pleasant up and down
That vine-set hill of Shasta town.

.

And then that cloud-burst came!
Ah, me!

That torn ditch there! The mellow
land

Rolled seaward like a rope of sand,
Nor left one leafy vine or tree

Of all that Eden nestling down
Below that moat by Shasta town!

The old man sat his cabin's sill,
His gray head bowed to hands and
knee;

The child went forth, sang pleasantly,
Where burst the ditch the day before,
And picked some pebbles from the
hill.

The old man moaned, moaned o'er
and o'er:

"My babe is dowerless, and I
Must fold my helpless hands and die!
Ah, me! What curse comes ever
down

On me and mine at Shasta town."

"Good Grandpa, see!" the glad
child said,

And so leaned softly to his side,—
Laid her gold head to his gray head,
And merry voiced and cheery cried,
"Good Grandpa, do not weep, but
see!

I've found a peck of orange seeds!
I searched the hill for vine or tree;
Not one!—not even oats or weeds;
But, oh! such heaps of orange seeds!

"Come, good Grandpa! Now,
once you said
That God is good. So this may teach
That we must plant each seed, and
each

May grow to be an orange tree.
Now, good Grandpa, please raise
your head,

And please come plant the seeds with
me."

And prattling thus, or like to this,
The child thrust her full hands in his.

He sprang, sprang upright as of old.
"'Tis gold! 'tis gold! my hidden vein!
'Tis gold for you, sweet babe, 'tis
gold!

Yea, God is good; we plant again!"
So one old miner still sits down
By pleasant, sunlit Shasta town.

THE SIOUX CHIEF'S DAUGHTER

Two gray hawks ride the rising blast;
Dark cloven clouds drive to and fro
By peaks pre-eminent in snow;
A sounding river rushes past,
So wild, so vortex-like, and vast.

A lone lodge tops the windy hill;
A tawny maiden, mute and still,
Stands waiting at the river's brink,
As eager, fond as you can think.
A mighty chief is at her feet;

She does not heed him wooing so—
She hears the dark, wild waters flow;
She waits her lover, tall and fleet,
From out far beaming hills of snow.

He comes! The grim chief springs
in air—
His brawny arm, his blade is bare.

She turns; she lifts her round,
brown hand;

She looks him fairly in the face;
 She moves her foot a little pace
 And says, with calmness and command,
 "There's blood enough in this lorn
 land.

"But see! a test of strength and
 skill,
 Of courage and fierce fortitude;
 To breast and wrestle with the rude
 And storm-born waters, now I will
 Bestow you both.

" . . . Stand either side!
 And you, my burly chief, I know
 Would choose my right. Now peer
 you low
 Across the waters wild and wide.
 See! leaning so this morn I spied
 Red berries dip yon farther side.

"See, dipping, dripping in the
 stream!
 Twin boughs of autumn berries
 gleam!

"Now this, brave men, shall be the
 test:
 Plunge in the stream, bear knife in
 teeth
 To cut yon bough for bridal wreath.
 Plunge in! and he who bears him best,
 And brings yon ruddy fruit to land
 The first, shall have both heart and
 hand."

Two tawny men, tall, brown and
 thewed
 Like antique bronzes rarely seen,
 Shot up like flame.

She stood between
 Like fixed, impassive fortitude.
 Then one threw robes with sullen air,
 And wound red fox-tails in his hair;
 But one with face of proud delight
 Entwined a wing of snowy white.

She stood between. She sudden
 gave
 The sign and each impatient brave
 Shot sudden in the sounding wave;
 The startled waters gurgled round;
 Their stubborn strokes kept sullen
 sound.

Oh, then uprose the love that slept!
 Oh, then her heart beat loud and
 strong!
 Oh, then the proud love pent up long
 Broke forth in wail upon the air!
 And leaning there she sobbed and
 wept,
 With dark face mantled in her hair.

She sudden lifts her leaning brow.
 He nears the shore, her love! and now
 The foam flies spouting from the face
 That laughing lifts from out the race.

The race is won, the work is done!
 She sees the kingly crest of snow;
 She knows her tall, brown Idaho.
 She cries aloud, she laughing cries,
 And tears are streaming from her eyes:
 "O splendid, kingly Idaho!
 I kiss thy lifted crest of snow.

"My tall and tawny king, come back!
 Come swift, O sweet! why falter so?
 Come! Come! What thing has
 crossed your track?

I kneel to all the gods I know. . .
 Great Spirit, what is this I dread?
 Why, there is blood! the wave is red!
 That wrinkled chief, outstripped in
 race,
 Dives down, and, hiding from my
 face,
 Strikes underneath.

“ . . . He rises now!
 Now plucks my hero's berry bough,
 And lifts aloft his red fox head,
 And signals he has won for me. . . .
 Hist, softly! Let him come and see.

“Oh, come! my white-crowned
 hero, come!
 Oh, come! and I will be your bride,
 Despite yon chieftain's craft and
 might.
 Come back to me! my lips are
 dumb,
 My hands are helpless with despair;
 The hair you kissed, my long, strong
 hair,
 Is reaching to the ruddy tide,
 That you may clutch it when you
 come.

“How slow he buffets back the
 wave!
 O God, he sinks! O Heaven! save
 My brave, brave king! He rises!
 see!
 Hold fast, my hero! Strike for me.
 Strike straight this way! Strike firm
 and strong!
 Hold fast your strength. It is not
 long—
 O God, he sinks! He sinks! Is
 gone!

“And did I dream and do I wake?
 Or did I wake and now but dream?
 And what is this crawls from the
 stream?
 Oh, here is some mad, mad mistake!
 What, you! the red fox at my feet?
 You first, and failing from the race?
 What! You have brought me berries
 red?
 What! You have brought your bride
 a wreath?
 You sly red fox with wrinkled face—
 That blade has blood between your
 teeth!

“Lie low! lie low! while I lean o'er
 And clutch your red blade to the
 shore. . . .
 Ha! ha! Take that! take that and
 that!
 Ha! ha! So, through your coward
 throat
 The full day shines! . . . Two
 fox-tails float
 Far down, and I but mock thereat.

“But what is this? What snowy
 crest
 Climbs out the willows of the west,
 All dripping from his streaming hair?
 'Tis he! My hero brave and fair!
 His face is lifting to my face,
 And who shall now dispute the race?
 “The gray hawks pass, O love! and
 doves
 O'er yonder lodge shall coo their
 loves.
 My hands shall heal your wounded
 breast,
 And in yon tall lodge two shall rest.”

A SHASTA TALE OF LOVE

"And God saw the light that it was good."

I heard a tale long, long ago,
Where I had gone apart to pray
By Shasta's pyramid of snow,
That touches me unto this day.
I know the fashion is to say
An Arab tale, an Orient lay;
But when the grocer rings my gold
On counter, flung from greasy hold,
He cares not from Acadian vale
It comes, or savage mountain
chine;—
But this the Shastan tale:

Once in the olden, golden days,
When men and beasts companioned,
when
All went in peace about their ways
Nor God had hid His face from men
Because man slew his brother beast
To make his most unholy feast,
A gray coyote, monkish cowed,
Upraised his face and wailed and
howled
The while he made his patient round;
For lo! the red men all lay dead,
Stark, frozen on the ground.

The very dogs had fled the storm,
A mother with her long, meshed hair
Bound tight about her baby's form,
Lay frozen, all her body bare.
Her last shred held her babe in place;
Her last breath warmed her baby's
face.

Then, as the good monk brushed the
snow

Aside from mother loving so,
He heard God from the mount above
Speak through the clouds and loving
say:

"Yea, all is dead but Love."

"Now take up Love and cherish
her,
And seek the white man with all
speed,
And keep Love warm within thy fur;
For oh, he needeth love indeed.
Take all and give him freely, all
Of love you find, or great or small;
For he is very poor in this,
So poor he scarce knows what love is."
The gray monk raised Love in his
paws
And sped, a ghostly streak of gray,
To where the white man was.

But man uprose, enraged to see
A gaunt wolf track his new-hewn
town.
He called his dogs, and angrily
He brought his flashing rifle down.
Then God said: "On his hearth-
stone lay
The seed of Love, and come away;
The seed of Love, 'tis needed so,
And pray that it may grow and
grow."

And so the gray monk crept at night
And laid Love down, as God had
said,
A faint and feeble light.

So faint, indeed, the cold hearth-
stone

It seemed would chill starved Love
to death;
And so the monk gave all his own
And crouched and fanned it with his
breath
Until a red cock crowed for day.
Then God said: "Rise up, come
away.
The beast obeyed, but yet looked
back
All morn along his lonely track;
For he had left his all in all,
His own Love, for that famished
Love
Seemed so exceeding small.

And God said: "Look not back
again."
But ever, where a campfire burned,
And he beheld strong, burly men
At meat, he sat him down and
turned
His face to wail and wail and mourn

The Love laid on that cold hearth-
stone.
Then God was angered, and God
said:
"Be thou a beggar then; thy head
Hath been a fool, but thy swift feet,
Because they bore sweet Love, shall
be
The fleetest of all fleet."

And ever still about the camp,
By chine or plain, in heat or hail,
A homeless, hungry, hounded tramp,
The gaunt coyote keeps his wail.
And ever as he wails he turns
His head, looks back and yearns and
yearns
For lost Love, laid that wintry day
To warm a hearthstone far away.
Poor loveless, homeless beast, I keep
Your lost Love warm for you, and,
too,
A cañon cool and deep.

LOVE IN THE SIERRAS

"No, not so lonely now—I love
A forest maiden; she is mine
And on Sierra's slopes of pine,
The vines below, the snows above,
A solitary lodge is set
Within a fringe of water'd firs;
And there my wigwam fires burn,
Fed by a round brown patient hand,
That small brown faithful hand of
hers
That never rests till my return.
The yellow smoke is rising yet;
Tiptoe, and see it where you stand
Lift like a column from the land.

"There are no sea-gems in her hair,
No jewels fret her dimpled hands,
And half her bronzen limbs are bare.
Her round brown arms have golden
bands,
Broad, rich, and by her cunning
hands
Cut from the yellow virgin ore,
And she does not desire more.
I wear the beaded wampum belt
That she has wove—the sable pelt
That she has fringed red threads
around;
And in the morn, when men are not,

I wake the valley with the shot
That brings the brown deer to the
ground.

And she beside the lodge at noon
Sings with the wind, while baby
swings

In sea-shell cradle by the bough—
Sings low, so like the clover sings
With swarm of bees; I hear her now,
I see her sad face through the
moon. . . .

Such songs!—would earth had more
of such! .

She has not much to say, and she
Lifts never voice to question me
In aught I do . . . and that is
much.

I love her for her patient trust,
And my love's forty-fold return—

A value I have not to learn
As you . . . at least, as many
must . . .

. . . "She is not over tall or fair;
Her breasts are curtained by her
hair,

And sometimes, through the silken
fringe,

I see her bosom's wealth, like wine
Burst through in luscious ruddy
tinge—

And all its wealth and worth are mine.
I know not that one drop of blood
Of prince or chief is in her veins:

I simply say that she is good,
And loves me with pure womanhood.

. . . When that is said, why, what
remains?"

OLD GIB AT CASTLE ROCKS

His eyes are dim, he gropes his way,
His step is doubtful, slow,
And now men pass him by today:
But forty years ago—
Why forty years ago I say
Old Gib was good to know.

For, forty years ago today,
Where cars glide to and fro,
The Modoc held the world at bay,
And blood was on the snow.
Ay, forty years ago I say
Old Gib was good to know.

Full forty years ago today
This valley lay in flame;
Up yonder pass and far away,
Red ruin swept the same:

Two women, with their babes at play,
Were butchered in black shame.

'Twas then with gun and flashing
eye
Old Gib loomed like a pine;
"Now will you fight, or will you fly?
I'll take a fight in mine.
Come let us fight; come let us die!"
There came just twenty-nine.

Just twenty-nine who dared to die,
And, too, a motley crew
Of half-tamed red men; would they
fly,
Or would they fight him too?
No time to question or reply,
That was a time to *do*.

Up, up, straight up where thunders
 grow
 And growl in Castle Rocks,
 Straight up till Shasta gleamed in
 snow,
 And shot red battle shocks;
 Till clouds lay shepherded below,
 A thousand ghostly flocks.

Yet up and up Old Gibson led,
 No looking backward then;
 His bare feet bled; the rocks were red
 From torn, bare-footed men.
 Yet up, up, up, till well nigh dead—
 The Modoc in his den!

Then cried the red chief from his
 height,
 "Now, white man, what would you?
 Behold my hundreds for the fight,
 But yours so faint and few;
 We are as rain, as hail at night
 But you, you are as dew.

"White man, go back; I beg go
 back,
 I will not fight so few;
 Yet if I hear one rifle crack,
 Be that the doom of you!
 Back! down, I say, back down your
 track,
 Back, down! What else to do?

"What else to do? Avenge or die!
 Brave men have died before;
 And you shall fight, or you shall fly.

You find no women more,
 No babes to butcher now; for I
 Shall storm your Castle's door!"

Then bang! whiz bang! whiz bang
 and ping!
 Six thousand feet below,
 Sweet Sacramento ceased to sing,
 But wept and wept, for oh!
 These arrows sting as adders sting,
 And they kept stinging so.

Then one man cried: "Brave men
 have died,
 And we can die as they;
 But ah! my babe, my one year's
 bride!
 And they so far away.
 Brave Captain, lead us back—aside,
 Must all here die today?"

His face, his hands, his body bled:
 Yea, no man there that day—
 No white man there but turned to
 red,
 In that fierce fatal fray;
 But Gib with set teeth only said:
 "No; we came here to stay!"

They stayed and stayed, and
 Modocs stayed,
 But when the night came on,
 No white man there was now afraid,
 The last Modoc had gone;
 His ghost in Castle Rocks was laid
 Till everlasting dawn.

COMANCHE

A blazing home, a blood-soaked
hearth;

Fair woman's hair with blood upon!
That Ishmaelite of all the earth
Has like a cyclone, come and gone—
His feet are as the blighting dearth;
His hands are daggers drawn.

“To horse! to horse!” the rangers
shout,

And red revenge is on his track!
The black-haired Bedouin en route
Looks like a long, bent line of black.
He does not halt nor turn about;
He scorns to once look back.

But on! right on that line of black,
Across the snow-white, sand-sown
pass;

The bearded rangers on their track
Bear thirsty sabers bright as glass.
Yet not one red man there looks back;
His nerves are braided brass.

.

At last, at last, their mountain came
To clasp its children in their flight!
Up, up from out the sands of flame
They clambered, bleeding to their
height;

This savage summit, now so tame,
Their lone star, that dread night!

“Huzzah! Dismount!” the cap-
tain cried.

“Huzzah! the rovers cease to roam!
The river keeps yon farther side,
A roaring cataract of foam.
They die, they die for those who died
Last night by hearth and home!”

His men stood still beneath the
steep;

The high, still moon stood like a nun.
The horses stood as willows weep;
Their weary heads drooped every one.
But no man there had thought of
sleep;

Each waited for the sun.

Vast nun-white moon! Her silver
rill

Of snow-white peace she ceaseless
poured;
The rock-built battlement grew still,
The deep-down river roared and
roared.

But each man there with iron will
Leaned silent on his sword.

Hark! See what light starts from
the steep!

And hear, ah, hear that piercing
sound.

It is their lorn death-song they keep
In solemn and majestic round.
The red fox of these deserts deep
At last is run to ground.

.

Oh, it was weird,—that wild, pent
horde!

Their death-lights, their death-wails
each one.

The river in sad chorus roared
And boomed like some great funeral
gun.

The while each ranger nursed his
sword

And waited for the sun.

MONTARA

Montara, Naples of my West!
 Montara, Italy to me!
 Montara, newest, truest, best
 Of all brave cities by this
 sea!

I'd rather one wee bungalow
 Where I mid-March may sit me down
 And watch thy warm waves come and
 go,
 Than two whole blocks of Boston
 town.

THE LARGER COLLEGE

ON LAVING THE COLLEGE CORNER-STONE

Where San Diego seas are warm,
 Where winter winds from warm
 Cathay
 Sing sibilant, where blossoms swarm
 With Hybla's bees, we come to lay
 This tribute of the truest, best,
 The warmest daughter of the West.

Here Progress plants her corner-
 stone
 Against this warm, still, Cortez wave.
 In ashes of the Aztec's throne,
 In tumblings of the Toltec's grave,
 We plant this stone, and from the sod
 Pick painted fragments of his god.

Here Progress lifts her torch to
 teach
 God's pathway through the pass of
 care;
 Her altar-stone Balboa's Beach,
 Her incense warm, sweet, perfumed
 air;
 Such incense! where white strophes
 reach
 And lap and lave Balboa's Beach!

We plant this stone as some small
 seed
 Is sown at springtime, warm with
 earth;
 We sow this seed as some good deed
 Is sown, to grow until its worth
 Shall grow, through rugged steeps of
 time,
 To touch the utmost star sublime.

We lift this lighthouse by the sea,
 The westmost sea, the westmost
 shore,
 To guide man's ship of destiny
 When Scylla and Charybdis roar;
 To teach him strength, to proudly
 teach
 God's grandeur, where His white
 palms reach:

To teach not Sybil books alone;
 Man's books are but a climbing
 stair,
 Lain step by step, like stairs of stone;
 The stairway here, the temple
 there—

Man's lampad honor, and his trust,
The God who called him from the
dust.

Man's books are but man's
alphabet,
Beyond and on his lessons lie—
The lessons of the violet,
The large gold letters of the sky;
The love of beauty, blossomed soil,
The large content, the tranquil toil:

The toil that nature ever taught,
The patient toil, the constant stir,
The toil of seas where shores are
wrought,
The toil of Christ, the carpenter;

The toil of God incessantly
By palm-set land or frozen sea.

Behold this sea, that sapphire sky!
Where nature does so much for man,
Shall man not set his standard high,
And hold some higher, holier plan?
Some loftier plan than ever planned
By outworn book of outworn land?

Where God has done so much for
man!
Shall man for God do aught at all?
The soul that feeds on books alone—
I count that soul exceeding small
That lives alone by book and creed,—
A soul that has not learned to read.

TO THE PIONEERS

READ AT SAN FRANCISCO, 1894

How swift this sand, gold-laden,
runs!
How slow these feet, once swift and
firm!
Ye came as romping, rosy sons,
Come jocund up at College term;
Ye came so jolly, stormy, strong,
Ye drown'd the roll-call with your
song.
But now ye lean a list'ning ear
And—"Adsum! Adsum! I am here!"

My brave world-builders of a world
That tops the keystone, star of
States,
All hail! Your battle flags are furled
In fruitful peace. The golden gates
Are won. The jasper walls be yours.

Your sun sinks down yon soundless
shores.
Night falls. But lo! your lifted eyes
Greet gold outcroppings in the skies.

Companioned with Sierra's peaks
Our storm-born eagle shrieks his scorn
Of doubt or death, and upward seeks
Through unseen worlds the coming
morn.
Or storm, or calm, or near, or far,
His eye fixed on the morning star,
He knows, as God knows, there is
dawn;
And so keeps on, and on, and on!

So ye, brave men of bravest days,
Fought on and on with battered shield,

Up bastion, rampart, till the rays
Of full morn met ye on the field.
Ye knew not doubt; ye only knew
To do and dare, and dare and do!
Ye knew that time, that God's first-
born,
Would turn the darkest night to
morn.

Ye gave your glorious years of
youth
And lived as heroes live—and die.
Ye loved the truth, ye lived the truth;
Ye knew that cowards only lie.
Then heed not now one serpent's hiss,

Or trait'rous, trading, Judas kiss.
Let slander wallow in his slime;
Still leave the truth to God and time.

Worn victors, few and true, such
clouds
As track God's trailing garment's hem
Where Shasta keeps shall be your
shrouds,
And ye shall pass the stars in them.
Your tombs shall be while time en-
dures,
Such hearts as only truth secures;
Your everlasting monuments
Sierra's snow-topt battle tents.

"49"

We have worked our claims,
We have spent our gold,
Our barks are astrand on the bars;
We are battered and old,
Yet at night we behold,
Outcroppings of gold in the stars.

Chorus

Tho' battered and old,
Our hearts are bold,
Yet oft do we repine;
For the days of old,
For the days of gold,
For the days of forty-nine.

Where the rabbits play,
Where the quail all day
Pipe on the chaparral hill;
A few more days,
And the last of us lays
His pick aside and all is still.

Chorus

We are wreck and stray,
We are cast away,
Poor battered old hulks and spars;
But we hope and pray,
On the judgment day,
We shall strike it up in the stars.

SAN DIEGO

*"O for a beaker of the warm South;
The true, the blushful hypocrinet!"*

What shall be said of the sun-born
Pueblo?

This town sudden born in the path of
the sun?
This town of St. James, of the calm
San Diego,
As suddenly born as if shot from a gun?

Why, speak of her warmly; why,
 write her name down
 As softer than sunlight, as warmer
 than wine!
 Why, speak of her bravely; this ulti-
 mate town
 With feet in the foam of the vast
 Argentine:

The vast argent seas of the Aztec,
 of Cortez!
 The boundless white border of battle-
 torn lands—
 The fall of Napoleon, the rise of red
 Juarez—
 The footfalls of nations are heard on
 her sands.

PIONEERS TO THE GREAT EMERALD LAND

READ AT PORTLAND, 1896

Emerald, emerald, emerald Land;
 Land of the sun mists, land of the
 sea,
 Stately and stainless and storied and
 grand
 As cloud-mantled Hood in white
 majesty—
 Mother of States, we are worn, we are
 gray—
 Mother of men, we are going away.

Mother of States, tall mother of
 men,
 Of cities, of churches, of homes, of
 sweet rest,
 We are going away, we must journey
 again,
 As of old we journeyed to the vast, far
 West.
 We tent by the river, our feet once
 more,
 Please God, are set for the ultimate
 shore.

Mother, white mother, white Ore-
 gon
 In emerald kilt, with star-set crown

Of sapphire, say is it night? Is it
 dawn?
 Say what of the night? Is it well up
 and down?
 We are going away. . . . From
 yon high watch tower,
 Young men, strong men, say, what
 of the hour?

Young men, strong men, there is
 work to be done;
 Faith to be cherished, battles to fight,
 Victories won were never well won
 Save fearlessly won for God and the
 right.
 These cities, these homes, sweet peace
 and her spell
 Be ashes, but ashes, with the infidel.

.
 Have Faith, such Faith as your
 fathers knew,
 All else must follow if you have but
 Faith.
 Be true to their Faith, and you must
 be true.
 "Lo! I will be with you," the Master
 saith.

Good by, dawn breaks; it is coming
 full day
 And one by one we strike tent and
 away.

Good by. Slow folding our snow-
 white tents,

Our dim eyes lift to the farther shore,
 And never these riddled, gray regi-
 ments

Shall answer full roll-call any more.
 Yet never a doubt, nay, never a
 fear

Of old, or now, knew the Pioneer.

ALASKA

Ice built, ice bound and ice
 bounded,
 Such cold seas of silence! such room!
 Such snow-light, such sea light con-
 founded
 With thunders that smite like a doom!
 Such grandeur! such glory! such
 gloom!
 Hear that boom! hear that deep dis-
 tant boom
 Of an avalanche hurled
 Down this unfinished world!

Ice seas! and ice summits! ice
 spaces
 In splendor of white, as God's throne!
 Ice worlds to the pole! and ice places
 Untracked, and unnamed, and un-
 known!
 Hear that boom! Hear the grinding,
 the groan
 Of the ice-gods in pain! Hear the
 moan
 Of yon ice mountain hurled
 Down this unfinished world.

THE AMERICAN OCEAN

"Ten thousand miles of mobile sea—
 This sea of all seas blent as one
 Wide, unbound book of mystery,
 Of awe, of sibyl prophecy,
 Ere yet a ghost or misty ken
 Of God's far, first beginning when
 Vast darkness lay upon the deep."

.

"He looked to heaven, God; but she
 Saw only his face and the sea."

.

"Aye, day is done, the dying
 sun

Sinks wounded unto death tonight;
 A great, hurt swan, he sinks to
 rest,

His wings all crimson, blood his
 breast!

With wide, low wings, reached left
 and right,

He sings, and night and swan are
 one—

One huge, black swan of Helicon."

TWILIGHT AT THE HEIGHTS

The brave young city by the Bal-
boa seas
Lies compassed about by the hosts of
night—
Lies humming, low, like a hive of
bees;
And the day lies dead. And its
spirit's flight
Is far to the west; while the golden
bars
That bound it are broken to a dust of
stars.

Come under my oaks, oh, drowsy
dusk!
The wolf and the dog; dear incense
hour
When Mother Earth hath a smell of
musk,
And things of the spirit assert their
power—
When candles are set to burn in the
west—
Set head and foot to the day at
rest.

ARBOR DAY

Against our golden orient dawns
We lift a living light today,
That shall outshine the splendid
bronze
That lords and lights that lesser Bay.

Sweet Paradise was sown with
trees;
Thy very name, lorn Nazareth,
Means woods, means sense of birds
and bees,
And song of leaves with lisp-
ing
breath.

God gave us Mother Earth, full
blest

With robes of green in healthful fold;
We tore the green robes from her
breast!
We sold our mother's robes for gold!

We sold her garments fair, and she
Lies shamed and naked at our feet!
In penitence we plant a tree;
We plant the cross and count it meet.

Lo, here, where Balboa's waters
toss,
Here in this glorious Spanish bay,
We plant the cross, the Christian
cross,
The Crusade Cross of Arbor Day.

CALIFORNIA'S CUP OF GOLD

The golden poppy is God's gold,
The gold that lifts, nor weighs us
down,
The gold that knows no miser's hold,
The gold that banks not in the town,

But singing, laughing, freely spills
Its hoard far up the happy hills;
Far up, far down, at every turn.—
What beggar has not gold to
burn!

BY THE BALBOA SEAS

The golden fleece is at our feet,
Our hills are girt in sheen of gold;
Our golden flower-fields are sweet
With honey hives. A thousand-fold
More fair our fruits on laden stem
Than Jordan tow'rd Jerusalem.

Behold this mighty sea of seas!
The ages pass in silence by.
Gold apples of Hesperides
Hang at our God-land gates for aye.
Our golden shores have golden keys
Where sound and sing the Balboa seas.

MAGNOLIA BLOSSOMS

The broad magnolia's blooms are
white;
Her blooms are large, as if the moon
Had lost her way some lazy night,
And lodged here till the afternoon.

Oh, vast white blossoms breathing
love!
White bosom of my lady dead,
In your white heaven overhead
I look, and learn to look above.

CALIFORNIA'S CHRISTMAS

The stars are large as lilies! Morn
Seems some illumined story—
The story of our Savior born,
Told from old turrets hoary—
The full moon smiling tips a horn
And hies to bed in glory!

Soft sea winds sleep on yonder
tide;
You hear some boatmen rowing.
Their sisters' hands trail o'er the side;
They toy with warm waves flowing;
Their laps are laden deep and wide
From rose-trees green and growing.

My sunclad city walks in light
And lasting summer weather;
Red roses bloom on bosoms white
And rosy cheeks together.
If you should smite one cheek, still
smite
For she will turn the other.

Such roses white! such roses red!
Such roses richly yellow!
The air is like a perfume fed
From autumn fruits full mellow—
But see! a brother bends his head,
An oar forgets its fellow!

The thronged warm street tides to
and fro
And Love, roseclad, discloses.
The only snowstorm we shall know
Is this white storm of roses—
It seems like Maytime, mating so,
And—Nature counting noses.

Give me to live in land like this,
Nor let me wander further;
Some sister in some boat of bliss
And I her only brother—
Sweet paradise on earth it is;
I would not seek another.

THE MEN OF FORTY-NINE

Those brave old bricks of forty-nine!

What lives they lived! what deaths they died!

A thousand cañons, darkling wide
Below Sierra's slopes of pine,
Receive them now. And they who died

Along the far, dim, desert route—
Their ghosts are many. Let them keep

Their vast possessions. The Piute,
The tawny warrior, will dispute
No boundary with these. And I
Who saw them live, who felt them die,

Say, let their unplow'd ashes sleep,
Untouch'd by man, on plain or steep.

The bearded, sunbrown'd men who bore

The burden of that frightful year,
Who toil'd, but did not gather store,
They shall not be forgotten. Drear
And white, the plains of Shoshonee
Shall point us to that farther shore,
And long, white, shining lines of bones,

Make needless sign or white mile-stones.

The wild man's yell, the groaning wheel;

The train that moved like drifting barge;

The dust that rose up like a cloud—
Like smoke of distant battle! Loud
The great whips rang like shot, and steel

Of antique fashion, crude and large,
Flash'd back as in some battle charge.

They sought, yea, they did find
their rest.

Along that long and lonesome way,
These brave men buffet'd the West
With lifted faces. Full were they
Of great endeavor. Brave and true
As stern Crusader clad in steel,
They died a-field as it was fit.

Made strong with hope, they dared to do

Achievement that a host today
Would stagger at, stand back and reel,

Defeated at the thought of it.

What brave endeavor to endure!
What patient hope, when hope was past!

What still surrender at the last,
A thousand leagues from hope! how pure

They lived, how proud they died!
How generous with life! The wide
And gloried age of chivalry
Hath not one page like this to me.

Let all these golden days go by,
In sunny summer weather. I
But think upon my buried brave,
And breathe beneath another sky.
Let Beauty glide in gilded car,
And find my sundown seas afar,
Forgetful that 'tis but one grave
From eastmost to the westmost wave.

Yea, I remember! The still tears
 That o'er uncoffin'd faces fell!
 The final, silent, sad farewell!
 God! these are with me all the years!
 They shall be with me ever. I
 Shall not forget. I hold a trust.
 They are part of my existence. When
 Swift down the shining iron track

You sweep, and fields of corn flash
 back,
 And herds of lowing steers move by,
 And men laugh loud, in mute mis-
 trust,
 I turn to other days, to men
 Who made a pathway with their
 dust.

CUSTER

Oh, it were better dying there,
 On glory's front, with trumpet's blare,
 And battle's shout blent wild about—
 The sense of sacrifice, the roar
 Of war! The soul might well leap
 out—

The brave, white soul leap boldly
 out
 The door of wounds, and up the stair
 Of heaven to God's open door,
 While yet the knees were bent in
 prayer.

THE HEROES OF AMERICA

O perfect heroes of the earth,
 That conquer'd forests, harvest set!
 O sires, mothers of my West!
 How shall we count your proud be-
 quest?
 But yesterday ye gave us birth;
 We eat your hard-earned bread to-
 day,
 Nor toil nor spin nor make regret,
 But praise our petty selves and say
 How great we are. We all forget
 The still endurance of the rude
 Unpolish'd sons of solitude.

What strong, uncommon men were
 these,
 These settlers hewing to the seas!
 Great horny-handed men and tan;

Men blown from many a barren
 land
 Beyond the sea; men red of hand,
 And men in love, and men in debt,
 Like David's men in battle set;
 And men whose very hearts had
 died,
 Who only sought these woods to
 hide
 Their wretchedness, held in the van;
 Yet every man among them stood
 Alone, along that sounding wood,
 And every man somehow a man.
 They push'd the mailéd wood aside,
 They toss'd the forest like a toy,
 That grand forgotten race of men—
 The boldest band that yet has been
 Together since the siege of Troy.

“THE FOURTH” IN OREGON

Hail, Independence of old ways!
 Old worlds! The West declares the
 West,
 Her storied ways, her gloried days,
 Because the West deserveth best.
 This new, true land of noblest deeds
 Has rights, has sacred rights and
 needs.

Sing, ye who may, this natal day;
 Of dauntless thought, of men of
 might,
 In lesser lands and far away.
 But truth is truth and right is right.
 And, oh, to sing like sounding flood,
 These boundless boundaries writ in
 blood!

Three thousand miles of battle
 deeds,
 Of burning Moscows, Cossacks,
 snows;
 Then years and years of British
 greed,
 Of grasping greed; of lurking foes.
 I say no story ever writ
 Or said, or sung, surpasses it!

And who has honored us, and who
 Has bravely dared stand up and say:
 “Give ye to Cæsar Cæsar’s due?”
 Unpaid, unpensioned, mute and gray,
 Some few survivors of the brave,
 Still hold enough land for a grave.

How much they dared, how much
 they won—
 Why, o’er your banner of bright
 stars,

Their star should be the blazing sun
 Above the battle star of Mars.
 Here, here beside brave Whitman’s
 dust,
 Let us be bravely, frankly just.

The mountains from the first were
 so.

The mountains from the first were
 free.

They ever laid the tyrant low,
 And kept the boon of liberty.
 The levels of the earth alone
 Endured the tyrant, bore the throne.

The levels of the earth alone
 Bore Sodoms, Babylons of crime,
 And all sad cities overthrown
 Along the surging surf of time.
 The coward, slave, creeps in the fen:
 God’s mountains only cradle men.

Aye, wise and great was Washing-
 ton,
 And brave the men of Bunker Hill;
 Most brave and worthy every one,
 In work and faith and fearless will
 And brave endeavor for the right,
 Until yon stars burst through their
 night.

Aye, wise and good was Washing-
 ton.
 Yet when he laid his sword aside,
 The bravest deed yet done was done.
 And when in stately strength and
 pride
 He took the plow and turned the mold
 He wrote God’s autograph in gold.

He wrought the fabled fleece of
gold
In priceless victories of peace,
With plowshare set in mother mold;
Then gathering the golden fleece
About his manly, martial breast,
This farmer laid him down to rest.

O! this was godlike! And yet, who
Of all men gathered here today
Has not drawn sword as swift as true,
Then laid its reddened edge away,
And took the plow, and turned the
mold
To sow yon sunny steeps with gold.

Aye, this true valor! Sing who will
Of battle charge, of banners borne
Triumphant up the blazing hill
On battle's front, of banners torn,
Of horse and rider torn and rent,
Red regiment on regiment.

Yet this were boy's play to that
man
Who, far out yonder lone frontier,
With wife and babe fought in the van,
Fought on, fought on, year after year.
No brave, bright flag to cheer the
brave,
No farewell gun above his grave.

I say such silent pioneers
Who here set plowshare to the sun,
And silent gave their sunless years,
Were kings of heroes every one.
No Brandywine, no Waterloo
E'er knew one hero half so true!

A nation's honor for our dead,
God's pity for the stifled pain;

And tears as ever woman shed,
Sweet woman's tears for maimed or
slain.
But man's tears for the mute, un-
known,
Who fights alone, who falls alone.

The very bravest of the brave,
The hero of all lands to me?
Far up yon yellow lifting wave
His brave ship cleaves the golden
sea.
And gold or gain, or never gain,
No argosy sails there in vain.

And who the coward? Hessian
he,
Who turns his back upon the
field,
Who wears the slavish livery
Of town or city, sells his shield
Of honor, as his ilk of old
Sold body, soul, for British gold.

My heroes, comrades of the field,
Content ye here; here God to you,
Whatever fate or change may yield,
Has been most generous and true.
Yon everlasting snow-peaks stand
His sentinels about this land.

Yon bastions of God's house are
white
As heaven's porch with heaven's
peace.
Behold His portals bathed in light!
Behold at hand the golden fleece!
Behold the fatness of the land
On every hill, on every hand!

Yon bannered snow-peaks point
and plead
God's upward path, God's upward
plan

Of peace, God's everlasting creed
Of love and brotherhood of man.
Thou mantled magistrates in white,
Give us His light! Give us His light!

AN ANSWER

Well! who shall lay hand on my
harp but me,
Or shall chide my song from the
sounding trees?
The passionate sun and the resolute
sea,
These were my masters, and only these.

These were my masters, and only
these,
And these from the first I obey'd, and
they
Shall command me now, and I shall
obey
As a dutiful child that is proud to
please.

There never were measures as true
as the sun,
The sea hath a song that is passingly
sweet,
And yet they repeat, and repeat, and
repeat,
The same old runes though the new
years run.

By unnamed rivers of the Oregon
north,
That roll dark-heaved into turbulent
hills,
I have made my home. . . . The
wild heart thrills
With memories fierce, and a world
storms forth.

On eminent peaks that are dark
with pine,
And mantled in shadows and voiced
in storms,
I have made my camps: majestic
gray forms
Of the thunder-clouds, they were
companions of mine;

And face set to face, like to lords
austere,
Have we talk'd, red-tongued, of the
mysteries
Of the circling sun, of the oracled
seas,
While ye who judged me had mantled
in fear.

Some fragment of thought in the
unfinish'd words;
A cry of fierce freedom, and I claim
no more.
What more would you have from the
tender of herds
And of horse on an ultimate Oregon
shore?

From men unto God go forth, as
alone,
Where the dark pines talk in their
tones of the sea
To the unseen God in a harmony
Of the under seas, and know the un-
known.

FROM
THE BUILDING OF THE CITY BEAUTIFUL,
1893

FEED MY SHEEP

Come, let us ponder; it is fit—
Born of the poor, born to the poor—
The poor of purse, the poor of wit
Were first to find God's opening
door,
Were first to climb the ladder, round
by round,
That fell from Heaven's door unto the
ground.

God's poor came first, the very first!
God's poor were first to see, to
hear,
To feel the light of heaven burst
Full on their faces far or near,
His poor were first to follow, first to
fall!
*What if at last His poor stand first of
all?*

UNDER THE SYRIAN STARS

Dear Bethlehem, the proud repose
Of conscious worthiness is thine.
Rest on. The Arab comes and
goes,
But farthest Saxon holds thy shrine
More sacred in his stouter Christian
hold
Than England's heaped-up iron house
of gold.

Thy stony hill is heaven's stair;
Thine every stone some storied gem.
Oh, thou art fair and very fair,
Thou holy, holy Bethlehem!

Thy very dust more dear than dust of
gold
Against my glorious sunset waters
rolled.

And here did glean the lowly Ruth;
Here strode her grandson, fierce and
fair,
Strode forth in all his kingly youth
And tore the ravening she-bear.
Here Rachel sleeps. Here David,
thirsting, cried
For just one drop from yonder trick-
ling tide.

THE GROWING OF A SOUL

Hear ye this parable. A man
Did plant a garden. Vine and tree
Alike, in course of time, began
To put forth fair and pleasantly.

The rains of heaven, the persuading
sun
Came down alike on each and every
one.

Yet some trees wilful grew, and some
 Strong vines grew gaily in the
 sun,
 With gaudy leaves, that ever come
 To naught. And yet, each flaunt-
 ing one
 Did flourish on triumphantly and
 glow
 Like sunset clouds in all their moving
 show.

But lo! the harvest found them not.
 The soul had perished from them.
 Mould

And muck and leaf lay there to rot,
 And furnish nourishment untold
 To patient tree and lowly creeping
 vine
 That grew as grew the Husbandman's
 design.

Hear then this lesson; hear and heed:
 I say that chaff shall perish; say
 Man's soul is like unto a seed
 To grow unto the Judgment Day.
 It grows and grows if he will have it
 grow;
 It perishes if he must have it so.

HOW BEAUTIFUL ARE THE FEET

O star-built bridge, broad milky way!
 O star-lit, stately, splendid span!
 If but one star should cease to stay
 And prop its shoulders to God's
 plan—
 The man who lives for self, I say,
 He lives for neither God nor man.

I count the columned waves at war
 With Titan elements; and they,
 In martial splendor, storm the bar

And shake the world, these bits of
 spray.
 Each gives to each, and like the star
 Gets back its gift in tenfold pay.

To get and give and give amain
 The rivers run and oceans roll.
 O generous and high-born rain
 When raining as a splendid whole!
 That man who lives for self, again,
 I say, has neither sense nor soul.

THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT

I think the birds in that far dawn
 Were still. The bustling town below
 Lay listening. Its strength was
 drawn
 To him, as tides that inward flow.
 All Galilee lay still. Far fields of
 corn
 Lay still to hear that silent, sacred
 morn.

Be comforted; and blessed be
 The meek, the merciful, the pure
 Of heart; for they shall see, shall
 hear
 God's mercy. So shall peace endure
 With God's peacemakers. They
 are His, and they
 Shall be His children in the Judg-
 ment Day.

IN THE SWEAT OF THY FACE

What sound was that? A pheasant's
whir?

What stroke was that? Lean low
thine ear.

Is that the stroke of the carpenter,
That far, faint echo that we hear?

Is that the sound that sometime
Bedouins tell

Of hammer stroke as from His hand
it fell?

Is it the stroke of the carpenter,
Through eighteen hundred years
and more

Still sounding down the hallowed stir
Of patient toil; as when He wore
The leathern dress,—the echo of a
sound

That thrills for aye the toiling, sensate
ground?

Hear Mary weaving! Listen! Hear
The thud of loom at weaving
time

In Nazareth. I weave this dear
Tradition with my lowly rhyme.
Believing everywhere that she may
hear

The sound of toil, sweet Mary bends
an ear.

Yea, this the toil that Jesus knew;
Yet we complain if we must bear.
Are we more dear? Are we more
true?

Give us, O God, and do not spare!
Give us to bear as Christ and Mary
bore

With toil by leaf-girt Nazareth of
yore!

THE CHRIST IN EGYPT

O land of temples, land of tombs!
O tawny land, O lion dead!

O silent land of silent looms;
Of kingly garments torn to shred!

O land of storied wonder still, as
when

Fair Joseph stood the chiefest of all
men!

.

The Christ in Egypt! Egypt and
Her mystic star-built Pyramids!

Her shoreless, tiger seas of sand!
Her Sphinx with fixed and weary

lids!

Her red and rolling Nile of yellow
sheaves

Where Moses cradled 'mid his lily
leaves.

Her lorn, dread temples of the dead
Had waited, as mute milestones
wait

By some untraversed way unread,
Until the King, or soon or late,
Should come that tomb-built way and
silent pass

To read their signs above the sand-
sown grass.

Behold! Amid this majesty
 Of ruin, at the dust-heaped tomb
 Of vanity came Christ to see
 Earth's emptiness, the dark death
 room
 Of haughtiness, of kingly pomp, of
 greed,
 Of gods of gold or stone, or storied
 creed.

And this His first abiding-place!
 And these dread scenes His child-
 hood's toys!
 What wonder at that thoughtful
 face?
 That boy face never yet a boy's?
 What wonder that the elders mar-
 velled when
 A boy spake in the Temple unto men?

AWAITING THE RESURRECTION AT KARNAK

Lorn land of silence, land of awe!
 Lorn, lawless land of Moslem
 will,—
 The great Law-giver and the law
 Have gone away together. Still
 The sun shines on; still Nilus darkly
 red
 Steals on between his awful walls of
 dead.

And sapphire skies still bend as when
 Proud Karnak's countless columns
 propped
 The corners of the world; when men
 Kept watch where massive Cheops
 topped
 Their utmost reach of thought, and
 sagely drew
 Their star-lit lines along the trackless
 blue.

But Phthah lies prostrate evermore;
 And Thoth and Neith all are gone;

And huge Osiris hears no more,
 Thebes' melodies; nor Mut at On;
 Yet one lone obelisk still lords the
 spot
 Where Plato sat to learn. But On is
 not.

Nor yet has Time encompassed all;
 You trace your finger o'er a name
 That mocks at age within the wall
 Of fearful Karnak. Sword nor
 flame
 Shall touch what men have jour-
 neyed far to touch
 And felt eternity in daring such!

"Juda Melchi Shishak!" Read
 The Holy Book; read how that he
 With chariot and champing steed
 Invaded far and fair Judea.
 Yea, read the chronicle of red hands
 laid
 On "shields of gold which Solomon
 had made."

THE VOICE OF TOIL

Come, lean an ear, an earnest ear,
 To Nature's breast, some stilly eve,
 And you shall hear, shall surely hear
 The Carpenter, and shall believe;
 Shall surely hear, shall hear for aye,
 who will,
 The patient strokes of Christ resound-
 ing still.

The thud of loom, the hum of wheel,
 That steady stroke of Carpenter!
 And was this all? Did God reveal
 No gleam of light to Him, to her?
 No gleam of hopeful light, sweet
 toiling friend,
 Save that which burneth dimly at
 the end.

