The City of the Dead.

By L. E. L.

'Twas dark with cypresses and yews which cast
Drear shadows on the fairer trees and flowers—
Affections latest signs.

Dark portal of another world—the grave—
I do not fear thy shadow; and methinks,
If I may make my own heart oracle,—
The many long to enter thee, for thou
Alone canst reunite the loved and lost
With those who pine for them. I fear thee not;
I only fear mine own unworthiness,
Lest it prove barrier to my hope, and make
Another parting in another world.

1.

LAUREL! oh fling thy green boughs on the air,
There is dew on thy branches, what doth it do there?
Thou that art worn on the conqueror's shield,
When his country receives him from glory's red field;
Thou that art wreathed round the lyre of the bard,
When the song of its sweetness has won its reward.
Earth's changeless and sacred—thou proud laurel tree!
The ears of the midnight, why hang they on thee?
2.
Rose of the morning, the blushing and bright,
Thou whose whole life is one breath of delight;
Beloved of the maiden, the chosen to bind
Her dark tresses' wealth from the wild summer wind.
Fair tablet, still vowed to the thoughts of the lover,
Whose rich leaves with sweet secrets are written all over;
Fragrant as blooming—thou lovely rose tree!
The tears of the midnight, why hang they on thee?

3.
Dark cypress I see thee—thou art my reply,
Why the tears of the night on thy comrade trees lie;
That laurel it wreathed the red brow of the brave,
Yet thy shadow lies black on the warrior's grave.
That rose was less bright than the lip which it prest,
Yet thy sad branches sweep o'er the maiden's last rest:
The brave and the lovely alike they are sleeping,
I marvel no more rose and laurel are weeping.

4
Yet sunbeam of heaven thou fall'st on the tomb—
Why pausest thou by such dwelling of doom?
Before thee the grove and the garden are spread,
Why lingerest thou round the place of the dead?
THE CITY OF THE DEAD.

Thou art from another, a lovelier sphere,
Unknown to the sorrows that darken us here.
Thou art as a herald of hope from above:—
Weep mourner no more o'er thy grief and thy love;
Still thy heart in its beating, be glad of such rest,
Though it call from thy bosom its dearest and best.
Weep no more that affection thus loosens its tie,
Weep no more that the loved and the loving must die
Weep no more o'er the cold dust that lies at your feet,
But gaze on yon starry world—there ye shall meet.

5.

O heart of mine! is there not One dwelling there
To whom thy love clings in its hope and its prayer?
For whose sake thou numberest each hour of the day,
As a link in the fetters that keep me away;
When I think of the glad and the beautiful home,
Which oft in my dreams to my spirit hath come;
That when our last sleep on my eyelids hath prest,
That I may be with thee at home and at rest:
When wanderer no longer on life's weary shore,
I may kneel at thy feet, and part from thee no more;
While death holds such hope forth to soothe and to save,
Oh sunbeam of heaven thou mayest well light the grave.
SANS SOUCI.

By L. E. L.

Come ye forth to our revel by moonlight,
With your lutes and your spirits in tune;
The dew falls to-night like an odour,
Stars weep o'er our last day in June.
Come maids leave the loom and its purple,
Though the robe of a monarch were there;
Seek your mirror, I know 'tis your dearest,
And be it to-night your sole care.

Braid ye your curls in their thousands,
Whether dark as the raven's dark wing,
Or bright as that clear summer colour,
When sunshine lights every ring.
On each snow ankle lace silken sandal,
Don the robes like the neck they hide white;
Then come forth like planets from darkness,
Or like lilies at day-break's first light.
Is there one who half regal in beauty,
   Would be regal in pearl and in gem;
Let her wreath her a crown of red roses,
   No rubies are equal to them.
Is there one who sits languid and lonely,
   With her fair face bowed down on her hand,
With a pale cheek and glittering eyelash,
   And careless locks 'scapeed from their band.

For a lover not worth that eye's tear-drop,
   Not worth that sweet mouth's rosy kiss,
Nor that cheek though 'tis faded to paleness;
   I know not the lover that is.
Let her bind up her beautiful tresses;
   Call her wandering rose back again;
And for one prisoner 'scapeing her bondage,
   A hundred shall carry her chain.

Come, gallants, the gay and the graceful,
   With hearts like the light plumes ye wear;
Eyes all but divine light our revel,
   Like the stars in whose beauty they share.
Come ye, for the wine cups are mantling,
   Some clear as the morning's first light;
Others touched with the evening's last crimson,
   Or the blush that may meet ye to night.
SANS SOUCI.

There are plenty of sorrows to chill us,
And troubles last on to the grave;
But the coldest glacier has its rose-tint,
And froth rides the stormiest wave.
Oh! Hope will spring up from its ashes,
With plumage as bright as before;
And pleasures like lamps in a palace,
If extinct, you need only light more.

When one vein of silver's exhausted,
'Tis easy another to try;
There are fountains enough in the desert,
Though that by your palm-tree be dry:
When an India of gems is around you,
Why ask for the one you have not?
Though the roc in your hall may be wanting,
Be contented with what you have got.

Come to-night, for the white blossomed myrtle
Is flinging its love-sighs around;
And beneath like the veiled eastern beauties,
The violets peep from the ground.
Seek ye for gold and for silver,
There are both on these bright orange-trees;
And never in Persia the moonlight
Wept o'er roses more blushing than these.
There are fireflies sparkling by myriads,
   The fountain wave dances in light;
Hark! the mandolin's first notes are waking,
   And soft steps break the sleeping of night.
Then come all the young and the graceful,
   Come gay as the lovely should be,
'Tis much in this world's toil and trouble,
   To let one midnight pass Sans Souci.