That beggar at the rich man's gate!
 That rich man moaning down in
 hell!
 And all life's pity, all life's hate!
 Yea, toil lay on Him like a spell.

Stop still and think of Christ, of
 Mary there,
 Her lifted face but one perpetual
 prayer.

I can but hope at such sore time,
 When all her soul went out so fond,
 She touched the very stars sublime
 And took some sense of worlds
 beyond;
 And took some strength to ever toil
 and wait
 The glories bursting through God's
 star-built gate.
 And He so silent, patient, sad,
 As seeing all man's sorrows through!

How could the Christ be wholly glad
 To know life's pathos as He knew,—
 To know, and know that all the
 beauteous years
 Man still will waste in battle, blood
 and tears?

THE FOUNDATION STONES

Be thou not angered. Go thy way
 From God's high altar to thy foe;
 Nor think to kneel and truly pray
 Till thou art reconciled and know
 Thou hast forgiven him; as thou must
 be
 Forgiven of the sins that burthen
 thee.

And if thine eye tempt thee to shame
 Turn thou aside; pluck it away!

And with thy right hand deal the
 same,
 Nor tempt thy soul to sin this
 day.
 Yea, thou art very weak. Thou
 couldst not make
 One hair turn white or black, for
 thine own sake.

And whosoever smite thy cheek,
 Turn thou that he may smite again.

The truly brave are truly meek,
And bravely bear both shame and
pain.

They slay, if truly brave men ever
slay,

Their foes, with sweet forgiveness,
day by day.

And if a man would take thy coat,
Give him thy cloak and count it
meet.

Bread cast on waters can but float
In sweet forgiveness to thy feet;
So thou, by silent act like this, shalt
preach

Such sermons as not flame nor sword
can teach.

Lay not up treasures for yourselves
On earth, and stint and starve the
soul

By heaping granaries and shelves
And high store-houses; for the
whole

Of wealth is this: to grow and grow
and grow

In faith; to know and ever seek to
know.

Therefore give not too much of
thought

For thy tomorrows. Birds that
call

Sweet melodies sow not, reap not,
And yet the Father feedeth all.

Therefore toil trusting, loving; watch
and pray,

And pray in secret; pray not long,
but say:

Give us our daily bread this day,

Forgive our sins as we forgive,

Lead us not in temptation's way,

Deliver us that we may live;

For thine the kingdom is, has ever
been,

And thine the power, the glory, and
—Amen!

THE FIRST LAW OF GOD

Look back, beyond the Syrian sand,
Beyond the awful flames that burst
O'er Sinai! That first command
Outside the gates, God's very first,

Was this: "Thou shalt in sweat and
constant toil

Eat bread till thou returnest to the
soil."

LO! ON THE PLAINS OF BETHEL

Lo! on the plains of Bethel lay
An outworn lad, unhoused, alone,
His couch the tawny mother clay,
His pillow that storm-haunted stone;

The hollow winds howled down the
star-lit plain,

All white and wild with highborn
wintry rain.

Yet here God's ladder was let down,
Yea, only here for aye and aye!
Not in the high-walled, splendid town,
Not to the throned king feasting
high,
But far beneath the storied Syrian
stars
God's ladder fell from out the golden
bars.

And ever thus. Take heart! to some
The hand of fortune pours her horn
Of plenty, smiling where they come;
And some to wit and some to
wealth are born,
And some are born to pomp and
splendid ease;
But lo! God's shining ladder leans to
none of these.

HOW SHALL MAN SURELY SAVE HIS SOUL?

"How shall man surely save his
soul?"

'Twas sunset by the Jordan. Gates
Of light were closing, and the whole
Vast heaven hung darkened as the
fates.

"How shall man surely save his
soul"; he said
As fell the kingly day, discrowned and
dead.

The Christ said: "Hear this parable.
Two men set forth and journeyed
fast

To reach a place ere darkness fell
And closed the gates ere they had
passed;

Two worthy men, each free alike of
sin,
But one did seek most sure to enter
in.

"And so when in their path did lay
A cripple with a broken staff,
The one did pass straight on his way,
While one did stoop and give the
half

His strength, and all his time did
nobly share
Till they at sunset saw their city fair.

"And he who would make sure ran
fast
To reach the golden sunset gate,
Where captains and proud chariots
passed,
But lo, he came one moment
late!

The gate was closed, and all night
long he cried;
He cried and cried, but never watch
replied.

"Meanwhile, the man who cared to
save
Another as he would be saved
Came slowly on, gave bread and
gave

Cool waters, and he stooped and
laved
The wounds. At last, bent double
with his weight,
He passed, unchid, the porter's pri-
vate gate.

"Hear then this lesson, hear and
learn:

He who would save his soul, I say,
Must lose his soul; must dare to
turn

And lift the fallen by the way;
Must make his soul worth saving by
some deed
That grows, and grows, as grows the
fruitful seed."

UNDER THE OLIVE TREES

Those shining leaves that lisped and
shook

All darkness from them, sensate
leaves

In Nature's never-ending book;

Leaves full of truth as garnered
sheaves

That hold till seed-time fruitful seed,
To grow as grows some small good
deed.

How strangely and how vastly still!

The harvest moon hung low and
large,

And drew across the dreamful hill

Like some huge star-bound,
freighted barge;

Some strange, new, neighbor-world
it surely seemed,

The while he gazed and dreamed, yet
scarcely dreamed.

FROM OUT THE GOLDEN DOORS OF DAWN

From out the golden doors of dawn

The wise men came, of wondrous
thought,

Who knew the stars. From far upon

The shoreless East they kneeling
brought

Their costly gifts of inwrought gems
and gold,

While cloudlike incense from their
presence rolled.

Their sweets of flower fields, their
sweet

Distillments of most sacred leaves

They laid, low-bending, at His feet,

As reapers bend above their
sheaves—

As strong-armed reapers bending
clamorous

To gather golden full sheaves kneeling
thus.

And kneeling so, they spake of when

God walked His garden's sacred
sod,

Nor yet had hid his face from men,

Nor yet had man forgotten God.

They spake. But Mary kept her
thought apart

And, silent, "pondered all things in
her heart."

They spake in whispers long, they laid
Their shaggy heads together, drew

Some stained scrolls breathless forth,
 then made
 Such speech as only wise men
 knew,—

Their high, red camels on the huge
 hill set
 Outstanding, like some night-hewn
 silhouette.

THE SUN LAY MOLTEN IN THE SEA

The sun lay molten in the sea
 Of sand, and all the sea was rolled

In one broad, bright intensity
 Of gold and gold and gold and gold.

HE WALKED THE WORLD WITH BENDED HEAD

He walked the world with bended
 head.
 "There is no thing," he moaning said,
 "That must not some day join the
 dead."

He sat where rolled a river deep;
 A woman sat her down to weep;
 A child lay in her lap asleep.

The water touched the mother's
 hand.
 His heart was touched. He passed
 from land,
 But left it laughing in the sand.

That one kind word, that one good
 deed,

Was as if you should plant a seed
 In sand along death's sable brede.

And looking from the farther shore
 He saw, where he had sat before,
 A light that grew, grew more and
 more.

He saw a growing, glowing throng
 Of happy people white and strong
 With faith, and jubilant with song.

It grew and grew, this little seed
 Of good sown in that day of need,
 Until it touched the stars indeed!

And then the old man smiling said,
 With youthful heart and lifted head,
 "No good deed ever joins the dead."

THE DAY SAT BY WITH BANNER FURLED

The Day sat by with banner furled;
 His battered shield hung on the
 wall;
 One great star walked the upper
 world,

All purple-robed, in Stately Hall;
 Some unseen reapers gathered golden
 sheaves,
 The skies were as the tree of life in
 yellow leaves.

God's poor of Hebron rested. Then
 Straightway unto their presence
 drew
 A captain with his band of men
 And smote His poor, and well-nigh
 slew,
 Saying, "Hence, ye poor! Behold,
 the king this night
 Comes forth with torch and dance and
 loud delight."

His poor, how much they cared to
 see!
 How begged they, prone, to see, to
 hear!

But spake the captain angrily,
 And drove them forth with sword
 and spear,
 And shut the gate; and when the
 king passed through,
 These lonely poor—they knew not
 what to do.

Lo, then a soft-voiced stranger said:
 "Come ye with me a little space.
 I know where torches gold and red
 Gleam down a peaceful, ample
 place;
 Where song and perfume fill the rest-
 ful air,
 And men speak scarce at all. The
 king is there."

They passed; they sat a grass-set
 hill—
 What king hath carpets like to this?
 What king hath music like the trill
 Of crickets 'mid these silences—

These perfumed silences, that rest
 upon
 The soul like sunlight on a hill at
 dawn?

Behold what blessings in the air!
 What benedictions in the dew!
 These olives lift their arms in prayer;
 They turn their leaves, God reads
 them through;
 Yon lilies where the falling water
 sings
 Are fairer-robed than choristers of
 kings.

Lift now your heads! yon golden
 bars
 That build the porch of heaven,
 seas
 Of silver-sailing golden stars—
 Yea, these are yours, and all of
 these!
 For yonder king hath never yet been
 told
 Of silver seas that sail these ships of
 gold.

They turned, they raised their heads
 on high;
 They saw, the first time saw and
 knew,
 The awful glories of the sky,
 The benedictions of the dew;
 And from that day His poor were
 richer far
 Than all such kings as keep where
 follies are.

THE TOIL OF GOD

Behold the silvered mists that rise
 From all-night toiling in the corn.
 The mists have duties up the skies,
 The skies have duties with the
 morn;
 While all the world is full of earnest
 care
 To make the fair world still more
 wondrous fair,

More lordly fair; the stately morn
 Moves down the walk of golden
 wheat;
 Her guards of honor gild the corn
 In golden pathway for her feet;
 The purpled hills she crowns in
 crowns of gold,
 And God walks with us as He walked
 of old.

THE BLESSED BEES

I think the bees, the blessed bees,
 Are better, wiser far than we.
 The very wild birds in the trees
 Are wiser far, it seems to me;
 For love and light and sun and air
 Are theirs, and not a bit of care.

What bird makes claim to all God's
 trees?
 What bee makes claim to all God's
 flowers?
 Behold their perfect harmonies,
 Their common board, the common
 hours!
 Say, why should man be less than
 these,
 The happy birds, the hoarding bees?

The birds? What bird hath envied
 bird
 That he sings on as God hath
 willed?
 Yet man—what song of man is heard
 But he is stoned, or cursed, or
 killed?
 Thank God, sweet singers of the air,
 No sparrow falls without His care.

O brown bee in your honey house?
 Could we like you but find it best
 To common build, on sweets carouse,
 To common toil, to common rest,
 To common share our sweets with
 men—
 We surely would be better then.

MAN'S BOOKS

Man's books are but man's alphabet;
 Beyond and on his lessons lie—

The lessons of the violet,
 The large, gold letters of the sky.

THE TRULY BRAVE

And what for the man who went forth
for the right,
Was hit in the battle and shorn of a
limb?
Why, honor for him who falls in the
fight,
Falls wounded of limb and crippled
for life;
Give honor, give glory, give pensions
for him,
Give bread and give shelter for babes
and for wife.

But what for the hero who battles
alone
In battles of thought where God set
him down;
Who fought all alone and who fell
overthrown
In his reason at last from the hardness
and hate?
Why, jibe him and jeer him and point
as you frown
To that lowly, lone hero who dared
challenge fate.

God pity, God pardon, and God help
us all!
"That young man of promise,"
wherever he be,
"That young man of promise,"
wherever he fall,—
For fall, he must fall, 'tis a thousand
to one,—
Let us plant him a rose; let us plant
a great tree
To hide his poor grave from the world
and the sun.

I tell you 'twere better to cherish
that soul—
That soldier that battles with thought
for a sword,
That climbs the steep ramparts where
wrong has control,
And falls beaten back by the rude,
trampling horde.
Ay, better to cherish his words and
his worth
Than all the Napoleons that people
the earth.

WHAT IF WE ALL LAY DEAD BELOW

What if we all lay dead below;
Lay as the grass lies, cold and dead
In God's own holy shroud of snow,
With snow-white stones at foot and
head,
With all earth dead and shrouded
white
As clouds that cross the moon at
night?

What if that infidel some night
Could then rise up and see how
dead,
How wholly dead and out of sight
All things with snows sown foot and
head
And lost winds wailing up and down
The emptied fields and emptied
town?

I think that grand old infidel
 Would rub his hands with fiendish
 glee,
 And say, "I knew it, knew it well!
 I knew that death was destiny;
 I ate, I drank, I mocked at God,
 Then as the grass was, and the
 sod."

Ah me, the grasses and the sod,
 They are my preachers. Hear
 them preach
 When they forget the shroud, and God
 Lifts up these blades of grass to
 teach
 The resurrection! Who shall say
 What infidel can speak as they?

PUT UP THY SWORD

And who the bravest of the brave;
 The bravest hero ever born?
 'Twas one who dared a felon's grave,
 Who dared to bear the scorn of
 scorn.
 Nay, more than this; when sword was
 drawn
 And vengeance waited for His
 word,
 He looked with pitying eyes upon
 The scene, and said, "Put up thy
 sword."
 Oh God! could man be found to-
 day
 As brave to do, as brave to say?

"Put up thy sword into its sheath."
 Put up thy sword, put up thy
 sword!
 By Cedron's brook thus spake be-
 neath
 The olive-trees our valiant Lord,
 Spake calm and king-like. Sword
 and stave
 And torch, and stormy men of death
 Made clamor. Yet He spake not,
 save
 With loving word and patient
 breath,
 The peaceful olive-boughs beneath,
 "Put up thy sword within its sheath."

WHY, KNOW YOU NOT SOUL SPEAKS TO SOUL

Why, know you not soul speaks to
 soul?
 I say the use of words shall pass—

Words are but fragments of the
 glass,
 But silence is the perfect whole.

THE VOICE OF THE DOVE

Come, listen O Love to the voice of
 the dove,
 Come, hearken and hear him say,

"There are many To-morrows, my
 Love, my Love,
 There is only one Today."

And all day long you can hear him
say,
"This day in purple is rolled
And the baby stars of the milky
way,
They are cradled in cradles of gold."

Now what is thy secret, serene gray
dove,
Of singing so sweetly always?
"There are many Tomorrows, my
Love, my Love,
There is only one Today."

ENGLISH THEMES

ENGLAND

Thou, mother of brave men, of
nations! Thou,
The white-brow'd Queen of bold
white-bearded Sea!
Thou wert of old ever the same as now,
So strong, so weak, so tame, so fierce,
so bound, so free,
A contradiction and a mystery;

Serene, yet passionate, in ways thine
own.
Thy brave ships wind and weave
earth's destiny.
The zones of earth, aye, thou hast set
and sown
All seas in bed of blossom'd sail, as
some great garden blown.

ST. PAUL'S

I see above a crowded world a cross
Of gold. It grows like some great
cedar tree
Upon a peak in shroud of cloud and
moss,
Made bare and bronzed in far anti-
quity.
Stupendous pile! The grim Yosemite
Has rent apart his granite wall, and
thrown
Its rugged front before us. . . .
Here I see
The strides of giant men in cryptic
stone,
And turn, and slow descend where
sleep the great alone.

The mighty captains have come
home to rest;
The brave returned to sleep amid the
brave.

The sentinel that stood with steely
breast
Before the fiery hosts of France, and
gave
The battle-cry that roll'd, receding
wave
On wave, the foeman flying back and
far,
Is here. How still! Yet louder now
the grave
Than ever-crashing Belgian battle-
car
Or blue and battle-shaken seas of
Trafalgar.

The verger stalks in stiff import-
ance o'er
The hollow, deep and strange re-
sponding stones;
He stands with lifted staff unchid
before

<p>The forms that once had crush'd or fashion'd thrones, And coldly points you out the coffin'd bones: He stands composed where armies could not stand</p>	<p>A little time before. . . . The hand disowns The idle sword, and now instead the grand And golden cross makes sign and takes austere command.</p>
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WESTMINSTER ABBEY

<p>The Abbeybroods beside the turbid Thames; Her mother heart is filled with mem- ories; Her every niche is stored with storied names; They move before me like a mist of seas. I am confused, and made abash'd by these Most kingly souls, grand, silent, and severe. I am not equal, I should sore displease The living . . . dead. I dare not enter; drear And stain'd in storms of grander days all things appear.</p>	<p>I go! but shall I not return again When art has taught me gentler, kindlier skill, And time has given force and strength of strain? I go! O ye that dignify and fill The chronicles of earth! I would instil Into my soul somehow the atmo- sphere Of sanctity that here usurps the will; But go; I seek the tomb of one—a peer Of peers—whose dust a fool refused to cherish here.</p>
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OH, FOR ENGLAND'S OLD TIME THUNDER!

<p>Oh, for England's old sea thunder! Oh, for England's bold sea men, When we banged her over, under And she banged us back again! Better old-time strife and stresses, Cloud topt towers, walls, distrust;</p>	<p>Better wars than lazinesses, Better loot than wine and lust! Give us seas? Why, we have oceans! Give us manhood, sea men, men! Give us deeds, loves, hates, emotions! Else give back these seas again.</p>
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AT LORD BYRON'S TOMB

<p>O Master, here I bow before a shrine; Before the lordliest dust that ever yet</p>	<p>Moved animate in human form di- vine.</p>
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Lo! dust indeed to dust. The mold is set
 Above thee and the ancient walls are
 wet,
 And drip all day in dank and silent
 gloom,
 As if the cold gray stones could not
 forget
 Thy great estate shrunk to this som-
 ber room,
 But lean to weep perpetual tears
 above thy tomb.

 Before me lie the oak-crown'd
 Annesley hills,
 Before me lifts the ancient Annesley
 Hall
 Above the mossy oaks. . . . A
 picture fills
 With forms of other days. A maiden
 tall
 And fair; a fiery restless boy, with all
 The force of man! a steed that frets
 without;
 A long thin sword that rusts upon the
 wall. . . .
 The generations pass. . . . Be-
 hold! about
 The ivied hall the fair-hair'd children
 sport and shout.

 A bay wreath, wound by Ina of the
 West,
 Hangs damp and stain'd upon the
 dark gray wall,
 Above thy time-soil'd tomb and
 tatter'd crest;
 A bay wreath gather'd by the seas
 that call
 To orient Cathay, that break and fall
 On shell-lined shores before Tahiti's
 breeze.

A slab, a crest, a wreath, and these are
 all
 Neglected, tatter'd, torn; yet only
 these
 The world bestows for song that
 rivall'd singing seas.

 A bay-wreath wound by one more
 truly brave
 Than Shastan; fair as thy eternal fame,
 She sat and wove above the sunset
 wave,
 And wound and sang thy measures
 and thy name.
 'Twas wound by one, yet sent with
 one acclaim
 By many, fair and warm as flowing
 wine,
 And purely true, and tall as growing
 flame,
 That list and lean in moonlight's
 mellow shine
 To tropic tales of love in other tongues
 than thine.

 I bring this idle reflex of thy task,
 And my few loves, to thy forgotten
 tomb;
 I leave them here; and here all pardon
 ask
 Of thee, and patience ask of singers
 whom
 Thy majesty hath silenced. I resume
 My staff, and now my face is to the
 West;
 My feet are worn; the sun is gone, a
 gloom
 Has mantled Hucknall, and the min-
 strel's zest
 For fame is broken here, and here he
 pleads for rest.

DEAD IN THE LONG, STRONG GRASS

Dead! stark dead in the long, strong
grass!
But he died with his sword in his
hand.
Who says it? who saw it? God saw it!
And I knew him! St. George! he
would draw it,
Though they swooped down in mass
Till they darkened the land!
Then the seventeen wounds in his
breast!
Ah! these witness best!

Dead! stark dead in the long, strong
grass!
Dead! and alone in the great dark
land!
O mother! not Empress now, mother!
A nobler name, too, than all
other,
The laurel leaf fades from thy
hand!
O mother that waiteth, a mass!
Masses and chants must be said,
And cypress, instead.

THE PASSING OF TENNYSON

My kingly kinsmen, kings of thought,
I hear your gathered symphonies,
Such nights as when the world is not,
And great stars chorus through my
trees.

.

We knew it, as God's prophets knew,
We knew it, as mute red men know,
When Mars leapt searching heaven
through
With flaming torch, that he must
go.

Then Browning, he who knew the
stars,
Stood forth and faced insatiate Mars.

Then up from Cambridge rose and
turned
Sweet Lowell from his Druid trees—
Turned where the great star blazed
and burned,
As if his own soul might appease.

Yet on and on through all the stars
Still searched and searched insatiate
Mars.

Then stanch Walt Whitman saw and
knew;

Forgetful of his "Leaves of Grass,"
He heard his "Drum Taps" and God
drew

His great soul through the shining
pass,
Made light, made bright by burnished
stars;

Made scintillant from flaming Mars.

Then soft-voiced Whittier was heard
To cease; was heard to sing no more,
As you have heard some sweetest bird
The more because its song is o'er.
Yet brighter up the street of stars
Still blazed and burned and beckoned
Mars.

.

And then the king came; king of
 thought,
 King David with his harp and
 crown. . . .
 How wisely well the gods had
 wrought
 That these had gone and sat them
 down
 To wait and welcome 'mid the
 stars
 All silent in the light of Mars.

All silent . . . So, he lies in state.
 . . .
 Our redwoods drip and drip with
 rain. . . .
 Against our rock-locked Golden Gate
 We hear the great, sad, sobbing
 main.
 But silent all. . . . He passed the
 stars
 That year the whole world turned to
 Mars.

RIEL, THE REBEL

He died at dawn in the land of
 snows;
 A priest at the left, a priest at the
 right;
 The doomed man praying for his piti-
 less foes,
 And each priest holding a low dim
 light,
 To pray for the soul of the dying.
 But Windsor Castle was far away;
 And Windsor Castle was never so
 gay
 With her gorgeous banners flying!

The hero was hung in the windy
 dawn—
 'Twas splendidly done, the telegraph
 said;
 A creak of the neck, then the shoul-
 ders drawn;
 A heave of the breast—and the man
 hung dead,
 And, oh! never such valiant dying!
 While Windsor Castle was far away
 With its fops and fools on that windy
 day,
 And its thousand banners flying!

MOTHER EGYPT

Dark-browed, she broods with weary
 lids
 Beside her Sphynx and Pyramids,
 With low and never-lifted head.
 If she be dead, respect the dead;
 If she be weeping, let her weep;
 If she be sleeping, let her sleep;
 For lo, this woman named the stars!
 She suckled at her tawny dugs

Your Moses while you reeked in wars
 And prowled your woods, nude,
 painted thugs.
 Then back, brave England; back in
 peace
 To Christian isles of fat increase!
 Go back! Else bid your high priests
 mold

Their meek bronze Christs to cannon
bold;
Take down their cross from proud St.
Paul's
And coin it into cannon-balls!
You tent not far from Nazareth;
Your camps trench where his child-
feet strayed.
If Christ had seen this work of death!
If Christ had seen these ships invade!

I think the patient Christ had said,
"Go back, brave men! Take up your
dead;
Draw down your great ships to the
seas;
Repass the Gates of Hercules.
Go back to wife with babe at breast,
And leave lorn Egypt to her rest."
Or is Christ dead, as Egypt is?
Ah, England, hear me yet again;
There's something grimly wrong in
this—
So like some gray, sad woman slain.

What would you have your mother
do?

Hath she not done enough for you?
Go back! And when you learn to
read,
Come read this obelisk. Her deed
Like yonder awful forehead is
Disdainful silence. Like to this
What lessons have you writ in stone
To passing nations that shall stand?
Why, years as hers will leave you
lone
And level as yon yellow sand.

Saint George? Your lions? Whence
are they?
From awful, silent Africa.
This Egypt is the lion's lair;
Beware, brave Albion, beware!
I feel the very Nile should rise
To drive you from this sacrifice.
And if the seven plagues should
come?
The red seas swallow sword and
steed?
Lo! Christian lands stand mute and
dumb
To see thy more than Moslem deed.

AFRICA

Oh! she is very old. I lay,
Made dumb with awe and wonder-
ment,
Beneath a palm before my tent,
With idle and discouraged hands,
Not many days ago, on sands
Of awful, silent Africa.
Long gazing on her ghostly shades,
That lift their bare arms in the air,
I lay. I mused where story fades

From her dark brow and found her
fair.

A slave, and old, within her veins
There runs that warm, forbidden
blood
That no man dares to dignify
In elevated song. The chains
That held her race but yesterday
Hold still the hands of men. Forbid

Is Ethiop. The turbid flood
Of prejudice lies stagnant still,
And all the world is tainted. Will
And wit lie broken as a lance
Against the brazen mailed face
Of old opinion. None advance,
Steel-clad and glad, to the attack,
With trumpet and with song. Look
back!

Beneath yon pyramids lie hid
The histories of her great race. . . .
Old Nilus rolls right sullen by,
With all his secrets. Who shall say:
My father rear'd a pyramid;
My brother clipp'd the dragon's
wings;
My mother was Semiramis?
Yea, harps strike idly out of place;
Men sing of savage Saxon kings
New-born and known but yesterday,
And Norman blood presumes to
say. . .

Nay, ye who boast ancestral name
And vaunt deeds dignified by time
Must not despise her. Who hath
worn
Since time began a face that is
So all-enduring, old like this—
A face like Africa's? Behold!
The Sphinx is Africa. The bond
Of silence is upon her. Old
And white with tombs, and rent and
shorn;

With raiment wet with tears, and
torn,
And trampled on, yet all untamed;
All naked now, yet not ashamed,—
The mistress of the young world's
prime,
Whose obelisks still laugh at time,
And lift to heaven her fair name,
Sleeps satisfied upon her fame.

Beyond the Sphinx, and still be-
yond,
Beyond the tawny desert-tomb
Of Time; beyond tradition, loom
And lift, ghost-like, from out the
gloom,
Her thousand cities, battle-torn
And gray with story and with
Time.
Her humblest ruins are sublime;
Her thrones with mosses overborne
Make velvets for the feet of Time.

She points a hand and cries: "Go
read
The letter'd obelisks that lord
Old Rome, and know my name and
deed.
My archives these, and plunder'd
when
I had grown weary of all men."
We turn to these; we cry: "Abhorr'd
Old Sphinx, behold, we cannot read!"

BOSTON TO THE BOERS

*"For the right that needs assistance,
For the wrong that needs resistance,
For the glory in the distance,
For the good that we can do."*

*"For Freedom's battles once begun,
Bequeathed from bleeding sire to son,
Though baffled oft, are ever won."—*
BYRON.

The Sword of Gideon, Sword of God,
 Be with ye, Boers. Brave men of
 peace,
 Ye hewed the path, ye brake the sod,
 Ye fed white flocks of fat increase,
 Where Saxon foot had never trod;
 Where Saxon foot unto this day
 Had measured not, had never known,
 Had ye not bravely led the way
 And made such happy homes your
 own.

I think God's house must be such
 home.
 The priestess Mother, choristers
 Who spin and weave, nor care to
 roam
 Beyond this white God's house of
 hers,
 But spinning sing and spin again.
 I think such silent shepherd men
 Most like that few the prophet
 sings—
 Most like that few stout Abram drew
 Triumphant o'er the slaughtered
 kings.

Defend God's house! Let fall the
 crook.
 Draw forth the plowshare from the
 sod,
 And trust, as in the Holy Book,
 The Sword of Gideon and of God;
 God and the right! Enough to fight
 A million regiments of wrong.
 Defend! Nor count what comes of it.
 God's battle bides not with the strong;
 And pride must fall. Lo! it is writ!

Great England's Gold! how stanch
 she fares,
 Fame's wine-cup dressing her proud
 lips—
 Her checker-board of battle squares
 Rimmed round by steel-built battle-
 ships!
 And yet meanwhiles ten thousand
 miles
 She seeks ye out. Well, welcome
 her!
 Give her such welcome with such will
 As Boston gave in battle's whir
 That red, dread day at Bunker Hill.

MORE SONGS FROM THE HIGHTS

THE POET

Yes, I am dreamer. Yet while you
dream,
Then I am awake. When a child,
back through
The gates of the past I peer'd, and I
knew
The land I had lived in. I saw a
broad stream,
Saw rainbows that compass'd a world
in their reach;
I saw my belovéd go down on the
beach;

Saw her lean to this earth, saw her
looking for me
As shipmen looked for loved ship at
sea. . . .
While you seek gold in the earth,
why, I
See gold in the steeps of the starry
sky;
And which do you think has the
fairer view
Of God in heaven—the dreamer or
you?

AND OH, THE VOICES I HAVE HEARD

And oh, the voices I have heard!
Such visions where the morning
grows—
A brother's soul in some sweet bird,
A sister's spirit in a rose.

And oh, the beauty I have found!
Such beauty, beauty everywhere;

The beauty creeping on the ground,
The beauty singing through the air.

The love in all, the good, the worth,
The God in all, or dusk or dawn;
Good will to man and peace on
earth;
The morning stars sing on and on.

THE WORLD IS A BETTER WORLD

Aye, the world is a better old
world today!
And a great good mother this earth
of ours;
Her white tomorrows are a white
stairway
To lead us up to the far star flowers—

The spiral tomorrows that one by
one
We climb and we climb in the face of
the sun.

Aye, the world is a braver old world
today!

For many a hero dares bear with
wrong—

Will laugh at wrong and will turn away;
Will whistle it down the wind with a
song—

Dares slay the wrong with his
splendid scorn!

The bravest old hero that ever was
born!

THE FORTUNATE ISLES

You sail and you seek for the Fortu-
nate Isles,

The old Greek Isles of the yellow
bird's song?

Then steer straight on through the
watery miles,

Straight on, straight on, and you
can't go wrong.

Nay not to the left, nay not to the
right,

But on, straight on, and the Isles are
in sight,

The old Greek Isles where yellow
birds sing

And life lies girt with a golden ring.

These Fortunate Isles they are not so
far,

They lie within reach of the lowliest
door;

You can see them gleam by the
twilight star;

You can hear them sing by the
moon's white shore—

Nay, never look back! Those leveled
grave stones

They were landing steps; they were
steps unto thrones

Of glory for souls that have gone
before,

And have set white feet on the fortu-
nate shore.

And what are the names of the
Fortunate Isles?

Why, Duty and Love and a large
Content.

Lo! these are the Isles of the watery
miles,

That God let down from the firma-
ment.

Aye! Duty, and Love, and a true
man's trust;

Your forehead to God though your
feet in the dust.

Aye! Duty to man, and to God mean-
whiles,

And these, O friend, are the Fortu-
nate Isles.

TO SAVE A SOUL

It seems to me a grandest thing
To save the soul from perishing
By planting it where heaven's rain
May reach and make it grow again.

It seems to me the man who leaves
The soul to perish is as one
Who gathers up the empty sheaves
When all the golden grain is done.

THE LIGHT OF CHRIST'S FACE

Behold how glorious! Behold
 The light of Christ's face; and such
 light!
 The Moslem, Buddhist, as of old,
 Gropes hopeless on in hopeless night.
 But lo, where Christ comes, crowned
 with flame,
 Ten thousand triumphs in Christ's
 name.

Elijah's chariot of fire
 Chained lightnings harnessed to his
 car!
 Jove's thunders bridled by a wire—
 Call unto nations "here we are!"
 Lo! all the world one sea of
 light,
 Save where the Paynim walks in
 night.

GOOD BUDDHA SAID "BE CLEAN, BE CLEAN"

A free translation from the Chinese.

"Be clean, be clean!" Gautama cried,
 "Come, know the strength of being
 clean;
 Come, lie no more, ye who have lied,
 Come, lust no more, no more be
 mean;
 Be false no more, be foul no more,
 For I shall judge ye to the core."

They came, the silken Mandarin,
 The soldier with his blood-wet
 name,
 The poet with his lust of fame,
 The priest in sandals soaked with
 sin,
 The lawyer with his quibs and lies,
 The merchant with queer mer-
 chandise.

And each so proud, proud and polite!
 So proud and clean! clean out of sight!
 Their very finger nails so clean
 They shone like sea shells, pink and
 green—

A sort of ultra-submarine—
 Whatever ultra-sub may mean.
 And, too, there came a barefoot boy,
 Who left his long-horned purple
 cow
 Amid red poppies at the plow—
 Came whistling low with quiet joy,
 To stand aloof with modest mien
 And see the strength of being clean.

Gautama waved his wand, and lo,
 On each such load of dirt was laid
 He bowed and sank down, sore
 afraid.
 Some sank so low, some trembled so,
 Some sank in such sad, piteous
 plight
 Their red-topt heads sank out of
 sight.

The Mandarin with silk-tipt tail
 Showed scarce a shining finger nail.

The white-robed lawyer, lies and
brief,

Lay hid in dirt past all belief.
The red-robed merchant could not
rise
One jot from out his load of lies.

And all lay helpless, all save one,
That simple-hearted farmer's son,
With soiled bare feet and sweat-
moiled face,
Who stood soft whistling in his
place—

Still wondering, yet safe, serene,
In all the strength of being clean.

But sudden tears came to his eyes,
A flood of tender, piteous tears,
For those poor slaves, so bound by
lies,
And writhing in their filth and
fears.

He leaned in pity o'er, when lo,
His clean tears washed all clean as
snow!

TRUE GREATNESS

How sad that all great things are
sad.—

That greatness knows not to be glad.
The boundless, spouseless, fearful sea
Pursues the moon incessantly;

And Cæsar childless lives and dies.
The thunder-torn Sequoia tree

In solemn isolation cries
Sad chorus with the homeless wind
Above the clouds, above his kind,
Above the bastioned peak, above
All sign or sound or sense of love.

How mateless, desolate and drear
His lorn, long seven thousand year!
My comrades, lovers, dare to be

More truly great than Cæsar; he
Who hewed three hundred towns
apart,

Yet never truly touched one heart.
The tearful, lorn, complaining sea

The very moon looks down upon,
Then changes,—as a saber drawn;

The great Sequoia lords as lone
As God upon that fabled throne.

No, no! True greatness, glory, fame,
Is his who claims not place nor
name,

But loves, and lives content, com-
plete,

With baby flowers at his feet.

ON THE FIRING LINE

For glory? For good? For fortune,
or for fame?

Why, ho, for the front where the
battle is on!

Leave the rear to the dolt, the lazy,
the lame;

Go forward as ever the valiant
have gone.

Whether city or field, whether
mountain or mine,

Go forward, right on for the firing
line!

Whether newsboy or plowboy or cow-
 boy or clerk,
 Fight forward; be ready, be steady,
 be first;
 Be fairest, be bravest; be best at your
 work;
 Exult and be glad; dare to hunger,
 to thirst,
 As David, as Alfred—let dogs skulk
 and whine—
 There is room but for men on the
 firing line.

Aye, the one place to fight and the one
 place to fall—
 As fall we must all, in God's good
 time—
 It is where the manliest man is the
 wall,
 Where boys are as men in their
 pride and prime,
 Where glory gleams brightest, where
 brightest eyes shine—
 Far out on the roaring red firing
 line.

MOTHERS OF MEN

“Oh, give me good mothers! Yea,
 great, glad mothers,
 Proud mothers of dozens, indeed
 twice ten;
 Fair mothers of daughters and
 mothers of men,
 With old-time clusters of sisters and
 brothers,

When grand Greeks lived like to
 gods, and when
 Brave mothers of men, strong
 breasted and broad,
 Did exult in fulfilling the purpose of
 God.”

AFTER THE BATTLE

Sing banners and cannon and roll
 of drum!
 The shouting of men and the marshal-
 ing!
 Lo! cannon to cannon and earth
 struck dumb!
 Oh, battle, in song, is a glorious
 thing!
 Oh, glorious day, riding down to
 the fight!
 Oh, glorious battle in story and song!

Oh, godlike man to die for the
 right!
 Oh, manlike God to revenge the
 wrong!
 Yea, riding to battle, on battle
 day—
 Why, a soldier is something more
 than a king!
 But after the battle! The riding
 away!
 Ah, the riding away is another thing!

OUR HEROES OF TODAY

I

With high face held to her ultimate star,
 With swift feet set to her mountains of gold,
 This new-built world, where the wonders are,
 She has built new ways from the ways of old.

II

Her builders of worlds are workers with hands;
 Her true world-builders are builders of these,
 The engines, the plows; writing poems in sands
 Of gold in our golden Hesperides.

III

I reckon these builders as gods among men:
 I count them creators, creators who knew
 The thrill of dominion, of conquest, as when
 God set His stars spinning their spaces of blue.

IV

A song for the groove, and a song for the wheel,
 And a roaring song for the rumbling car;
 But away with the pomp of the soldier's steel,
 And away forever with the trade of war.

V

The hero of time is the hero of thought;
 The hero who lives is the hero of peace;
 And braver his battles than ever were fought,
 From Shiloh back to the battles of Greece.

VI

The hero of heroes is the engineer;
 The hero of height and of gnome-built deep,
 Whose only fear is the brave man's fear
 That some one waiting at home might weep.

VII

The hero we love in this land today
 Is the hero who lightens some fellow-man's load—
 Who makes of the mountain some pleasant highway;
 Who makes of the desert some blossom-sown road.

VIII

Then hurrah! for the land of the golden downs,
 For the golden land of the silver horn;
 Her heroes have built her a thousand towns,
 But never destroyed her one blade of corn.

A DEAD CARPENTER

What shall be said of this soldier
 now dead?
 This builder, this brother, now resting
 forever?
 What shall be said of this soldier who
 bled
 Through thirty-three years of silent
 endeavor?

Why, name him thy hero! Yea,
 write his name down
 As something far nobler, as braver
 by far
 Than purple-robed Cæsar of battle-
 torn town
 When bringing home glittering
 trophies of war.

Oh, dark somber pines of my star-
 lit Sierras,
 Be silent of song, for the master is
 mute!

The Carpenter, master, is dead and
 lo! there is
 Silence of song upon nature's draped
 lute!

Brother! Oh, manly dead brother
 of mine!
 My brother by toil 'mid the toiling
 and lowly,
 My brother by sign of this hard hand,
 by sign
 Of toil, and hard toil, that the Christ
 has made holy:

Yea, brother of all the brave mil-
 lions that toil;
 Brave brother in patience and silent
 endeavor,
 Rest on, as the harvester rich from
 his soil,
 Rest you, and rest you for ever and
 ever.

QUESTION?

In the days when my mother, the
 Earth, was young,
 And you all were not, nor the likeness
 of you,
 She walk'd in her maidenly prime
 among
 The moonlit stars in the boundless
 blue

Then the great sun lifted his shin-
 ing shield,
 And he flash'd his sword as the sol-
 diers do,

And he moved like a king full over
 the field,
 And he looked, and he loved her
 brave and true.

And looking afar from the ultimate
 rim,
 As he lay at rest in a reach of
 light,
 He beheld her walking alone at
 night,
 When the buttercup stars in their
 beauty swim.

So he rose up flush'd in his love,
and he ran,
And he reach'd his arms, and around
her waist
He wound them strong like a love-
struck man,
And he kissed and embraced her,
brave and chaste.

So he nursed his love like a babe at
its birth,

And he warm'd in his love as the long
years ran,
Then embraced her again, and sweet
mother Earth
Was a mother indeed, and her child
was man.

The sun is the sire, the mother is
earth!

What more do you know? what more
do I need?

DON'T STOP AT THE STATION DESPAIR

We must trust the Conductor, most
surely;

Why, millions of millions before
Have made this same journey
securely

And come to that ultimate shore.
And we, we will reach it in season;
And ah, what a welcome is there!
Reflect then, how out of all reason
To stop at the Station Despair.

Aye, midnights and many a potion
Of bitter black water have we
As we journey from ocean to ocean—
From sea unto ultimate sea—

To that deep sea of seas, and all
silence

Of passion, concern and of care—
That vast sea of Eden-set Islands—
Don't stop at the Station Despair!

Go forward, whatever may follow,
Go forward, friend-led, or alone;
Ah me, to leap off in some hollow
Or fen, in the night and unknown—
Leap off like a thief; try to hide
you

From angels, all waiting you there!
Go forward; whatever betide you,
Don't stop at the Station Despair!

FOR THOSE WHO FAIL

"All honor to him who shall win
the prize,"
The world has cried for a thousand
years;
But to him who tries, and who fails
and dies,
I give great honor and glory and
tears:

Give glory and honor and pitiful
tears
To all who fail in their deeds sub-
lime;
Their ghosts are many in the van of
years,
They were born with Time, in ad-
vance of their Time.

Oh, great is the hero who wins a
name,
But greater many and many a time
Some pale-faced fellow who dies in
shame,
And lets God finish the thought sub-
lime.

And great is the man with a sword
undrawn,
And good is the man who refrains
from wine;
But the man who fails and yet still
fights on,
Lo, he is the twin-born brother of mine.

THE RIVER OF REST

A beautiful stream is the River of
Rest;
The still, wide waters sweep clear and
cold,
A tall mast crosses a star in the west,
A white sail gleams in the west
world's gold:
It leans to the shore of the River of
Rest—
The lily-lined shore of the River of
Rest.

The boatman rises, he reaches a
hand,
He knows you well, he will steer you
true,
And far, so far, from all ills upon
land,

From hates, from fates that pursue
and pursue;
Far over the lily-lined River of
Rest—
Dear mystical, magical River of Rest.

A storied, sweet stream is this
River of Rest;
The souls of all time keep its ulti-
mate shore;
And journey you east or journey you
west,
Unwilling, or willing, sure footed or
sore,
You surely will come to this River of
Rest—
This beautiful, beautiful River of
Rest.

DEATH IS DELIGHTFUL

Death is delightful. Death is dawn,
The waking from a weary night
Of fevers unto truth and light.
Fame is not much, love is not much,
Yet what else is there worth the touch
Of lifted hands with dagger drawn?

So surely life is little worth:
Therefore I say, look up; there-
fore
I say, one little star has more
Bright gold than all the earth of
earth.

THE SONG OF THE SILENCE

O, heavens, the eloquent song of the
silence!

Asleep lay the sun in the vines, on
the sod,

And asleep in the sun lay the green-
girdled islands,

As rock'd to their rest in the cradle
of God.

God's poet is silence. His song is
unspoken.

And yet so profound, so loud, and
so far,

It fills you, it thrills you with
measures unbroken,
And as soft, and as fair, and as far
as a star.

The shallow seas moan. From the
first they have mutter'd

And mourn'd, as a child, and have
wept at their will . . .

The poems of God are too grand to
be utter'd:

The dreadful deep seas they are
loudest when still.

TOMORROW

O thou Tomorrow! Mystery!
O day that ever runs before!
What hath thine hidden hand in store
For mine, Tomorrow, and for me?
O thou Tomorrow! what hast thou
In store to make me bear the Now?

O day in which we shall forget
The tangled troubles of today!
O day that laughs at duns, at debt!

O day of promises to pay!
O shelter from all present storm!
O day in which we shall reform!

O day of all days to reform!
Convenient day of promises!
Hold back the shadow of the storm.
Let not thy mystery be less,
O bless'd Tomorrow! chiefest friend,
But lead us blindfold to the end.

FINALE

Ah me! I mind me long ago,
Once on a savage snow-bound
height
We pigmies pierced a king. Upon
His bare and upreared breast till
night
We rained red arrows and we
rained

Hot lead. Then up the steep and
slow
He passed; yet ever still disdained
To strike, or even look below.
We found him, high above the clouds
next morn
And dead, in all his silent, splendid
scorn.

So leave me, as the edge of night
Comes on, a little time to pass,
Or pray. For steep the stony height
And torn by storm, and bare of grass
Or blossom. And when I lie dead
Oh, do not drag me down once
more.

For Jesus' sake let my poor head
Lie pillowed with these stones. My
store
Of wealth is these. I earned them.
Let me keep
Still on alone, on mine own star-lit
steep.

MISCELLANEOUS LINES

THE MISSOURI

Where ranged thy black-maned,
woolly bulls

By millions, fat and unafraid;

Where gold, unclaimed in cradlefuls,
Slept 'mid the grass roots, gorge,
and glade;

Where peaks companioned with the
stars,

And propped the blue with shining
white,

With massive silver beams and bars,
With copper bastions, height on
height—

There wast thou born, O lord of
strength!

O yellow lion, leap and length
Of arm from out an Arctic chine
To far, fair Mexic seas are thine!

What colors? Copper, silver, gold
With sudden sweep and fury blent,
Enwound, unwound, inrolled, un-
rolled,

Mad molder of the continent!

What whirlpools and what choking
cries

From out the concave swirl and
sweep

As when some god cries out and dies
Ten fathoms down thy tawny deep!

Yet on, right on, no time for death,
No time to gasp a second breath!

You plow a pathway through the
main

To Morro's castle, Cuba's plain.

Hoar sire of hot, sweet Cuban seas,
Gray father of the continent,
Fierce fashioner of destinies,

Of states thou hast upreared or
rent,

Thou know'st no limit; seas turn
back,

Bent, broken from the shaggy
shore;

But thou, in thy resistless track,
Art lord and master evermore.

Missouri, surge and sing and sweep!

Missouri, master of the deep,

From snow-reared Rockies to the
sea

Sweep on, sweep on eternally!

DOWN THE MISSISSIPPI AT NIGHT

Sowing the waves with a fiery
rain,

Leaving behind us a lane of light,
Weaving a web in the woof of night,
Cleaving a continent's wealth in
twain.

Lighting the world with a way of
flame,

Writing, even as the lightnings write
High over the awful arched forehead
of night,

Jehovah's dread, unutterable name.

BY THE LOWER MISSISSIPPI

The king of rivers has a dolorous
 shore,
 A dreamful dominion of cypress-
 trees,
 A gray bird rising forever more,
 And drifting away toward the Mexi-
 can seas—
 A lone bird seeking for some lost
 mate,
 So dolorous, lorn and desolate.

The shores are gray as the sands
 are gray;
 And gray are the trees in their cloaks
 of moss;—
 That gray bird rising and drifting
 away,

Slow dragging its weary long legs
 across—
 So weary, just over the gray wood's
 brink;
 It wearies one, body and soul to think.

These vast gray levels of cypress
 wood,
 The gray soldiers' graves; and so,
 God's will—
 These cypress-trees' roots are still
 running blood;
 The smoke of battle in their mosses
 still—
 That gray bird wearily drifting away
 Was startled some long-since battle
 day.

HER PICTURE

I see her now—the fairest thing
 That ever mocked man's picturing,
 I picture her as one who drew
 Aside life's curtain and looked
 through
 The mists of all life's mystery
 As from a wood to open sea.

I picture her as one who knew
 How rare is truth to be untrue—
 As one who knew the awful sign
 Of death, of life, of the divine
 Sweet pity of all loves, all hates,
 Beneath the iron-footed fates.

I picture her as seeking peace,
 And olive leaves and vine-set land;
 While strife stood by on either hand,

And wrung her tears like rosaries.
 I picture her in passing rhyme
 As of, yet not a part of, these—
 A woman born above her time.

The soft, wide eyes of wonderment
 That trusting looked you through
 and through;
 The sweet arched mouth, a bow new
 bent,
 That sent love's arrows swift and
 true.

That sweet, arched mouth! The
 Orient
 Hath not such pearls in all her stores,
 Nor all her storied, spice-set shores
 Have fragrance such as it hath spent.

CHRISTMAS BY THE GREAT RIVER

Oh, lion of the ample earth,
What sword can cleave thy sinews
through?

The south forever cradles you;
And yet the great North gives you
birth.

Go find an arm so strong, so sure,
Go forge a sword so keen, so true,
That it can thrust thy bosom
through;
Then may this union not endure!

In orange lands I lean today
Against thy warm tremendous mouth,
Oh, tawny lion of the South,
To hear what story you shall say.

What story of the stormy North,
Of frost-bound homes, of babes at
play,

What tales of twenty States the day
You left your lair and leapt forth:

The day you tore the mountain's
breast
And in the icy North uprose,
And shook your sides of rains and
snows,
And rushed against the South to rest:

Oh, tawny river, what of they,
The far North folk? The maiden
sweet—
The ardent lover at her feet—
What story of thy States today!

.
The river kissed my garment's hem
And whispered as it swept away:
"God's story in all States today
Is of a babe of Bethlehem."

HE LOVES AND RIDES AWAY

A fig for her story of shame and of
pride!
She strayed in the night and her feet
fell astray;
The great Mississippi was glad that
day,
And that is the reason the poor girl
died;
The great Mississippi was glad, I say,
And splendid with strength in his
fieree, full pride—
And that is the reason the poor girl
died.

And that was the reason, from first
to last;
Down under the dark, still eypresses
there.
The Father of Waters he held her
fast.
He kissed her face, he fondled her
hair,
No more, no more an unloved outcast,
He clasped her close to his great,
strong breast,
Brave lover that loved her last and
best:

Around and around in her watery world,
 Down under the boughs where the bank was steep,
 And cypress trees kneeled all gnarly and curled,
 Where woods were dark as the waters were deep,
 Where strong, swift waters were swept and swirled,
 Where the whirlpool sobbed and sucked in its breath,
 As some great monster that is choking to death:

Where sweeping and swirling around and around
 That whirlpool eddied so dark and so deep
 That even a populous world might have drowned,
 So surging, so vast and so swift its sweep—
 She rode on the wave. And the trees that weep,
 The solemn gray cypresses leaning o'er;
 The roots that ran blood as they leaned from the shore!

She surely was drowned! But she should have lain still;
 She should have lain dead as the dead under ground;
 She should have kept still as the dead on the hill!
 But ever and ever she eddied around,
 And so nearer and nearer she drew me there
 Till her eyes met mine in their cold dead stare.

Then she looked, and she looked as to look me through;
 And she came so close to my feet on the shore;
 And her large eyes, larger than ever before,
 They never grew weary as dead men's do.
 And her hair! as long as the moss that swept
 From the cypress trees as they leaned and wept.

Then the moon rose up, and she came to see,
 Her long white fingers slow pointing there;
 Why, shoulder to shoulder the moon with me
 On the bank that night, with her shoulders bare,
 Slow pointing and pointing that white face out,
 As it swirled and it swirled, and it swirled about.

There ever and ever, around and around,
 Those great sad eyes that refused to sleep!
 Reproachful sad eyes that had ceased to weep!
 And the great whirlpool with its gurgling sound!
 The reproachful dead that was not yet dead!
 The long strong hair from that shapely head!

Her hair was so long! so marvelous long,

As she rode and she rode on that
whirlpool's breast;
And she rode so swift, and she rode so
strong,
Never to rest as the dead should rest.
Oh, tell me true, could her hair in the
wave
Have grown as grow dead men's in
the grave?

For, hist! I have heard that a
virgin's hair
Will grow in the grave of a virgin
true,
Will grow and grow in the coffin
there,
Till head and foot it is filled with hair
All silken and soft—but what say
you?
Yea, tell me truly can this be true?

For oh, her hair was so strangely
long,
That it bound her about like a veil of
night,
With only her pitiful face in sight!
As she rode so swift, and she rode so
strong,

That it wrapped her about, as a
shroud had done,
A shroud, a coffin, and a veil in one.

And oh, that ride on the whirling
tide!
That whirling and whirling it is in
my head,
For the eyes of my dead they are not
yet dead,
Though surely the lady had long since
died:
Then the mourning wood by the
watery grave;
The moon's white face to the face in
the wave.

That moon I shall hate! For she
left her place
Unmasked up in heaven to show me
that face.
I shall hate forever the sounding
tide;
For oh, that swirling it is in my head
As it swept and it swirled with my
dead not dead,
As it gasped and it sobbed as a God
that had died.

THE QUEEN OF MY DREAMS

I dream'd, O Queen, of you, last
night;

I can but dream of thee today.
But dream? Oh! I could kneel and
pray

To one, who, like a tender light,
Leads ever on my lonesome way,
And will not pass—yet will not stay.

I dream'd we roam'd in elden
land;

I saw you walk in splendid state,
With lifted head and heart elate,
And lilies in your white right hand,
Beneath your proud Saint Peter's
dome

That, silent, lords almighty Rome.

A diamond star was in your hair,
Your garments were of gold and
snow;

And men did turn and marvel so,
And men did say, How matchless
fair!

And all men follow'd as you pass'd;
But I came silent, lone, and last.

And holy men in sable gown,
And girt with cord, and sandal shod,
Did look to thee, and then to God.
They cross'd themselves, with heads
held down;

They chid themselves, for fear that
they
Should, seeing thee, forget to pray.

Men pass'd, men spake in wooing
word;
Men pass'd, ten thousand in a line.

You stood before the sacred shrine,
You stood as if you had not heard.
And then you turn'd in calm com-
mand,
And laid two lilies in my hand.

O Lady, if by sea or land
You yet might weary of all men,
And turn unto your singer then,
And lay one lily in his hand,
Lo! I would follow true and far
As seamen track the polar star.

My soul is young, my heart is
strong;
O Lady, reach a hand today,
And thou shalt walk the milky way,
For I will give thy name to song.
Yea, I am of the kings of thought,
And thou shalt live when kings are
not.

THOSE PERILOUS SPANISH EYES

Some fragrant trees,
Some flower-sown seas
Where boats go up and down,
And a sense of rest
To the tired breast
In this beauteous Aztec town.

But the terrible thing in this Aztec
town
That will blow men's rest to the
stormiest skies,
Or whether they journey or they lie
down—
Those perilous Spanish eyes!

Snow walls without,
Drawn sharp about
To prop the sapphire skies!
Two huge gate posts,
Snow-white like ghosts—
Gate posts to paradise!]

But, oh! turn back from the high-
walled town!
There is trouble enough in this world
I surmise,
Without men riding in regiments
down—
Oh, perilous Spanish eyes!

MEXICO CITY, 1880.

MONTGOMERY AT QUEBEC

Sword in hand he was slain;
The snow his winding sheet;
The grinding ice at his feet—
The river moaning in pain.

Pity and peace at last;
Flowers for him today
Above on the battlements gray—
And the river rolling past.

THE DEFENSE OF THE ALAMO

Santa Ana came storming, as a storm
might come;
There was rumble of cannon; there
was rattle of blade;
There was cavalry, infantry, bugle
and drum—
Full seven proud thousand in pomp
and parade,
The chivalry, flower of all Mexico;
And a gaunt two hundred in the
Alamo!

And thirty lay sick, and some were
shot through;
For the siege had been bitter, and
bloody, and long.
“Surrender, or die!”—“Men, what
will you do?”
And Travis, great Travis, drew
sword, quick and strong;
Drew a line at his feet. . . . “Will
you come? Will you go?
I die with my wounded, in the
Alamo.”

Then Bowie gasped, “Guide me over
that line!”
Then Crockett, one hand to the
sick, one hand to his gun,
Crossed with him; then never a word
or a sign

Till all, sick or well, all, all, save
but one,
One man. Then a woman stopped
praying, and slow
Across, to die with the heroes of the
Alamo.

Then that one coward fled, in the
night, in that night
When all men silently prayed and
thought
Of home; of tomorrow; of God and
the right;
Till dawn; then Travis sent his
single last cannon-shot,
In answer to insolent Mexico,
From the old bell-tower of the Alamo.

Then came Santa Ana; a crescent of
flame!
Then the red *escalade*; then the
fight hand to hand:
Such an unequal fight as never had
name
Since the Persian hordes butchered
that doomed Spartan band.
All day—all day and all night, and
the morning? so slow,
Through the battle smoke mantling
the Alamo.

Then silence! Such silence! Two
 thousand lay dead
 In a crescent outside! And within?
 Not a breath
 Save the gasp of a woman, with gory,
 gashed head,
 All alone, with her dead there,
 waiting for death;
 And she but a nurse. Yet when shall
 we know
 Another like this of the Alamo?

Shout "Victory, victory, victory
 ho!"
 I say, 'tis not always with the hosts
 that win;
 I say that the victory, high or low,
 Is given the hero who grapples with
 sin,
 Or legion or single; just asking to
 know
 When duty fronts death in his
 Alamo.

A NUBIAN FACE ON THE NILE

One night we touched the lily
 shore,
 And then passed on, in night indeed,
 Against the far white waterfall.

I saw no more, shall know no more
 Of her for aye. And you who read
 This broken bit of dream will smile,
 Half vexed that I saw aught at all.

PETER COOPER

Honor and glory forever more
 To this good man gone to rest;
 Peace on the dim Plutonian shore;
 Rest in the land of the blest.

I reckon him greater than any
 man
 That ever drew sword in war;

Nobler, better than king or khan,
 Better, wiser by far.

Aye, wisest he is in this whole wide
 land,
 Of hoarding till bent and gray;
 For all you can hold in your cold,
 dead hand
 Is what you have given away.

THE DEAD MILLIONAIRE

The gold that with the sunlight
 lies
 In bursting heaps at dawn,
 The silver spilling from the skies
 At night to walk upon,

The diamonds gleaming in the dew
 He never saw, he never knew.

He got some gold, dug from the mud,
 Some silver, crushed from stones;

But the gold was red with dead men's
blood,
The silver black with groans;

And when he died he moaned aloud
"They'll make no pocket in my
shroud."

GARFIELD

"Bear me out of the battle, for lo, I am sorely wounded."

From out of the vast, wide
bosomed West,
Where gnarled old maples make
array,
Deep scarred from Redmen gone to
rest,
Where unnamed heroes hew the way
For worlds to follow in their quest,
Where pipes the quail, where squirrels
play
Through tops of trees with nuts for
toy,
A boy stood forth clear-eyed and tall,
A timid boy, a bashful boy,
Yet comely as a son of Saul—
A boy all friendless, all unknown,
Yet heir apparent to a throne:

A throne the proudest yet on earth
For him who bears him noblest, best,
And this he won by simple worth,
That boy from out the wooded West.
And now to fall! Pale-browed and
prone

He lies in everlasting rest.
The nations clasp the cold, dead
hand;
The nations sob aloud at this;
The only dry eyes in the land
Now at the last we know are his;
While she who sends a wreath has
won
More conquests than her hosts had
done.

Brave heart, farewell. The wheel
has run
Full circle, and behold a grave
Beneath thy loved old trees is done.
The druid oaks look up and wave
A solemn beckon back. The brave
Old maples welcome, every one.
Receive him, earth. In center land,
As in the center of each heart,
As in the hollow of God's hand,
The coffin sinks. And we depart
Each on his way, as God deems best
To do, and so deserve to rest.

TO ANDREW CARNEGIE

Hail, fat king Ned!
Hail, fighting Ted,
Grand William,
Grim Oom Paul!

But I'd rather twist
Carnegie's wrist,
That open hand in this
Than shake hands with ye all.

LINCOLN PARK

Unwalled it lies, and open as the sun
When God swings wide the dark
doors of the East.

Oh, keep this one spot, still this one,
Where tramp or banker, laymen or
high priest,

May equal meet before the face of
God:

Yea, equals stand upon that common
sod

Where they shall one day equals be
Beneath, for aye, and all eternity.

RESURGO SAN FRANCISCO

This tall, strong City stands today
The fairest, comeliest fashionings
Of marble, granite, concrete, clay
That ever fell from human hand;
That ever flourished sea or land,
Or wooed the sea-world's wide white-
wings.

This concrete City stands today,
The newest, truest, man has wrought;
The kindest, cleanest, strongest, yea
Twice strongest City, deed or
thought,

Thrice strongest ever lost or won—
Thrice strongest wall, without, within
That is or ever yet has been
Beneath the broad path of the Sun.

Behold her Seven Hills loom white
Once more as marble-built Rome.
Her marts teem with a touch of home
And music fills her halls at night;
Her streets flow populous, and light
Floods every happy, hopeful face;
The wheel of fortune whirls apace
And old-time fare and dare hold sway.
Farewell the blackened, toppling wall,
The bent steel gird, the somber pall—
Farewell forever, let us pray;
Farewell forever and a day!

How beauteous her lifted brow!
How heartfelt her harmonious song!
How strong her heart, how more than
strong

She stands rewrought, refashioned
now!

Her concrete bastions, knit with steel,
Sing symphonies in stately forms,
Make harmonies that mock at storms,
Make music that you can but feel.

And yet, and yet what ropes of
sand,

What wisps of straw in God's right
hand—

And yet, my risen city, yet
Your prophets must not now forget:

Must not forget how you laid hold
This whole west world as all your
own—

How sat this sea-bank as a throne,
How strewed these very streets with
gold,

How laid hard tribute, land and sea,
Heaped silver, gold incessantly!
The simple Mexicans' broad lands
You coveted, thrust forth both hands,
Then bade Ramona plead her cause
In unknown language, unknown laws!

You robbed her, robbed her without
shame:

Ay, even of her virtuous name!

Nor shall your prophets now forget,
Now that you stand sublimely
strong,

How when these vast estates were set
With granaries that burst in song,
You spurned the heathen at your
feet

Because he begged to toil to eat;
Because he plead with bended head
For work, for work and barely bread.
Yea, how you laughed his lack of
pride,

And lied and laughed, and laughed
and lied

And mocked him, in your pride and
hate,

Then in his gaunt face banged your
Gate!

Nay, not forget, now that you rise
Triumphant, strong as Abram's song,
How that you lied the lie of lies
And wrought the Nipponese such
wrong,

Then sent your convict chief to plead
The President expel them hence.
Ah me, what black, rank insolence!
What rank, black infamy indeed!
Because their ways, their hands were
clean,

You feared the difference between,
Feared they might surely be preferred
Above your howling, convict herd!

Their sober, sane life put to shame
Your noisome, drunken penal band
That howled in Labor's sacred name,

Nor wrought, nor even lifted hand,
Save but to stone and mock and moil
Their betters who but asked to toil.
Yon harvest-fields cried out as when
Your country cries for fighting men,
And yet your hordes, by force and
fraud,

Forbade this first, last law of God!
And you! You sat supinely by
And gathered gold, nor reckoned why!

Your great, proud men heaped gold
on gold;

They heaped deep cellars with such
hoard

Of costliest wines, rich, rare, and old
As never Thebes or Babel stored—
They sat at wine till ghostly
dawn. . . .

The ides had come but had not gone;
For lo! the writing on the wall
And then the surge, the topple, fall—
Then dust, then darkness, then such
light

As never yet lit day or night,
And there was neither night nor day,
For night and day were burned away!

Hear me once more, my city, heed!
I may not kiss again your tears
Nor point your drunken, grasping
greed,

For I am stricken well with years,
But do ye as you erst have done,
Despise His daughter, mock His
son—

If still the sow her wallow keeps
And wine runs as a rivulet,
My harp hangs where the willow
weeps.

Nay, nay, I must not now forget
The sin, the shame, the feast, the fall,
The red handwriting on the wall.

Then let me not behold once more
Your flowing cellars, mile on mile,
A sea of flame, without a shore
Or even one lone, lifted isle.
Let me not hear it, feel it choke,
A wild beast choking in his chain
The while he tugs and leaps in vain
And drinks his death of flaming
smoke.

Spare me this nightmare, pray you
spare
This black three days of blank
despair!
Spare me this red-black, surging sea
Of leaping, choking agony.

.

I call one witness, only one,
In proof that God is God, and just:
Yon high-heaved dome, débris and
dust.
With torn lips lifted to the sun,
In desolation still, lords all—
The rent and ruined City Hall.

And here throbbed San Francisco's
heart,
And here her madness held high
mart—
Sold justice, sold black shame, sold
hell.
And here, right here, God's high hand
fell,
Fell hardest, hottest, first and
worst—
Your huge high Hall, the most
accurst!

Therefore I say tempt not the fates.
Love meekness more, love folly less.
The stranger housed within thy gates
Hold sacred in his lowliness.
That pride which runs before a fall—
Behold God's Angels fell from pride!
And He, the lowly crucified?
Ye would have stoned Him, one and
all.
Beware the pride of race, beware
The pride of creed, long pompous
prayer—
Who made your High Priest higher
than
The humblest, honest Chinaman?

CUBA LIBRE

Comes a cry from Cuban water—
From the warm, dusk Antilles—
From the lost Atlanta's daughter,
Drowned in blood as drowned in
seas;
Comes a cry of purpled anguish—
See her struggles, hear her cries!
Shall she live, or shall she languish?
Shall she sink, or shall she rise?

She shall rise, by all that's holy!
She shall live and she shall last;
Rise as we, when crushed and lowly,
From the blackness of the past.
Bid her strike! Lo, it is written,—
Blood for blood and life for life.
Bid her smite, as she is smitten;
Behold, our stars were born of
strife!

Once we flashed her lights of freedom,
 Lights that dazzled her dark eyes
 Till she could but yearning heed
 them,
 Reach her hands and try to rise.
 Then they stabbed her, choked her,
 drowned her,
 Till we scarce could hear a note.
 Ah! these rusting chains that bound
 her!
 Oh! these robbers at her throat!

And the kind who forged these
 fetters?
 Ask five hundred years for news.
 Stake and thumbscrew for their
 betters?

Inquisitions! Banished Jews!
 Chains and slavery! What reminder
 Of onc red man in that land?
 Why, these very chains that bind
 her
 Bound Columbus, foot and hand!

She shall rise as rose Columbus,
 From his chains, from shame and
 wrong—
 Rise as Morning, matchless, won-
 drous—
 Rise as some rich morning song—
 Rise a ringing song and story,
 Valor, Love personified. . . .
 Stars and stripes, espouse her glory,
 Love and Liberty allied.

THE DEAD CZAR

.
 A storm burst forth! From out the
 storm
 The clean, red lightning leapt,
 And lo! a prostrate royal form . . .
 And Alexander slept!
 Down through the snow, all smoking,
 warm,
 Like any blood, his crept.
 Yea, one lay dead, for millions dead!
 One red spot in the snow,
 For one long damning line of red,
 Where exiles endless go—
 The babe at breast, the mother's head
 Bowed down, and dying so.

 And did a woman do this deed?
 Then build her scaffold high,

That all may on her forehead read
 Her martyr's right to die!
 Ring Cossack round on royal steed!
 Now lift her to the sky!
 But see! From out the black hood
 shines
 A light few look upon!
 Lorn exiles, see, from dark, deep
 mines,
 A star at burst of dawn! . . .
 A thud! A creak of hangman's
 lines!—
 A frail shape jerked and
 drawn! . . .

The Czar is dead; the woman dead,
 About her neck a cord.
 In God's house rests his royal head—
 Hers in a place abhorred—

Yet I had rather have her bed
 Than thine, most royal lord!
 Aye, rather be that woman dead,
 Than thee, dead-living Czar,

To hide in dread, with both hands red,
 Behind great bolt and bar . . .
 You may control to the North Pole,
 But God still guides his star.

THE LITTLE BROWN MAN

Where now the brownie fisher-lad?
 His hundred thousand fishing-
 boats
 Rock idly in the reedy moats;
 His baby wife no more is glad.
 But yesterday, with all Nippon,
 Beneath his pink-white cherry-
 trees,
 In chorus with his brown, sweet bees,
 He careless sang, and sang right on.
 Take care! for he has ceased to sing;
 His startled bees have taken wing!

His cherry-blossoms drop like blood;
 His bees begin to storm and sting;
 His seas flash lightning, and a flood
 Of crimson stains their wide, white
 ring;
 His battle-ships belch hell, and all
 Nippon is but one Spartan wall!
 Aye, he, the boy of yesterday,
 Now holds the bearded Russ at bay;
 While, blossom'd steeps above, the
 clouds
 Wait idly, still, as waiting shrouds.

But oh, beware his scorn of death,
 His love of Emperor, of isles
 That boast a thousand bastioned
 miles
 Above the clouds where never
 breath

Of frost or foe has ventured yet,
 Or foot of foreign man has set!
 Beware his scorn of food (his fare
 Is scarcely more than sweet sea-
 air);
 Beware his cunning, sprite-like skill—
 But most beware his dauntless will.

Goliath, David, once again,
 The giant and the shepherd
 youth—
 The tallest, smallest of all men,
 The trained in tongue, the trained
 in truth.
 Beware this boy, this new mad man:
 That erst mad man of Macedon,
 Who drank and died at Babylon;
 That shepherd lad; the Corsican—
 They sat the thrones of earth! Be-
 ware
 This new mad man whose drink is
 air!

His bees are not more slow to strife,
 But, stirred, they court a common
 death!

He knows the decencies of life—
 Of all men underneath the sun
 He is the one clean man, the one
 Who never knew a drunken breath!
 Beware this sober, wee brown man,
 Who yesterday stood but a span

Beneath his blossom'd cherry-trees,
Soft singing with his brother bees!

The brownie's sword is as a snake,
A sudden, sinuous copperhead:
It makes no flourish, no mistake;
It darts but once—the man is
dead!

'Tis short and black; 'tis never seen
Save when, close forth, it leaps its
sheath

And, snake-like, darts up from be-
neath.

But oh, its double edge is keen!
It strikes but once, then on, right on:
The sword is gone—the Russ is gone!

CHILKOOT PASS

And you, too, banged at the Chilkoot,
That rock-locked gate to the golden
door!

These thunder-built steps have
words built to suit,
And whether you prayed or whether
you swore

'Twere one where it seemed that an
oath was a prayer—
Seemed God couldn't care,
Seemed God wasn't there!

And you, too, climbed to the Klon-
dyke

And talked, as a friend, to those
five-horned stars!

With muckluck shoon and with
talspike

You, too, bared head to the bars,
The heaven-built bars where morning
is born,

And drank with maiden morn
From Klondyke's golden horn!

And you, too, read by the North
Lights

Such sermons as never men say!
You sat and sat with the midnights
That sit and that sit all day;

You heard the silence, you heard the
room,

Heard the glory of God in the
gloom

When the icebergs boom and boom!

Then come to my Sunland, my
soldier,

Aye, come to my heart and to
stay;

For better crusader or bolder
Bared never a breast to the fray.

And whether you prayed or whether
you cursed

You dared the best and you dared
the worst

That ever brave man durst.

THE FOURTH IN HAWAIIAN WATERS

Sail, sail yon skies of cobalt blue,
O star-built banner of the brave!

We follow you, exult in you
Or Arctic peak or sapphire wave;

From mornlit Maine to dusk Luzon,
Or set of sun or burst of dawn.

From Honolulu's Sabbath seas,
From battle-torn Manila's bay
We toss you bravely to the breeze
This nation's natal day to stay—
To stay, to lead, lead on and on
Or set of sun or burst of dawn.

O ye who fell at Bunker Hill,
O ye who fought at Brandywine,
Behold your stars triumphant still;
Behold where Freedom builds her
shrine,
Where Freedom still leads on and
on,
Or set of sun or burst of dawn.

LIGHT OF THE SOUTHERN CROSS

A POEM ON THE UNION OF THE OCEANS AT PANAMA

Espousal of the vast, void seas,
Where God's spirit moved upon
The waters ere the burst of dawn
Is of creation's majesties—
God's six days' work was not quite
done
Till man made these two seas as one.

The piteous story of men drowned,
The beauteous story of the dove,
And olive leaf and God's great love
Still lives wherever man is found,
And still His rainbow banners rise
Above the cloud-embattled skies.

Behold, the gaudy ships of Spain
With cross-hilt sword dared distant
seas,
Dared death and the Antipodes,
To find the farthest, utmost main.
They found it—and such ruin laid
That e'en dusk Paynim were dis-
mayed.

They found it, found the vast void
seas

Where God had said, "Let there be
light."

They turned God's morning into
night

With cross-bone banner to the
breeze—

Their trust was pike and sword and
shot

And all was as if God were not.

They made a trade of war. They
laid

Such tribute in their greed for gold
On helpless heathen, young and old,
That slavery grew a common trade.

They built great ships, they said all
seas

Be but the passive serfs of these.

They gathered as in one great breath
Huge battleships of all the seas,
With not one note of love or peace—
Huge isles of steel all rank with death,
Death manned and bannered, gold
on gold,

A thousand slaves in each dark hold.

Which shall prevail, mad men of
 strife
 With steel-built walls, shot, shell and
 sword,
 Or loving angels of the Lord
 With peace and love and precious life?
 "Peace, peace on earth, goodwill to
 men,"
 God's angels sang, but what since
 then?

Two thousand years of doubts and
 fears
 Since angels sang God's message clear
 To men who could not choose but
 hear—
 And still man's tyranny and tears,
 And still great decks of guns and
 gold—
 A thousand slaves in each dark hold!

They sailed, they met at Panama,
 A thousand bannered battleships,
 With great guns loaded to the lips,
 To laugh, to mock God's love and
 law;
 When lo! a peace upon them lay
 Like to that holy natal day.

And men all mute with wonderment,
 Famed martial men sword-girt and
 bold,
 Looked up and suddenly—behold!
 The boundless heavens sown and
 blent
 With such soft beauteous blaze of
 light
 As shepherds knew that natal night.

The love-lit Southern Cross o'er-
 spread

The heavens as that one great star
 That led the wise men from afar
 To find that humble tavern shed
 Where Mary Mother waited them
 Within the walls of Bethlehem.

Now great men garmented with gold
 Forgot their pride, forgot their state,
 Their love of war, their piteous hate,
 And called their mute slaves from the
 hold.

The cross of stars gave forth such
 light
 They could but see and know the
 right.

The star-built cross stood out so clear
 Great sword-girt men forgot to say
 But silent, crossed themselves to
 pray,
 And there leaned, listening, to hear
 His angels sing as on that morn
 The Christ at Bethlehem was born.

The seas lay like a harvest land;
 White ships were lilies stately, fair,
 White peace lay on them like a
 prayer,
 Vast peace poured down so bless'd,
 so bland—
 The rich unfolding of a rose
 That only dewy morning knows.

'Tis done! The seven seas are one
 Without the rending of a sheet,
 Without one signal of defeat,
 Without the firing of a gun.
 Go home, you useless battleships,
 Nor open once your iron lips.

Mark this! God's spirit moved upon
The waters e'er the world was made.
Mark this! Christ said, "Be not
afraid."

Mark this! Henceforth no sword is
drawn.

Mark this! The Deluge, Galilee—
All waters are but one great sea!

My brave Evangels, forth and preach
The love of beauty, cloud or clod,
The love that leads to love of God,
The God in all, the good in each.
For God has said of weed or wood,
"Behold, it all is very good."

Teach man the love of man and teach
The grace of Faith, Hope, Charity,
The bare brown earth, the blossomed
tree.

To hear these high priests preach and
preach

In sweet persistent harmony—
What chorus like the wind-kissed
tree?

Is man to be the last on earth
To slay his kind, to rend and tear?
Behold the monstrous great cave bear
Has passed, her huge paws nothing
worth,

With all her kindred beast of prey,
Shall man be last, so less than they?

Let there be light, the light that was
That first, vast void and voiceless day
When God pushed darkness far away
And spake the first creative cause.
Let there be light, the light of love,
The lift of sun-lit boughs above.

Come, let us consecrate the trees
To God, with neither creed nor rule.
Each bough to be a vestibule
Broad open, breezy as the seas,
A song, a sermon, in each leaf—
His birds they are so wisely brief.

God loves the man who loves a tree,
The plumed tree "pleasant to the
sight."

His birds sing on in sweet delight,
Low voiced and ever pleasantly,
Of Him who rears it from the seed
As next to God in word and deed.

And he who plants a stony steep
Or wards some wooded, watered
glade.

Where man may not make them
afraid,

The while they nest or clucking
creep

The tall, green, fragrant, growing
sod,

They sense in partnership with God.

To hear the chant of topmost trees
That lord Sierra's silent steep,
When earth and sky are hushed in
sleep,

Is heeding heaven's mysteries,
So deeper than the song of seas
And sweeter than man's harmonies.

I beg, I plead for Light, "more
Light."

I think if man might only see
The beauty, glory, majesty
Of but the humblest plant in sight,
He then might learn to lift his eyes
Up, up to the majestic skies;

And seeing there the peace of all,
The silent, happy harmony,
He then might pause a breath and he
Might let his glad eyes restful fall
To earth, and in each fragrant sod
First sense the living soul of God.

And seeing good, of all a part,
Some tithe of good, but yet the seed
Of greater things in word and deed;
He then might take man to his heart
And lead him loving into light
From out his narrow walls of night.

My brave Evangelists, pity hate!
God's pity for such fellowkind,
The blind who lead the doubly blind,
God's pity for such piteous state!
Man is not wicked, man is weak—
He smites, turn then the other cheek.

The morning stars forever sing
From out the awful arch of night:
"Let there be Light, let there be
Light,
God's Light, forever pitying!"
Poor man made blind with haste and
hate,
Who will not see God's open gate!

My swordless, brave Evangelist,
Lead forth, lead up the shining way
Saint Paul, that blest, immortal day,
Uprose from out the blinding mist,
The kingliest figure man may see
This side the Cross of Calvary.

And what, when red swords rust and
rust
And glittering ploughshares greet the
sun?

Ah me, what deed shall then be
done—

What worlds of valor, duty, trust—
What worlds of thought, what un-
known seas
Of shoreless, deep discoveries!

When man shall lift his face and look
Straight in at heaven's opened door,
What courage to explore, explore
And read God's beauteous star-
strewn book,
What songs of conquest, sea and air,
When man shall truly do and dare!

What are the stars for, tell me, man?
I say He made each one, that they,
Bright stars, or dimmest Milky Way,
Are peopled to His will and plan;
Behold each street of stars is fair
And peopled with His perfect care.

No, nature wastes not one brief
breath:

She knows no void, unpeopled place.
Then tell me not that yon vast space
Is voiceless as the doors of death,
That all is but a desert where
His stars stretch upward as a stair.

Believe it not. As well believe
That the wise Vestal Virgins bore
Brown waters from wild Tiber's
shore
Unto their shrine in open sieve.
As well believe white marble shed
Red blood the while prone Cæsar
bled.

Columbus of the cobalt blue,
Rise up and pierce thy chartless main,

Bring glory, bring glad news again
 As you were wont of old to do:
 Bring news of new worlds while men
 scoff—
 Yon worlds we see but know not of.

Fare forth in Faith, devoted, fond,
 Forgetful of the mocking shore—
 Explore, explore and still explore—
 Beyond, beyond and still beyond:
 You could not see one dimmest speck
 Of Indies from your Nina's deck.

Yet here above all brooding night,
 Lo, every street of heaven strewn
 With worlds far brighter than our own,
 And each as some brave beacon
 light;—
 Fare forth and light us up the way
 To Light, to Light and endless Day.

Fare forth above earth's urge and
 roar—
 The morning stars sang at earth's
 dawn—
 The morning stars they still sing on—
 Fare forth and hear the stars once
 more
 Sing as they sang to light unfurled
 That primal morning of the world.

The while you pass high heaven's
 door
 And voyage on so far, so far
 You speak souls of that utmost star
 And still explore, explore, explore,
 Then back to earth; then death shall
 be
 No more man's nightmare mystery.

Then shall we know serene, secure,
 Of scenes beyond the set of sun—
 That life is but a play begun
 That death is but a change of scene,
 A night of rest, 'neath rose and bay
 With bright morn but a breath away.

The while brave men all unafraid
 Shall conquer elements and space
 And speak tall dim forms face to face
 And find out why the stars were
 made:
 Aye find out whether beck—what
 shores
 Beyond the sea-girt, gray Azores.

Yea, these the victories of Peace,
 The priceless victories to be
 When men forsake their Polar seas
 And dare God's door in rivalry:
 When mind shall master force ten-
 fold,
 And fear be as a tale that's told.

SEMI-HUMOROUS SONGS

IN CLASSIC SHADES

Alone and sad I sat me down
To rest on Rousseau's narrow isle
Below Geneva. Mile on mile,
And set with many a shining town,
Tow'rd Dent du Midi danced the
 wave
Beneath the moon. Winds went and
 came
And fanned the stars into a flame.
I heard the far lake, dark and deep,
Rise up and talk as in its sleep;
I heard the laughing waters lave
And lap against the further shore,
An idle oar, and nothing more
Save that the isle had voice, and save
That 'round about its base of stone
There plashed and flashed the foamy
 Rhone.

A stately man, as black as tan,
Kept up a stern and broken round
Among the strangers on the ground.
I named that awful African
A second Hannibal.

I gat

My elbows on the table; sat
With chin in upturned palm to scan
His face, and contemplate the scene.
The moon rode by, a crownéd queen.
I was alone. Lo! not a man
To speak my mother tongue. Ah me!
How more than all alone can be
A man in crowds! Across the isle

My Hannibal strode on. The while
Diminished Rousseau sat his throne
Of books, unnoticed and unknown.

This strange, strong man, with face
 austere,
At last drew near. He bowed; he
 spake
In unknown tongues. I could but
 shake
My head. Then half achill with fear,
Arose, and sought another place.
Again I mused. The kings of thought
Came by, and on that storied spot
I lifted up a tearful face.
The star-set Alps they sang a tune
Unheard by any soul save mine.
Mont Blanc, as lone and as divine
And white, seemed mated to the
 moon.

The past was mine; strong-voiced and
 vast——
Stern Calvin, strange Voltaire, and
 Tell,
And two whose names are known too
 well
To name, in grand procession passed.

And yet again came Hannibal;
King-like he came, and drawing
 near,
I saw his brow was now severe
And resolute.

In tongue unknown
Again he spake. I was alone,
Was all unarmed; was worn and sad;
But now, at last, my spirit had
Its old assertion.

I arose,
As startled from a dull repose;
With gathered strength I raised a
hand
And cried, "I do not understand."

His black face brightened as I
spake;
He bowed; he wagged his woolly
head;
He showed his shining teeth, and said,
"Sah, if you please, dose tables heah
Am consecrate to lager beer;
And, sah, what will you have to
take?"

Nott hat I loved that colored cuss—
Nay! he had awed me all too much—
But I sprang forth, and with a clutch
I grasped his hand, and holding thus,
Cried, "Bring my country's drink for
two!"
For oh! that speech of Saxon sound
To me was as a fountain found
In wastes, and thrilled me through
and through.

.
On Rousseau's isle, in Rousseau's
shade,
Two pink and spicy drinks were
made,
In classic shades, on classic ground,
We stirred two cocktails round and
round.

THAT GENTLE MAN FROM BOSTON

AN IDYL OF OREGON

Two noble brothers loved a fair
Young lady, rich and good to see;
And oh, her black abundant hair!
And oh, her wondrous witchery!
Her father kept a cattle farm,
These brothers kept her safe from
harm:

From harm of cattle on the hill;
From thick-necked bulls loud bellow-
ing
The livelong morning, long and shrill,
And lashing sides like anything!
From roaring bulls that tossed the
sand
And pawed the lilies of the land.

There came a third young man.
He came
From far and famous Boston town.
He was not handsome, was not
"game,"
But he could "cook a goose" as brown
As any man that set foot on
The mist kissed shores of Oregon.

This Boston man he taught the
school,
Taught gentleness and love alway,
Said love and kindness, as a rule,
Would ultimately "make it pay."
He was so gentle, kind, that he
Could make a noun and verb agree.

So when one day these brothers
grew

All jealous and did strip to fight,
He gently stood between the two
And meekly told them 'twas not right.
"I have a higher, better plan,"
Outspake this gentle Boston man.

"My plan is this: Forget this fray
About that lily hand of hers;
Go take your guns and hunt all day
High up yon lofty hill of firs,
And while you hunt, my ruffled doves,
Why, I will learn which one she
loves."

The brothers sat the windy hill,
Their hair shone yellow, like spun
gold,
Their rifles crossed their laps, but still
They sat and sighed and shook with
cold.
Their hearts lay bleeding far below;
Above them gleamed white peaks of
snow.

Their hounds lay crouching slim
and neat,
A spotted circle in the grass.
The valley lay beneath their feet;
They heard the wide-winged eagles
pass.
Two eagles cleft the clouds above;
Yet what could they but sigh and
love?

"If I could die," the elder sighed,
"My dear young brother here might
wed."
"Oh, would to heaven I had died!"

The younger sighed with bended
head.

Then each looked each full in the face
And each sprang up and stood in place.

"If I could die"—the elder spake,
"Die by your hand, the world would
say

'Twas accident—; and for her sake,
Dear brother, be it so, I pray."
"Not that!" the younger nobly said;
Then tossed his gun and turned his
head.

And fifty paces back he paced!
And as he paced he drew the ball;
Then sudden stopped and wheeled
and faced
His brother to the death and fall!
Two shots rang wild upon the air!
But lo! the two stood harmless there!

Two eagles poised high in the air;
Far, far below the bellowing
Of bullocks ceased, and everywhere
Vast silence sat all questioning.
The spotted hounds ran circling round,
Their red, wet noses to the ground.

And now each brother came to
know
That each had drawn the deadly ball;
And for that fair girl far below
Had sought in vain to silent fall.
And then the two did gladly "shake,"
And thus the elder gravely spake:

"Now let us run right hastily
And tell the kind schoolmaster all!
Yea! yea! and if she choose not me,
But all on you her favors fall,

This valiant scene, till all life ends,
Dear brother, binds us best of friends.

The hounds sped down, a spotted
line,
The bulls in tall abundant grass
Shook back their horns from bloom
and vine,
And trumpeted to see them pass—
They loved so good, they loved so
true,
These brothers scarce knew what to
do.

They sought the kind schoolmaster
out
As swift as sweeps the light of morn—
They could but love, they could not
doubt
This man so gentle, "in a horn,"
They cried: "Now whose the lily
hand—
That lady's of this emer'ld land?"

They bowed before that big-nosed
man,

That long-nosed man from Boston
town;
They talked as only lovers can,
They talked, but he would only frown
And still they talked and still they
plead;
It was as pleading with the dead.

At last this Boston man did
speak—
"Her father has a thousand ceows,
An hundred bulls, all fat and sleek;
He also had this ample heouse."
The brothers' eyes stuck out thereat
So far you might have hung your hat.

"I liked the looks of this big
heouse—
My lovely boys, won't you come in?
Her father had a thousand ceows—
He also had a heap o' tin.
The guirl? Oh yes, the guirl, you
see—
The guirl, this morning married me."

WILLIAM BROWN OF OREGON

They called him Bill, the hired
man,
But she, her name was Mary Jane,
The squire's daughter; and to reign
The belle from Ber-she-be to Dan
Her little game. How lovers rash
Got mittens at the spelling school!
How many a mute, inglorious fool
Wrote rhymes and sighed and dyed—
mustache?

This hired man had loved her long,
Had loved her best and first and last,

Her very garments as she passed
For him had symphony and song.
So when one day with flirt and frown
She called him "Bill," he raised his
head,
He caught her eye and faltering said,
"I love you; and my name is Brown."

She fairly waltzed with rage; she
wept;
You would have thought the house
on fire.
She told her sire, the portly squire,

Then smelt her smelling-salts and
slept.

Poor William did what could be done;
He swung a pistol on each hip,
He gathered up a great ox-whip
And drove right for the setting sun.

He crossed the big backbone of
earth,
He saw the snowy mountains rolled
Like mighty billows; saw the gold
Of great big sunsets; felt the birth
Of sudden dawn upon the plain;
And every night did William Brown
Eat pork and beans and then lie down
And dream sweet dreams of Mary
Jane.

Her lovers passed. Wolves hunt
in packs,
They sought for bigger game; some-
how
They seemed to see about her brow
The forky signs of turkey tracks.
The teeter-board of life goes up,
The teeter-board of life goes down,
The sweetest face must learn to
frown;
The biggest dog has been a pup.

O maidens! pluck not at the air;
The sweetest flowers I have found
Grow rather close unto the ground
And highest places are most bare.
Why, you had better win the grace
Of one poor cussed Af-ri-can
Than win the eyes of every man
In love alone with his own face.

At last she nursed her true desire.
She sighed, she wept for William
Brown.

She watched the splendid sun go down
Like some great sailing ship on fire,
Then rose and checked her trunks
right on;
And in the cars she lunched and
lunched,
And had her ticket punched and
and punched,
Until she came to Oregon.

She reached the limit of the lines,
She wore blue specs upon her nose,
Wore rather short and manly clothes,
And so set out to reach the mines.
Her right hand held a Testament,
Her pocket held a parasol,
And thus equipped right on she went,
Went water-proof and water-fall.

She saw a miner gazing down,
Slow stirring something with a spoon;
"O, tell me true and tell me soon,
What has become of William Brown?"
He looked askance beneath her specs,
Then stirred his cocktail round and
round,
Then raised his head and sighed pro-
found,
And said, "He's handed in his
checks."

Then care fed on her damaged
cheek,
And she grew faint, did Mary Jane,
And smelt her smelling salts in vain,
Yet wandered on, way-worn and
weak.
At last upon a hill alone,
She came, and there she sat her down;
For on that hill there stood a stone,
And, lo! that stone read, "William
Brown."

"O William Brown! O William
Brown!
And here you rest at last," she said,
"With this lone stone above your
head,
And forty miles from any town!
I will plant cypress trees, I will,
And I will build a fence around,
And I will fertilize the ground
With tears enough to turn a mill."

She went and got a hired man,
She brought him forty miles from
town,
And in the tall grass squatted down
And bade him build as she should
plan.
But cruel cowboys with their bands
They saw, and hurriedly they ran
And told a bearded cattle man
Somebody builded on his lands.

He took his rifle from the rack,
He girt himself in battle pelt,

He stuck two pistols in his belt,
And mounting on his horse's back,
He plunged ahead. But when they
shewed
A woman fair, about his eyes
He pulled his hat, and he likewise
Pulled at his beard, and chewed and
chewed.

At last he gat him down and spake:
"O lady, dear, what do you here?"
"I build a tomb unto my dear,
I plant sweet flowers for his sake."
The bearded man threw his two hands
Above his head, then brought them
down
And cried, "O, I am William Brown,
And this the corner-stone of my
lands!"

.
.
.

And the Prince married her and they
lived happy ever after.

HORACE GREELEY'S DRIVE

The old stage-drivers of the brave
old days!
The old stage-drivers with their dash
and trust!
These old stage-drivers they have
gone their ways
But their deeds live on, though their
bones are dust;
And many brave tales are told and
retold
Of these daring men in the days of old:

Of honest Hank Monk and his
Tally-Ho,

When he took good Horace in his
stage to climb
The high Sierras with their peaks of
snow
And 'cross to Nevada, "and come in
on time;"
But the canyon below was so deep—
oh! so deep—
And the summit above was so steep—
oh! so steep!

The horses were foaming. The
summit ahead

Seemed as far as the stars on a still,
clear night.

And steeper and steeper the narrow
route led

Till up to the peaks of perpetual
white;

But faithful Hank Monk, with his
face to the snow,

Sat silent and stern on his Tally-Ho!

Sat steady and still, sat faithful and
true

To the great, good man in his charge
that day;

Sat vowing the man and the mail
should "go through

On time" though he bursted both
brace and stay;

Sat silently vowing, in face of the
snow,

He'd "get in on time" with his
Tally-Ho!

But the way was so steep and so
slow—oh! so slow!

'Twas silver below, and the bright
silver peak

Was silver above in its beauty and
glow.

An eagle swooped by, Hank saw its
hooked beak;

When, sudden out-popping a head
snowy white—

"Mr. Monk, I *must* lecture in Nevada
tonight!"

With just one thought that the
mail must go through;

With just one word to the great, good
man—

But weary—so weary—the creaking
stage drew

As only a weary old creaking stage
can—

When again shot the head; came
shrieking outright:

"Mr. Monk, I *MUST* lecture in Ne-
vada tonight!"

Just then came the summit! And
the far world below,

It was Hank Monk's world. But he
no word spake;

He pushed back his hat to that fierce
peak of snow!

He threw out his foot to the eagle and
brake!

He threw out his silk! He threw out
his reins!

And the great wheels reeled as if reel-
ing snow skeins!

The eagle was lost in his crag up
above!

The horses flew swift as the swift
light of morn!

The mail must go through with its
message of love,

The miners were waiting his bright
bugle horn.

The *man* must go through! And
Monk made a vow

As he never had failed, why, he
wouldn't fail now!

How his stage spun the pines like a
far spider's web!

It was spider and fly in the heavens
up there!

And the clanging of hoofs made the
blood flow and ebb,

For 'twas death in the breadth of a
wheel or a hair.

Once more popped the head, and the
piping voice cried:

"Mr. Monk! Mr. Monk!" But no
Monk replied!

Then the great stage it swung, as if
swung from the sky;

Then it dipped like a ship in the deep
jaws of death;

Then the good man he gasped as men
gasping for breath,

When they deem it is coming their
hour to die.

And again shot the head, like a
battering ram,

And the face it was red, and the words
they were hot:

"Mr. Monk! Mr. Monk! I don't
care a (mill?) *dam*.

Whether I lecture in Nevada or not!"

THAT FAITHFUL WIFE OF IDAHO

Huge silver snow-peaks, white as
wool,

Huge, sleek, fat steers knee deep in
grass,

And belly deep, and belly full,
Their flower beds one fragrant mass

Of flowers, grass tall-born and grand,
Where flowers chase the flying snow!

Oh, high held land in God's right
hand,

Delicious, dreamful Idaho!

We rode the rolling cow-sown hills,
That bearded cattle man and I;

Below us laughed the blossomed rills,
Above the dappled clouds blew by.

We talked. The topic? Guess.

Why, sir,

Three-fourths of all men's time they
keep

To talk, to think, to *be* of HER;

The other fourth they give to sleep.

To learn what he might know, or
how,

I laughed all constancy to scorn.

"Behold yon happy, changeful cow!
Behold this day, all storm at morn,

Yet now 'tis changed by cloud and
sun,

Yea, all things change—the heart, the
head,

Behold on earth there is not one

That changeth not in love," I said.

He drew a glass, as if to scan
The steeps for steers; raised it and
sighed.

He craned his neck, this cattle man,
Then drove the cork home and re-
plied:

"For twenty years (forgive these
tears),

For twenty years no word of strife—
I have not known for twenty years
One folly from my faithful wife."

I looked that tarn man in the face—
That dark-browed, bearded cattle
man.

He pulled his beard, then dropped in
place

A broad right hand, all scarred and
tan,
And toyed with something shining
there
Above his holster, bright and small.
I was convinced. I did not care
To agitate his mind at all.

But rest I could not. Know I must
The story of my stalwart guide;
His dauntless love, enduring trust;
His blessed and most wondrous bride.
I wondered, marveled, marveled
much;
Was she of Western growth? Was
she
Of Saxon blood, that wife with such
Eternal truth and constancy?

I could not rest until I knew—
“Now twenty years, my man,” I
said,
“Is a long time.” He turned, he drew
A pistol forth, also a sigh.
“’Tis twenty years or more,” sighed
he.
“Nay, nay, my honest man, I vow

I do not doubt that this may be;
But tell, oh! tell me truly how?”

“’Twould make a poem, pure and
grand;
All time should note it near and far;
And thy fair, virgin, gold-sown land
Should stand out like some winter
star.
America should heed. And then
The doubtful French beyond the
sea—
’Twould make them truer, nobler men
To know how this might truly be.”

“’Tis twenty years or more,” urged
he;
“Nay, that I know, good guide of
mine;
But lead me where this wife may be,
And I a pilgrim at a shrine,
And kneeling as a pilgrim true”—
He, leaning, shouted loud and clear:
“I cannot show my wife to you;
She’s dead this more than twenty
year.”

SARATOGA AND THE PSALMIST

These famous waters smell like—
well,
Those Saratoga waters may
Taste just a little of the day
Of judgment; and the sulphur smell
Suggests, along with other things,
A climate rather warm for springs.

But restful as a twilight song,
The land where every lover hath
A spring, and every spring a path

To lead love pleasantly along.
Oh, there be waters, not of springs—
The waters wise King David sings.

Sweet is the bread that lovers
eat
In secret, sang on harp of gold,
Jerusalem’s high king of old.
“The stolen waters they are sweet!”
Oh, dear, delicious piracies
Of kisses upon love’s high seas!

The old traditions of our race
Repeat for aye and still repeat;
The stolen waters still are sweet
As when King David sat in place,
All purple robed and crowned in gold,
And sang his holy psalms of old.

Oh, to escape the searching sun;
To seek these waters over sweet;
To see her dip her dimpled feet
Where these delicious waters run—

To dip her feet, nor slip nor fall,
Nor stain her garment's hem at all:

Nor soil the whiteness of her feet,
Nor stain her whitest garment's
hem—

Oh, singer of Jerusalem,
You sang so sweet, so wisely sweet!
Shake hands! shake hands! I guess
you knew

For all your psalms, a thing or two.

A TURKEY HUNT IN TEXAS

(AS TOLD AT DINNER)

No, sir; no turkey for me, sir.

But soft, place it there,
Lest friends may make question and
strangers may stare.

Ah, the thought of that hunt in the
cañon, the blood——

Nay, gently, please, gently! You
open a flood

Of memories, memories melting me
so

That I rise in my place and—excuse
me—I go.

No? You must have the story?
And you, lady fair?

And you, and you all? Why, it's
blood and despair;

And 'twere not kind in me, not manly
or wise

To bring tears at such time to such
beautiful eyes.

I remember me now the last time I
told

This story a Persian in diamonds and
gold

Sat next to good Gladstone, there was
Wales to the right,

Then a Duke, then an Earl, and such
ladies in white!

But I stopped, sudden stopped, lest
the story might start

The blood freezing back to each
feminine heart.

But they all said, "The story!" just
as you all have said,

And the great Persian monarch he
nodded his head

Till his diamond-decked feathers fell,
glittered and rose,

Then nodded almost to his Ishmaelite
nose.

The story! Ah, pardon! 'Twas
high Christmas tide

And just beef and beans; yet the
land, far and wide,

Was alive with such turkeys of silver
and gold,

As never men born to the north may
behold.

And Apaches? Aye, Apaches, and
 they took this game
 In a pen, tolled it in. Might not we
 do the same?
 So two of us started, strewing corn,
 Indian corn,
 Tow'rd a great granite gorge with the
 first flush of morn;
 Started gay, laughing back from the
 broad mesa's breast,
 At the bravest of men, who but
 warned for the best.

We built a great pen from the sweet
 cedar wood
 Tumbled down from a crown where
 the sentry stars stood.
 Scarce done, when the turkeys in line
 —such a sight!
 Picking corn from the sand, russet
 gold, silver white,
 And so fat that they scarcely could
 waddle or hobble.
 And 'twas "Queek, tuckee, queek,"
 and 'twas, "gobble and gobble!"
 And their great, full crops they did
 wabble and wabble
 As their bright, high heads they did
 bob, bow and bobble,
 Down, up, through the trench, crowd-
 ing up in the pen.
 Now, quick, block the trench! Then
 the mules and the men!

Springing forth from our cove,
 guns leaned to a rock,
 How we laughed! What a feast! We
 had got the whole flock.

How we worked till the trench was all
 blocked close and tight,
 For we hungered, and, too, the near
 coming of night,
 Then the thought of our welcome.
 The news? We could hear
 Already, we fancied, the great hearty
 cheer
 As we rushed into camp and exult-
 ingly told
 Of the mule loads of turkeys in silver
 and gold.
 Then we turned for our guns. Our
 guns? In their place
 Ten Apaches stood there, and five
 guns in each face.

And we stood! we stood straight
 and stood strong, track solid to
 track.
 What, turn, try to fly and be shot
 in the back?
 No! We threw hats in the air. We
 should not need them more.
 And yelled! Yelled as never yelled
 man or Comanche before.
 We dared them, defied them, right
 there in their lair.
 Why, we leaned to their guns in our
 splendid despair.
 What! spared us for bravery, because
 we dared death?
 You know the tale? Tell it, and
 spare me my breath.
 No, sir. They killed us, killed us
 both, there and then,
 And then nailed our scalps to that
 turkey pen.

USLAND

And where lies Usland, Land of
Us?

Where Freedom lives, there Usland
lies!

Fling down that map and measure
thus

Or argent seas or sapphire skies:
To north, the North Pole; south, as
far

As ever eagle cleaved his way;
To east, the blazing morning star,
And west! West to the Judgment
Day!

No borrowed lion, rampt in gold;
No bleeding Erin, plaintive strains;
No starving millions, mute and cold;
No plundered India, prone in
chains;

No peaceful farmer, forced to fly
Or draw his plowshare from the sod,
And fighting, one to fifty, die
For freedom, fireside, and God.

Fear not, brave, patient, free-born
Boers,
Great Usland's heart is yours to-
day.

Aye, England's heart of hearts is
yours,
Whatever scheming men may say.
Her scheming men have mines to sell,
And we? Why, meat and corn
and wheat.

But, Boers, all brave hearts wish you
well;
For England's triumph means
defeat.

THAT USSIAN OF USLAND

"I am an Ussian true," he said;
"Keep off the grass there, Mister
Bull!
For if you don't, I'll bang your head
And bang your belly-full.

"Now mark, my burly jingo-man,
So prone to muss and fuss and cuss,
I am an Ussian, spick and span,
From out the land of Us!"

The stout man smole a frosty smile—
"An Ussian! Russian, Rusk, or
Russ?"
"No, no! an Ussian, every while;
My land the land of Us."

"Aw! Usland, Outland? or, maybe,
Some Venezuela I'd forgot.
Hand out your map and let me see
Where Usland is, and what."

The Yankman leaned and spread his
map
And shewed the land of Us and
shewed,
Then eyed and eyed that paunchy
chap,
And pulled his chin and chewed.

"What do you want?" A face grew
red,
And red chop whiskers redder grew.

"I want the earth," the Ussian
said,
"And all Alaska too.

"My stars swim up yon seas of blue;
No Shind am I, Boer, Turk or
Russ.

I am an Ussian—Ussian true;
My land the land of Us.

"My triple North Star lights me on,
My Southern Cross leads ever thus;
My sun scarce sets till burst of dawn.
Hands off the land of Us!"

SAYS PLATO

Says Plato, "Once in Greece the
gods
Plucked grapes, pressed wine, and
reveled deep
And drowsed below their poppy-pods,
And lay full length the hills asleep.
Then, waking, one said, 'Overmuch
We toil: come, let us rise and touch
Red clay, and shape it into man,
That he may build as we shall plan!'
And so they shaped man, all complete,
Self-procreative, satisfied;
Two heads, four hands, four feet.

"And then the gods slept, heedless,
long;
But waking suddenly one day,
They heard their valley ring with
song
And saw man reveling as they.
Enraged, they drew their swords and
said,
'Bow down! bend down!'—but man
replied
Defiant, fearless, everywhere
His four fists shaking in the air.
The gods descending cleft in twain
Each man; then wiped their swords on
'grapes;
And let confusion reign.

"And such confusion! each half ran,
Ran here, ran there; or weep or laugh
Or what he would, each helpless man
Ran hunting for his other half.
And from that day, thenceforth the
grapes
Bore blood and flame, and restless
shapes
Of hewn-down, helpless halves of
men,
Ran searching ever; crazed, as when
First hewn in twain, they grasped, let
go,
Then grasped again; but rarely found
That lost half once loved so."

Now, right or wrong, or false or
true,
'Tis Plato's tale of bitter sweet;
But I know well and well know you
The quest keeps on at fever heat.
Let Love, then, wisely sit and wait!
The world is round; sit by the gate,
Like blind Belisarius: being blind,
Love should not search; Love shall
not find
By searching. Brass is so like gold,
How shall this blind Love know new
brass
From pure soft gold of old?

WELCOME TO THE GREAT AMERICAN OCEAN

Aloha! Wahwah! Quelle raison?
 Ship ahoy! What sails are these?
 What tuneful Orpheus, what Jason
 Courts Colchis and her Golden
 Fleece?
 For never since the oak-keeled Argo
 Such sweet chords, such kingly cargo.

Never since the mad Magellan
 Dared the Philippines and died,
 Did these boundless billows swell in
 Such surprised and saucy pride.
 Are they laughing, chaffing at you?
 Waiting but to bang and bat you?

Doughty Vikings, dauntless Norse-
 men,
 White-maned stallions plunge and
 fret;
 Ride them, ride them, daring horse-
 men,
 Ride or perish in the wet!
 Galleons, doubloons galore
 Paved of old this proud sea floor!

Carabellos, caballeros!
 Where your boasted Totus Munda?
Chile carne con tamales. . . .
 And the bull-fight of a Sunday!
 That is all there is to say
 Of all your yesterdays, today.

Heed my heroes, heed the story;
 Gone the argent galleon;
 Gone the gold and gone the glory,
 Gone the gaudy, haughty Don.
 His sword, his pride, sleep side by
 side,
 Nor reck, at all, yond ebb or tide.

Ye who buckle on bright armor,
 Read and heed nor boast at all
 Tillye have worn it warm and warmer,
 Fronting pride that runs to fall.
 And heed, my heroes, where away
 We all, a span of years today?

But welcome, walls of flame and
 thunder,
 Isles of steel and miles of launches!
 Welcome to these seas of wonder,
 Men of war with olive branches;
 Welcome to dear Crusoe's seas,
 These sundown seas, this sun-born
 breeze.

Welcome to the oldest, newest!
 Here God's spirit moved upon
 The waters, these the broadest, bluest,
 Ere that sudden burst of dawn
 Dividing day from primal night,
 When He said, "Let there be light."

But, beware the wild tornadoes!
Entre nous, they are terrific!
 Scout that dago's gay bravados!
 Cut that silly name, Pacific!
 Balboa, wading to his knees,
 Cried: "Lo, the calm, pacific seas!"

Straightway Cortez hewed his head
 off!
 Nay, blame not, accuse nor cavil.
 Spite of all that has been said of
 He should have hewed it to the
 navel;
 Aye, cut his neck off to his knees,
 For naming these "Pacific Seas!"

Pacific? No, American!

Her go, her get there, gown or gun!
Her British, "Get, and keep who
can,"

All places, races, rolled in one.
Pacific Ocean? Mild of motion?
Never such a silly notion!

So, beware the sometimes tidal
Wave Tahitian, where bananas
Bathe; where fig-leaved parties bridal
Dine in tree-tops on mañanas!

Samoa's typhoons, too, beware—
Her mermaids combing kinky hair.

Aye, tidals, typhoons, 'clones beware!
But when you touch sea-set Nippon,
Where lift three thousand isles mid-
air,

And each an Eden dear as dawn,
With dimpled Eves and dainty elves—
Why, then beware your bloomin'
selves.

TWO WISE OLD MEN OF OMAR'S LAND

The world lay as a dream of love,
Lay drowned in beauty, drownd in
peace,
Lay filled with plenty, fat-increase,
Lay low-voiced as a wooing dove.
And yet, poor, blind man was not
glad,
But to and fro, contentious, mad,
Rebellious, restless, hard he sought
And sought and sought—he scarce
knew what.

The Persian monarch shook his head,
Slow twirled his twisted, raven beard,
As one who doubted, questioned,
feared.

Then called his poet up and said:
"What aileth man, blind man, that
he,
Stiff-necked and selfish, will not see
Yon gorgeous glories overhead,
These flowers climbing to the knee,
As climb sweet babes that loving cling
To hear a song?—Go forth and sing!"

The poet passed. He sang all day,
Sang all the year, sang many years;
He sang in joy, he sang in tears,
By desert way or watered way,
Yet all his singing was in vain.
Man would not list, man would not
heed
Save but for lust and selfish greed
And selfish glory and hard gain.

And so at last the poet sang
In biting hunger and hard pain
No more, but tattered, bent and gray,
He hanged his harp and let it hang
Where keen winds walked with wintry
rain,
High on a willow by the way,
The while he sought his king to cry
His failure forth and reason why.

The old king pulled his thin white
beard,
Slow sipped his sherbet nervously,

Peered right and left, suspicious
 peered,
 Thrummed with a foot as one who
 feared,
 Then fixed his crown on close; then he
 Clutched tight the wide arm of his
 throne,
 And sat all sullen, sad and lone.

At last he savagely caught up
 And drained, deep drained, his
 jeweled cup;
 Then fierce he bade his poet say,
 And briefly say, what of the day?
 The trembling poet felt his head,
 He felt his thin neck chokingly.
 "Oh, king, this world is good to see!
 Oh, king, this world is beautiful!"
 The king's thin beard was white as
 wool,
 The while he plucked it terribly,
 Then suddenly and savage said:
 "Cut that! cut that! or lose your
 head!"

The poet's knees smote knee to knee,
 The poet's face was pitiful.
 "Have mercy, king! hear me, hear
 me!
 This gorgeous world is beautiful,
 This beauteous world is good to see;
 But man, poor man, he has not time
 To see one thing at all, save one—"

"Haste, haste, dull poet, and have
 done
 With all such feeble, foolish rime!
 No time? Bah! man, no bit of time
 To see but one thing? Well, that
 one?"

"That one, oh, king, that one fair
 thing
 Of all fair things on earth to see,
 Oh, king, oh, wise and mighty king,
 That takes man's time continually,
 That takes man's time and drinks it
 up
 As you have drained your jeweled
 cup——
 Is woman, woman, wilful, fair—
 Just woman, woman, everywhere!"

The king scarce knew what next to
 do;
 He did not like that ugly truth;
 For, far back in his sunny youth,
 He, too, had loved a goodly few.
 He punched a button, punched it
 twice,
 Then as he wiped his beard he said:
 "Oh, threadbare bard of foolish rime,
 If man looks all his time at her,
 Sees naught but her, pray tell me, sir,
 Why, how does woman spend her
 time?"

The singer is a simple bird,
 The simplest ever seen or heard.
 It will not lie, it knows no thing
 Save but to sing and truly sing.
 The poet reached his neck, his head,
 As if to lay it on the shelf
 And quit the hard and hapless trade
 Of simple truth and homely rime
 That brought him neither peace nor
 pelf;
 Then with his last, faint gasp he said:
 "Why, woman, woman, matron,
 maid,
 She puts in all her precious time
 In looking, looking at herself!"

A silence then was heard to fall
So hard it broke into a grin!
The old king thought a space and
thought
Of when her face was all in all—
When love was scarce a wasteful
sin,
And even kingdoms were as naught.
At last he laughed, and in a
trice

He banged the button, banged it
thrice,
Then clutched his poet's hand and
then
These two white-bearded, wise old
men
They sat that throne and chinned and
chinned,
And grinned, they did, and grinned
and grinned!

SONGS OF THE AMERICAN SEAS

COLUMBUS

Behind him lay the gray Azores,
Behind the Gates of Hercules;
Before him not the ghost of shores;
Before him only shoreless seas.

The good mate said: "Now must
we pray,

For lo! the very stars are gone,
Brave Adm'r'l speak; what shall I
say?"

"Why, say: 'Sail on! sail on! and
on!'"

"My men grow mutinous day by
day;

My men grow ghastly, wan and
weak."

The stout mate thought of home; a
spray

Of salt wave washed his swarthy
cheek.

"What shall I say, brave Adm'r'l,
say,

If we sight naught but seas at
dawn?"

"Why, you shall say at break of
day:

'Sail on! sail on! sail on! and on!'"

They sailed and sailed, as winds
might blow,

Until at last the blanched mate
said:

"Why, now not even God would
know

Should I and all my men fall dead.

These very winds forget their way,
For God from these dread seas is
gone.

Now speak, brave Adm'r'l, speak and
say——"

He said: "Sail on! sail on! and
on!"

They sailed. They sailed. Then
spake the mate:

"This mad sea shows his teeth
tonight.

He curls his lip, he lies in wait,

He lifts his teeth, as if to bite!

Brave Adm'r'l, say but one good
word:

What shall we do when hope is
gone?"

The words leapt like a leaping sword:

"Sail on! sail on! sail on! and on!"

Then pale and worn, he paced his
deck,

And peered through darkness.

Ah, that night

Of all dark nights! And then a
speck—

A light! A light! At last a light!

It grew, a starlit flag unfurled!

It grew to be Time's burst of
dawn.

He gained a world; he gave that
world

Its grandest lesson: "On! sail on!"

A SONG OF CREATION

*The bravest, manliest man is he
Who braves the brede, who breaks the
sod,*

*Who sows a seed, who plants a tree,
Who turns and tears the barren clod,
In partnership with God is he—
Himself a very part of God,
Aye, God's anointed, God's high
priest.*

*And he who sees, who knows to see
As saw the eager seers of old,
Is of the "wise men of the East,"
Is richer than all Araby
In incense, myrrh and gifts of gold.*

*The noblest woman, bravest, best
Of all brave souls beneath the sun?*

*I say the queeniest is that one—
Seek north or south or east or west—
Who loves to fold the little frock
And hear the cradle rock and rock.*

*I say the purest woman, best
Beneath our forty stars, is she
Who loves her spouse most ardently
And rocks the cradle oftenest—
Who rocks and sings and rocks, and
then,
When birds are nesting, rocks again.*

CANTO I

I

A yucca crowned in creamy bloom,
A yucca freighted with perfume,
Breathed fragrance up the blossomed
steep;

The warm sea winds lay half asleep,
Lay drowsing in the dreamy wold

By Saint Francisco's tawny Bay,
As if to fold, forever fold,
Worn, wearied wings and rest
always
In careless, languid Arcady.

II

Some clean, lean Eucalyptus trees,
Wind-torn and tossing to the blue,
Kept ward above the silent two
Who sat the fragrant sundown seas
Above the sounding Golden Gate
Nor questioned overmuch of fate;
For she was dowered, gold on gold,
With wealth of face and form un-
told!

And he was proud and passionate.

III

Ten thousand miles of mobile sea—
This sea of all seas blent as one
Wide, unbound book of mystery,
Of awe, of sibyl prophecy,
Ere yet a ghost or misty ken
Of God's far, first Beginning when
Vast darkness lay upon the deep;
As when God's spirit moved upon
Such waters cradled in such sleep
Such night as never yet knew dawn,
Such night as weird atallaph weaves
But never mortal man conceives.

IV

He looked to heaven, God; but
she
Saw only his face and the sea.

He said—his fond face leaned to
hers,
The warmest of God's worshipers—
"In the beginning? Where and
when,
Before the fashioning of men,
Swung first His high lamps to and
fro,
To light us as we please to go?
And where the waters, dark deeps
when
God spake, and said, 'Let there be
light?'
They still house where they housed,
as then,
Dark curtained with majestic night—
Dusk Silence, in travail of Light
That knew not man or man's, at all—
Steel battle-ship or wood-built wall.

V

"Aye, these, these were the waters
when
God spake and knew His fair first-
born—
That silent, new-born baby morn,
Such eons ere the noise of men.
His Southern Cross, high-built about
The deep, set in a town of stars,
Commemorates, forbids a doubt
That here first fell God's golden
bars—
Red bars, with soft, white silver
blent,
Broad sown from sapphire firma-
ment.

VI

"Behold what wave-lights leap and
run

Swift up the shale from out the sea
Inwove with silver, gold and sun!
Light lingers in the tawny mane
Of wild oats waving lazily
Far upon the climbing poppy plain;
Far up yon steep of dusk and
dawn—
Black night, white light, inwound as
one.
But when, when fell that far, first
dawn
With ways of gold to walk upon?

VII

"I know not when, but only know
That darkness lay upon yon deep,
Lay cradled, as a child asleep,
And that God's spirit moved upon
These waters ere the burst of dawn
When first His high lamps to and
fro
Swung forth to guide which way to
go.

VIII

"I only know that Silence keeps
High court forever still hereon,
That Silence lords alone these deeps
The silence of God's house, and
keeps
Inviolatè yon water's face.
As if still His abiding place,
As ere that far, first burst of dawn
Ere fretful man set sail upon.

IX

"The deeps," he mused, "are still as
when

Dusk Silence kept her curtained bed
 Low moaning for the birth of
 dawn,
 When she should push black night
 aside,
 As some ghoul nightmare most
 abhorred—
 When she might laughing look upon
 God's first-born glory, holy Light—
 As when fond Eve exulting cried,
 In mother-pain, with mother-pride,
 'Behold the fair first-born of men!
 I gat a man-child of the Lord!'"

X

As one discerning some sweet nook
 Of wild oats, mantling yellow, pink,
 Will pass, then turn and turn to
 look,
 Then pass again to think and think,
 Then try to not turn back again,
 But try and try to quite forget
 And, sighing, try and try in vain;
 So you would turn and turn again
 To her, her girlish woman's grace—
 Full-flowered yet fond baby's face.

XI

Her wide, sweet mouth, an opened
 rose,
 Pushed out, reached out, as if to
 kiss;
 A mobile mouth in proud repose
 This moment, then unlike to this
 As storm to calm, as day to night,
 As sullen darkness to swift light;
 This new-made woman was, the sun
 And surged sea interwound in one.

XII

Her proud and ample lips pushed
 out
 As kissing sea-winds unaware;
 And then they arched in angry
 pout,
 As if she cared yet did not care.
 Then lightning lit her great, wide
 eyes,
 As if black thunder walled the skies,
 And all things took some touch of
 her,
 The while she stood nor deigned to
 stir:
 The while she saw with vision
 dim—
 Saw all things, yet saw only him.

XIII

Such eyes as compass all the skies,
 That see all things yet naught have
 seen;
 Such eyes of love or sorrow's eyes—
 A martyr or a Magdalene?
 How sad that all great souls are sad!
 How sad that gladness is not glad—
 That Love's sad sister is sweet Pain,
 That only lips of beauty drain
 Life's full-brimmed, glittering goblet
 dry,
 And only drain the cup to die!

XIV

The yellow of her poppy hair
 Was as red gold is, when at rest;
 But when aroused was as the west
 In sunset flame and then—take care!
 Her tall, free-fashioned, supple form

Was now some sudden, tropic storm
 Was now some lily leaned at play.
 What sea and sun, sunshine and
 shower,
 Full flowered ere the noon of day,
 Full June ere yet the morn of May,
 This sun-born blossom of an hour—
 Precocious Californian flower!

XV

She answered not but looked away
 With brown hand arched above her
 brow,—
 As peers a boatman from his prow,—
 To where white sea-doves wheeled at
 play.
 She watched them long, then turned
 and sighed
 And looking in his face she cried,
 While blushing prettily, "Behold,
 There is no mateless dove, not one!
 And see! not one unhappy dove.
 Ten thousand circling in the sun,
 Entangled as the mesh of fate,
 Yet each remains as true as gold
 And constant courts his pretty mate.
 See here! See there! Behold,
 above—
 I think each dove would die for
 love."
 He watched the shallows spume the
 shore
 And fleck the shelly, drifting shale,
 Then far at sea his swift eyes swept
 Where one tall, stately, snow-white
 sail
 Its silent course majestic kept
 And gloried in its alien mood,
 As his own soul in solitude.

XVI

"The shallows murmur and com-
 plain,
 The shallows turn with wind and
 tide,
 They fringe with froth and moil the
 main;
 They wail and will not be denied—
 Poor, puny babes, unsatisfied!

XVII

"The lighthouse clings her beetling
 steep
 Above the rock-sown, ragged shore
 Where Scylla and Charybdis roar
 And dangers lurk and shallows keep
 Mad tumult in the house of sleep.
 The shallows moan and moan
 alway—
 The deeps have not one word to
 say.

XVIII

"I reckon Silence as a grace
 That was ere light had name or
 place;
 A saint enshrined ere hand was laid
 To fashioning of man or maid.
 For, storm or calm, or sun or shade,
 Fair Silence never truth betrayed;
 For, ocean deep or dappled sky,
 Saint Silence never told a lie."

CANTO II

I

From out the surge of Sutro's steep,
 Beyond the Gate a rock uprears,

So sudden, savage, unawares
 The very billows start and leap,
 As frightened at its lifted face,
 So shoreless, sealess, out of place:
 A sea-washed, surge-locked isle, as
 lone

As lorn Napoleon on his throne—
 His Saint Helena throne, where still
 The dazed world in dumb wonder
 turns

To his high throned, imperious
 will

And incense burns and ever burns.
 Here huge sea-lions climb and
 cling,

Despite the surge and seethe and
 shock

The topmost limit of the rock,
 And one is named Napoleon, king.
 Behold him lord the land, the sea,
 In lone, unquestioned majesty!

II

She saw, she raised alert her head
 With eager face and cheery said:
 "What lusty, upheaved, bull-built
 neck!

What lungs to lift above the roar!
 What captain on his quarter-deck
 To mock the sea and scorn the
 shore!

I like that scar across his breast,
 I like his ardent, lover's zest!"

III

The huge sea-beast uprose, uprose,
 As if to surely topple down;
 He reached his black and bearded
 nose

Above his harem, gray, black,
 brown,
 Sleek, shining, wet or steaming
 dry,
 And mouthed and mouthed against
 the sky.

IV

What eloquence, what hot love pain!
 What land but this, what love but
 his?

What isle of bliss but this and this—
 To roar and love and roar again?

What land, what love but this his
 own,

Loud thundered from his slippery
 throne;

Loud thundered in his Sappho's ear,
 As if she could not, would not hear.

V

At last her heart was moved and
 she

Raised two bright eyes to his black
 beard,

Then sudden turned, as if she feared,
 And threw her headlong in the sea,
 Another Sappho, all for love.

While Phaon towered still above—
 An instant only; yet once more
 That upheaved head, that great bull
 neck,

That sea-born, bossed, bull-throated
 roar—

A poise, a plunge, a flash, a fleck,
 And far down, caverned in the deep,
 Where sea-green curtains swing and
 sweep

And varicolored carpets creep,

Soft emerald or amethyst,
Two lion lovers kept sweet tryst.

VI

She looked, looked long, then smiled,
then sighed,
A proud, pure soul unsatisfied,
Then sat dense grasses suddenly
And thrust a foot above the sea.
She threw her backward, arms wide
out,
And up the poppy-spangled steep
O'er grass-set cushions sown in gold,
As she would sleep yet would not
sleep.
She reached her wide hands fast
about
And grasses, gold and manifold,
Of lowly blossoms, pink and blue,
She gathered in and laughing threw,
With bare-armed, heedless, happy
grace—
Threw fragrant handfuls in his face.
And then as if to sleep she lay,
A babe nursed at the breast of
May—
Lay back with wide eyes to the
skies
And clouds of wondrous butterflies;
Such Mariposa blooms in air!
Such bloomy, golden, poppy hair!
And which were hers or poppy's
gold
Without close care none could have
told;
And which were butterflies or bloom,
To guess there was not guessing
room,
The while, in quest of sweets or
rest,

They fanned her face, they kissed her
breast.

VII

That face like to a lilt of song—
A face of sea-shell tint, with tide
Of springtime flowing fast and strong
And fearless in its maiden pride—
Such rich rose ambushed in such
hair
Of heedless, wind-kissed, poppy gold
Blown here, blown there, blown any-
where,
Soft-lifting, falling fold on fold,
As made gold poppies where she lay
Turn envious, turn green as May!
What wise face yet what wilful face,
A face that would not be denied
No more than gipsy winds that race
The sea bank in their saucy pride;
A form that knew yet only knew
The natural, the human, true.

VIII

Those two round mounds of Nine-
veh,
What treasures of the past they
knew!
But these two round mounds here
to-day
Hold treasures richer far than they,
And prophecies more truly true.
Old Nineveh's twin mounds are
dust;
They only know the ghostly past;
But these two new mounds hold in
trust
The awful future, hold the vast
Unbounded empire, land or sea,

Henceforth, for all eternity.
 Let pass dead pasts; far wiser
 turn
 And delve the future; love and
 learn.

IX

It seems she dreamed. She slept, we
 know,
 A happy, quiet little space,
 Then thrust a round limb far below
 And half-way turned aside her face,
 And then she threw her arms wide
 out
 In sleep, and so reached blind about
 As if for something she might find
 From fortune-telling, gipsy wind.

X

The soft, warm winds from far away
 Were weary, and they crept so near
 They lay against her willing ear
 As if they had so much to say.
 And she, she seemed so glad to hear
 The while she loving, sleeping lay
 And dreamed of love nor dreamed of
 doubt,
 But laughing thrust her form far
 out
 And down the fragrant poppy steep
 In playful, restless, happy sleep.
 She sighed, she heaved her hilly
 breast,
 As one who would but could not rest.

XI

How natural, how free, how fair,
 The while the happy winds on wing,

As larger butterflies, laid bare
 A rippled, braided rim of white
 And outstretched ankles exquisite.
 What arms to hold a babe at breast—
 Such breast as prudist never guessed!
 What shapely limbs, what everything
 That makes great woman great and
 good—
 That makes for proud, pure mother-
 hood!

XII

Such thews as mount the steeps of
 morn,
 Such limbs as love, not lust shall
 share,
 Such legs as God has shaped to
 bear
 The weight of ages, worlds unborn;
 Such limbs as Lesbian shrines
 revealed
 When comely, longing mothers
 kneeled;
 Such thews as Phidias loved to
 hew,
 Such limbs as Leighton loved to
 draw
 When painting tall, Greek girls at
 play;
 Such legs as blind old Homer saw,
 As Marlowe knew but yesterday,
 When Helen climbed in dreams for
 him
 Her cloud-topped towers of Ilium.

CANTO III

I

White sea-gulls glistened in the
 sun—

Ten thousand if a single one—
 And every sea-dove knew his mate.
 Far, far at sea, the Farallones
 Sent up a million plaintive moans
 From sea-beasts moaning love, or
 hate.

The sun sank weary, flushed and
 worn,
 The warm sea-winds sank tattered,
 torn,
 The sun and sea lay welded, wed;
 The day lay crouched upon the
 deep
 Half closed, as eyes half closed in
 sleep,
 Half closed, as some good book half
 read.

II

The sea was as an opal sea
 Inlaid with scintillating light,
 Yet close about and left and right
 The sea lay banked and bossed in
 night,
 As black as ever night may be.

III

The sundown sea all sudden then
 Lay argent, pallid, white as death.
 As when some great thing dies; as
 when
 A god gasps in one final breath
 And heaves full length his somber
 bed.
 The sundown sea now shone, mobile,
 Translucent, flaming, molten steel,
 Red, green, then tenfold more than
 red,
 And then of every hue, a hint

Of doubloons spilling from the mint,
 Alternate, changing, manifold,
 Yet melting, minting all to gold.

IV

Far mountain peaks flashed flecks of
 gold
 And dashed with dappled flecks the
 skies.
 "Behold," said he, "the fleecy fold
 Now slowly, surely, homeward hies.
 Such cobalt blue, such sheep of
 gold,
 Such gold as hath not place or
 name
 In elsewhere land, because no seer
 Hath seen or dauntless prophet told
 Where stood the loom in primal
 peace
 That wove the fair, first golden
 fleece.
 Behold, what gold-flecked flocks of
 Light!
 Ten million moving sheep of gold,
 Wee lambs of gold that nudge their
 dams,
 Great horned, wrinkled, heady
 rams!

V

"Slow-shepherded, the golden sheep,
 With bent horns lowered to the
 deep,
 Come home; the hollows of the sea
 Receive and house them lovingly.
 The little lambs of Light come
 home
 And house them in the argent foam,

The while He counts them every
one,
And shuts the Gate, for day is done.

VI

“Aye, day is done, the dying sun
Sinks wounded unto death to-night;
A great, hurt swan, he sinks to rest,
His wings all crimson, blood his
breast!
What wide, low wings, reached left
and right,
He sings, and night and swan are
one—
One huge black swan of Helicon.

VII

“What crimson breast, what crimson
wings
The while he dies, and dying sings!
Yet safe is housed the happy fold,
The golden sheep, the fleece of gold
That lured the dauntless Argonaut—
The fleece that daring Jason
sought.”

VIII

She waking sighed, soft murmuring,
As waters from some wood-walled
spring:
“Oh happy, huge, horn-headed rams,
To guide and lead the golden fleece,
To ward the fold of fat increase
Fast mated to your golden dams!
What bridal gold, what golden bride,
What golden twin lambs, side by
side!

Oh happy, happy nudging lambs,
Thrice happy, happy golden dams!”

IX

His face was still against the west;
For still a flush of gold was there
That would not or that could not
rest,
But seemed some night bird of the
air.
At last, with half-averted head
And dreamfully, as dreaming, said:
“What banker gathers yonder gold
That sinks, sea-washed, beyond the
deeps?
Lie there no sands to house and
hold
This sunset gold in countless heaps?
There sure must be some far, fierce
land,
Some Guinea shore, some fire-fed
strand,
Some glowing, palm-set, pathless
spot
Where all this sunset gold is stored,
As misers gather hoard on hoard.
There sure must be, beyond this
sea,
Some Argo's gold, some argosy,
Some golden fleece, long since for-
got,
To wait the coming Argonaut.”

X

She sprang up sudden, savagely,
And flushed, and paled, looked far
away.
Grinding gold poppies with her heel.

She could not say, she could but
feel.

She nothing said, because that they
Who really feel can rarely say.

And then she looked up, forth and
far,

And pointed to the pale North
Star,

The while her color went and came
From pink to white, from frost to
flame.

XI

For this, the one forbidden theme,
The one hard, dread, unquiet dream
That he should go, lead forth and
far

Below the triple Arctic star,
As he had planned; and now to
speak,

To hint—she heard with pallid
cheek,

Hard had she tried, had fain forgot
How strong, strange men were trend-
ing far

Against this cold, elusive star,
And he their Jason—Argonaut!

CANTO IV

I

How passing fair, how wondrous fair,
This daughter of the yellow sun!

Her sunlit length and strength of
hair

Seemed sun and gold inwound in
one.

How strangely silent, unaware,
Unconscious quite of strength or
grace

Or peril of her beauteous face,
She stood, the first-born of a race,
A proud, new race, scarce yet begun.
How tall she stood, free debonair—
How stately and how supple, tall,
The time she loosened and let fall
Her tossed and mighty Titian hair!

II

So beautiful she was, as one
From out some priceless picture-
book!

You could but love, you had no
choice

But love and turn again to look.
How young she was and yet how
old!—

Red orange ripened in the sun
Where never hand had reached as
yet.

The calm strength of her lifted face,
The low notes of her tuneful voice,
Were mint-marks of that wondrous
race

But scarcely born nor known as yet
Beyond yon yellow hills that fret
Warm sea-winds with their waving
pine.

A princess of that royal line
Of kings who came and silent passed,
Yet, passing, set bold, royal hand
And mighty mint-marks on the land,
And set it there to last and last,
As if in bronzen copper cast.

III

He, too, was born of men who wooed
The savage walks of solitude,

And hewed close, clean to nature's
 laws—
 Of men who knew not tears or fears,
 Of men full-sexed, yet men who
 knew
 Not sex till perfect manhood was.
 When men had thews of antique
 men,
 And one stood with the strength of
 ten;
 When men gat men who dared to
 do;
 Gat men of heart who dwelt apart,
 As Adam dwelt, when giants grew
 And men as gods drew ample
 breath—
 As Adams with their thousand
 years,
 Ere drunkenness of sex had done
 The silly world to willing death.

IV

What royal parentage, what true
 Nobility, those men who knew
 The light, who chased the yellow
 sun
 From sea to sea triumphantly,
 And westward fought and westward
 won,
 As never daring man had done.

V

They housed with God upon the
 height;
 Companioned with the peak, the
 pine;
 They led the red-lit firing line.
 Walled 'round by room and room and
 room,

They read God's open book at night,
 And drank His star-distilled per-
 fume;
 By day they dared the trackless
 west
 And chased the battling sun to rest.

VI

Such sad, mad marches to the sea,
 Such silent sacrifice, such trust!
 Such months of marching, misery,
 Such mountains heaped with heroes'
 dust!
 Yet what stout thews the fearless
 few
 Who won the sea at last, who knew
 The cleansing fire and laid hold
 To hammer out their house of gold!

VII

Their cities zone their sea of seas,
 Their white tents top the mountain's
 crest.
 The coward? He trenched not with
 these.
 The weakling? He was laid to rest.
 Each man stood forth a man, such
 men
 As God wrought not since time
 began,
 Each man a hero, lion each.
 Behold what length of limb, what
 length
 Of life, of love, what daring reach
 To deep-hived honeycomb! What
 strength!
 How clean his hands, how stout his
 heart

To dare, to do, camp, court or
mart.

He stands so tall, so clean, he hears
The morning music of the spheres.

VIII

He loved her, feared her, far apart,
He kept his ways and dreamed his
dreams;

He sang strange songs, he tuned his
heart

To music of the pines that preach
Such sermons on such holy themes
As only he who climbs can reach.

IX

He would not selfish pluck one
rose

To wear upon his breast a day
And let its perfume pass away
With any wind that comes or goes.

Why, he might walk God's garden
through

Nor touch one bud nor fright one
bird.

The music of the spheres he heard,
The harmony he breathed, he knew.

He never marred God's harmony
With one harsh thought. The fav-
ored few

Who cared to live above the sod
And lift glad faces up to God
He knew loved all as well as he,
Had equal right to rose or tree.

X

And he must spare all to the day
Their willing feet should pass the way

God in His garden walked at eve.
And as for weaklings who by turn
Would jest or jeer, he could but
grieve,

And pity all and silent say:

"Let us lead forth, make fair the
way;

By time and stress they, too, will
learn

Which way to live, to love, to
turn."

XI

The long, lean Polar bear uprose,
Outreached a paw, a bare, black
nose,

As if to still hold hard control,
By glacier steep or ice-packed main,
His mighty battlemented snows.

He bared his yellow teeth in vain;
Then backed against his bleak North
Pole

He sulked and shook his icy chain.
And he who dared not pluck a rose,
As if in chorus with his pine,
Must up and lead the battle line
Beyond the awesome Arctic chine.

XII

No airy sighs, no tales to tell;
He knew God is, that all is well,
That death is but a name, a date,
A milestone by the stormy road,
Where you may lay aside your
load

And bow your face and rest and
wait,

Defying fear, defying fate.

XIII

How fair is San Francisco Bay
 When golden stars consort and
 when
 The moon pours silver paths for
 men,
 And eare walks by the other way!
 Huge ships, black-bellied, lay below
 Broad, yellow flags from silken
 Chind,
 Round, blood-red banners from Nip-
 pon,
 Like to her sun at sudden dawn—
 Brave battle-ships as white as
 snow,
 With bannered stars tossed to the
 wind,
 Warm as a kiss when love is kind.

XIV

'Twas twilight, such soft, twilight
 night
 As only Californians know,
 When faithful love is forth, and
 when
 The Bay lies bathed in mellow
 light;
 And perfumed breath and softened
 breeze
 Blows far from Honolulu's seas—
 From sundown seas in afterglow—
 When Song sits at the feet of men
 And pipes, low-voiced as mated
 dove,
 For love to measure step with love.

XV

And yet, for all the perfumed seas,
 The peace, the silent harmonies,

The two stood mute, estranged
 before
 Her high-built, stately, opened door
 High up the terraced, plunging hill
 As hushed as death, as white and
 still.

XVI

The moon, amid her yellow fleet,
 With full, white sail, moved on and
 on,
 And drew, as loving hearts are
 drawn,
 All seas of earth fast following,
 As slow she sailed her sapphire seas.
 Then, as if pausing, pitying,
 She poured down at their very
 feet
 Broad silver ways to walk upon
 Which way they would, or east or
 west,
 Which way they would, or worst or
 best.

XVII

Her voice was low, low leaned her
 head,
 Her two white hands all helpless
 prest
 As if to hush her aching breast,
 As if to bid her aching heart
 To silent bear its bitter part,
 The while she choking, sobbing said:
 "Then here, for all our poppy days,
 Here, here, the parting of the ways?"

XVIII

"Aye, so you will it. Here divide
 The ways, forever and a day.

You, you—you women lead the way—
 You lead where love hangs crucified,
 Where love is laid prone in the
 dust—

Where cunning, cold men mouth
 sweet lies

And make pure love their mer-
 chandise.

You heedless lead to hollow lands
 Of bloodless hearts and nerveless
 hands;

I will not rival such, nay, nay
 Not look on such, save with disgust."

XIX

Her head sank lower still: her hair,
 Her heavy hair, great skeins of gold,
 Hung loosened, heedless, fold on fold,
 As if she cared not, could not care;
 She tried to speak but nothing said;
 She could but press her aching
 heart,

Step back a pace and shudder,
 start,

The while she slowly moved her
 head,

As if to say; but nothing said.

XX

Her silence lit his soul with rage,
 He strode before her, forth and back,
 A lion strident in his cage,
 Hard bound within his iron track.
 And then he paused, shook back his
 head,

And fronting her half savage said:

"My father, yours, each Argonaut

An Alexander, to this sea

Came forth and conquered mightily.

XXI

"God, what great loves, what lovers
 when

These westmost states were born of
 men,

When giants gripped their hands and
 came

With nerves of steel and souls of
 flame—

Could you not wait within yon Gate,
 As their loves dared to wait and
 wait?

An hundred thousand Didos sat
 Atlantic's sea-bank nor forgot,
 The while their lovers westmost
 fought,

But patient sat as Dido, when
 She waved Æneas back again
 And bravely dared to smile thereat.

XXII

"Hear me! All Europe, rind to core,
 Is rotting, tumbling, base to top.
 Withhold the gold and silver prop
 Our dauntless fathers hewed of yore
 From yonder seamed Sierras' core,
 And such a toppling you may hear
 As never fell on mortal ear.

XXIII

"What's London town but sorrow's
 town

And sins, such as I dare not name?
 Such thousands creeping up and
 down

Its dreary streets in draggled shame!
 What's London but a market pen—

Its hundred thousand lewd, rude
men?
What's London but a town of stone,
Its thousand thousand women prone?

XXIV

"What's Paris but a painted screen,
A gaudy gauze that scant conceals
The sensuous nakedness between
The folds it but the more reveals?
What's Paris but a circus, fair,
To tempt this west world's open
purse
With tawdry trinkets, toys bizarre?
Ah, would that she were nothing
worse!
What's Paris but a piteous mart
For west-world mothers crazed to
trade
Some silly, simpering, weak maid
For thread-bare, out-at-elbows
rank—
To outworn, weak degenerate
Whose bank is but the faro bank,
Whose grave bounds all his real
estate;
Whose boast, whose only stock in
trade,
A duel and a ruined maid!

XXV

"What's Berlin, Dresden, sorry
Rome,
But traps that take you unaware?
Behold yon paintings, right at
home,
Where nature paints with patient
care

Such splendid pictures, sea and
shore,
As all the world should bow before;
Such pictures hanging to the skies
Against the walls of Paradise,
From base to bastion, as should
wake
Piave's painter from the dust;
Such walls of color crowned in
snow,
Such steeps, such deeps, profoundly
vast,
As old-time Art had died to know,
And knowing, died content, as he
Who looked from Nimo's steep to
see,
Just once, the Promised Land, and
passed!
And yet, for all yon scene, this
sea,
You will not bide, Penelope?

XXVI

"Then go, since you so will it, go!
My way lies yonder, forth and far
Beneath yon gleaming northmost
star
O'er silent lands of trackless snow.
Lo, there leads duty, hope, as when
This westmost world demanded men:
Such men as led the firing line
When blood ran free as festal wine;
Such men as when, fast side by side,
Our fathers fought and fighting
died.

XXVII

"But go—good by! Go see again
The noisy circus, since you must;

Its painted women that disgust,
 Its nauseating monkey men;
 But mark you, Beautiful, the moth
 That loves that luring, sensuous
 light—

Nay, hear! I am not wilful, wroth;
 I love with such exceeding might,
 My beautiful, my all, my life,
 I would not, could not take to wife
 My lily tainted by the touch,
 The breath, the very sight of such.

XXVIII

“Shall I see leprous apes lean o’er
 My rose, breathe, touch it if they
 may,
 With breath that is a very stench,
 The while they bow and bend before
 Familiar, as with some weak wench,
 And smirk in double-meaning
 French?”

XXIX

“You shrink back angered? Well,
 adieu;
 What, not a hand? What, not a
 touch? . . .
 My crime is that I love too much,
 My crime is that I love too true,
 Love you, love you, not part of
 you—
 Yea, how much less the rose that
 droops
 In fevered halls where folly stoops!

XXX

“Yon splendid, triple, midnight star
 Is mine; I follow fast and sure,

Because it guides so far, so far
 From fevered follies that allure
 Your soul, your splendid, spotless
 soul

To wreck where siren billows roll—
 Good night! What, turn aside your
 face

That I might never see again
 Its lifted glory and proud grace,
 As some brave beacon light! Well,
 then. . . .

Ha, ha! Let’s laugh lest one may
 weep—

How steep your hill seems, steeps how
 steep!

How deep down seems the misty
 town,

How lone, how dark, how distant
 down!

The moon, too, turns her face, her
 light,

As you have turned your face to-
 night,

As you have turned your face from
 me,

My heartless, lost Penelope.”

XXXI

Then sudden up she tossed her
 head,

And, face to his face, proudly
 said:

“Penelope! To wait and weave!

Penelope! To wait and wait,

As waits a dog within his gate;

To weave and unweave, grieve and
 grieve,

As some weak harem favorite

Tight fenced from action, life, and
 light!

XXXII

"Why, I should not have sat one
 day
 To that dull-threaded, thudding
 loom,
 With cowards crowding fast for
 room
 To say what brave men dare not
 say!
 Why, I had snatched down from the
 wall
 His second sword that sad, first day
 And set its edge to end it all!—
 Had hewn that loom to splinters,
 yea,
 Had slashed the warp, enmeshed the
 woof
 And called that dog and put to
 proof
 Each silly suitor hounding me,
 Then hoisted sail and bent to sea!"

XXXIII

"Penelope! Penelope!
 Of all fool tales in history
 I think this tale the foolishest!
 Why I, the favored of that land,
 Had such fools come to seek my
 hand,
 Had ranged in line the sexless list
 And frankly answered with my fist!"

XXXIV

He passed. She paused. Each help-
 less hand
 Fell down, fell heavy down as lead;
 She tried but could not understand.
 At last she raised once more her head,

Set firm her lips, stepped back a pace,
 Looked long his far star in the face,
 Stood stately, still, as fixed as fate,
 Till all the east flushed sudden red;
 Then as she turned within she said:
 "I cannot, will not, will not wait."

.

He passed, with set lips, lifted hand,
 He passed the northmost golden zone
 Of dreamful, yellow poppy land,
 And silent passed, and so alone!

Beyond the utmost Oregon,
 Far, far beyond and still beyond,
 Where the crisp, clean waters rattle
 O'er the sparkling, shining shale,
 Where the dusky king, Seattle,
 Lorded mountain, wold and vale,
 When he drave his galleon
 Where scarce a battle-ship would
 dare,
 Far out, far out, or dusk or dawn,
 An hundred leagues of sea to fare
 All up or down or anywhere—
 Whose dusky, tall, breeched oarsmen
 ate
 Red salmon of an hundred weight.

His huge white cedar ships were
 wrought
 By flint and flame and ballasted
 With slabs of virgin copper brought
 From hidden mountain mines and
 red
 With dash and dot of native gold—
 Their coin, their currency of old.
 Here white Tacoma smiles upon
 Wild, wood-born blackness every-
 where!
 Here hairy monsters prowl and howl

Their whole night long and nothing
care,

White-fanged or mated cheek by
jowl.

Here nature is, here man may trace
First footprints of his brutal race.

On, on, what wood-hung waters these;
What baby cities crowd the seas!

What British ships incessantly
Cross swords with stately shadow
trees!

What white-maned stallions plunge
and play

And charge and challenge day by
day

These baby cities of the wold
That sit their shifting sands of
gold!

What black firs climb the cloud-
capped steep

And bid the bold invaders halt!
What robust Britons mount and keep
Their topless walls of Esquimalt!

On, on, what inland seas of wonder,
So icy cold, so spicy keen,

So deep as fate, so clear, so clean!
You taste a tingling, spicy breath

What time the avalanche's thunder
Grinds balm and balsam woods to
death

And in these wood-walled seas of
wonder

Swift drowns his dread, earth-shak-
ing thunder;

While here and there beneath the
trees

White ice tents dash and dot the
seas.

BOOK SECOND

CANTO I

I

His triple star led on and on,
Led up blue, bastioned Chilkoot Pass
To clouds, through clouds, above
white clouds

That droop with snows like beaded
strouds—

Above a world of gleaming glass,
Where loomed such cities of the skies
As only prophets look upon,
As only loving poets see,
With prophet ken of mystery.

II

What lone, white silence, left or
right,

What whiteness, something more than
white!

Such steel blue whiteness, van or
rear—

Such silence as you could but hear
Above the sparkled, frosted rime,

As if the steely stars kept time
And sang their mystic, mighty

rune—
. . . And oh, the icy, eerie moon!

III

What temples, towers, tombs of
white,

White tombs, white tombstones, left
and right,

That pushed the passing night
aside

Toward where fallen stars had died—
 Toward white tombs where dead stars
 lay—
 White tombs more white, more bright
 than they;
 White tombs high heaped white
 tombs upon—
 White Ossa piled on Pelion!

IV

Pale, steel stars flashed, rose, fell
 again,
 Then paused, leaned low, as pitying,
 And leaning so they ceased to sing,
 The while the moon, with mother
 care,
 Slow rocked her silver rocking-chair.

V

Night here, mid-year, is as a span;
 Thor comes, a gold-clad king of war,
 Comes only as the great Thor can.
 Thor storms the battlements and
 Thor,
 Far leaping, clinging crowned upon,
 Throws battle hammer forth and
 back
 Until the walls blaze in his track
 With sparks and it is sudden dawn—
 Dawn, sudden, sparkling, as a gem—
 A jeweled, frost-set diadem
 Of diamond, ruby, radium.

VI

Two tallest, ice-tipt peaks take
 flame,
 Take yellow flame, take crimson,
 pink,

Then, ere you yet have time to
 think,
 Take hues that never yet had name.
 Then turret, minaret, and tower,
 As if to mark some mystic hour,
 Or ancient, lost Masonic sign,
 Take on a darkness like to night,
 Deep night below the yellow light
 That erstwhile seemed some snow-
 white tomb.

Then all is set in ghostly gloom,
 As some **dim**-lighted, storied shrine—
 As if the stars forget to stay
 At court when comes the kingly day.

VII

And now the high-built shafts of
 brass,
 Gate posts that guard the tomb-set
 pass,
 Put off their crowns, rich robes, and
 all
 Their sudden, splendid light let fall;
 And tomb and minaret and tower
 Again gleam as that midnight hour.
 While day, as scorning still to wait,
 Drives fiercely through the ice-built
 gate
 That guards the Arctic's outer hem
 Of white, high-built Jerusalem.

VIII

To see, to guess the great white
 throne,
 Behold Alaska's ice-built steeps
 Where everlasting silence keeps
 And white death lives and lords
 alone:
 Go see God's river born full grown—

The gold of this stream it is good:
Here grows the Ark's white gopher
wood—

A wide, white land, unnamed, un-
known,

A land of mystery and moan.

IX

Tall, trim, slim gopher trees incline,
A leaning, laden, helpless copse,
And moan and creak and intertwine
Their laden, twisted, tossing tops,
And moan all night and moan all day
With winds that walk these steeps
always.

X

The melancholy moose looks down,
A tattered Capuchin in brown,
A gaunt, ungainly, mateless monk,
An elephant without his trunk,
While far, against the gleaming blue,
High up a rock-topt ridge of snow,
Where scarce a dream would care to
go,
Climb countless blue-clad caribou,
In endless line till lost to view.

XI

The rent ice surges, grinds and groans,
Then gorges, backs, and climbs the
shore,
Then breaks with sudden rage and
roar
And plunging, leaping, foams and
moans
Swift down the surging, seething
stream—

Mad hurdles of some monstrous
dream.

XII

To see God's river born full grown,
To see him burst the womb of earth
And leap, a giant at his birth,
Through shoreless whiteness with wild
shout—

A shout so sharp, so cold, so dread
You see, feel, hear, his sheeted dead—
'Tis as to know, no longer doubt,
'Tis as to know the eld Unknown,
Aye, bow before the great white
throne.

XIII

White-hooded nuns, steeps gleaming
white,
Lean o'er his cradle, left and right,
And weep the while he moans and
cries
And rends the earth with agonies;
High ice-heaved summits where no
thing
Has yet set foot or flashed a wing—
Bare ice-built summits where the
white
Wide world is but a sea of white—
White kneeling nuns that kneel and
feed
The groaning ice god in his greed,
And feed, forever feed, man's soul.
The full-grown river bounds right
on
From out his birthplace tow'rd the
Pole;
He knows no limit, no control:

He scarce is here till he is gone—
This sudden, mad, ice-born Yukon.

XIV

Beyond white plunging Chilkoot
Pass,
That trackless Pass of stately tombs,
Of midday glories, midnight glooms,
Of morn's great gate posts, girt in
brass—
This courtier, born to nature's court,
This comrade, peer of peaks, still
kept
Companion with the stars and leapt
And laughed, the gliding sea of glass
Beneath his feet in merry sport.

XV

Then mute red men, the quick canoe,
Then o'er the ice-born surge and
on,
Till gleaming snows and steeps were
gone,
Till wide, deep waters, swirling,
blue,
Received the sudden, swift canoe,
That leapt and laughed and laughing
flew.

XVI

Then tall, lean trees, girth scarce a
span,
With moss-set, moss-hung banks of
gold
Most rich in hue, more gorgeous
than
Silk carpetings of Turkestan:
Deep yellow mosses, rich as gold,

More gorgeous than the eye of man
Hath seen save in this wonderland—
Then flashing, tumbling, headlong
waves

Below white, ice-bound, ice-built
shores—

The river swept a stream of white
Where basalt bluffs made day like
night.

And then they heard no sound, the
oars

Were idle, still as grassy graves.

XVII

And then the mad, tumultuous moon
Spilt silver seas to plunge upon,
Possessed the land, a sea of white.
That white moon rivaled the red
dawn

And slew the very name of night,
And walked the grave of after-
noon—

That vast, vehement, stark mad
moon!

XVIII

The wide, still waters, sedgy shore,
A lank, brown wolf, a hungry howl,
A lean and hungry midday moon;
And then again the red man's oar—
A wide-winged, mute, white Arctic
owl,

A black, red-crested, screeching loon
That knew not night from middle
noon,

Nor gold-robed sun from lean, lank
moon—

That crazy, black, red-crested loon.

XIX

Swift narrows now, and now and
 then
 A broken boat with drowning men;
 The wide, still marshes, dank as
 death,
 Where honked the wild goose long
 and loud
 With unabated, angry breath.
 Black swallows twittered in a cloud
 Above the broad mosquito marsh,
 The wild goose honked, forlorn and
 harsh;
 Honked, fluttered, flew in warlike
 mood
 Above her startled, myriad brood,
 The while the melancholy moose,
 As if to mock the honking goose,
 Forsook his wall, plunged in the
 wave
 And sank, as sinking in a grave,
 Sank to his eyes, his great, sad eyes,
 And watched, in wonder, mute
 surprise,
 Watched broken barge and drowning
 men
 Drift, swirl, then plunge the gorge
 again.

XX

Again that great white Arctic owl,
 As pitying, it perched the bank
 Where swirled a barge and swirling
 sank—
 A drowned man swirling with white
 face
 Low lifting from the swift whirlpool.
 That distant, doleful, hilltop howl—
 That screaming, crimson-crested fool!

And oh, that eerie, ice-made moon
 That hung the cobalt tent of blue
 And looked straight down, to look
 you through,
 That dead man swirling in his place,
 That honking, honking, huge gray
 goose,
 That solitary, sad-eyed moose,
 That owl, that wolf, that human
 loon,
 And oh, that death's head, hideous
 moon!

XXI

And this the Yukon, night by night,
 The yellow Yukon, day by day;
 A land of death, vast, voiceless,
 white,
 A graveyard locked in ice-set clay,
 A graveyard to the Judgment Day.

XXII

On, on, the swirling pool was gone,
 On, on, the boat swept on, swept on,
 That moon was as a thousand moons!
 Two dead men swirled, one swept,
 one sank—
 Two wolves, two owls, two yelling
 loons!
 And now three loons! How many
 moons?
 How many white owls perch the
 shore?
 Three lank, black wolves along the
 bank
 That watch the drowned men swirl or
 sink!
 Three screeching loons along the
 brink—

That moon disputing with the dawn
That dared the yellow, dread
Yukon!

XXIII

And why so like some lorn graveyard
Where only owls and loons may say
And life goes by the other way?
Aye, why so hideous and so hard,
So deathly hard to look upon?
Because this cold, wild, dread Yukon,
Of gold-sown banks, of sea white
waves,
Is but one land, one sea of graves.

XXIV

Behold where bones hang either
bank!
Great tusks of beasts before the
flood
That floated here and floating sank—
'Mid ice-locked walls and ice-hung
steep,
With muck and stone and moss and
mud,
Where only death and darkness
keep!
Lo, this is death-land! Heap on
heap,
By ice-strown strand or rock-built
steep,
By moss-brown walls, gray, green or
blue,
The Yukon cleaves a graveyard
through!
Three thousand miles of tusk and
bone,
Strown here, strown there, all heed-
less strown,

All strown and sown just as they lay
That time the fearful deluge passed,
Safe locked in ices to the last,
Safe locked, as records laid away,
To wait, to wait, the Judgment Day.

XXV

He landed, pierced the ice-locked
earth,
He burned it to the very bone—
Burned and laid bare the deep bed-
stone
Placed at the building, at the birth
Of morn, and here, there, everywhere,
Such bones of bison, mastodon!
Such tusky monsters without name!
Great ice-bound bones with flesh
scarce gone,
So fresh the wild dogs nightly came
To fight about and feast upon.
And gold along the bedrock lay
So bounteous below the bones
Men barely need to turn the stones
To fill their skins, within the day,
With rich, red gold and go their way.

XXVI

"The gold of that place it is good."
Lo, here God laid the Paradise!
Lo, here each witness of the flood,
Tight jailed in ice eternal, lies
To wait the bailiff's chorus call:
"Come into court, come one, come
all!"
But why so cold, so deathly cold
The battered beasts, the scattered
gold,
The pleasant trees of Paradise,
Deep locked in everlasting ice?

XXVII

Oyez! the red man's simple tale;
 He says that once, o'er hill and vale
 Ripe fruits hung ready all the year;
 That man knew neither frost nor
 fear,
 That bison wallowed to the eyes
 In grass, that palm trees brushed the
 skies
 Where birds made music all day long.
 That then a great chief shaped a
 spear
 Bone-tipt and sharp and long and
 strong,
 And made a deadly moon-shaped
 bow,
 And then a flint-tipt arrow wrought.
 Then cunning, snake-like, creeping
 low,
 As creeps a cruel cat, he sought
 And in sheer wantonness he shot
 A large-eyed, trusting, silly roe.
 And then, exultant, crazed, he slew
 Ten bison, ten tame bear and, too,
 A harmless, long-limbed, shambling
 moose;
 That then the smell of blood let loose
 The passions of all men and all
 Uprose and slew, or great or small—
 Uprose and slew till hot midday
 All four-foot creatures in their way;
 Then proud, defiant, every one,
 Shook his red spear-point at the sun.

XXVIII

Then God said, through a mist of
 tears,
 "What would ye, braves made mad
 with blood?"

And then they shook their bone-tipt
 spears
 And cried, "The sun it is not good!
 Too hot the sun, too long the
 day;
 Break off and throw the end away!"

XXIX

Then God, most angered instantly,
 Drew down the day from out the sky
 And brake the day across his knee
 And hurled the fragments hot and
 high
 And far down till they fell upon
 The bronzing waves of dread Yukon,
 Nor spared the red men one dim ray
 Of light to lead them on their way.

XXX

And then the red men filled the lands
 With wailing for just one faint ray
 Of light to guide them home that
 they
 Might wash and cleanse their blood-
 red hands.

XXXI

But God said, "Yonder, far away
 Down yon Yukon, your broken day!
 Go gather it from out the night!
 That fitful, fearful Northern Light,
 Is all that ye shall ever know
 To guide henceforth the way you go.

XXXII

"You shall not see my face again,
 But you shall see cold death instead.

This land hath sinned, this land is
 dead;
 You drenched your beauteous land in
 blood,
 And now behold the wild, white rain
 Shall fall until a drowning flood
 Shall fill all things above, below,
 To wash away the smell of blood,
 And birds shall die and beasts be
 dumb,
 When cold, the cold of death shall
 come
 And weave a piteous shroud of snow,
 In graveyard silence, ever so."

XXXIII

The red men say that then the rain
 Drowned all the fires of the world,
 Then drowned the fires of the moon;
 That then the sun came not again,
 Save in the middle summer noon,
 When hot, red lances they had hurled
 Are hurled at them like fiery rain,
 Till Yukon rages like a main.

XXXIV

With bated breath these skin-clad
 men
 Tell why the big-nosed moose fore-
 knew
 The flood; how, bandy-legged, he
 flew
 Far up high Saint Elias: how
 Down in the slope of his left horn,
 The raven rested, night and morn;
 How, in the hollow of his right,
 The dove-hued moose-bird nestled
 low

Until they touched the utmost
 height;
 How dove and raven soon took
 flight
 And winged them forth and far
 away;
 But how the moose did stay and stay,
 His great sad eyes all wet with tears,
 And keep his steeps two thousand
 years.

XXXV

He heard the half nude red men say,
 Close huddled to the flame at night,
 How in the hollow of a palm
 A woman and a water rat,
 That dreadful, darkened, drowning
 day,
 Crept close and nestled in their
 fright;
 And how a bear, tame as a lamb,
 Came to them in the tree and sat
 The long, long drift-time to the sea,
 The while the wooing water rat
 Made love to her incessantly;
 How then the bear became a priest
 And married them at last; how then
 To them was born the shortest,
 least
 Of all the children of all men,
 And yet most cunning and most
 brave
 Of all who dare the bleak north
 wave.

XXXVI

What tales of tropic fruit! No tale
 But of some soft, sweet sensuous
 clime,

Of love and lovely maiden's trust—
 Some peopled, pleasant, palm-hung
 vale
 Of everlasting summer time—
 And, then the deadly sin of lust;
 Forbidden fruit, shame and disgust!

XXXVII

And whence the story of it all,
 The palm land, love land and the
 fall?
 Was't born of ages of desire
 From such sad children of the snows
 For something fairer, better, higher?
 God knows, God knows, God only
 knows.
 But I should say, hand laid to heart
 And head made bare, as I would
 swear,
 These piteous, sad-faced children
 there
 Knew Eden, the expulsion, knew
 The deluge, knew the deluge true!

XXXVIII

And what though this be surely so?
 Just this: I know, as all men know,
 As few before this surely knew—
 Just this, and count it great or
 small,
 The best of you or worst of you,
 The Bible, lid to lid, is true!

CANTO II

I

The year waxed weary, gouty, old;
 The crisp days dwindled to a span,

The dying year it fell as cold
 As dead feet of a dying man.
 The hard, long, weary work was
 done,
 The dark, deep pits probed to the
 bone,
 And each had just one tale to tell.
 Ten thousand argonauts as one,
 Agnostic, Christian, infidel,
 All said, despite of creed or class,
 All said as one, "As surely as
 The Bible is, the deluge was,
 Whate'er the curse, whate'er the
 cause!"

II

What merry men these miners were,
 And mighty in their pent-up force!
 They wrought for her, they fought
 for her,
 For her alone, or night or day,
 In tent or camp, their one discourse
 The Love three thousand miles away,
 The Love who waked to watch and
 pray.

III

Yet rude were they and brutal they,
 Their love a blended love and lust,
 Born of this later, loveless day;
 You could but love them for their
 truth,
 Their frankness and their fiery youth,
 And yet turn from them in disgust,
 To loathe, to pity, and mistrust.

IV

The Siege of Troy knew scarce such
 men,

Such hardy, daring men as they,
The coward had not voyaged then,
The weak had died upon the way.

V

They sang, they sang some like to
this,
"I say risk all for one warm kiss;
I say 'twere better risk the fall,
Like Romeo, to venture all
And boldly climb to deadly bliss."

VI

I like that savage, Sabine way;
What mighty minstrels came of it!
Their songs are ringing to this day,
The bravest ever sung or writ;
Their loves the love of Juliet,
Of Portia, Desdemona, yea,
The old true loves are living yet;
And we, we love, we weep, we sigh,
In love with loves that will not die.

VII

Then take her, lover, sword in hand,
Hot-blooded and red-handed, clasp
Her sudden, stormy, tall and grand,
And lift her in your iron grasp
And kiss her, kiss her till she cries
From keen, sweet, happy, killing
pain.
Aye, kiss her till she seeming dies;
Aye, kiss her till she dies, and then,
Why kiss her back to life again!

VIII

I love all things that truly love,
I love the low-voiced cooing dove

In wooing time, he woos so true,
His soft notes fall so overfull
Of love they thrill me through and
through.

But when the thunder-throated bull
Upheaves his head and shakes the
air

With eloquence and battle's blare,
And roars and tears the earth to
woo,

I like his warlike wooing too.

IX

Yet best to love that lover is
Who loves all things beneath the
sun,
Then finds all fair things in just one,
And finds all fortune in one kiss.

X

How wisely born, how more than
wise,
How wisely learned must be that soul
Who loves all earth, all Paradise,
All people, places, pole to pole,
Yet in one kiss includes the whole!

XI

Give me a lover ever bold,
A lover clean, keen, sword in hand,
Like to those white-plumed knights of
old
Whose loves held honor in the land;
Those men with hot blood in their
veins
And hot, swift, iron hand to kill—
Those women loving well the chains

That bound them fast against their
will;
Yet loved and lived—are living still.

XII

Enough: the bronzed man launched
his boat,
A faithful dwarf clutched at the oar,
And Boreas began to roar
As if to break his burly throat.

XIII

Down, down by basalt palisade,
Down, down by bleakest ice-piled
isle!
The mute, dwarf water rat afraid?
The water rat it could but smile
To hear the cold, wild waters roar
Against his savage Arctic shore.

XIV

But now he listened, gave a shout,
A startled cry, akin to fear.
The hand of God had reached swift
out
And locked, as in an iron vise,
The whole white world in blue-black
ice,
And daylight scarce seemed living
more.
The day, the year, the world, lay
dead.
With star-tipt candles foot and
head;
Great stars, that burn a whole half
year,
Stood forth, five-horned, and near, so
near!

XV

The ghost-white day scarce drew a
breath,
The dying day shrank to a span;
There was no life save that of man
And woolly dogs—man, dogs, and
death!
The sun, a mass of molten gold,
Surged feebly up, then sudden rolled
Right back as in a beaten track
And left the white world to the moon
And five-horned stars of gleaming
gold;
Such stars as sang in silent rune—
And oh, the cold, such killing cold
As few have felt and none have told!

XVI

And now he knew the last dim light
Lay on yon ice-shaft, steep and far,
Where stood one bold, triumphant
star,
And he would dare the gleaming
height,
Would see the death-bed of the day,
Whatever fate might make of it.
A foolish thing, yet were it fit
That he who dared to love, to say,
To live, should look the last of Light
Full in the face, then go his way
All silent into lasting night
As he had left her, on her height?

XVII

He climbed, he climbed, he neared at
last
The Golden Fleece of flitting Light!
When sudden as an eagle's flight—

An eagle frightened from its nest
That crowns the topmost, rock-reared
crest—
It swooped, it drooped, it, dying,
passed.

XVIII

As when some sunny, poppy day
The Mariposa scatters gold
The while he takes his happy flight,
Like star dust when the day is old,
So passed his Light and all was night.

XIX

Some star-like scattered flecks of gold
Flashed from the far and fading
wings
That kept the sky, like living things—
Then oh, the cold, the cruel cold!
The light, the life of him had past,
The spirit of the day had fled;
The lover of God's first-born, Light,
Descended, mourning for his dead.
The last of light, the very last
He deemed that he should look upon
Until God's everlasting dawn
Beyond this dread half year of night
Had fled forever from his sight.

XX

'Twas death to go, thrice death to
stay.
Turn back, go southward, seek the
sun?
Yea, better die in search of light,
Die boldly, face set forth for day,
As many dauntless men have done,

Than wail at fate and house with
night.

XXI

Some woolly dogs, a low, dwarf-
chief—
His trained thews stood him now in
stead—
Broad snow-shoes, skins, a laden
sled.—
That moon was as a brazen thief
That dares to mock, laugh, and
carouse!
It followed, followed everywhere;
He hid his face, that moon was there.
Such painful light, such piteous pain!
It broke into his very brain,
As breaks a burglar in a house.

XXII

Scarce seen, a change came, slow, so
slow!
That moon sank slowly out of sight,
The lower world of gleaming white
Took on a somber band of woe,
A wall of umber 'round about,
So dim at first you could but doubt,
That change there was, day after
day—
Nay, nay, not day, I can but say
Sleep after sleep, sleep after sleep—
That band grew darker, deep, more
deep,
Until there girt a dense dark wall,
A low, black wall of ebon hue,
Oppressive, deathlike as a pall;
It walked with you, close compassed
you,

While not one thread of light shot
through.

Above the black a gird of brown
Soft blending into amber hue,
And then from out the cobalt blue
Great, massive, golden stars swung
down
Like tow'rd lights of mountain town.

XXIII

At last the moon moved gaunt and
slow,
Half veiled her hollow, hungry face
In amber, kept unsteady pace
High up her star-set wall of snow,
Nor scarcely deigned to look below.

XXIV

Then far beyond, above the night,
Above the umber, amber hue,
Above the lean moon's glare and
blight,
One mighty ice shaft shimmered
through;
One gleaming peak, as white, as lone
As you could think the great white
throne
Stood up against the cobalt blue,
And kept companion with the stars
Despite dusk walls or umber bars.

XXV

That wall, that hideous prison wall,
That blackness, umber, amber hue,
It cumpers you, encircles you,
It mantles as a hearse's pall.
Your eyes lift to the star-pricked
sky,

You lift your frosted face, you pray
That e'en the sickly moon might
stay

A time, if but to see you die.
Yet how it blinds you, body, soul!
You can no longer keep control.
Your feebled senses fall astray:
You cannot think, you dare not say.

XXVI

And now such under gleam of light,
Such blazing, flaming, frightful glare;
Such sudden, deadly, lightning gleam,
Some like a monstrous, mad night-
mare—

Such hideous light, born of such
night!

It burst, with changeful interval,
From out the ice beneath the wall,
From out the groaning, surging
stream

That breathed, or tried to breathe, in
vain,

That struggled, strangled, shrieked
with pain!

'Twas as if he of Patmos read,
Sat by with burning pen and said,
With piteous and prophetic voice,
"The earth shall pass with rustling
noise."

XXVII

Swift out the ice-crack, fiery red,
Swift up the umber wall and back,
Then 'round and 'round, up, down
and back,

The sudden lightning sped and sped,
Until the walls hung burnished red,
An instant red, then yellow, white,

With something more than earthly
light.

XXVIII

It blinds your eyes until they burn,
Until you dare not look or turn,
But think of him who saw and told
The story of, the glory of,
The jasper walls, the streets of gold,
Where trails God's unseen garments'
hem
The holy New Jerusalem.

XXIX

Then while he trudged he tried to
think—
And then another sudden light,
Or red or yellow, blue or white,
Burst up from out the very brink
Of where he passed and, left or right,
It burnished yet again the walls!
Then up, straight up against the stars
That seemed as jostled, rent with
jars!
Then silent night. Where next and
when?
Then blank, black interval, and
then—
And oh, those blank, dread intervals,
This writing on the umber walls!

XXX

The blazing Borealis passed,
The umber walls fell down at last
And left the great cathedral stars,—
The five-horned stars, blent, burn-
ished bars

Of gold, red, gleaming, blinding
gold—
And still the cold, the killing cold!

XXXI

The moon resumed all heaven now,
She shepherded the stars below
Along her wide, white steeps of snow,
Nor stooped nor rested, where or how.
She bared her full white breast, she
dared
The sun e'er show his face again.
She seemed to know no change, she
kept
Carousal constantly, nor slept,
Nor turned aside a breath, nor
spared
The fearful meaning, the mad pain,
The weary eyes, the poor, dazed brain
That came at last to feel, to see.
The dread, dead touch of lunacy.

XXXII

How loud the silence! Oh, how loud!
How more than beautiful the shroud
Of dead Light in the moon-mad north
When great torch-tipping stars stand
forth
Above the black, slow-moving pall
As at some fearful funeral!

XXXIII

The moon blares as mad trumpets
blare
To marshaled warriors long and loud:
The cobalt blue knows not a cloud,
But oh, beware that moon, beware

Her ghostly, graveyard, moon-mad
stare!

XXXIV

Beware white silence more than white!
Beware the five-horned starry rune;
Beware the groaning gorge below;
Beware the wide, white world of
snow,
Where trees hang white as hooded
nun—
No thing not white, not one, not one,
But most beware that mad white
moon.

XXXV

All day, all day, all night, all night—
Nay, nay, not yet or night or day.
Just whiteness, whiteness, ghastly
white
Made doubly white by that mad moon
And strange stars jangled out of tune!

XXXVI

At last he saw, or seemed to see,
Above, beyond, another world.
Far up the ice-hung path there curled
A red-veined cloud, a canopy
That topt the fearful ice-built peak
That seemed to prop the very porch
Of God's house; then, as if a torch
Burned fierce, there flashed a fiery
streak,
A flush, a blush on heaven's cheek!

XXXVII

The dogs sat down, men sat the sled
And watched the flush, the blush of
red.

The little woolly dogs they knew,
Yet scarce knew what they were
about.

They thrust their noses up and out,
They drank the Light, what else to
do?

Their little feet, so worn, so true,
Could scarce keep quiet for delight.
They knew, they knew, how much
they knew,

The mighty breaking up of night!
Their bright eyes sparkled with such
joy

That they at last should see loved
Light!

The tandem sudden broke all rule,
Swung back, each leaping like a boy
Let loose from some dark, ugly
school—

Leaped up and tried to lick his
hand—

Stood up as happy children stand.

XXXVIII

How tenderly God's finger set
His crimson flower on that height
Above the battered walls of night!
A little space it flourished yet,
And then His angel, His first-born,
Burst through, as on that primal
morn!

XXXIX

His right hand held a sword of flame,
His left hand javelins of light;
And swift down, down, right down he
came!

His bright wings wide as the wide
sky,

And right and left, and hip and thigh,
 He smote the marshaled hosts of
 night
 With all his majesty and might.

XL

The scared moon paled and she forgot
 Her pomp and pride and turned to
 fly.

The ice-heaved palisades, the high
 Heaved peaks that propped God's
 house, the stars

That flamed above the prison bars,
 As battle stars with fury fraught,
 Were burned to ruin and were not.

XLI

Then glad earth shook her raiment
 wide,

And free and far, and stood up tall,
 As some proud woman, satisfied,
 Forgets, and yet remembers all.

She stood exultant, till her form,
 A queen above some battle storm,
 Blazed with the glory, the delight
 Of battle with the hosts of night.

And night was broken. Light at last
 Lay on the Yukon. Night had
 passed.

CANTO III

I

The days grew longer, stronger, yet
 The strong man grew then as a child.
 Too hard the tension and too wild
 The terror; he could not forget.
 And now at last when Light was, now

He could not see nor lift his eyes,
 Nor lift a hand in any wise.

It was as when a race is won
 By some strong favorite athlete,
 Then sinks down dying at your feet.

II

The red chief led him on and on
 To his high lodge by gorged Yukon
 And housed him kindly as his own,
 Blind, broken, dazed, and so alone!

III

The low bark lodge was desolate,
 And deathly cold by night, by day.
 Poor, hungered children of the snows,
 They heaped the fire as he froze,
 Did all they could, yet what could
 they

But pity his most piteous fate
 And pitying, silent, watch and wait?

IV

His face was ever to the wall
 Or buried in his skins; the light—
 He could not bear the light of day
 Nor bear the heaped-up flame at
 night—

Not bear one touch of light at all.
 There are no pains, no sharp death
 throes,
 So dread as blindness of the snows.

V

He thought of home, he thought of
 her,

Thought most of her, and pictured
 how
 She walked in springtime splendor
 where
 Warm sea winds twined her heavy
 hair
 In great Greek braids piled fold on
 fold,
 Or loosely blown, as poppy's gold.

VI

And then he thought of her afar
 Mid follies, and his soul at war
 With self, self will, and iron fate
 Grew as a blackened thing of hate!
 And then he prayed forgiveness,
 prayed
 As one in sin, and sore afraid.

VII

And praying so he dreamed, he
 dreamed
 She sat there looking in his face,
 Sat silent by in that dread place,
 Sat silent weeping, so it seemed,
 Sat still, sat weeping silently.
 He saw her tears and yet he knew,
 The blind man knew he could not see,
 Scarce hope to see for years and
 years.
 And then he seemed to hear her
 tears,
 To hear them steal her loose hair
 through
 And gently fall, as falls the dew
 And still, small rain of summer
 morn,
 That makes for harvests, yellow corn.

VIII

He raised his hand, he touched her
 hair;
 He did not start, he did not say;
 It seemed that she was surely there;
 He only questioned would she stay.
 How glad he was! Why, now, what
 care
 For hunger, blindness, blinding pain,
 Could he but touch her hair again?

IX

He heard her rise, give quick com-
 mand
 To patient, skin-clad, savage men
 To heap the wood, come, go, and then
 Go feed their woolly friends at hand,
 To bring fresh stores, still heap fresh
 flame,
 Then go, then come, as morning came.

X

All seemed so real! He dared not
 stir,
 Lest he might break this dream of her.
 How holy, holy sweet her voice,
 Like benediction o'er the dead!
 So glad he was, so grateful he,
 And thanking God most fervently,
 Forgot his plight, forgot his pain,
 And deep at heart did he rejoice;
 Yet prayed he might not wake again
 To peril, blindness, piteous pain.

XI

Then, as he hid his face, she came
 And leaned quite near and took his
 hand.

'Twas cold, 'twas very cold, 'twas
thin

And bony, black, just skin and bone,
Just bone and wrinkled mummy-skin.
She held it out against the flame,
Then pressed it with her two warm
hands.

It seemed as she could feel the sands
Of life slow sift to shadow land.
Close on his hurt eyes she laid hand,
The while she, wearied, nodded,
slept.

The flame burned low, the wind's wild
moan

Awakened her. Cold as a stone
His starved form, shrunken to a
shade,

Stretched in the darkness, and, dis-
mayed,

She put the robes back and she crept
Close down beside and softly laid
Her warm, strong form to his and
slept,

The while her dusk men vigi! kept.

XII

That long, long night, that needed
rest!

Then flames at morn; her precious
store

Heaped hard by on the earthen floor
While mute brown men, starved men,
stood by

To wait the slightest breath or sigh
Or sign of wakening request—

What silence, patience, trust! What
rest!

Of all good things, I say the best
Beneath God's sun is rest, and—rest.

XIII

She slowly wakened from her sleep
To find him sleeping, silent, deep!
What food for all, what feast for all,
To chief or slave, or great or small,
Ranged round the flaming, glowing
heap—

Such lank, lean flank, such hungry
zest!

Such reach of limb, such rest, such
rest!

XIV

Why, he had gone, had gladly gone
In quest of his eternal Light,
Beyond all dolours, that dread night,
Had she not reached her hand and
drawn,

Hard drawn him back and held him
so,

Held him so hard he could not go.
And yet he lingered by the brink,
As dulled and dazed as you can
think—

Long, long he lingered, helpless lay,
A babe, a broken pot of clay.

XV

She made a broader couch, she sat
All day beside and held his hand
Lest he might sudden slip away.
And she all night beside him lay,
Lest these last grains of sinking sand
Might in the still night slip and pass,
With none at hand to turn the glass.

XVI

And did the red men prate thereat?
Why, they had laid them down and
died

For her, those simple dusky sons
Of nature, children of the snows,
Born where the ice-bound river runs,
Born where the Arctic torrent flows.
Look you for evil? Look for ill
Or good, you find just what you will.

XVII

He spake no more than babe might
speak:

His eyes were as the kitten's eyes
That open slowly with surprise
Then close as if to sleep a week;
But still he held, as if he knew,
The warm, strong hand, the healthful
hand,
The dauntless, daring hand and true,
Nor, while he waked, would his un-
fold,
But held, as drowning man might
hold
Who hopes no more of life or land,
But, as from habit, clutches hand.

XVIII

Once, as she thought he surely slept,
She slowly drew herself aside,
He thrust his hand as terrified,
Caught back her hand, kissed it and
wept.
Then she, too, wept, wept tears like
rain,
Her first warm, welcome happy tears,

Drew in her breath, put by her fears
And knew she had not dared in vain.

XIX

Yet day by day, hard on the brink
He hung with half-averted head,
As silent, listless, as the dead,
As sad to see as you can think.
Their lorn lodge sat the terraced
steep
Above the wide, wild, groaning
stream
That, like some monster in a dream,
Cried out in broken, breathless sleep;
And looking down, night after night,
She saw leap forth that sword of
Light.

XX

She guessed, she knew the flaming
sword
That turned which way to watch and
ward
And guard the wall and ever guard
The Tree of Life, as it is writ.
The hand, the hilt, she could not see,
Nor yet the true, life-giving tree,
Nor cherubim that cherished it,
But yet she saw the flaming sword,
As written in the Book, the Word.

XXI

She held his hand, he did not stir,
And as she nightly sat and sat,
She silent gazed and guessed thereat.
His fancies seemed to come to her;
She could not see the Tree of Life,
How fair it grew or where it grew,

But this she knew and surely knew,
That gleaming sword meant holy
 strife
To keep and guard the Tree of Life.

XXII

Oh, flaming sword, rest not nor rust!
The Tree of Life is hewn and torn,
The Tree of Life is bowed and worn,
The Tree of Life is in the dust.
Hew brute man down, hew branch
 and root,
Till he may spare the Tree of Life,
The pale, the piteous woman, wife—
Till he shall learn, as learn he must,
To lift her fair face from the dust.

XXIII

She watched the wabby moose at
 morn
Climb steeply up the further steep,
Huge, solitary and forlorn.
She saw him climb, turn, look and
 keep
Scared watch, this wild, ungainly
 beast,
This mateless, lost thing and the last
That roamed before and since the
 flood—
That climbed and climbed the top-
 most hill
As if he heard the deluge still.

XXIV

The sparse, brown children of the
 snow
Began to stir, as sap is stirred
In springtime by the song of bird,

And trudge by, wearily and slow,
Beneath their load of dappled skins
That weighed them down as weighty
 sins.

XXV

And oft they paused, turned and
 looked back
Along their desolate white track,
With arched hand raised to shield
 their eyes—
Looked back as if for something lost
Or left behind, of precious cost,
Sad-eyed and silent, mutely wise,
As just expelled from Paradise.

XXVI

How sad their dark, fixed faces
 seemed,
As if of long-remembered sins!
They listless moved, as if they
 dreamed,
As if they knew not where to go
In all their wide, white world of snow.
She could but think upon the day
God made them garments from the
 skins
Of beasts, then turned and bade them
 go,
Go forth as willed they, to and fro.

XXVII

Between the cloud-capt walls of
 snow
A wide-winged raven, croaking low,
Passed and repassed, each weary
 day,
And would not rest, not go, not stay,

But ever, ever to and fro,
 As when forth from the ark of old;
 And ever as he passed, each day
 Let fall one croak, so cold, so cold
 It seemed to strike the ice below
 And break in fragments hard as fate;
 It fell so cold, so desolate.

XXVIII

At last the sun hung hot and high,
 Hung where that heartless moon had
 hung.

A dove-hued moose bird sudden sung
 And had glad answerings hard by;
 The icy steeps began to pour
 Mad tumult down the rock-built
 steep.

The great Yukon began to roar,
 As if with pain in broken sleep.
 The breaking ice began to groan,
 The very mountains seemed to moan.

XXIX

Then, bursting like a cannon's boom,
 The great stream broke its icy bands,
 And rushed and ran with outstretched
 hands

That laid hard hold the willow lands,
 Rent wide the somber, gopher gloom
 And roared for room, for room, for
 room!

XXX

The stalwart moose climbed hard
 his steep,
 Climbed till he wallowed, brisket
 deep,

In soft'ning, sinking steeps of snow,
 Then raging, turned to look below.

XXXI

He tossed, shook high his antlered
 head,
 Blew blast on blast through his huge
 nose,
 Then, wild with savage rage and
 fright,
 He climbed, climbed to the highest
 height,
 As if he felt the flood once more
 Had come to swallow sea and shore.

XXXII

The waters sank, the man uprose,
 A boat of skins, his Eskimo,
 Then down from out the world of
 snow
 They passed tow'rd seas of calm
 repose
 Where wide sails waited, warm sea
 wind,
 For mango isles and tamarind.

XXXIII

What wonders ward these Arctic
 seas!
 What dread, dumb, midnight days
 are these!
 A wonder world of night and light;
 A land of blackness blent with white,
 A land of water, ices, snow,
 Where ice is emperor and floe
 And berg and pack and jam and drift
 Forever grind and gnaw and lift

And tide about the bleak North
Pole—
Where bull whales bellow, blow and
blow
Great rainbows in their lover's quest
With all a sunland lover's zest!
A land of contradictions and
A desolated dead man's land!
A land of neither life nor soul;
A land where isles on isles of bone
And totem towns lie lifeless, lone—
Their tombstones just a totem pole.

XXXIV

Their cedar boat deep ballasted
With bags of bleak, Koyukuk's gold,
An ancient Bedford salt at head,
Drives through the ice floes, jolly,
bold!

What isles! Saghalien beyond,
Bleak, blown Saghalien, where bear
And wild men are as one and share
Their caves and shaggy coats of hair
In close affection, warm and fond.
At least, so ran the jolly tale
Of him who steered them on and on
Tow'rd Saghalien from far Yukon—
This Bedford salt who lassoed whales,
Or said he did, of largest size,
And so, according, made his tales
Of whales to fit in size his lies,
The while they sailed tow'rd Sag-
halien.

XXXV

What worlds, these wild Aleutian
Isles!
What wonder worlds, unnamed, un-
known!

They lift a thousand icy miles
From Unalaska, bleak and lone
And bare as icebergs anywhere,
Save where the white fox, black fox,
red,
Starts from his ice and snow-built
bed,
And like some strange bird flits the
air.
You sometimes see the white sea
bear,
A mother seal with babe asleep
Held close to breast in careful keep,
And here a thousand sea birds scream
And see the wide-winged albatross
In silence bear his shadow cross
As still and restful as a dream—
Naught else is here; here life is not;
'Tis as the land that God forgot.

XXXVI

And yet it was not always so;
This old salt tells a thousand tales
Of love and joy, of weal and woe,
That happened in the long ago
When reindeer ranged the mossy
vales
That dot this thousand miles of isles;
That here the fond Aleutian maid,
With naught to fright or make afraid,
Lived, loved and silent went her way
As yon swift albatross in grey.
But totem towns have naught to say
Of all her tears and all her smiles.

XXXVII

And this, one of so many tales,
This Bedford salt in quest of whales!
He tells of one once favored isle

Far out, a full five hundred mile,
 Where dwelt a Russian giant, knave,
 A pirate, priest, and all in one,
 With many wives, and reindeer white
 As Saint Elias in the sun;
 Yet every wife was as a slave
 To herd his white deer night by night
 And day by day to pluck away
 Each hair that was not perfect white.

XXXVIII

“And,” says this bearded Bedford
 salt,
 This man of whales and wondrous
 tales
 Of seas of ice and Arctic gales,
 This truthful salt without one fault—
 “White reindeer’s milk is yellow gold
 And he who drinks it lives for aye;
 He will not drown, he cannot die,
 Nor hunger, thirst, nor yet grow cold,
 But live and live a thousand lives—
 Ten thousand deer, two thousand
 wives.”

XXXIX

“And what the end?” He turns his
 quid,
 This ancient, sea-baked, Bedford
 man—
 “The thing blowed up, you bet it did,
 A bloomin’s big volcano, and
 So bright that you can stand and
 write
 Your log most any bloomin’ night,
 Five hundred miles away to-day.
 Them deers? They’re now the milky
 way.”
 But now enough of hairy men,

Of monstrous beasts before the flood,
 White Arctic chine, black gopher
 wood,
 Of flower-fed skies, of ice-sown seas;
 Come, let us court love-land again.
 Behold, how good is love, how fair!
 Behold, how fair is love, how good!
 A sense of burning sandalwood
 Is in my nostrils and the air
 Is redolent of cherry trees
 Red, pink, and brown with Nippon
 bees.

BOOK THIRD

CANTO I

I

Of all fair trees to look upon,
 Of all trees “pleasant to the sight,”
 Give me the Poet’s tree of white—
 Pink cherry trees of blest Nippon
 With lovers passing to and fro—
 Pink cherry lanes of Tokio:
 Ten thousand cherry trees and each
 Hung white with Poet’s plaint and
 speech.

II

Of all fair lands to look upon,
 To feel, to breathe, at Orient dawn,
 I count this baby land the best,
 Because here all things rest and rest
 And all men love all things most fair
 And beautiful and rich and rare;
 And women are as cherry trees
 With treasures laden, brown with
 bees.

III

Of all loved lands to look upon,
Give me this love land of Nippon,
Its bright, brave men, its maids at
prayer,
Its peace, its carelessness of care.

IV

A mobile sea of silver mist
Sweeps up for morn to mount upon:
Then yellow, saffron, amethyst—
Such changeful hues has blest
Nippon!
See but this sunrise, then forget
All scenes, all suns, all lands save one,
Just matin sun and vesper sun;
This land of inland seas of light;
This land that hardly recks of night.

V

The vesper sun of blest Nippon
Sinks crimson in the Yellow Sea:
The purple butterfly is gone,
The rainbow bird housed in his tree—
Hushed, as the last loved, trembling
note
Still thrills his tuneful Orient throat—
Hushed, as the harper's weary hand
Waits morn to waken and command.

VI

Fast homeward bound, brown, busy
feet
In wooden shoon clang up the street;
But not through all the thousand year
In Buddha's temple may you hear
One step, see hue of sun or sea,

Though wait you through eternity:
All is so still, so soft, subdued—
The very walls are hueless hued.

VII

Behold brown, kneeling penitents!
What perfumed place of silent prayer!
Burned Senko-ho, sweet frankincense!
And hear what silence everywhere!
Pale, pensive priests pass here and
there
And silent lisp with bended head
The Golden Rule on scrolls of gold
As gentle, ancient Buddhists read
These precepts sacred unto them,
And watched the world grow old, so
old,
Ere yet the Babe of Bethlehem.

VIII

How leaps the altar's forky flame!
How dreamful, dense, the sweet
incense,
As pale priests burn, in Buddha's
name,
Red-written sins of penitents—
Mute penitents with bended head
And unsaid sins writ deep in red.

IX

Now slow a priest with staff and scroll,
Barefoot, as mendicant, and old—
You sudden start, you lift your head,
You hear and yet you do not hear,
A sound, a song, so sweet, so dear
It well might waken yonder dead.
His staff has touched the sacred bowl
Of copper, silver, shot with gold

And wrought so magic-like of old
That all sweet sounds, or east or west,
Sought this still hollow where to rest.
Hear, hear the voice of Buddha's bell,
Bonsho-no-oto! All is well!

X

And you, you, lean, lean low to hear:
You doubt your ears, you doubt your
eyes,

Your hand is lifted to your ear,
You fear, how cruelly you fear
The melody may die—it dies—
Dies as the swan dies, as the sun
Dies, bathed in dewy benison.

XI

It lives again; you breathe again!
What cadences that speak, that stir,
Take form and presence, as of her
Whom first you loved, ere yet of men.
It utters essence as a sound;
As Santalum sends from the ground
For devotee and worshipper
Where saints lie buried, balm and
myrrh.

XII

But now so low, so faint, so low
You lean to hear yet hardly hear.
Again your hand is to your ear,
Your lips are parted, leaning so,
And now again you catch your breath
Such breath as when you lie becalmed
At sea, and sudden start to feel
A cooling wave and quickened keel
And see your tall sail court the shore.

You hear, you more than hear, you
feel,

As when the white wave shimmereth,
Your love is at your side once more,
An essence of some song embalmed,
Long hidden in the house of death—
You breathe it, as your Lady's
breath!

XIII

Now low, so low, so soft, so still,
As when a single leaf is stirred,
As when some doubtful matin bird
Dreams russet morning decks his
hill—

Then nearer, clearer, lilt each note
And longer, stronger, swells each
wave—

Ten thousand dead have burst the
grave,

An angel's song in every throat!
The forky flame turns and returns
To burn and burn red sins away;
Such incense on the altar burns
As some may breathe but none may
say,

Though cherished to their dying day.

XIV

And now the sandaled pilgrims fall
With faces to the jeweled floor—
The incense darkens as a pall,
As clouds that darken more and more.
You dare not lift your bended head—
The silence is as if the dead
Alone had passed the temple door.
And now the Bonsho notes, the song!
So stronger now, so strong, so strong!

XV

The black smokes of the ashen urn
 Where brown priests burn red sins
 away
 Begin to stir, to start, to turn,
 To seek the huge, bossed copper
 door—
 As evil things that dare not stay.
 The while the rich notes roll and roar
 To drive dread, burned sin out before
 Calm Dia-busta, the adored,
 As cherubim with flaming sword.

XVI

And far, so far, such rich notes roll
 That barefoot fishers far at sea
 Fall prone and pray all silently
 For wife and babes that wait the
 strand,
 The tugging net clutched tight in
 hand,
 The while they bow a space to pray;
 For every asking, eager soul
 Knows well the time and patiently
 It lists an hundred Ri away.

XVII

The thousand pilgrims girt in straw
 That press Fujame's holy peak,
 Prone, fasting, penitent and meek,
 Hear notes as from the stars and pray,
 As we who know and keep the Law—
 As we who walk Jerusalem
 With pilgrim step and pallid cheek.
 How earnestly they silent pray
 To keep their Golden Rule alway,
 To do no thing, or night or day,

Though tempted by a diadem,
 They would not others do to them!

XVIII

And wee, brown wives, on high, wild
 steeps
 Of terraced rice or bamboo patch
 Where toil, hard toil incessant, keeps
 Sweet virtue, sweet sleep, and a
 thatch,
 They hear and hold, with closer fold,
 Their bare, brown babes against the
 cold.
 They croon and croon, with soothing
 care,
 To babes meshed in their mighty hair,
 And loving, crooning, breathe a
 prayer.

XIX

The great notes pass, pass on and on,
 As light sweeps up the doors of dawn,
 And now the strong notes are no
 more,
 But feebler tones wail out and cry,
 As sad things that have lost their way
 At night and dare not bide the day
 But turn back to the shrine to die,
 And steal in softly through the door
 And gently fade along the floor.

XX

The barefoot priest slow fades from
 sight,
 Faint and more faint the last notes
 fall;
 You hear them now, then not at all,
 And now the last note of the night

Wails out, as when a lover cries
At night, and at the altar dies.

XXI

How sweet, how sad, how piteous
sweet
This last note at the bowed monk's
feet
That dies as dies some saintly light—
That dies so like the sweet swan
dies—
So loving sad, so tearful sweet,
This last, lost note—Good night,
good night.
Good night to holy Buddha's bell—
Bonsho-no-oto! All is well—
A mist is rising to the eyes!

CANTO II

I

This water town of Tokio
Is as a church with priests at prayer,
With restful silence everywhere,
Or night or day, or high or low.
You something hear a turtle dove,
A locust trilling from his tree
In chorus with his mated love,
May see a raven in the air,
Wide-winged and high, but even he
Is as a shadow in the stream,
As dreamful, silent as a dream.

II

They could but note the silent maids
That carried, with a mother's care,
The silent baby, ofttimes bare

As birthtime through their Caran
shades.

Ten thousand babies, everywhere,
But not one wail, or day or night,
To put the locust's love to flight,
Or mar the chorus of the dove.
And why? Why, they were born of
love:
Born soberly, born sanely, clean,
As Indian babes of old were born
Ere yet the white man's face was
seen,
Ere yet the sensuous white man came;
Born clean as love, of lovelight born
Some long lost Rocky Mountain morn
Where snow-topt turrets first took
flame
And flashed God's image in God's
name!

III

Tell me, my flint-scarred pioneer,
My skin-clad Carson, mountaineer,
Who met red Sioux, met dusk Modoc,
Red hand to hand in battle shock
Where men but met to dare and die,
Did ever you once see or hear
One poor brown Indian baby cry?

IV

The long, hot march by ashen plain,
The burning trail by lava bed,
Babes lashed to back in corded pain
Until the swollen bare legs bled,
But on and on their mothers led,
If but to find a place to die.
Yet who, of all men that pursued
This dying race, year after year,
By burning plain or beetling wood,

Did ever see, did ever hear,
One bleeding Indian baby cry?

V

The starving mother's breasts were
dry,
There scarce was time to stop and
drink,
The swollen legs grew black as ink—
There was not even time to die.
And yet, through all this fifty year,
What hounding man did ever hear
One piteous Indian baby cry?

VI

Nay, they were born as men were
born
Far back in Jacob's Bible morn;
Were born of love, born lovingly,
Unlike the fretful child of lust,
When love gat love and trust gat
trust—
And trusting, dared to silent die
In torture and disdain a tear,
If mother willed, nor question why.
Yea, I have seen so many die,
This cruel, hard, half-hundred year,
And I have cried, to see, to hear—
But never heard one baby cry.

VII

Shot down in Castle Rocks I lay
One midnight, lay as one shot dead,
A lad, and lone, years, years of yore.
I heard deep Sacramento roar,
Saw Shasta glitter far away—
I never saw such moon before
And yet I could not turn my head,

Nor move my lips to cry or say.
Red arrows in both form and face
Held form and face tight pinned in
place
Against the gnarled, black chaparral,
As one fast nailed against a wall
With scant half room to wholly fall—
The hot, thick, gurgling, gasping
breath,
The thirst, the thirsting unto death!

VIII

And then a child against my feet
Crawled feebly and crept close to die;
I moaned, "Oh baby, won't you cry?
'Twould be as music piteous sweet
To hear in this dread place of death
Just one lorn cry, just one sweet
breath
Of life, here 'mid the moonlit dead,
The mingled dead, white men and
red.

IX

"Oh, bleeding, blood-red baby, cry
Just once before I, choking die!
And maybe some white man will hear
In yonder fortified camp anear
And bring blest drink for you and I—
Oh, baby, please, please, baby, cry!"

X

A crackling in the chaparral
And then a lion in the clear
From which the dying babe had crept,
Swift as a yellow sunbeam, leapt
And stood so tall, so near, so near!
So cruel near, so sinuous, tall—
Some Landseer's picture on a wall.

XI

I never saw such length of limb,
Such arm as God had given him!
His paws, they swallowed up the
earth,
His midnight eyes shot arrows out
The while his tail whipped swift
about—
His tail was surely twice his girth!

XII

His nostrils wide with smell of blood
Reached out above us where he stood
And snuffed the dank, death-laden air
Till half his yellow teeth were bare.
His yellow length was bare and lank—
I never saw such hollow flank;
'Twas as a grave is, as a pall,
A flabby black flank—scarce at all!

XIII

He sudden quivered, tail to jaws,
Crouched low, unsheathed his shining
claws—
“Oh, baby, baby, won't you cry,
Just once before we two must die?”
I felt him spring, clutch up, then leap
Swift down the rock-built, broken
steep;
I heard a crunch of bones, but I—
I did not hear that baby cry!

CANTO III

I

I would forget—help me forget,
The while we fondly linger yet

The flower-field so sweet, so sweet,
With Buddha at fair Fuji's feet.
Fair Fuji-san, throned Queen of air!
Fair woman pure as maiden's prayer;
As pure as prayer to the throne
Of God, as lone as God, as lone
As Buddha at her feet in prayer—
Fair Fuji-san, so more than fair!

II

Fair Fuji-san, Kamkura, and
Reposeful, calm Buddha the blest,
With folded hands that rest and rest
On old Kamkura's blood-soaked sand.
Here russet apples hang at hand
So russet rich that when they fall
'Tis as if some gold-bounden ball
Sank in the loamy, warm, wet sand
Where hana, kusa, carpet earth
That never knows one day of dearth.

III

Kamkura, where Samurai bled,
Where Buddha sits to rest and rest!
Was ever spot so beauteous, blest?
Was ever red rose quite so red?

IV

Fair Fuji from her mountain chine
Above her curtained courts of pine
Looks down on calm Kamkura's sea
So tranquil, dreamful, restfully
You fold your arms across your breast
And rest with her, with Buddha rest,
While silence musks the warm sea
air—
Just silence, silence everywhere.

V

Here midst this rest, this pure repose,
 This benediction, peace, and prayer,
 That as religion was, and where
 A breath of senko blessed the air,
 The erstwhile children of the snows
 Came silently and sat them down
 Within a Kusa coigne that lay
 Above the buried Bushi town,
 Above the dimpled, beauteous Bay
 Of sun and shadow, gold and brown,
 And Care blew by the other way—
 A breath, a butterfly, a fay.

VI

And one was as fair as Fuji, fair,
 True, trusting as some maid at prayer,
 Aye, one as Buddha was, but one
 Was turbulent of blood and was
 An instant of the earth and sun;
 As when the ice-tied torrent thaws
 And sudden leaps from frost and snow
 Headlong and lawless, far below—
 As when the sap flows suddenly
 And warms the wind-tost mango tree.

VII

He caught her hand, he pressed her
 side,
 He pressed her close and very close,
 He breathed her as you breathe a rose,
 Nor was in any wise denied.
 Her comely, shapely limbs pushed out
 As elden on her golden shore;
 Her long, strong arms reached round
 about
 And bent along the flowered floor,
 While full length on her back she lay

Like some wild, beauteous beast at
 play.

VIII

He thrust him forward, caught her,
 caught
 Her form as if she were of naught.
 His outstretched face was as a flame,
 His breath was as a furnace is,
 He kissed her mouth with such mad
 kiss
 Her rich, full lips shut tight with
 shame.

IX

As one of old who tilled the mould,
 Took triple strength from earth and
 thrust
 His burly focman to the dust,
 She sprang straight up, and springing
 threw
 Him from her with such voltage he
 Knew not how he might, writhing,
 rise,
 Or dare to meet again those eyes
 That seemed to burn him through and
 through;
 Or daring, how could he undo
 His coward, selfish deed of shame
 Enforced as in religion's name?
 And she so trustful, so alone!
 'Twas as if some sweet, sacred nun
 Had opened wide her door to one
 Who slew her on her altar stone.

X

She passed and silent passed and slow.
 What strength, what length of limb,
 what eyes!

She left him lying low, so low,
 So crested and so surely slain
 He deemed he never more might rise,
 Or rising, see her face again.
 And yet, her look was not of hate,
 But pity, as akin to pain;
 And when she touched the temple gate
 She paused, turned, beckoned he
 should go,
 Go wash his hands of carnal clay
 And go alone his selfish way—
 Forever, ever and a day!

CANTO IV

I

How cold she grew, how chilled, how
 changed,
 Since that loathed scene by Nippon's
 sea!
 No longer flexile, trustful, she
 Held him aloof, hushed and estranged,
 A fallen star, yet still her star,
 And she his heaven, earth, his all,
 To follow, worship, near or far,
 Let good befall or ill befall.
 But he was silent. He had sold
 His birthright, sold for even less
 Than any poor, cheap pottage mess,
 His right to speak forth, warm and
 bold,
 And look her unshamed in the face.
 Mute, penitent, he kept his place,
 As silent as that Nippon saint
 That knew not prayer, praise, or
 plaint.

II

Saint Silence seems some maid of
 prayer,

God's arm about her when she prays
 And where she prays and everywhere,
 Or storm-strewn or sun-down days.
 What ill to Silence can befall,
 Since Silence knows no ill at all?

III

Saint Silence seems some twilight sky
 That leans as with her weight of stars
 To rest, to rest, no more to roam,
 But rest and rest eternally.
 She loosens and lets down the bars,
 She brings the kind-eyed cattle home,
 She breathes the fragrant field of hay
 And heaven is not far away.

IV

The deeps of soul are still the deeps
 Where stately Silence ever keeps
 High court with calm Nirvana, where
 No shallows break the noisy shore
 Or beat, with sad, incessant roar,
 The fettered, fevered world of care
 As noisome vultures fret the air.

V

The star-sown seas of thought are still,
 As when God's plowmen plant their
 corn
 Along the mellow grooves at morn
 In patient trust to wait His will.
 The star-sown seas of thought are
 wide,
 But voiceless, noiseless, deep as night;
 Disturb not these, the silent seas
 Are sacred unto souls allied,
 As golden poppies unto bees.

Here, from the first, rude giants
wrought,
Here delved, here scattered stars of
thought
To grow, to bloom in years unborn,
As grows the gold-horned yellow corn.

VI

They lay low-bosomed on the bay
Of Honolulu, soft the breeze
And soft the dreamful light that lay
On Honolulu's Sabbath seas—
The ghost of sunshine gone away—
Red roses on the dust of day,
Pale, pink, red roses in the west
Where lay in state dead Day at rest.

VII

Their dusky boatman set his face
From out the argent, opal sea
Tow'rd where his once proud, warlike
race
Lay housed in everlasting dust.
He sang low-voiced, sad, silently,
In listless chorus with the tide,
Because his race was not, because
His sun-born race had dared, defied
The highest, holiest of His laws
And so fell stricken and so died—
Died stricken of dread leprosy
Begot of lust—prone in the dust—
Degenerating love to lust.

VIII

Sweet sandal-wood burned bow and
stern
In colored, shapely crates of clay;
Sweet sandal-wood long laid away,

Long caverned with dead battle kings
Whose dim ghosts rise betimes and
burn
The torch and touch sweet taro
strings—
Such giant, stalwart, stately kings!

IX

Sweet sandal-wood, long ages torn
From cloud-capt steeps where
thunders slept,
Then hidden where dead giants kept
Their sealed Walhalla, waiting
morn—
Deep-hidden, till such sweet perfume
Betrayed their long-forgotten tomb.

X

The sea's perfume and incense lay
About, above, lay everywhere;
The sea swung incense through the
air—
The censer, Honolulu's Bay.
And then the song, the soft, low rune,
As sad, as if dead kings kept tune.

XI

The moon hung twilight from each
horn,
Soft, silken twilight, soft to touch
As baby lips—and over much
Like to the baby breath of morn.
Huge, five-horned stars swung left
and right
O'er argent, opal, amber night.

XII

What changeful, dreamful, ardent
light,
When Mauna Loa, far afield,
Uprose and shook his yellow shield
Below the battlements of night;
Below the Southern Cross, o'er seas
That sang such silent symphonies!

XIII

Far lava peaks still lit the night,
Like holy candles foot and head,
That dimly burned above the dead,
Above the dead and buried Light.
There rose such perfume of the sea,
Such Sabbath breath, soft, silently,
As when some burning censer swings,
As when some surpliced choir sings.

XIV

He scarce had lived save in such fear,
But now yon mitered tongues of flame
That tipped the star-lit lava peak
Brought back some fervor to his
cheek
And made him half forget his shame.
He could but heed, he could but hear
That call across the walls of night
From triple mitered tongues of Light,
That soulful, silent, perfumed night.
He said—and yet he said no word;
No word he said, yet all she heard,
So close their souls lay, in such Light,
That holy Honolulu night.

XV

“Lies yonder Nebo's mount, my
Soul?—

The Promised Land beyond, beyond
The grave of rest, the broken bond,
Where manly force must lose control,
Must press the grapes and fill the
bowl,
Go round and round, rest, rise up, eat,
Tread grapes, then wash the wearied
feet?

XVI

“I know I have enough of bliss,
I know full well I should not dare
To ask a deeper joy than this,
This scene, your presence, this soft
air,
This incense, this deep sense of rest
Where long-sought, sweet Arcadia
lies
Against these gates of Paradise.

XVII

“And yet, hear me, I dare ask more.
Lone Adam had all Paradise
And still how poor he was, how poor,
With all things his beneath the skies!
Aye, sweet it were to roam or rest,
To ever rest and ever roam
As you might reckon and reckon best;
But still there comes a sense of home,
Of hearthstone, happy babes at play,
And you and I—not far away.

XVIII

“Nay, do not turn aside your face—
'Be fruitful ye and multiply'
Meant all; it meant the human race,
And he or she shall surely die
Despised and pass to nothingness

Who does not love the little dress,
The heaven in the mother's eyes,
The holy, sacred, sweet surprise
The time she tells how truly blest,
With face laid blushing to his breast.

XIX

"How flower-like the little frock—
The daffodil forerunning spring—
The doll-like shoes, socks, everything,
And each a secret, secret stored!
And yet each day the little hoard,
As careful merchants note their stock,
Is noted with such happy care
As only angel mothers share.

XX

"At last to hear her rock and rock—
Behold her bowed Madonna face!
She lifts her baby from its place,
Pulls down the crumpled, dampened
frock,
And never Cleopatra guessed
The queenliness, the joy, the pride,
She knows with baby to her breast—
His chub fists churning either side!

XXI

"The bravest breast faith ever bared
For brother, country, creed or friend,
However high the aim or end,
Was that brave breast a baby shared
With kicking, fat legs half unfrocked
The while sweet mother rocked and
rocked."

CANTO V

I

As when first blossoms feel first bees,
As when the squirrel hoists full sail
And leaps his world of maple trees
And quirks his saucy, tossy tail;
As when Vermont's tall sugar trees
First feel sweet sap, then don their
leaves

In haste—a million Mother Eves;
As when strange winds stir strong-
built ships

Long ice-bound fast in Arctic seas,
So she, the strong, full woman now,
Felt new life thrilling breast and brow
And tingled to her finger tips.

Her limbs pushed out, outreached her
head

As if to say—she nothing said.

But something of the tender light
That lit her girl face that first night,
The time she pulling poppies sat
The sod and saw the golden sheep
Safe housed within the hollowed deep,
Was hers; and how she blushed
thereat!

Yet blushing so, still silent sat.

II

She would forget his weakness, yet
Try as she would, could not forget.
He knew her thought. She raised her
head

And searched his soul, and searching
said:

"He who would save the world must
stand

Hard by the world with steel-mailed
 hand
 And save by smiting hip and thigh.
 The world needs truth, tall truth and
 grand,
 And keen sword-cuts that thrust to
 kill.
 The man who climbed the windy hill
 To talk, is talking, climbing still,
 And could not help or hurt a fly.
 The stoutest swimmer and most wise
 Swims somewhat with the sweeping
 stream,
 Yet leads, leads unseen as a dream.
 The strong fool breasts the flood and
 dies,
 The weak fool turns his back and
 flies."

III

He did not answer, could not dare
 Lift his shamed eyes to her fair face,
 But looked right, left, looked any-
 where,
 And mused, mused mutely out of
 place:
 "If yonder creedists may not teach,
 For all their books, and bravely
 preach

That here, right here, the womb of
 night
 Gave us God's first-born, holy Light,
 Why, pity, nor yet blame them quite;
 Because they know not, cannot read,
 Save as commanded by some creed.
 What eons they may have to wait
 Within their wall, without the gate,
 Nor once dare lift their eyes to look
 Beyond their blinding creed and book,

We know not, but we surely know
 Yon lava-lifted, star-tipt height
 Is bannered still by that first Light.
 We know this phosphorescent glow,
 At every dip of dripping oar,
 Is but lost bits of Light below,
 Where moves God's spirit as of yore.
 Aye, here, right here, from out the
 night,
 God spake and said: "Let there be
 light!"

IV

"And dare ask doubting, creed-made
 men
 Why we so surely know and how?
 Why here 'the waters,' now as then?
 Why here 'the waters,' then as now?
 We know because we read, yet read
 So little that we much must heed.
 We read: 'God's spirit moved upon
 The waters' ere that burst of dawn.
 What waters? Why, 'The Waters,'
 these,
 These soundless, silent, sundown seas.

V

"The morning of the world was here,
 'Twas here 'He made dry land
 appear,'
 Here 'Darkness lay upon the deep.'
 What deep? This deep, the deepest
 deep
 That ever rolled beneath the sun
 When night and day were then as one
 And dreamless day lay fast asleep,
 Rocked in this cradle of the deep."

VI

She would not, could not be denied
Her thought, her theme but turned
once more,

As turns the all-devouring tide
Against a stubborn unclean shore,
With lifted face and soul aflame,
And spake as speaking in God's
name—

With face raised to the living God:
“Hear me! How pitiful the plea
Of men who plead their temperance,
Of men who know not one first sense
Of self-control, yet, fire-shod,
Storm forth and rage intemperately
At sins that are but as a breath,
Compared with their low lives of
death!

VII

“And oh, for prophet's tongue or pen
To scourge, not only, and accuse
The childless mother, but such men
As know their loves but to abuse!
Give me the brave, child-loving Jew,
The full-sexed Jew of either sex,
Who loves, brings forth and nothing
recks

Of care or cost, as Christians do—
Dulled souls who will not hear or see
How Christ once raised his lowly head
And, all rebuking, gently said,
The while he took them tenderly,
‘Let little ones come unto me.’

VIII

“The true Jew lover keeps the Way.
For clean, serene, and contrite heart

The bride and bridegroom kneel apart
Before the bridal bed and pray.

IX

“Behold how great the bride's estate!
Behold how holy, pure the thought
That high Jehovah welcomes her
In partnership, to coin, create
The fairest form He yet has wrought
Since Adam's clay knew breath and
stir:

To glory in her daughters, sons;
To be God's tabernacle, tent,
The keeper of the covenant,
The mother of His little ones!

X

“Go forth among this homeless race,
This landless race that knows no place
Or name or nation quite its own,
And see their happy babes at play,
Or palace, Ghetto, rich or poor,
As thick as birds about the door
At morn, some sunny Vermont May,
Then think of Christ and these alone.
Yet ye deride, ye jeer, ye jibe,
To see their plenteous babes; ye say
‘Behold the Jew and all his tribe!’

XI

“Yet Solomon upon his throne
Was not more kingly crowned than
they
These Jews, these jeered Jews of to-
day—
More surely born to lord, to lead,
To sow the land with Abram's seed;

Because their babes are healthful born
And welcomed as the welcome morn.

XII

“Hear me this prophecy and heed!
Except we cleanse us, kirk and creed,
Except we wash us, word and deed,
The Jew shall rule us, reign the Jew.
And just because the Jew is true,
Is true to nature, true to truth,
Is clean, is chaste, as trustful Ruth
Who stood amid the alien corn
In tears that far, dim, doubtful
morn—
Who bore us David, Solomon—
The Babe, that far, first Christmas
dawn.

XIII

“You shrink, are angered at my
speech?
You dare avert your doubtful face
Because I name this chaste, strange
race?
So be it then; there lies the beach,
And up the beach the ways divide.
I would not leave the truth untold
To win the whole world to my side,
Nor would I spare your selfish pride,
Your carnal coarseness, lustful lie,
For that would be to let you die.
Come! yonder lifts the clear, white
Light
For seamen, souls sea-tost at night.

XIV

“I see the spiked Agave’s plume,
The pepsin’s plume, acacia’s bloom

Far up beyond tall cocoa trees,
Tall tamarind and mango brown,
That gird the pretty, peaceful town.
That lane leads up, the church looks
down—
There lie the ways, now which of
these?
Bear with me, I must dare be true.
The nation, aye, the Christian race,
Now fronts its stern Sphynx, face to
face,
And I must say, say here to you,
Whate’er the cost of love, of fame,
The Christian is a thing of shame—
Must say because you prove it true,
The better Christian is the Jew.

XV

“I know you scorn the narrow deeds
Of men who make their god of
creeds—
Yon men as narrow as the miles
That bank their rare, sweet flower-fed
isles,
But come, my Lost Star, come with
me
To yon fond church, high-built and
fair,
For God is there, as everywhere,
Or Arctic snow or argent sea.”

XVI

He looked far up the mango lane
Below the wide-boughed banyan tree;
He looked to her, then looked again,
As one who tries yet could not see
But one steep, narrow, upward way:
“You said two ways, here seems but
one,

Or set of moon or rise of sun,
 But one way to the perfect day,
 And I will go. And you must stay?"
 She looked far up the steep of stone
 And said: "Aye, go, but not alone."

XVII

The boat's prow pushed the cocoa
 shore,
 The man spake not, but, leaning o'er,
 Strong-armed, he drew her to his side
 And was not anywise denied.
 He pointed to the failing fire,
 That still tipt lava peak and spire,
 While stars pinned round the robe of
 night;
 'Twas here God said, "Let there be
 Light!"

XVIII

A little church, a lava wall,
 A soft light looking gently down,
 The Light of Christ, the second light,
 Where two as one passed up the town.
 She gave her hand, she gave her all,
 And said, as such brave women might,
 With ample right, in hallowed cause:
 "As it in the beginning was,
 So let the man-child be full born
 Of Love, of Light, the Light of Morn!"

BOOK FOUR

CANTO I

I

And which of all Hawaii's isles
 Of sandalwood and singing wilds

Received and housed this maiden
 rare—

This bravest, best, since Eve's des-
 pair?

It matters not; enough to know
 Night-blooming trumpets ever blow
 Love's tuneful banner to the breeze
 In chorus with the ardent seas;
 That Juno walks her mountain wall
 In peacock plumes the whole year
 through.

You hear her gaudy lover call
 From dawn till dusk, then see them
 fall

From out the clouds far, far below,
 And droop and drift slow to and fro—
 Dusk rainbows blending with the dew.

II

And had he won her? He had wed,
 But now it was that he must woo,
 Must keep alone his widowed bed
 Or sit and woo the whole night
 through.

He plead. He could not touch her
 hand;

Her eyes held anger and command
 And memories of a trustful time
 He would have made her muck and
 slime.

III

He plead his perfect life, still plead;
 But spurning him she mocking said:
 "You would have trailed me in the
 dust

In very drunkenness of lust —
 And now you dare to meekly plead

Your love of Light, your studious
youth,
Your strenuous toil, your quest of
truth,
Your perfect life! Indeed! Indeed!

IV

“Behold the pale, wan, outworn wife
Of him who pleads his perfect life!
Her step is slow, she waits for death;
Hear, hear her wan babe’s hollow cry!
He scarce can cry above a breath.
Poor babe! begotten but to die,
Or, harder fate, live feebly on,
The shame of mother, curse of state—
Half-witted, worthless, jest of fate.

V

“Behold God’s image, fashioned tall
As heaven, stooping down to crawl
Upon his belly as a snake,
Ere yet his sense is well awake,
Ere yet his force has come, ere yet
The child-wife knows but to regret.
And lo! the greatest is the least;
For man lies lower than the beast.

VI

“Such pity that sweet love should lie
Prone, strangled in its bed of shame,
And no man dare to publish why!
Such pity that in slain Love’s name
The weak bring forth the weaker,
bring
The leper, idiot, anything
That lawless passion can beget!
Sweet pity, pity for them all—

The child that cries, child-wife that
dies,
The weakling that may linger yet
A feeble day to feebly fall—
As food for sword or cannon ball,
For prison wall or charity
Or fruit of gruesome gallows tree!

VII

“But pity most poor man, blind man,
Whose passions stoop him to a span.
Why, man, each well-born man was
born
To dwell in everlasting morn,
To top the mountain as a tower,
A thousand years of pride and power;
To face the four winds with the face
Of youth until full length he lies—
Still God-like, even as he dies.

VIII

“Could I but teach lorn man to live,
But teach low man to truly love,
Could I but teach blind man to see,
How gladly he would turn to me
And give great thanks, and ever give
Glad heed, as to some soft-voiced
dove.

IX

“The burning cities of the plain,
The high-built harlot, Babylon,
The bannered mur’ls of Rome un-
done,
That rose again and fell again
To ashes and to heaps of dust,
All died because man lived in vain,
Because man sold his soul to lust.

X

“And count what crimes have come
of it!

I say all sins, or said or writ,
Lie gathered here in this dark pit
Of man's licentious, mad desire,
Where woman's form is ruthless
thrown,

As on some sacrificial stone,
And burned as in a living fire,
To leave but ashes, rue, and ire.

XI

“Aye, even crimes as yet unnamed
Are born of man's degrading lust.
The wildest beast man ever tamed,
Or ever yet has come to know—
The vilest beast would feel disgust
Could it but know how low, how low
God's image sinks in muck and slime,
In crimes so deeper than all crime,
In slime that hath not yet a name,
And yet man knows no whit of shame!

XII

“Poor, weak, mad man, so halt, so
blind!

Poor, weak, mad man that must
carouse

And prostitute what he should house
And husband for his coming kind!
Behold the dumb beasts at glad morn,
Clean beasts that hold them well in
hand!

How nobler thus to lord the land,
How nobler thus to love your race,
To house its health and strength and
grace,

Than rob the races yet unborn
And build new Babylon to scorn!

XIII

“I say that each man has a right,
The right the beast has to be born
Full-flowered, beauteous, free and
fair

As wide-winged bird that rides the
air;

Not as a babe that cries all night,
Cries, cries in darkness for such Light
As man should give it at its birth.

I say that poor babe has a right,
The right, at least, of each wild
beast—

Aye, red babe, black, white, west or
east,

To rise at birth and lord the earth,
Strong-limbed, long-limbed, robust
and free

As supple beast or towering tree.

XIV

“God's pity for the breasts that bear
A little babe, then banish it

To stranger hands, to alien care,
To live or die as chance sees fit.

Poor, helpless hands, reached any-
where,

As God gave them to reach and reach,
With only helplessness in each!

Poor little hands, pushed here, pushed
there,

And all night long for mother's breast:
Poor, restless hands that will not rest

And gather strength to reach out
strong

To mother in the rosy morn!
Nay, nay, they gather scorn for scorn
And hate for hate the lorn night
long—

Poor, dying babe! to reach about
In blackness, as a thing cast out!

XV

“God’s pity for the thing of lust
Who bears a frail babe to be thrust
Forth from her arms to alien thrall,
As shutting out the light of day,
As shutting off God’s very breath!
But thrice God’s pity, let us pray,
For her who bears no babe at all,
But, grinning, leads the dance of
death.

That sexless, steel-braced breast of
bone

Is like to some assassin cell,
A whited sepulchre of stone,
A graveyard at the gates of hell,
A mart where motherhood is sold,
A house of murders manifold!”

CANTO II

I

He heard; he could but bow his head
In silence, penitence, and shame,
Confess the truth of all she said
Of crimes committed in Love’s name,
Nor beg the sacred seal of red
To marriage bond and marriage bed.

II

And that was all, aye, that was all
For days, for days that seemed as
years.

He still must woo, put by her fears,
Make her his friend, let what befall;
Bide her sweet will and, loving, bide
Meek dalliance with his maiden bride.

III

One night in May, such soulful night
Of cherry blossoms, birds, such birds
As burst with song, that sing outright
Because so glad they cannot keep
Their song, but sing out in their sleep!
Such noisy night, a cricket’s night,
A night of Katydids, of dogs
That bayed and bayed the vast full
moon

In chorus with glad, tuneful frogs—
With May’s head in the lap of June.
How hot, how sultry hot the room!
Their garden tree in perfect bloom
Gave out fair Nippon’s full perfume—
The night grew warm and very warm,
And warm her warm, full-bosomed
form!

IV

How vital, virile, strong with life,
The world without, the maiden wife!
How wondrous fair the world, how
fair

The maid meshed in her mighty hair!
The man uprose, caught close a skin,
A lion’s skin, threw this about
His great, Herculean, pent-up form,
Thrust feet into his slippered shoes,
Then, with a lion’s force and frown
He strode the wide room up and
down,

The skin’s claws flapping at his thews.
He turned, he caught her suddenly

And instant wrapped her close within;
Then down the stairs and back and
out

Beneath the blossomed Nippon tree—
Against the tree he pressed her form,
He was so warm, so very warm—
He held her close as close could be
Against the blossomed cherry tree.

V

He held with all his might and main—
Held her so hard he shook the tree,
Because he trembled mightily
And shook in his hard, happy pain—
Because he quivered as a pine
When tropic storm sweeps up the line,
As when some swift horse, harnessed
low,

Frets hard and bites the bit to go.
She laughed such low, sweet laugh,
and said,

The while she raised her pretty head,
“Please, please, be gentle good to me,
And please don’t hurt the cherry
tree.”

VI

The warm land lay as in a swoon,
Full length, the happy lap of June—
A fair bride fainting with delight
And fond forgetfulness with night.
How warm the world was and how
wise

The world is in its love of life,
Its hate of harshness, hate of strife,
Its love of Eden, peace that lies
In love-set, leaf-sown Paradise!

VII

How generous, how good is night
To give its length to man’s delight—
To give its strength from dusk till
morn,

To push the planted yellow corn!
How warm this garden was, how
warm

With life, with love in any form!
Two lowly crickets, clad in black,
Came shyly forth, shrank sudden
back—

Then chirped in chorus, side by side;
And oh, their narrow world was wide
As oceans, light their hearts as air,
And oh, their little world was fair,
And oh, their little world was warm
Because each had a lover there,
Because they loved and didn’t care.

VIII

How languid all things with delight,
With sensuous longings, sweet desire
That burned as with immortal fire,
Immortal love that burns to live
And, lives to burn, to take, to give,
Create, bring forth, and loving share
With God the fruitage, flesh or
flower—

Just loving, loving, bud or bower,
Or bee or birdling, small or great,
Just loving, loving to create,
With just one caution, just one care—
That all creation shall be fair.

IX

The very garden wall was warm
With gorgeous sunshine gone away;

Each vine, with eager, reaching arm,
Clung amorous, tiptoed to kiss,
With eager lips, the ardent clay
That held her to its breast of bliss.

X

Blown cherry blossoms basking lay,
A perfect pathway of perfume;
The tiger lily scarce had room
For roses bending in a storm
Of laden sweetness more than sweet.
The moon leaned o'er the garden wall,
Then, smiling, tiptoed up her way,
The while she let one full beam fall,
Love-laden in the sensuous heat,
So sweet, so warm, so still withal,
Love heard pink cherry blossoms fall.

XI

A Katydid laid his green thigh
Against another leaf-green form
And so began to sing and sigh,
As if it were his time to die
From stress and strain of passion's
storm—
He, too, was warm and very warm.

XII

A tasseled hammock, silken red,
Swung, hung hard by, and foot and
head,
A blossom-laden cherry tree.
This famed tree of the Japanese,
Whatever other trees may be,
Is held most sacred of all trees:
Not quite because of its perfume,
Not all because of rich pink bloom,

But much because its blossomed
boughs
Not only list to lover's vows,
But true to lovers, ever true,
Refuse to let one moonbeam through.

XIII

Here, close beneath this Nippon tree,
The sweetest tree this side Cathay,
The lover's tree of mystery,
Where not a thread of moonlight lay,
While waves of moonlight laughed
and played
At hide and seek the other way,
He threw her, full length, from his
arm;
Full length, then raised her drooping
head,
Threw back the skin and, blushing
red,
He sought to say—He nothing said!
He nothing did but blush and blush
And feel his hot blood rush and rush—
The very hammock's fringe was warm
The while he leaned low from his
place
And felt her warm breath in his face.

XIV

Then, all abashed, he trembled so
He clutched the hammock hard and
fast,
He held so hard it came, at last,
To swing, to swing fast to and fro.
Such awkwardness! He clutched,
let go,
Then clutched so hard he shook each
tree
Till perfumed silence came to see—

Till fragrance fell upon her hair,
 Such hair, a storm of pink and snow.
 How fair, how fair, how sensuous fair,
 Half hidden in a pink snow-storm;
 And yet how warm, how more than
 warm!

XV

How shamed he was! His great heart
 beat
 As beats some signal for retreat.
 This stupid, bravest of brave men,
 Confused, dismayed, hung down his
 head,
 Then turned and helplessly had fled,
 Had she not reached a timid hand
 And, half as pleading, half command
 And half-way laughing, shyly said,
 From out her snood of snow and rain,
 "Please shake the Nippon trees
 again!"

XVI

He shook the trees; a fragrant shower
 On laughing face and loosened hair—
 A flash of perfume and of flower—
 O, she was fair and very fair!
 Then with a sudden strength he
 plucked
 His red-ripe cherry from the tree,
 Wound 'round the skin and loosely
 tucked
 The folds about her modestly,
 Then on and up with giant stride
 He bore his blushing maiden bride,
 So cherry ripe, so cherry red,
 And laid her in her bridal bed—
 Laid perfumed bride, laid flesh and
 flower,

Half drowning from the fragrant
 shower.

What snows strewn in her ample hair,
 What low, light laughter everywhere,
 Or cherry tree, or step or stair!
 Just low, soft laughter, cherry bloom,
 Just love and love's unnamed
 perfume.

XVII

He tossed the lion's skin aside,
 With folded arms leaned o'er his
 bride,
 Turned low the light, then stood full
 length,
 Then strode in all his supple strength
 The room a time, tossed back his hair,
 Then to his bride, swift bent to her,
 And kneeled, as lowliest worshiper.

XVIII

And then he threw him by her side,
 His long, strong limbs thrown out full
 length,
 His two fists full of housed-up
 strength.
 What pride, what manly, kingly pride
 That he had conquered, bravely slain
 His baser self, was self again!

XIX

He held a hand exceeding small,
 He breathed her perfume, threw her
 hair
 Across her breast with such sweet
 care
 He scarce did touch her form at all.
 Again he rose, strode to and fro,

Came back and turned the light
quite low.

XX

He bowed his face close to her feet;
Now he would rise, then would not
rise;

He bent, blushed to his very eyes,
Then sudden pushed aside the sheet
And kissed her pink and pearly toes.
Their perfume was the perfect rose
When perfect summer, passion, heat,
Points both hands of the clock
straight up,

As when we lift and drain the cup,
As when we lift two hands and pray
When we have lived our bravest day,
The horologue of life may stop
With both hands pointing to the top.

XXI

Then suddenly, in strength and pride,
Full length he threw him at her side
And caught again her timid hand,
A bird that had escaped his snare.
He caught it hard, he held it there,
He begged her pardon, begged and
prayed

She would forgive him, then he laid
His face to her face and the land
Was like a fairy land. They lay
As children well outworn at play.

XXII

As children bounding from their bed,
So rested, radiant, satisfied
With self and selfishness denied,
Life seemed some merry roundelay.

They laughed with early morn, they
led,

So full of soul, of strength were they,
The laughing dance of love all day.

XXIII

All day! A month of days, and each
A song, a sermon, but to teach,
A holy book to teach the truth
Of endless, laughing, joyous youth.
He stood so tall, he stood so strong—
As one who holds the keys yet keeps
His treasure housed in shining heaps
Until all life was as a song.

XXIV

At last, one warmest morning, she
Would scarce let go, said o'er and o'er,
Held close his hand, held hard the
door,

“Good-by! Come early back to me!”
And then, close up beside, as one
Might eager seek some stout oak tree
When storm is sudden threatened,
she

Put up her pretty, pouting mouth,
Half closed her laughing, saucy eyes—
Such lips, such roses from the south,
The warm, south side of Paradise!—

XXV

“Good-by! Come early back to me!”
Why, he heard nothing else all day,
Saw nothing else, knew naught but
this,

Their fond, fond, first full-flowered
kiss,

Wherein she led the rosy way,

As is her right, as it should be.
 He looked his watch hard in its face
 A hundred times, he blushed, he
 smiled,
 Did leave his friends and lightly pace
 The street, half laughing, as a child.
 A million kisses! He'd had one—
 Scant one, his joy had just begun!

XXVI

Come early? He was at the gate
 And through the door ere yet the day
 Had kneeled down in the west to pray
 Its vesper prayer, all brimming o'er
 And blushing that he could not wait
 To kiss her just once more, once more,
 Take breath, then kiss her o'er and
 o'er.

XXVII

By some sweet chance he found her
 there,
 Close fenced against the winding
 stair,
 With no escape, behind, before.
 She put her lips up as to plead
 She might be spared a little space;
 But there was mischief in her face,
 A world of frolic and of fun,
 And he could run as he could read,
 Aye, he could read as he could run.
 And then she pushed her full lips out:
 "You are so strong, you hold so fast!
 You know I tried to guard the door."
 And then she frowned, began to pout
 And sighed, "Dear, dear, 'tis not well
 done!"
 And then he caught her close, and
 then

He kissed her once, twice, thrice
 again.

XXVIII

Then days and many days of this—
 Ah! man, make merry and carouse
 Upon your way, within your house,
 Hold right there in your manly hand,
 Your happy maid who waits your
 kiss;
 Carouse on kisses and carouse
 In soul, the livelong, thronging day
 When duty tears you well away,
 To know what waits you at the gate,
 And waiting loves and loves to wait.

XXIX

And how to kiss? A thousand ways,
 And each way new and each way true,
 And each way true and each way new
 Each day for thrice ten thousand
 days.

XXX

How loyal he who loves, how grand!
 He does not tell her overmuch,
 He does not sigh or seek to touch
 Her garments' hem or lily hand;
 She is his soul, his life, his light,
 His saint by day, his shrine by night.

XXXI

True love leads home his maiden bride
 Low-voiced and tender, soft and true:
 He leans to her, to woo, to woo,
 As if she still turned and denied—

No selfish touch, no sated kiss
To kill and dig the grave of bliss.

XXXII

True love will hold his maiden bride
As nobles hold inheritance;
He will not part with one small pence
Of her fair strength and stately pride,
But wait serenely at her side,
Supremely proud, full satisfied.

XXXIII

Why, what a glorious thing to view!
Each morn a maiden at your side,
The one fair woman, maid and bride,
With all her sweetness waiting you!
How wise the miser, more than wise,
Who knows to count and keep such
prize!

XXXIV

How glad the coming home of him
Who knows a maiden waits and waits,
All pulsing, still, within his gates,
To kiss his goblet's golden brim;
How joyous still to woo and woo,
To read the old new story through!

XXXV

Ah me, behold what heritage!
What light by which to walk, to live
This age when lights resplendent
burn,
This glorious, shining, new-born age,
When love can bravely give and give
And get thrice tenfold in return,
If man will only love and learn!

XXXVI

And now soft colors through the house
Began to surely bud and bloom;
The wise, the fair, far-seeing spouse
Began to deck the bridal room;
Began to build, as builds a bird,
When first footfalls of spring are
heard.

XXXVII

Some warm-toned colors on the wall,
Then gorgeous, grass-like carpetings
Strown, sown with lily, pink and all
That nature in sweet springtime
brings;
Then curtains from the Orient,
The silken couch, soft as a kiss,
The music born of love and blent
But rarely with such loves as this;
Mute music, where not hand of man
Or foot of man is seen or heard,
Such soft, sweet sound as only can
In happy blossom time be heard—
Be heard from happy, nested bird.

XXXVIII

And now full twelve o'clock, the noon
Of faithful, trustful, wedded love,
The two hands pointing straight
above,
This vast midnight, this argent June!
Their noon was midnight and the
moon
Came through the silken sheen and
laid
A sword of silver at her side.
And peace, sweet, perfect peace was
hers,

As when nor bird nor blossom stirs,
 And she was now no more afraid;
 The moon surrendered to the maid,
 Drew back and softly turned aside,
 As bridesmaid turning from the bride.

XXXIX

All voiceless, noiseless, tenderly
 He pressed beside her, took her
 hand—

He took her from the leaning
 moon,
 And far beyond the amber sea,
 They sailed the seas of afternoon—
 The far, still seas, so grandly grand,
 Until they came to babyland.
 And there Creation was and there
 Were giants in the land, once
 more,
 Long-lived and valiant as of yore,
 Yet gentle, patient as His Prayer.

SIT LUX

WITH LOVE TO YOU AND YOURS

"And God said, Let there be light."

*Rise up! How brief this little day?
 We can but kindle some dim light
 Here in the darkened, wooded way
 Before the gathering of night.
 Come, let us kindle it. The dawn
 Shall find us tenting farther on.
 Come, let us kindle ere we go—
 We know not where; but this we know,
 Night cometh on, and man needs light.
 Come! camp-fire embers, ere we grope
 Yon gray archway of night.*

*Life is so brief, so very brief,
 So rounded in, we scarce can see
 The fruitage grown amid the leaf
 And foliage of a single tree
 In all God's garden; yet we know
 That goodly fruits must grow and grow
 Beyond our vision. We but stand
 In some deep hollow of God's hand,
 Hear some sweet bird its little day,*

*See cloud and sun a season pass,
 And then, sweet friend, away!*

*Clouds pass, they come again; and
 we,
 Are we, then, less than these to God?
 Oh, for the stout faith of a tree
 That drops its small seeds to the sod,
 Safe in the hollow of God's hand,
 And knows that perish from the land
 It shall not! Yea, this much we know,
 That each, as best it can, shall grow
 As God has fashioned, fair or plain,
 To do its best, or cloud or sun,
 Or in His still, small rain.*

*Oh, good to see is faith in God!
 But better far is faith in good:
 The one seems but a sign, a nod,
 The one seems God's own flesh and
 blood.
 How many names of God are sung!
 But good is good in every tongue.*

*And this the light, the Holy Light
That leads thro' night and night and
night;
Thro' nights named Death, that lie
between
The days named Life, the ladder round
Unto the Infinite Unseen.*

“In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth; the earth was without form and void and darkness lay upon the deep and the spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters.”

PART FIRST

I

What is there in a dear dove's eyes,
Or voice of mated melodies,
That tells us ever of blue skies
And cease of deluge on Love's seas?
The dove looked down on Jordan's
tide
Well pleased with Christ the Crucified;
The dove was hewed in Karnak stone
Before fair Jordan's banks were
known.
The dove has such a patient look,
I read rest in her pretty eyes
As in the Holy Book.

I think if I should love some day—
And may I die when dear Love dies—
I'd sail brave San Francisco's Bay
And seek to see some sea-dove's eyes:
To see her in her air-built nest,
Her wide, warm, restful wings at rest;
To see her rounded neck reach out,

Her eyes lean lovingly about;
And seeing this as love can see,
I then should know, and surely know,
That love sailed on with me.

II

See once this boundless bay and
live,
See once this beauteous bay and love,
See once this warm, bright bay and
give
God thanks for olive branch and dove.
Then plunge headlong yon sapphire
sea
And sail and sail the world with
me. . . .
Some isles, drowned in the drowning
sun,
Ten thousand sea-doves voiced as
one;
Lo! love's wings furled and wings
unfurled;
Who sees not this warm, half-world
sea,
Sees not, knows not the world.

How knocks he at the Golden Gate,
This lord of waters, strong and bold,
And fearful-voiced and fierce as fate,
And hoar and old, as Time is old;
Yet young as when God's finger lay
Against Night's forehead that first
day,
And drove vast Darkness forth, and
rent
The waters from the firmament.
Hear how he knocks and raves and
loves!
He woos us through the Golden Gate
With all his soft sea-doves.

Now on and on, up, down, and on,
The sea is oily grooves; the air
Is as your bride's sweet breath at
dawn

When all your ardent youth is there.
And oh, the rest! and oh, the room!
And oh, the sensuous sea perfume!
Yon new moon peering as we passed
Has scarce escaped our topmost mast.
A porpoise, wheeling restlessly,
Quick draws a bright, black, dripping
blade,
Then sheathes it in the sea.

Vast, half-world, wondrous sea of
ours!
Dread, unknown deep of all sea depths!
What fragrance from thy strange
sea-flowers
Deep-gardened where God's silence
keeps!
Thy song is silence, and thy face
Is God's face in His holy place.
Thy billows swing sweet censer foam,
Where stars hang His cathedral's
dome.
Such blue above, below such blue!
These burly winds so tall, they can
Scarce walk between the two.

Such room of sea! Such room of
sky!
Such room to draw a soul-full breath!
Such room to live! Such room to die!
Such room to roam in after death!
White room, with sapphire room set
'round,
And still beyond His room profound;
Such room-bound boundlessness o'er-
head

As never has been writ or said
Or seen, save by the favored few,
Where kings of thought play chess
with stars
Across their board of blue.

III

The proud ship wrapped her in the
red
That hung from heaven, then the
gray,
The soft dove-gray that shrouds the
dead
And prostrate form of perfumed day:
Some noisy, pigmy creatures kept
The deck a spell, then, leaning, crept
Apart in silence and distrust,
Then down below in deep disgust.
An albatross,—a shadow cross
Hung at the head of buried day,—
At foot the albatross.

Then came a warm, soft, sultry
breath—
A weary wind that wanted rest;
A breath as from some house of death
With flowers heaped; as from the
breast
Of such sweet princess as had slept
Some thousand years embalmed, and
kept,
In fearful Karnak's tomb-hewn hill,
Her perfume and spiced sweetness
still,—
Such breath as bees droop down to
meet,
And creep along lest it may melt
Their honey-laden feet.

The captain's trumpet smote the
air!

Swift men, like spiders up a thread,
Swept suddenly. Then masts were
bare

As when tall poplars' leaves are shed,
And ropes were clamped and stays
were clewed.

'T was as when wrestlers, iron-thewed
Gird tight their loins, take full breath,
And set firm face, as fronting death.
Three small brown birds, or gray, so
small,
So ghostly still and swift they passed,
They scarce seemed birds at all.

Then quick, keen saber-cuts, like
ice;

Then sudden hail, like battle-shot,
Then two last men crept down like
mice,

And man, poor, pigmy man, was not.
The great ship shivered, as with
cold—

An instant staggered back, then bold
As Theodosia, to her waist
In waters, stood erect and faced
Black thunder; and she kept her way
And laughed red lightning from her
face

As on some gala day.

The black sea-horses rode in row;
Their white manes tossing to the
night

But made the blackness blacker grow
From flashing, phosphorescent light.
And how like hurdle steeds they leapt!
The low moon burst; the black troop
swept

Right through her hollow, on and on.

A wave-wet simitar was drawn,
Flashed twice, flashed thrice trium-
phantly,

But still the steeds dashed on, dashed
on,

And drowned her in the sea.

What headlong winds that lost
their way

At sea, and wailed out for the shore!
How shook the orient doors of day
With all this mad, tumultuous roar!
Black clouds, shot through with stars
of red;

Strange stars, storm-born and fire-
fed;

Lost stars that came, and went, and
came;

Such stars as never yet had name.

The far sea-lions on their isles
Upheaved their huge heads terrified,
And moaned a thousand miles.

What fearful battle-field! What
space

For light and darkness, flame and
flood!

Lo! Light and Darkness, face to face,
In battle harness battling stood!

And how the surged sea burst upon
The granite gates of Oregon!

It tore, it tossed the seething spume,
And wailed for room! and room! and
room!

It shook the crag-built eaglets' nest
Until they screamed from out their
clouds,

Then rocked them back to rest.

How fiercely reckless raged the
war!

Then suddenly no ghost of light,
 Or even glint of storm-born star.
 Just night, and black, torn bits of
 night;
 Just night, and midnight's middle
 noon,
 With all mad elements in tune;
 Just night, and that continuous roar
 Of wind, wind, night, and nothing
 more.

Then all the hollows of the main
 Sank down so deep, it almost seemed
 The seas were hewn in twain.

How deep the hollows of this deep!
 How high, how trembling high the
 crest!

Ten thousand miles of surge and
 sweep
 And length and breadth of billow's
 breast!

Up! up, as if against the skies!
 Down! down, as if no more to rise!
 The creaking wallow in the trough,
 As if the world was breaking off.
 The pigmies in their trough down
 there!

Deep in their trough they tried to
 pray—
 To hide from God in prayer.

Then boomed Alaska's great, first
 gun
 In battling ice and rattling hail;
 Then Indus came, four winds in one!
 Then came Japan in counter mail
 Of mad cross winds; and Waterloo
 Was but as some babe's tale unto.
 The typhoon spun his toy in play
 And whistled as a glad boy may
 To see his top spin at his feet:

The captain on his bridge in ice,
 His sailors mailed in sleet.

What unchained, unnamed, noises,
 space!
 What shoreless, boundless, rounded
 reach
 Of room was here! Fit field, fit place
 For three fierce emperors, where each
 Came armed with elements that make
 Or unmake seas and lands, that shake
 The heavens' roof, that freeze or
 burn
 The seas as they may please to turn.
 And such black silence! Not a sound
 Save whistling of that mad, glad boy
 To see his top spin round.

Then swift, like some sulked Ajax,
 burst
 Thewed Thunder from his battle-
 tent;
 As if in pent-up, vengeful thirst
 For blood, the elements of Earth were
 rent,
 And sheeted crimson lay a wedge
 Of blood below black Thunder's edge.
 A pause. The typhoon turned, up-
 wheeled,
 And wrestled Death till heaven reeled.
 Then Lightning reached a fiery rod,
 And on Death's fearful forehead
 wrote
 The autograph of God.

IV

God's name and face—what need
 of more?
 Morn came: calm came; and holy
 light,

And warm, sweet weather, leaning
o'er,
Laid perfumes on the tomb of night.
The three wee birds came dimly back
And housed about the mast in black,
And all the tranquil sense of morn
Seemed as Dakota's fields of corn,
Save that some great soul-breaking
sigh
Now sank the proud ship out of sight,
Now sent her to the sky.

V

One strong, strange man had kept
the deck—
One silent, seeing man, who knew
The pulse of Nature, and could reckon
Her deepest heart-beats through and
through.
He knew the night, he loved the night.
When elements went forth to fight
His soul went with them without fear
To hear God's voice, so few will hear.
The swine had plunged them in the
sea,
The swine down there, but up on
deck
The captain, God and he.

VI

And oh, such sea-shell tints of light
High o'er those wide sea-doors of
dawn!
Sail, sail the world for that one sight,
Then satisfied, let time begone.
The ship rose up to meet that light,
Bright candles, tipped like tasseled
corn,
The holy virgin, maiden morn,

Arrayed in woven gold and white.
Put by the harp—hush minstrelsy;
Nor bard or bird has yet been heard
To sing this scene, this sea.

VII

Such light! such liquid, molten
light!
Such mantling, healthful, heartfelt
morn!
Such morning born of such mad night!
Such night as never had been born!
The man caught in his breath, his
face
Was lifted up to light and space;
His hand dashed o'er his brow, as
when
Deep thoughts submerge the souls of
men;
And then he bowed, bowed mute,
appalled
At memory of scenes, such scenes
As this swift morn recalled.

He sought the ship's prow, as men
seek
The utmost limit for their feet,
To lean, look forth, to list nor speak,
Nor turn aside, nor yet retreat
One inch from this far vantage-
ground,
Till he had pierced the dread pro-
found
And proved it false. And yet he knew
Deep in his earth that all was true;
So like it was to that first dawn
When God had said, "Let there be
light,"
And thus he spake right on:

“My soul was born ere light was
born,
When blackness was, as this black
night.
And then that morn, as this sweet
morn!
That sudden light, as this swift light!
I had forgotten. Now, I know
The travail of the world, the low,
Dull creatures in the sea of slime
That time committed unto time,
As great men plant oaks patiently,
Then turn in silence unto dust
And wait the coming tree.

“That long, lorn blackness, seams
of flame,
Volcanoes bursting from the slime,
Huge, shapeless monsters without
name
Slow shaping in the loom of time;
Slow weaving as a weaver weaves;
So like as when some good man leaves
His acorns to the centuries
And waits the stout ancestral trees.
But ah, so piteous, memory
Reels back, as sickened, from that
scene—
It breaks the heart of me!

“Volcanoes crying out for light!
The very slime found tongues of fire!
Huge monsters climbing in their
might
O'er submerged monsters in the mire
That heaved their slimy mouths, and
cried
And cried for light, and crying, died.
How all that wailing through the air
But seems as some unbroken prayer.

One ceaseless prayer that long lorn
night
The world lay in the loom of time
And waited so for light!

“And I, amid those monsters there,
A grade above, or still below?
Nay, Time has never time to care;
And I can scarcely dare to know.
I but remember that one prayer;
Ten thousand wide mouths in the air,
Ten thousand monsters in their
might,
All eyeless, looking up for light.
We prayed, we prayed as never man,
By sea or land, by deed or word,
Has prayed since light began.

“Great sea-cows laid their fins
upon
Low-floating isles, as good priests lay
Two holy hands, at early dawn,
Upon the altar cloth to pray.
Aye, ever so, with lifted head,
Poor, slime-born creatures and slime-
bred,
We prayed. Our sealed-up eyes of
night
All lifting, lifting up for light.
And I have paused to wonder, when
This world will pray as we then
prayed,
What God may not give men!

“Hist! Once I saw,—What was I
then?
Ah, dim and devious the light
Comes back, but I was not of men.
And it is only such black night
As this, that was of war and strife
Of elements, can wake that life,

That life in death, that black and
 cold
 And blind and loveless life of old.
 But hear! I saw—heed this and
 learn
 How old, how holy old is Love,
 However Time may turn:

“I saw, I saw, or somehow felt,
 A sea-cow mother nurse her young.
 I saw, and with thanksgiving knelt,
 To see her head, low, loving, hung
 Above her nursling. Then the light,
 The lovelight from those eyes of
 night!
 I say to you ’t was lovelight then
 That first lit up the eyes of men.
 I say to you lovelight was born
 Ere God laid hand to clay of man,
 Or ever that first morn.

“What though a monster slew her
 so,
 The while she bowed and nursed her
 young?
 She leaned her head to take the blow,
 And dying, still the closer clung—
 And dying gave her life to save
 The helpless life she erstwhile gave,
 And so sank back below the slime,
 A torn shred in the loom of time.
 The one thing more I needs must say,
 That monster slew her and her young;
 But Love he could not slay.”

PART SECOND

I

The man stood silent, peering past
 His utmost verge of memory.
 What lay beyond, beyond that vast

Bewildering darkness and dead sea
 Of noisome vapors and dread night?
 No light! not any sense of light
 Beyond that life when Love was born
 On that first, far, dim rim of morn:
 No light beyond that beast that clung
 In darkness by the light of love
 And died to save her young.

And yet we know life must have
 been
 Before that dark, dread life of pain;
 Life germs, love germs of gentle men,
 So small, so still; as still, small rain.
 But whence this life, this living soul,
 This germ that grows a godlike whole?
 I can but think of that sixth day
 When God first set His hand to clay,
 And did in His own image plan
 A perfect form, a manly form,
 A comely, godlike man.

II

Did soul germs grown down in the
 deeps,
 The while God's Spirit moved upon
 The waters? High-set Lima keeps
 A rose-path, like a ray of dawn;
 And simple, pious peons say
 Sweet Santa Rosa passed that way;
 And so, because of her fair fame
 And saintly face, these roses came.
 Shall we not say, ere that first morn,
 Where God moved, garmented in
 mists,
 Some sweet soul germs were born?

III

The strange, strong man still kept
 the prow;

He saw, still saw before light was,
The dawn of love, the huge sea-cow,
The living slime, love's deathless
laws.

He knew love lived, lived ere a blade
Of grass, or ever light was made;
And love was in him, of him, as
The light was on the sea of glass.
It made his heart great, and he grew
To look on God all unabashed;
To look lost eons through.

IV

Illuming love! what talisman!
That Word which makes the world
go 'round!
That Word which bore worlds in its
plan!
That Word which was the Word
profound!
That Word which was the great First
Cause,
Before light was, before sight was!
I would not barter love for gold
Enough to fill a tall ship's hold;
Nay, not for great Victoria's worth—
So great the sun sets not upon
In all his round of earth.

I would not barter love for all
The silver spilling from the moon;
I would not barter love at all
Though you should coin each after-
noon
Of gold for centuries to be,
And count the coin all down as free
As conqueror fresh home from wars,—
Coin sunset bars, coin heaven-born
stars,
Coin all below, coin all above,

Count all down at my feet, yet I—
I would not barter love.

V

The lone man started, stood as
when
A strong man hears, yet does not
hear.
He raised his hand, let fall, and then
Quick arched his hand above his ear
And leaned a little; yet no sound
Broke through the vast, serene pro-
found.
Man's soul first knew some telephone
In sense and language all its own.
The tall man heard, yet did not hear;
He saw, and yet he did not see
A fair face near and dear.

For there, half hiding, crouching
there
Against the capstan, coils on coils
Of rope, some snow still in her hair,
Like Time, too eager for his spoils,
Was such fair face raised to his face
As only dream of dreams give place;
Such shyness, boldness, sea-shell
tint,
Such book as only God may print,
Such tender, timid, holy look
Of startled love and trust and hope,—
A gold-bound storybook.

And while the great ship rose and
fell,
Or rocked or rounded with the sea,
He saw,—a little thing to tell,
An idle, silly thing, maybe,—
Where her right arm was bent to
clasp

Her robe's fold in some closer clasp,
 A little isle of melting snow
 That round about and to and fro
 And up and down kept eddying.
 It told so much, that idle isle,
 Yet such a little thing.

It told she, too, was of a race
 Born ere the baby stars were born;
 She, too, familiar with God's face,
 Knew folly but to shun and scorn;
 She, too, all night had sat to read
 By heaven's light, to hear, to heed
 The awful voice of God, to grow
 In thought, to see, to feel, to know
 The harmony of elements
 That tear and toss the sea of seas
 To foam-built battle-tents.

He saw that drifting isle of snow,
 As some lorn miner sees bright gold
 Seamed deep in quartz, and joys to
 know
 That here lies hidden wealth untold.
 And now his head was lifted strong,
 As glad men lift the head in song.
 He knew she, too, had spent the night
 As he, in all that wild delight
 Of tuneful elements; she, too,
 He knew, was of that olden time
 Ere oldest stars were new.

VI

Her soul's ancestral book bore date
 Beyond the peopling of the moon,
 Beyond the day when Saturn sate
 In royal cincture, and the boon
 Of light and life bestowed on stars
 And satellites; ere martial Mars
 Waxed red with battle rage and shook

The porch of heaven with a look;
 Ere polar ice-shafts propt gaunt earth
 And slime was but the womb of time,
 That knew not yet of birth.

VII

To be what thou wouldst truly be,
 Be bravely, truly, what thou art.
 The acorn houses the huge tree,
 And patient, silent bears its part,
 And bides the miracle of time.
 For miracle, and more sublime
 It is than all that has been writ,
 To see the great oak grow from it.
 But thus the soul grows, grows the
 heart,—
 To be what thou wouldst truly be.
 Be truly what thou art.

To be what thou wouldst truly be,
 Be true. God's finger sets each seed,
 Or when or where we may not see;
 But God shall nourish to its need
 Each one, if but it dares be true;
 To do what it is set to do.
 Thy proud soul's heraldry? 'T is writ
 In every gentle action; it
 Can never be contested. Time
 Dates thy brave soul's ancestral book
 From thy first deed sublime.

VIII

Wouldst learn to know one little
 flower,
 Its perfume, perfect form and hue?
 Yea, wouldst thou have one perfect
 hour
 Of all the years that come to you?
 Then grow as God hath planted, grow

A lordly oak or daisy low,
 As He hath set His garden; be
 Just what thou art, or grass or tree.
 Thy treasures up in heaven laid
 Await thy sure ascending soul,
 Life after life,—be not afraid!

IX

Wouldst know the secrets of the
 soil?
 Wouldst have Earth bare her breast
 to you?
 Wouldst know the sweet rest of hard
 toil?
 Be true, be true, be ever true!
 Ah me, these self-made cuts of wrong
 That hew men down! Behold the
 strong
 And comely Adam bound with lies
 And banished from his paradise!
 The serpent on his belly still
 Eats dirt through all his piteous days,
 Do penance as he will.

Poor, heel-bruised, prostrate, tortu-
 ous snake!
 What soul crawls here upon the
 ground?
 God willed his soul at birth to take
 The round of beauteous things, the
 round
 Of earth, the round of boundless skies.
 It lied, and lo! how low it lies!
 What quick, sleek tongue to lie with
 here!
 Wast thou a broker but last year?
 Wast known to fame, wast rich and
 proud?
 Didst live a lie that thou mightst die
 With pockets in thy shroud?

X

Be still, be pitiful! that soul
 May yet be rich in peace as thine.
 Yea, as the shining ages roll
 That rich man's soul may rise and
 shine
 Beyond Orion; yet may reel
 The Pleiades with belts of steel
 That compass commerce in their
 reach;
 May learn and learn, and learning
 teach,
 The while his soul grows grandly old,
 How nobler far to share a crust
 Than hoard car-loads of gold!

XI

Oh, but to know; to surely know
 How strangely beautiful is light!
 How just one gleam of light will glow
 And grow more beautifully bright
 Than all the gold that ever lay
 Below the wide-arched Milky Way!
 "Let there be light!" and lo! the
 burst
 Of light in answer to the first
 Command of high Jehovah's voice!
 Let there be light for man to-night,
 That all men may rejoice.

XII

The little isle of ice and snow
 That in her gathered garment lay,
 And dashed and drifted to and fro
 Unhindered of her, went its way.
 The while the warm winds of Japan
 Were with them, and the silent man

Stood by her, saying, hearing naught,
 Yet seeing, noting all; as one
 Sees not, yet all day sees the sun.
 He knew her silence, heeded well
 Her dignity of idle hands
 In this deep, tranquil spell.

XIII

The true soul surely knows its own,
 Deep down in this man's heart he
 knew,
 Somehow, somewhere along the zone
 Of time, his soul should come unto
 Its safe seaport, some pleasant land
 Of rest where she should reach a hand.
 He had not questioned God. His care
 Was to be worthy, fit to share
 The glory, peace, and perfect rest,
 Come how or when or where it comes,
 As God in time sees best.

Her face reached forward, not to
 him,
 But forward, upward, as for light;
 For light that lay a silver rim
 Of sea-lit whiteness more than white.
 The vast full morning poured and
 spilled
 Its splendor down, and filled and filled
 And overfilled the heaped-up sea
 With silver molten suddenly.
 The night lay trenched in her meshed
 hair;
 The tint of sea-shells left the sea
 To make her more than fair.

What massed, what matchless
 midnight hair!
 Her wide, sweet, sultry, drooping
 mouth,

As droops some flower when the air
 Blows odors from the ardent South—
 That Sapphic, sensate, bended bow
 Of deadly archery; as though
 Love's legions fortified there and
 sent
 Red arrows from his bow fell bent.
 Such apples! such sweet fruit con-
 cealed
 Of perfect womanhood make more
 Sweet pain than if revealed.

XIV

How good a thing it is to house
 Thy full heart treasures to that day
 When thou shalt take her, and
 carouse
 Thenceforth with her for aye and
 aye;
 How good a thing to give the store
 That thus the thousand years or
 more,
 Poor, hungered, holy worshiper,
 You kept for her, and only her!
 How well with all thy wealth to wait
 Or year, or thousand thousand years,
 Her coming at love's gate!

XV

The winds pressed warm from
 warm Japan
 Upon her pulsing womanhood.
 They fanned such fires in the man
 His face shone glory where he stood.
 In Persia's rose-fields, I have heard,
 There sings a sad, sweet, one-winged
 bird;
 Sings ever sad in lonely round
 Until his one-winged mate is found;

And then, side laid to side, they rise
So swift, so strong, they even dare
The doorway of the skies.

XVI

How rich was he! how richer she!
Such treasures up in heaven laid,
Where moth and rust may never be,
Nor thieves break in, or make afraid.
Such treasures, where the tranquil
soul
Walks space, nor limit nor control
Can know, but journeys on and on
Beyond the golden gates of dawn;
Beyond the outmost round of Mars;
Where God's foot rocks the cradle of
His new-born baby stars.

XVII

As one who comes upon a street,
Or sudden turn in pleasant path,
As one who suddenly may meet
Some scene, some sound, some sense
that hath
A memory of olden days,
Of days that long have gone their
ways,
She caught her breath, caught quick
and fast
Her breath, as if her whole life passed
Before, and pendant to and fro
Swung in the air before her eyes;
And oh, her heart beat so!

How her heart beat! Three thou-
sand years
Of weary, waiting womanhood,
Of folded hands, of falling tears,

Of lone soul-wending through dark
wood;

But now at last to meet once more
Upon the bright, all-shining shore
Of earth, in life's resplendent dawn,
And he so fair to look upon!
Tall Phaon and the world aglow!
Tall Phaon, favored of the gods,
And oh, her heart beat so!

Her heart beat so, no word she
spake;
She pressed her palms, she leaned her
face,—
Her heart beat so, its beating brake
The cord that held her robe in place
About her wondrous, rounded throat,
And in the warm winds let it float
And fall upon her soft, round arm,
So warm it made the morning warm.
Then pink and pearl forsook her
cheek,
And, "Phaon, I am Sappho, I—"
Nay, nay, she did not speak.

And was this Sappho, she who sang
When mournful Jeremiah wept?
When harps, where weeping willows
hang,
Hung mute and all their music kept?
Such witchery of song as drew
The war-like world to hear her sing,
As moons draw mad seas following.
Aye, this was Sappho; Lesbos hill
Had all been hers, and Tempé's vale,
And song sweet as to kill.

Her dark Greek eyes turned to the
sea;
Lo, Phaon's ferry as of old!
He kept his boat's prow still, and he

Was stately, comely, strong, and bold
 As when he ferried gods, and drew
 Immortal youth from one who knew
 His scorn of gold. The Lesbian shore
 Lay yonder, and the rocky roar
 Against the promontory told,
 Told and retold her tale of love
 That never can grow old.

Three thousand years! yet love
 was young
 And fair as when Æolis knew
 Her glory, and her great soul strung
 The harp that still sweeps ages
 through.
 Ionic dance or Doric war,
 Or purpled dove or dulcet car,
 Or unyoked dove or close-yoked dove,
 What meant it all but love and love?
 And at the naming of Love's name
 She raised her eyes, and lo! her doves!
 Just of old they came.

PART THIRD

I

And they sailed on; the sea-doves
 sailed,
 And Love sailed with them. And
 there lay
 Such peace as never had prevailed
 On earth since dear Love's natal day.
 Great black-backed whales blew bows
 in clouds,
 Wee sea-birds flitted through the
 shrouds.
 A wide-winged, amber albatross
 Blew by, and bore his shadow cross,
 And seemed to hang it on the mast,

The while he followed far behind,
 The great ship flew so fast.

She questioned her if Phaon knew,
 If he could dream, or halfway guess
 How she had tracked the ages through
 And trained her soul to gentleness
 Through many lives, through every
 part
 To make her worthy his great heart.
 Would Phaon turn and fly her still,
 With that fierce, proud, imperious
 will,
 And scorn her still, and still despise?
 She shuddered, turned aside her face,
 And lo, her sea-dove's eyes!

II

Then days of rest and restful
 nights;
 And love kept tryst as true love will,
 The prow their trysting-place. De-
 lights
 Of silence, simply sitting still,—
 Of asking nothing, saying naught;
 For all that they had ever sought
 Sailed with them; words or deeds had
 been
 Impertinence, a selfish sin.
 And oh, to know how sweet a thing
 Is silence on those restful seas
 When Love's dove folds her wing!

The great sea slept. In vast re-
 pose
 His pillowed head half-hidden lay,
 Half-drowned in dread Alaskan snows
 That stretch to where no man can
 say.
 His huge arms tossed to left, to right,

Where black woods, banked like bits
 of night,
 As sleeping giants toss their arms
 At night about their fearful forms.
 A slim canoe, a night-bird's call,
 Some gray sea-doves, just these and
 Love,
 And Love indeed was all!

III

Far, far away such cradled Isles
 As Jason dreamed and Argos sought
 Surge up from endless watery miles!
 And thou, the pale high priest of
 thought,
 The everlasting thronèd king
 Of fair Samoa! Shall I bring
 Sweet sandal-wood? Or shall I lay
 Rich wreaths of California's bay
 From sobbing maidens? Stevenson,
 Sleep well. Thy work is done; well
 done!
 So bravely, bravely done!

And Molokia's lord of love
 And tenderness, and piteous tears
 For stricken man! Go forth, O dove!
 With olive branch, and still the fears
 Of those he meekly died to save.
 They shall not perish. From that
 grave
 Shall grow such healing! such as He
 Gave stricken men by Galilee.
 Great ocean cradle, cradle, keep
 These two, the chosen of thy heart,
 Rocked in sweet, baby sleep.

IV

Fair land of flowers, land of flame,
 Of sun-born seas, of sea-born clime,

Of clouds low shepherded and tame
 As white pet sheep at shearing time,
 Of great, white, generous high-born
 rain,
 Of rainbows builded not in vain—
 Of rainbows builded for the feet
 Of love to pass dry-shod and fleet
 From isle to isle, when smell of musk
 'Mid twilight is, and one lone star
 Sits in the brow of dusk.

Oh, dying, sad-voiced, sea-born
 maid!
 And plundered, dying, still sing on.
 Thy breast against the thorn is laid—
 Sing on, sing on, sweet dying swan.
 How pitiful! And so despoiled
 By those you fed, for whom you
 toiled!
 Aloha! Hail you, and farewell,
 Far echo of some lost sea-shell!
 Some song that lost its way at sea,
 Some sea-lost notes of nature, lost,
 That crying, came to me.

Dusk maid, adieu! One sea-shell
 less!
 Sa l sea-shell silenced and forgot.
 O Rachel in the wilderness,
 Wail on! Your children they are
 not.
 And they who took them, they who
 laid
 Hard hand, shall they not feel afraid?
 Shall they who in the name of God
 Robbed and enslaved, escape His
 rod?
 Give me some after-world afar
 From these hard men, for well I know
 Hell must be where they are.

V

Lo! suddenly the lone ship burst
 Upon an uncompleted world,
 A world so dazzling white, man durst
 Not face the flashing search-light
 hurled
 From heaven's snow-built battle-
 ments
 And high-heaved camp of cloud-
 wreathed tents.
 And boom! boom! boom! from sea or
 shore
 Came one long, deep, continuous roar,
 As if God wrought; as if the days,
 The first six pregnant mother morns,
 Had not quite gone their way.

What word is fitting but the Word
 Here in this vast world-fashioning?
 What tongue here name the nameless
 Lord?

What hand lay hand on anything?
 Come, let us coin new words of might
 And massiveness to name this light,
 This largeness, largeness everywhere!
 White rivers hanging in the air,
 Ice-tied through all eternity!
 Nay, peace! It were profane to say:
 We dare but hear and see.

Be silent! Hear the strokes re-
 sound!
 'T is God's hand rounding down the
 earth.
 Take off thy shoes, 't is holy ground,
 Behold! a continent has birth!
 The skies bow down, Madonna's blue
 Enfolds the sea in sapphire. You
 May lift, a little spell, your eyes

And feast them on the ice-propped
 skies,
 And feast but for a little space:
 Then let thy face fall grateful down
 And let thy soul say grace.

VI

At anchor so, and all night through,
 The two before God's temple kept.
 He spake: "I know yon peak; I knew
 A deep ice-cavern there. I slept
 With hairy men, or monsters slew,
 Or led down misty seas my crew
 Of cruel savages and slaves,
 And slew who dared the distant
 waves,
 And once a strange, strong ship—and
she,
 I bore her to yon cave of ice,—
 And Love companioned me.

VII

"Two scenes of all scenes from the
 first
 Have come to me on this great sea:
 The one when light from heaven
 burst,
 The one when sweet Love came to
 me.
 And of the two, or best or worst,
 I ever hold this second first,
 Bear with me. Yonder citadel
 Of ice tells all my tongue can tell:
 My thirst for love, my pain, my
 pride,
 My soul's warm youth the while she
 lived,
 Its old age when she died.

"I know not if she loved or no.
I only asked to serve and love;
To love and serve, and ever so
My love grew as grows light above,—
Grew from gray dawn to gold midday,
And swept the wide world in its
 sway.

The stars came down, so close they
 came,
I called them, named them with her
 name,
The kind moon came,—came once so
 near,
That in the hollow of her arm
I leaned my lifted spear.

"And yet, somehow, for all the
 stars,
And all the silver of the moon,
She looked from out her icy bars
As longing for some sultry noon;
As longing for some warmer kind,
Some far south sunland left behind.
Then I went down to sea. I sailed
Thro' seas where monstrous beasts
 prevailed,
Such slimy, shapeless, hungered
 things!
Red griffins, wide-winged, bat-like
 wings,
Black griffins, black or fire-fed,
That ate my fever-stricken men
Ere yet they were quite dead.

"I could not find her love for her,
Or land, or fit thing for her touch,
And I came back, sad worshiper,
And watched and longed and loved
 so much!
I watched huge monsters climb and
 pass

Reflected in great walls, like glass;
Dark, draggled, hairy, fearful forms
Upblown by ever-battling storms,
And streaming still with slime and
 spray;
So huge from out their sultry seas,
Like storm-torn islands they.

"Then even these she ceased to
 note,
She ceased at last to look on me,
But, baring to the sun her throat,
She looked and looked incessantly
Away against the south, away
Against the sun the livelong day.
At last I saw her watch the swan
Surge tow'rd the north, surgé on and
 on.
I saw her smile, her first, faint smile;
Then burst a new-born thought, and
 I,
I nursed that all the while.

VIII

"I somehow dreamed, or guessed,
 or knew,
That somewhere in the dear earth's
 heart
Was warmth and tenderness and
 true
Delight, and all love's nobler part.
I tried to think, aye, thought and
 thought;
In all the strange fruits that I brought
For her delight I could but find
The sweetness deep within the rind.
All beasts, all birds, some better part
Of central being deepest housed;
And earth must have a heart.

“I watched the wide-winged birds
 that blew
 Continually against the bleak
 And ice-built north, and surely knew
 The long, lorn croak, the reaching
 beak,
 Led not to ruin evermore;
 For they came back came swooping
 o'er
 Each spring, with clouds of younger
 ones,
 So dense, they dimmed the summer
 suns.
 And thus I knew somehow, some-
 where,
 Beyond earth's ice-built, star-tipt
 peaks
 They found a softer air.

“And too, I heard strange stories,
 held
 In memories of my hairy men,
 Vague, dim traditions, dim with eld,
 Of other lands and ages when
 Nor ices were, nor anything;
 But ever one warm, restful spring
 Of radiant sunlight: stories told
 By dauntless men of giant mold,
 Who kept their cavern's icy mouth
 Ice-locked, and hungered where they
 sat,
 With sad eyes tow'rd the south:

“Tales of a time ere hate began,
 Of herds of reindeer, wild beasts
 tamed,
 When man walked forth in love with
 man,
 Walked naked, and was not ashamed;
 Of how a brother beast he slew,
 Then night, and all sad sorrows knew;

How tame beasts were no longer
 tame;
 How God drew His great sword of
 flame
 And drove man naked to the snow,
 Till, pitying, He made of skins
 A coat, and clothed him so.

“And, true or not true, still the
 same,
 I saw continually at night
 That far, bright, flashing sword of
 flame,
 Misnamed the Borealis light;
 I saw my men, in coats of skin
 As God had clothed them, felt the
 sin
 And suffering of that first death
 Each day in every icy breath.
 Then why should I still disbelieve
 These tales of fairer lands than mine,
 And let my lady grieve?

IX

“Yea, I would find that land for
 her!
 Then dogs, and sleds, and swift
 reindeer;
 Huge, hairy men, all mailed in fur,
 Who knew not yet the name of fear,
 Nor knew fatigue, nor aught that
 ever
 To this day has balked endeavor.
 And we swept forth, while wide, swift
 wings
 Still sought the Pole in endless strings.
 I left her sitting looking south,
 Still leaning, looking to the sun,—
 My kisses on her mouth!

X

“Far toward the north, so tall, so
far,
One tallest ice shaft starward stood—
Stood as if 'twere itself a star,
Scarce fallen from its sisterhood.
Tip-top the glowing apex there
Upreared a huge white polar bear;
He pushed his swart nose up and
out,
Then walked the North Star round
about,
Below the Great Bear of the main,
The upper main, and as if chained,
Chained with a star-linked chain.

XI

“And we pushed on, up, on, and
on,
Until, as in the world of dreams,
We found the very doors of dawn
With warm sun bursting through the
seams.
We brake them through, then down,
far down,
Until, as in some park-set town,
We found lost Eden. Very rare
The fruit, and all the perfumed air
So sweet, we sat us down to feed
And rest, without a thought or care,
Or ever other need.

“For all earth's pretty birds were
here;
And women fair, and very fair;
Sweet song was in the atmosphere,
Nor effort was, nor noise, nor care.
As cocoons from their silken house
Wing forth and in the sun carouse,

My men let fall their housings and
Passed on and on, far down the
land
Of purple grapes and poppy bloom.
Such warm, sweet land, such peaceful
land!
Sweet peace and sweet perfume!

“And I pushed down ere I returned
To climb the cold world's walls of
snow,
And saw where earth's heart beat
and burned,
An hundred sultry leagues below;
Saw deep seas set with deep-sea isles
Of waving verdure; miles on miles
Of rising sea-birds with their broods,
In all their noisy, happy moods!
Aye, then I knew earth has a heart,
That Nature wastes nor space or
place,
But husbands every part.

XII

“My reindeer fretted: I turned
back
For her, the heart of me, my soul!
Ah, then, how swift, how white my
track!
All Paradise beneath the Pole
Were but a mockery till she
Should share its dreamful sweets with
me. . . .
I know not well what next befell,
Save that white heaven grew black
hell.
She sat with sad face to the south,
Still sat, sat still; but she was dead—
My kisses on her mouth.

XIII

“What else to do but droop and die?

But dying, how my poor soul yearned
To fly as swift south birds may fly—
To pass that way her eyes had turned,
The dear days she had sat with me,
And search and search eternity!
And, do you know, I surely know
That God has given us to go
The way we will in life or death—
To go, to grow, or good or ill,
As one may draw a breath?”

PART FOURTH

I

Nay, turn not to the past for light;
Nay, teach not Pagan tale forsooth!
Behind lie heathen gods and night,
Before lifts high, white holy truth.
Sweet Orpheus looked back, and lo,
Hell met his eyes and endless woe!
Lot's wife looked back, and for this
fell
To something even worse than hell.
Let us have faith, sail, seek and find
The new world and the new world's
ways:
Blind Homer led the blind!

II

Come, let us kindle Faith in light!
Yon eagle climbing to the sun
Keeps not the straightest course in
sight,
But room and reach of wing and run
Of rounding circle all are his,

Till he at last bathes in the light
Of worlds that look far down on this
Arena's battle for the right.

The stoutest sail that braves the
breeze,

The bravest battle ship that rides,
Rides rounding up the seas.

Come, let us kindle faith in man!
What though yon eagle, where he
swings,

May moult a feather in God's plan
Of broader, stronger, better wings!
Why, let the moulted feathers lie
As thick as leaves upon the lawn:
These be but proof we cleave the sky
And still round on and on and on.
Fear not for moulting feathers; nay,
But rather fear when all seems fair,
And care is far away.

Come, let us kindle faith in God!
He made, He kept, He still can keep.
The storm obeys His burning rod,
The storm brought Christ to walk the
deep.

Trust God to round His own at will;
Trust God to keep His own for aye—
Or strife or strike, or well or ill;
An eagle climbing up the sky—
A meteor down from heaven hurled—
Trust God to round, reform, or rock
His new-born baby world.

III

How full the great, full-hearted seas
That lave high, white Alaska's feet!
How densely green the dense green
trees!

How sweet the smell of wood! how
sweet!

What sense of high, white newness
where

This new world breathes the new, blue
air

That never breath of man or breath
Of mortal thing considereth!

And O, that Borealis light!

The angel with his flaming sword
And never sense of night!

IV

Are these the walls of Paradise—
Yon peaks the gates man may not
pass?

Lo, everlasting silence lies

Along their gleaming ways of glass!
Just silence and that sword of flame;
Just silence and Jehovah's name,
Where all is new, unnamed, and
white!

Come, let us read where angels write—
"In the beginning God"—aye, these
The waters where God's Spirit
moved;

These, these, the very seas!

Just one deep, wave-washed char-
iot wheel:

Such sunset as that far first day!
An unsheathed sword of flame and
steel;

Then battle flashes; then dismay,
And mad confusion of all hues
That earth and heaven could infuse,
Till all hues softly fused and blent
In orange worlds of wonderment:
Then dying day, in kingly ire,

Struck back with one last blow, and
smote

The world with molten fire.

So fell Alaska, proudly, dead
In battle harness where he fought.
But falling, still high o'er his head
Far flashed his sword in crimson
wrought,

Till came his kingly foeman, Dusk,
In garments moist with smell of
musk.

The bent moon moved down heaven's
steeps

Low-bowed, as when a woman weeps;
Bowed low, half-veiled in widowhood;
Then stars tiptoed the peaks in gold
And burned brown sandal-wood.

Fit death of Day; fit burial rite
Of white Alaska! Let us lay
This leaflet 'mid the musky night
Upon his tomb. Come, come away;
For Phaon talks and Sappho turns
To where the light of heaven burns
To love light, and she leans to hear
With something more than mortal ear
The while the ship has pushed her
prow

So close against the fir-set shore
You breathe the spicy bough.

V

Some red men by the low white
beach;

Camp fires, belts of dense, black fir:
She leans as if she still would reach
To him the very soul of her.
The red flames cast a silhouette
Against the snow, above the jet

Black, narrow night of fragrant fir,
Behold, what ardent worshiper!
Lim'd out against a glacier peak,
With strong arms crossed upon his
 breast;
The while she feels him speak:

“How glad was I to walk with
 Death
Far down his dim, still, trackless
 lands,
Where wind nor wave nor any breath
Broke ripples o'er the somber sands.
I walked with Death as eagerly
As ever I had sailed this sea.
Then on and on I searched, I sought,
Yet all my seeking came to naught.
I sailed by pleasant, peopled isles
Of song and summer time; I sailed
Ten thousand weary miles!

“I heard a song! She had been sad,
So sad and ever drooping she;
How could she, then, in song be glad
The while I searched? It could not
 be.

And yet that voice! so like it seemed,
I questioned if I heard or dreamed.
She smiled on me. This made me
 scorn

My very self; for I was born
To loyalty. I would be true
Unto my love, my soul, my self,
Whatever death might do.

“I fled her face, her proud, fair face,
Her songs that won a world to her.
Had she sat songless in her place,
Sat with no single worshiper,
Sat with bowed head, sad-voiced,
 alone,

I might have known! I might have
 known!

But how could I, the savage, know
This sun, contrasting with that snow,
Would waken her great soul to
 song

That still thrills all the ages through?
I blindly did such wrong!

“Again I fled. I ferried gods;
Yet, pining still, I came to pine
Where drowsy Lesbos Bacchus nods
And drowned my soul in Cyprian
 wine.

Drowned! drowned my poor, sad soul
 so deep,

I sank to where damned serpents
 creep!

Then slowly upward; round by round
I toiled, regained this vantage-ground
And now, at last, I claim mine own,
As some long-banished king comes
 back

To battle for his throne.”

VI

I do not say that thus he spake
By word of mouth, by human speech;
The sun in one swift flash will take
A photograph of space and reach
The realm of stars. A soul like his
Is like unto the sun in this:

Her soul the plate placed to receive
The swift impressions, to believe,
To doubt no more than you might
 doubt

The wondrous midnight world of
 stars

That dawn has blotted out.

VII

And Phaon loved her; he who knew
The North Pole and the South, who
named
The stars for her, strode forth and
slew
Black, hairy monsters no man tamed;
And all before fair Greece was born,
Or Lesbos yet knew night or morn.
No marvel that she knew him when
He came, the chiefest of all men.
No marvel that she loved and died,
And left such marbled bits of song—
Of broken Phidian pride.

VIII

Oh, but for that one further sense
For man that man shall yet possess!
That sense that puts aside pretense
And sees the truth, that scorns to
guess
Or grope, or play at blindman's
buff,
But knows rough diamonds in the
rough!
Oh, well for man when man shall see,
As see he must man's destiny!
Oh, well when man shall know his
mate,
One-winged and desolate, lives on
And bravely dares to wait!

IX

Full morning found them, and the
land
Received them, and the chapel gray;
Some Indian huts on either hand,
A smell of pine, a flash of spray,—

White, frozen rivers of the sky
Far up the glacial steeps hard by.
Far ice-peaks flashed with sudden
light,
As if they would illumine the rite,
As if they knew his story well,
As if they knew that form, that face,
And all that Time could tell.

X

They passed dusk chieftains two by
two,
With totem gods and stroud and shell
They slowly passed, and passing
through,
He bought of all—he knew them
well.
And one, a bent old man and blind,
He put his hands about, and kind
And strange words whispered in his
ear,
So soft, his dull soul could but hear.
And hear he surely did, for he,
With full hands, lifted up his face
And smiled right pleasantly.

How near, how far, how fierce, how
tame!
The polar bear, the olive branch;
The dying exile, Christ's sweet name—
Vast silence! then the avalanche!
How much this little church to them—
Alaska and Jerusalem!
The pair passed in, the silent pair
Fell down before the altar there,
The Greek before the gray Greek
cross,
And Phaon at her side at last,
For all her weary loss.

The bearded priest came, and he laid
 His two hands forth and slowly spake
 Strange, solemn words, and slowly
 prayed,
 And blessed them there, for Jesus' sake.
 Then slowly they arose and passed,
 Still silent, voiceless to the last.
 They passed: her eyes were to his eyes,
 But his were lifted to the skies,
 As looking, looking, that lorn night,
 Before the birth of God's first-born
 As praying still for Light.

XI

So Phaon knew and Sappho knew
 Nor night nor sadness any more. . . .
 How new the old world, ever new,
 When white Love walks the shining
 shore!
 They found their long-lost Eden,
 found
 Her old, sweet songs; such dulcet
 sound
 Of harmonies as soothe the ear
 When Love and only Love can hear.
 They found lost Eden; lilies lay
 Along their path, whichever land
 They journeyd from that day.

XII

They never died. Great loves live
 on.
 You need not die and dare the skies
 In forms that poor creeds hinge upon
 To pass the gates of Paradise.
 I know not if that sword of flame

Still lights the North, and leads the
 same
 As when he passed the gates of old.
 I know not if they braved the bold,
 Defiant walls that fronted them
 Where awful Saint Elias broods,
 Wrapped in God's garment-hem.

I only know they found the lost,
 The long-lost Eden, found all fair
 Where naught had been but hail and
 frost;
 As Love finds Eden anywhere.
 And wouldst thou, too, live on and on?
 Then walk with Nature till the dawn.
 Aye, make thy soul worth saving—
 save
 Thy soul from darkness and the
 grave.
 Love God not overmuch, but love
 God's world which He called very
 good;
 Then lo, Love's white sea-dove!

XIII

I know not where lies Eden-land;
 I only know 't is like unto
 God's kingdom, ever right at hand—
 Ever right here in reach of you.
 Put forth thy hand, or great or small,
 In storm or sun, by sea or wood,
 And say, as God hath said of all,
 Behold, it all is very good.
 I know not where lies Eden-land;
 I only say receive the dove:
 I say put forth thy hand.

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ADIOS

*And here, sweet friend, I go my way
Alone, as I have lived, alone
A little way, a brief half day,
And then, the restful, white milestone.
I know not surely where or when,
But surely know we meet again,
As surely know we love anew
In grander life the good and true.
But why assume to guide or guess?
Behold our stars are shepherded!*

Madonna, Shepherdess.

*Enough to know that I and you
Shall breathe together there as here
Some clearer, sweeter atmosphere:
Shall walk high, wider ways above
Our petty selves, shall lean to lead
Man up and up in thought and deed. . .
Dear soul, sweet friend, I love you, love
The love that led you patient through
This wilderness of words in quest
Of strange wild flowers from my West,
But here, dear heart, Adieu.*

I

Yon great chained sea-ship chafes to
be

Once more unleashed without the Gate
On proud Balboa's boundless sea,
And I chafe with her, for I hate
The rust of rest, the dull repose,
The fawning breath of changeful foes,
Whose blame through all my bitter
days

I have endured; spare me their praise!
I go, full hearted, grateful, glad
Of strength from dear good mother
earth;
And yet am I full sad.

II

Could I but teach man to believe—
Could I but make small men to grow,
To break frail spider-webs that weave
About their thews and bind them low;
Could I but sing one song and slay
Grim Doubt; I then could go my way
In tranquil silence, glad, serene,
And satisfied, from off the scene.
But ah, this disbelief, this doubt,
This doubt of God, this doubt of
good,—

The damned spot will not out!

III

Grew once a rose within my room
Of perfect hue, of perfect health;
Of such perfection and perfume,
It filled my poor house with its wealth.
Then came the pessimist who knew
Not good or grace, but overthrew
My rose, and in the broken pot
Nosed fast for slugs within the rot.
He found, found with exulting pride,
A baby butterfly it was;
The while my rose-tree died.

IV

Yea, he did hurt me. Joy in this.
Receive great joy at last to know,
Since pain is all your world of bliss,
That ye did, hounding, hurt me
so!

But mute as bayed stag on his steeps,
 Who keeps his haunts, and, bleeding,
 keeps
 His breast turned, watching where
 they come,
 Kept I, defiant, and as dumb.
 But comfort ye; your work was done
 With devils' cunning, like the mole
 That lets the life-sap run.

And my revenge? My vengeance
 is
 That I have made one rugged spot
 The fairer; that I fashioned this
 While envy, hate, and falsehood
 shot
 Rank poison; that I leave to those
 Who shot, for arrows, each a rose;
 Aye, labyrinths of rose and wold,
 Acacias garmented in gold,
 Bright fountains, where birds come
 to drink;
 Such clouds of cunning pretty birds,
 And tame as you can think.

V

Come here when I am far away
 Fond lovers of this lovely land,
 And sit quite still and do not say,
 Turn right or left, or lift a hand,
 But sit beneath my kindly trees
 And gaze far out yon sea of seas:—
 These trees, these very stones, could
 tell
 How long I loved them, and how
 well—
 And maybe I shall come and sit
 Beside you; sit so silently
 You will not reckon of it.

VI

The old desire of far, new lands,
 The thirst to learn, to still front
 storms,
 To bend my knees, to lift my hands
 To God in all His thousand forms—
 These lure and lead as pleasantly
 As old songs sung anew at sea.
 But, storied lands or stormy deeps,
 I will my ashes to my steeps—
 I will my steeps, green cross, red
 rose,
 To those who love the beautiful—
 Come, learn to be of those.

VII

The sun has draped his couch in
 red;
 Night takes the warm world in his
 arms
 And turns to their espousal bed
 To breathe the perfume of her charms:
 The great sea calls, and I descend
 As to the call of some strong friend.
 I go, not hating any man,
 But loving Earth as only can
 A lover suckled at her breast
 Of beauty from his babyhood,
 And roam to truly rest.

VIII

God is not far; man is not far
 From Heaven's porch, where pæans
 roll.

Man yet shall speak from star to star
In silent language of the soul;
Yon star-strewn skies be but a town,
With angels passing up and down.
"I leave my peace with you." Lo!
these

His seven wounds, the Pleiades
Pierce Heaven's porch. But, resting
there,
The new moon rocks the Child Christ
in
Her silver rocking-chair.

NOTES

NOTES

(Notes by Miller are marked M. The Bear Edition is referred to as B. Obvious typographical errors are silently corrected, but Miller's grammar has not been altered.)

FROM JOAQUIN, ET AL.

In B. I, 174, Miller says that *Joaquin, Et Al.* was first published in 1868: but the title-page and copyright are dated 1869.

"Is It Worth While?"—Preserved in part, as "Down into the Dust" in *Songs of the Sun-Lands*, 1873, and reprinted in part, in B., I, 172, with the original title but revised and with this comment: "I give the following place . . . not only because it is right in spirit but because it shows how old, how very old I was as a boy, and sad at heart over the cruelties of man to man."

"Zanara."—An altered version appears as "Sleep that was not sleep" in *Songs of the Sun-Lands*, but not in B.

"Dirge."—For the much altered version in *Songs of the Sun-Lands* and in B., see "Dead in the Sierras."

"Ultime."—Five stanzas are preserved in B., I, 174.

SONGS OF THE SIERRAS

"To Maud."—"My Little Daughter in Oregon." In B., this dedication follows "The Arizonian."

All the poems of this section are in the edition of 1871 but they are here printed according to the text and order of B., except the dedication, which in 1871 preceded "Arizonian" at the beginning of the book.

"Walker in Nicaragua."—"General William Walker, citizen, soldier, president and historian of Nicaragua, was born in Nashville, Tennessee, in 1824, of Scotch ancestry, and educated at a university in Paris, after which he studied international law in London. He voyaged to California in 1850 and, after some experience in the gold mines and gathering many bold men about him he became editor of the San Francisco Herald and began to publish his plans to his followers. He made two bold attempts to establish a settlement in Baja California, but was twice driven out by the Mexicans. Returning to California he raised a company and sailed for Nicaragua. War had been raging there for a long time between the aristocrats, or Church party, of Granada, and

the Democrats of Leon, to the North. Americans as well as British were fighting on both sides.

“After fearful fighting at Granada, Walker, shut up in Rivas, surrendered to the United States and was taken to New Orleans for trial, his men going whither they would or could.

“He now published an elaborate book, giving the wealth and wonderful resources of the country and at the same time, giving every detail of the war, under the title of “The War in Nicaragua.” It is written in the third person, like the books of the first Cæsar, and is as conservative and exact as an equation.

“He was tried in New Orleans and, on his vindication, raised in that city and Mobile a force far exceeding that with which he had left California and with which he had fought his way to the presidency; but his Californians were dead or scattered and these untried men of enervating cities knew little of arms and were, comparatively, worthless.

“Walker’s last expedition was closely watched by British gunboats. He took refuge up a river on the coast of Honduras and soon found himself cut off on all sides. He led his men up the coast and down, facing fifty to one, as at Rivas and Granada, but they soon became disheartened and he surrendered to the captain of a British man-of-war, who at once turned him over to Honduras, when he was promptly tried at the drum’s head, condemned and shot.”—M.

In the first edition, the poem opened at what is now the ninth division, as follows:

He was a brick: let this be said
Above my brave, dishonored dead.

The eight divisions which now open the poem were obviously added in an attempt to “whitewash” Walker and to square the record with Miller’s later “pacifistic” professions.

“The Tale of the Alcalde.”—“Twice revised and published before its first appearance in London, and has been cut and revised at least half a dozen times since; and is still incomplete and very unsatisfying to the writer, except as to the descriptions. It was my first attempt at telling a story in verse, that was thought worth preserving. It was begun when but a lad, camped with our horses for a month’s rest in an old adobe ruin on the Reading Ranch, with the gleaming snows of Mount Shasta standing out above the clouds against the cold, blue north. The story is not new, having been written or at least lived

in every mountain land of intermixed races that has been: a young outlaw in love with a wild mountain beauty, his battles for her people against his own; the capture, prison, brave release, flight, return, and revenge—a sort of modified ‘Mazeppa.’—M. In *Joaquin, Et Al.* this poem was called “Benoni”; it was one of the chief sources of Joaquin Miller’s “legend.”

“Arizonian.”—At its first appearance spelled “Arazonian.”

“The Last Taschastas.”—“‘Tc’hastas’ a name given to King John by the French, a corruption of chaste; for he was a pure, just man and a great warrior. He was the king of the Rouge (Red) River Indians of Oregon, and his story is glorious with great deeds in defense of his people. When finally overpowered, he and his son Moses were put on a ship at Port Orford and sent to Fort Alcatraz in the Golden Gate. In mid-ocean, these two Indians, in irons, rose up, and, after a bloody fight, took the ship. But one had lost a leg, the other an arm, and so they finally had to let loose the crew and soldiers tumbled into the hold, and surrender themselves again; for the ship was driving helpless in a storm towards the rocks. The king died a prisoner, but his son escaped and never again surrendered. He lives alone near Yreka and is known as ‘Prince Peg-leg Moses.’ A daughter of the late Senator Nesmith sends me a picture, taken in 1896 of the king’s devoted daughter, Princess Mary, who followed his fortunes in all his battles. She must be nearly one hundred years old. I remember her as an old woman full forty years ago, tall as a soldier, and most terrible in council. I have tried to picture her and her people as I once saw them in a midnight camp before the breaking out of the war; also their actions and utterances, so like some of the old Israelite councils and prophecies. This was the leading piece in my very first book, “Specimens,” published in Oregon in 1867–8 if I remember rightly.”—M.

“Joaquin Murietta.—Called “Joaquin” in the Portland book and “California” in *Songs of the Sierras*, 1871.

“Even So.”—This poetical treatment of Miller’s relations with “Minnie Myrtle” was much worked over after 1871. In the prelude, the original last line is better than the revised form—

“White storms are in the feathered fir.”

“Myrrh.”—In *Songs of the Sierras*, 1871, dated, “Blue Mountains, Oregon, 1870.”

“Burns.”—Originally, this and the following poem appeared as “Burns and Byron.” “In my pilgrimage to places sacred to the memory of Burns, I found none equal in interest to Ayr, the Doon, and their environs.”—M.

“Byron.”—“The day before my departure for Europe last summer, a small party sailed out to the beautiful sea-front of Saucélito, lying in the great bay of

San Francisco, forever green in its crown of California laurel and there the fairest hands of the youngest and fairest city of the New World wove a wreath of bay for the tomb of Byron. I brought it over the Rocky Mountains, and the seas, and placed it above the dust of the soldier-poet, as desired."—M. (Note in edition of 1871).

"Kit Carson's Ride."—"Two of the Archbishop's [Trench's] beautiful daughters had been riding in the park with the Earl of Aberdeen. 'And did you gallop?' asked Browning of the younger beauty. 'I galloped, Joyce galloped, we galloped all three.' Then we all laughed at the happy and hearty retort, and Browning, beating the time and clang of galloping horses' feet on the table with his fingers, repeated the exact measure in Latin from Virgil; and the Archbishop laughingly took it up, in Latin, where he left off. I then told Browning I had an order—it was my first—for a poem from the *Oxford Magazine*, and would like to borrow the measure and spirit of his 'Good News' for a prairie fire on the plains, driving buffalo and all other life before it into the river."—M. In his note (in B.), Miller says this poem "was not in any of my first four books, and so has not been rightly revised till now." This is apparently a slip; for it is in the American edition of *Songs of the Sierras*, 1871, though it is there much longer, and the girl sinks in the fire. Something of colloquial vigor has been lost in the revision. Compare the original opening line:

"Run? Now you bet you; I rather guess so!"

FALLEN LEAVES

This series appeared in *Songs of the Sun-Lands*, 1873, but Miller discarded the group, preserving only (in B.) "Thomas of Tigre," "Yosemite" (originally "In the Yosemite), and "Dead in the Sierras."

"Thomas of Tigre."—"This was a brave old boyhood friend in the Mount Shasta days. You will find him there as the Prince in my *Life Among the Modocs*. . . . This man, Prince Thomas, now of Leon, Nicaragua, was a great favorite and my best friend, in one sense for years in Europe. He had passed the most adventurous life conceivable, at one time having been king of an island."—M.

The edition of 1873 has a fifth stanza as follows:

"Answer me from out the West.
I am weary, stricken now;
Thou art strong and I would rest:
Reach a hand with lifted brow,—
King of Tigre, where art thou?"

“Dead in the Sierras.”—Originally “Dirge,” see p. 54.

“A Memory of Santa Barbara.”—Not included in the English edition of 1873. In its place, the English edition has an inferior eleven-line piece entitled “Lo, Here,” beginning, “I think ’twere better books were not.”

BY THE SUN-DOWN SEAS

“By the Sun-Down Seas.”—This was originally a continuous Oregonian poem, under the same title, opening the volume *Songs of the Sun-Lands*, 1873, which was dedicated to the Rossettis. Miller broke it up into its constituent parts, as here printed, and appended them (in B) to *Songs of the Sierras*, except for two fragments, “St. Paul’s” and “Westminster Abbey,” which he inserted in his section of “Miscellaneous Lines.” See now pp. 409 and 410.

“Ove-Agua: Oregon.”—“In 1858, while teaching a sort of primer school, below Fort Vancouver, during a vacation at Columbia College, the forerunner of Oregon University, I met Father Broulette, the head of the Catholic School at Vancouver. This learned and kindly priest helped me in my Latin, when I went to him on Saturdays, and twice took me rowing in an Indian’s canoe far up the great Oregon River to hear the waters; to hear the waters dashing down out of the clouds from the melting snows of Mt. Hood. And he quoted Bryant’s poem and laid great stress on the words: ‘Where rolls the Oregon and hears no sound save its own dashing.’”—M.

“To Rest at Last.”—“These final verses are peculiarly descriptive of the home I have built here on the Hights for my declining years; although written and published in London . . . in 1873. . . . The only departure from my dear first plan is in finding my ideal home by the glorious gate of San Francisco instead of the somber fir-set sea bank far to the north, ‘Where Rolls the Oregon.’”—M.

SONGS OF THE SUN-LANDS

“Songs of the Sun-Lands.”—The volume thus entitled in B. includes the following poems; “The Sea of Fire,” “The Ship in the Desert,” “Isles of the Amazons,” “An Indian Summer,” “From Sea to Sea,” “A Song of the South,” “Resurgo San Francisco,” and a notice in prose of “The Last San Francisco Fire.” The original “Songs of the Sun-Lands,” 1873, contained only three of the foregoing poems: “Isles of the Amazons,” “From Sea to Sea,” and “In the Indian Summer,” the rest of the volume being made up of three sequences: By the Sun-Down Seas, Olive Leaves, and Fallen Leaves. From the present section I have removed the two pieces on San Francisco; and have added “Dawn in San Diego,” as in its present form a late poem and more in harmony

with the style and mood of this group than with *Songs of the Sierras*, to which Miller appended it in B. I have also restored "Isles of the Amazons" to its leading place, and have tried to arrange the other pieces in chronological order.

"Isles of the Amazons."—"I do not like this, although I have cut it up and cut it down, and worked it over and over more than anything else. I had seen this vast and indescribable country, but not absorbed it; and that, most likely, is the reason it seems artificial and foolish, with knights and other things that I know nothing about. The only thing that I like in it is the water. I can handle water, and water is water the world over. But had it not been for the water and some of the wild tangles and jungles the whole thing would, ere this, have gone where the biggest half went long since. It was written in San Francisco, and was published at the same time in the *Overland* there and the *Gentleman's Magazine* in London. It was written at the instance of the Emperor, who translated it and to the last was brave and courtly enough to insist that it was good work. I had hoped to induce people to pour out of crowded London and better their fortunes there; for there is great wealth far, far up the Amazon. Aye, what exultant pride swelled my heart one happy day in Rome when Partridge, our minister to Brazil, gave me that message of thanks from the good Emperor, with a request to make his home my own while he lived."—M.

"An Indian Summer."—"I wrote, or rather lived, this bit of color at Cleveland, Ohio, giving it the entire autumn of gold. The prime purpose was to get the atmosphere of an Ohio Saint Martin's summer, but it grew to be a very serious matter. Yet we must, in some sort at least, live what we write if what we write is to live."—M.

"From Sea to Sea."—"This was written during my first railroad ride from New York to San Francisco, at a time when this was the greatest ride on the globe and parties came to California in great crowds to look upon the sundown seas."—M.

"The Ship in the Desert."—Miller's note in B. gives the date of the first book publication of this poem as 1876; but the title-page gives 1875 and his dedicatory preface, which he quotes without the date, is dated in the original edition, 1874. "The body of this poem was first published in the *Atlantic Monthly* [July, 1874]. The purpose of it was the same as induced the Isles of the Amazons, but the work is better because more true and nearer to the heart. Bear in mind it was done when the heart of the continent was indeed a desert, or at least a wilderness. . . . How much or how little it may have had to do in bringing Europe this way to seek for the lost Edens, and to make the desert blossom as the rose, matters nothing now; but, 'He hath brought many captives home to Rome whose ransom did the generous (sic) coffer fill.'"—M.

"The Sea of Fire."—This poem was one of the two published as *Songs of the Mexican Seas*, Boston, 1887. But it had previously formed part of the long and unshapely verse romance, *The Baroness of New York*, 1877, which Miller consigned to oblivion. In its original form it seems to have been associated with his revulsion against city life after his sojourn in the eastern cities. Hence his note in B.—"The real poet would rather house with a half savage and live on a sixpence in some mountain village, as did Byron, than feast off the board of Madame Leo Hunter in a city. Nor is Washington a better place for work with soul or heart in it. Madame Leo Hunter is there also, persistent, numerous, superficial, and soulless as in almost any great center. If I am cruel, O my coming poets, I am cruel to be kind. Go forth in the sun, away into the wilds or contentedly lay aside your aspirations of song. Now, mark you distinctly, I am not writing for poets of the Old World or the Atlantic seaboard. They have their work and their ways of work. My notes are for the songless Alaskas, Canadas, Californias, the Aztec lands and the Argentines that patiently await their coming prophets. For come they will; but I warn them they will have to gird themselves mightily and pass through fire, and perish, many a man; for these new worlds will be whistling, out of time, the tunes of the old, and the rich and the proud will say in their insolence and ignorance, 'Pipe thus, for thus piped the famous pipers of old; piping of perished kings, of wars, of castle walls, of battling knights, and of maids betrayed. Sing as of old or be silent, for we know not, we want not, and we will not, your seas of colors, your forests of perfumes, your mountains of melodies.'"—M.

"A Song of the South."—Entitled "The Rhyme of the Great River," this was one of the two poems comprised in *Songs of the Mexican Seas*, 1887. It reappeared as the "Song of the Soundless River" in *Songs of the Soul*, 1896.

"Dawn at San Diego"—Entitled "Sunset and Dawn in San Diego," this was the second poem in *Songs of the Soul*, 1896.

SONGS OF THE HEBREW CHILDREN

Songs of the Hebrew Children.—The poems in this section are given as in the fourth volume of B., except that "The Last Supper" is recovered from a miscellaneous section in the first volume, entitled "Lines that Papa Liked." The entire sequence appeared as Olive Leaves in *Songs of the Sun-Lands*, 1873, except "La Notte," "To Russia," and "To Rachel in Russia," which seem to have appeared first in book form in, *In Classic Shades*, Chicago, 1890. The group is obviously related in theme and spirit to the poems in *The Building of the City Beautiful*; but the Olive Leaves sequence is much more strongly marked by the influence of Swinburne and reflects the poet's first contacts with the London poets and with Palestine. In a note in B., IV, 77, Miller speaks of

writing and publishing an American edition of "Olive Leaves" in Easton, Pa., where he was attending his dying brother in 1871. At this time he had been contemplating a poetical life of Christ, but "had begun to see that the measure was monotonous."

SONGS OF ITALY

"Songs of Italy."—The book with this title was published in Boston, 1878. The series is here given as in B. Most of the poems presumably reflect experience in Italy previous to 1876. An elaborate romantic commentary on this period is available in his prose romance, *The One Fair Woman*, 1876.

"The Ideal and the Real."—From Miller's "allegorical" introduction to *Mae Madden*, 1876, a novel of Italy by Mary Murdock Mason; the poem is dated, 1875.

"Vale! America."—"I do not like this bit of impatience, nor do I expect any one else to like it and only preserve it here as a sort of landmark or journal in my journey through life. It is only an example of almost an entire book, written in Italy. I had, after a long struggle with myself, settled down in Italy to remain, as I believed, and as you can see was very miserable, and wrote accordingly."—M.

The poem "Poveris! Poveris!" is omitted from this section as it appears with the title "Feed My Sheep" in *The Building of the City Beautiful*.

FROM, SHADOWS OF SHASTA

Shadows of Shasta, a prose tale, was published in Chicago, 1881. "Why this book? Because last year, in the heart of the Sierras, I saw women and children chained together and marched down from their cool, healthy homes to degradation and death on the Reservation."—M. In a characteristic chapter, "The Escape," an Indian girl on the Reservation is rescued by "old Forty-Nine" and carried off on horseback in a wild ride into the Sierras.

LOG CABIN LINES

"In the early eighties I built a log cabin in the edge of Washington, to be more in touch with both sides of the Civil War as well as with the smaller republics. And then many noble people who had been ruined in the South were ill content to live in log cabins, as their slaves had lived. I wanted to teach that a log cabin can be made very comfortable, with content at hand."—M.

Only the first four poems were included by Miller under this title in B.

The others here printed were, though scattered through B., marked by external or internal evidence as belonging to the same group. All but "Washington by the Delaware" and "The Bravest Battle" appeared in the volume of 1890, *In Classic Shades*.

"The Lost Regiment."—"In a pretty little village of Louisiana destroyed by shells toward the end of the war, on a bayou back from the river, a great number of very old men had been left by their sons and grandsons, while they went to the war. And these old men, many of them veterans of others wars, formed themselves into a regiment, made for themselves uniforms, picked up old flintlock guns, even mounted a rusty old cannon, and so prepared to go to battle if ever the war came within their reach. Toward the close of the war some gunboats came down the river shelling the shore. The old men heard the firing, and, gathering together, they set out with their old muskets and rusty old cannon to try to reach the river over the corduroy road through the cypress swamp. They marched out right merrily that hot day, shouting and bantering to encourage each other, the dim fires of their old eyes burning with desire of battle, although not one of them was young enough to stand erect. And they never came back any more. The shells from the gunboats set the dense and sultry woods on fire. The old men were shut in by the flames—the gray beards and the gray moss and the gray smoke together."—M.

"The Poem by the Potomac."—"The thing, however of the most singular interest here [at Mount Vernon] is a key of the Bastile, presented by Thomas Paine to Lafayette."—M. [Lafayette sent the key by Paine to Washington.]

"The Bravest Battle."—"A few years ago, when living in my log cabin, Washington, some ladies came to inform me that I had been chosen to write a poem for the unveiling of an equestrian statue of a hero, the hero of 'the bravest battles that ever were fought.'

"When they had delivered their message I told them that the beautiful city was being disfigured by these pitiful monuments to strife, not one in forty being fit works of art, and that I hoped and believed that the last one of these would be condemned to the scrap heap within the next century. I reminded them that while nearly every city in the Union had more or less of these monstrosities I had seen but one little figure in honor of woman; that of a crude bit of granite to the memory of a humble baker woman in a back street of New Orleans, who gave away bread to the poor. I finally told them, however, that if they would come back next morning I would have a few lines about 'The bravest battles that ever were fought.'

"One of them came, got the few lines, but they were not read at the unveiling. However, they were read later in New York, by a New Orleans lady, of noble French extraction, the Baroness de Bazus, and they have since been read many times, in many lands, and, I am told, in many languages."—M.

THE ULTIMATE WEST

To this group as arranged by Miller, I have added nothing not contained in B, but have included half a dozen pieces from his "miscellaneous" group and from his unorganized first volume: "To Juanita," "California's Resurrection," "Pleasant to the Sight," "The Trees," "A Hard Row for Stumps," "Comanche," "The American Ocean," and "California's Cup of Gold." "Yosemite" and "Dead in the Sierras" are now shifted from this group to their original position in *Fallen Leaves*. *In Classic Shades* contains a dozen of the poems in this section.

"Old Gib at Castle Rocks."—Reuben P. Gibson, a pioneer judge, led a company at the battle of Castle Rocks, in June, 1855, when Miller received an arrow wound in the neck.

"49."—"This poem is taken from '49, or the Gold Seekers' by permission of Funk and Wagnalls. . . . The words have been set to music and selected as The Song of the Native Sons of California. It was sung in Mining Camps long before it was in print."—M.

"San Diego."—The preceding lines from Keats's "Ode to a Nightingale" were apparently quoted from memory. They should read:

"O for a beaker full of the warm South,
Full of the true, the blushful Hippocrene."

"'The Fourth' in Oregon."—"This poem was read, 1896, near the scene of the Whitman massacre at the old Mission." M. In honor of Marcus P. Whitman, founder of Whitman College.

"An Answer."—In the American edition of *Songs of the Sun-Lands*, this poem was originally printed as the prelude to "Isles of the Amazons," and contained four additional stanzas.

FROM, THE BUILDING OF THE CITY BEAUTIFUL

The Utopian romance from which these poems were taken was published in Chicago in 1893. It contains some interesting chapters on the settlement of The Hights. Miller reprinted only three of the poems in this section: "In the Sweat of Thy Face (At Mary's Fountain)"; "To Save a Soul"; and "The Voice of the Dove."

"In the Sweat of Thy Face."—This poem appears, detached from the sequence, in B., with the title "At Mary's Fountain, Nazareth." The text of B. is followed here, as it contains obvious improvements.

"The Voice of the Dove."—This poem is here printed from the text of

B., where it appears under *Lines that Papa Liked*. In the book, *The Building of the City Beautiful*, only the first two stanzas appear.

ENGLISH THEMES

This group I have composed by bringing together related poems, all of which appear in B.

"St. Paul's" and "Westminster Abbey" were originally parts of "By the Sun-Down Seas," 1873.

"At Byron's Tomb."—This poem alludes to Miller's first visit to the tomb of Byron but was apparently written several years later.

"Dead in the Long, Strong Grass."—In memory of Prince Napoleon, a friend of the hunting field in England, who died while fighting with the English troops in the Zulu war.

"The Passing of Tennyson."—Included in *Songs of the Soul*, 1896.

"Mother Egypt."—Included in *Songs of the Soul*. Dedicated "to England on her invasion of North Africa," this was one of nine poems in *Chants for the Boer*, a pamphlet of 28 pages published in San Francisco, 1900. Miller took at this time a high "moral" tone and attitude towards the question of an Anglo-Saxon alliance, maintaining that there could be none, "until this crime against the Boer is forgotten, as well as Bunker Hill and the Fourth of July."

"Boston to the Boers."—From *Chants for the Boer*.

MORE SONGS FROM THE HIGHTS

This group I have made by bringing together short poems of related mood, which were scattered through the first, fourth, and fifth volumes of B., mainly under "Miscellaneous Lines" and "Lines that Papa Liked."

"Good Buddha Said, Be Clean, Be Clean."—"What is the matter with China, the mightiest and in some ways, such as reverence for parents and respect for old age, the most civilized power that ever had place on the pages of history? Why, China never adored beauty. China set up and keeps in her temples a monstrous, hideous Joss, and until the day that her hideous Joss is thrown down will she, too, be deservedly hideous in the eyes of the world."—M.

"Death Is Delightful."—This is a fragment detached from "Myrrh" and included in B. among Miller's favorite lines.

MISCELLANEOUS LINES

"The Missouri."—"The Missouri' has a right to exist, as it stirred the waters from 'The Shining Mountains' to the Gulf of Mexico, and taught the nation to no longer disdain, 'The Father of Waters.'"—M.

"Peter Cooper."—"The world did not want all I had to say of this gentle old man and kept only the three little verses."—M.

"Light of the Southern Cross."—Title from a manuscript copy supplied by Mrs. Miller. In pamphlet form it is entitled: "Panama, Union of the Oceans."

SEMI-HUMOROUS SONGS

"The dower of song is, to my mind, a sacred gift. The prophet and the seer should rise above the levities of this life. And so it is that I make humble apology for now gathering up from recitation books these next half dozen pieces. The only excuse for doing it is their refusal to die; even under the mutilations of the compilers of 'choice selections.'"—M.

SONGS OF THE AMERICAN SEAS

"Columbus."—This poem is printed in B. under the caption "Later Lines Preferred by London." It was included in *Songs of the Soul*, 1896. "The London Atheneum (sic), years after the royal reception given my first books, pronounced this the best American poem. Let me say to my following it is far from that; even I have done better; too much like a chorus. 'The Passing of Tennyson' is better. 'The Missouri' better still."—M.

"A Song of Creation."—The greater part of this poem appeared in a 99-page pamphlet called *As it Was in the Beginning*, published in San Francisco in 1903. It was revised and published as *Light* in Boston, in 1907, with illustrative scenes from California, Alaska, Japan, and Hawaii as headings for the four books.

"With Love to You and Yours."—A revision of "Sappho and Phaon," the first poem in *Songs of the Soul*, 1896.

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