

DEPARTMENTAL DITTIES
AND THE VAMPIRE
KIPLING

UC SOUTHERN REGIONAL LIBRARY FACILITY



LIBRARY

UNIVERSITY OF
CALIFORNIA
SAN DIEGO



presented to the
LIBRARY
UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA • SAN DIEGO
by
FRIENDS OF THE LIBRARY

MR. JOHN C. ROSE

donor





Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2007 with funding from
Microsoft Corporation

Departmental Ditties
The Vampire, Etc.

LIBRARY
UNIVERSITY OF
CALIFORNIA
SAN DIEGO

List of Volumes in the
Pomegranate Series

By Rudyard Kipling

THE MAN WHO WOULD BE KING
THE COURTING OF DINAH SHADD
THE DRUMS OF THE FORE AND AFT
WITHOUT BENEFIT OF CLERGY
THE INCARNATION OF KRISHNA MULVANEY
BARRACK-ROOM BALLADS AND RECESSIONAL
DEPARTMENTAL DITTIES AND THE VAMPIRE

THE RUBAIYÁT OF OMAR KHAYYÁM
Fourth Fitzgerald Translation

QUATRAINS OF OMAR KHAYYÁM
By Justin Huntley McCarthy

Departmental **D**itties

The **V**ampire, **E**tc.

By

Rudyard **K**ipling



Published by **Brentano's** at
31 Union Square, New York

Contents

DEPARTMENTAL DITTIES :	PAGE
PRELUDE	3
GENERAL SUMMARY	5
ARMY HEADQUARTERS	7
STUDY OF AN ELEVATION, IN INDIAN INK	10
A LEGEND OF THE FOREIGN OF- FICE	12
THE STORY OF URIAH	16
THE POST THAT FITTED	18
PUBLIC WASTE	21
DELILAH	25
WHAT HAPPENED	29
PINK DOMINOES	34
THE MAN WHO COULD WRITE	37
MUNICIPAL	41
A CODE OF MORALS	45
THE LAST DEPARTMENT	49
OTHER VERSES :	
“ AS THE BELL CLINKS ”	55
AN OLD SONG	59
CERTAIN MAXIMS OF HAFIZ	63

Contents

	PAGE
THE GRAVE OF THE HUNDRED HEAD	69
THE MOON OF OTHER DAYS	74
THE OVERLAND MAIL	76
WHAT THE PEOPLE SAID	79
THE UNDERTAKER'S HORSE	82
THE FALL OF JOCK GILLESPIE	85
ARITHMETIC ON THE FRONTIER	88
THE BETROTHED	90
GRIFFEN'S DEBT	96
IN SPRINGTIME	101
TWO MONTHS	103
THE GALLEY-SLAVE	106
L'ENVOI	111
THE CONUNDRUM OF THE WORK- SHOPS	112
THE EXPLANATION	116
THE GIFT OF THE SEA	118
THE BALLAD OF EAST AND WEST	122
THE LAST SUTTEE	132
THE BALLAD OF THE "CLAMPHER- DOWN"	139
THE VAMPIRE	144
OUR LADY OF THE SNOWS	147

DEPARTMENTAL DITTIES

*I HAVE eaten your bread and salt,
I have drunk your water and wine,
The deaths ye died I have watched beside,
And the lives that ye led were mine.*

*Was there aught that I did not share
In vigil or toil or ease—
One joy or woe that I did not know,
Dear hearts across the seas?*

*I have written the tale of our life
For a sheltered people's mirth,
In jesting guise—but ye are wise,
And ye know what the jest is worth.*

General Summary

WE are very slightly changed
From the semi-apes who ranged
 India's prehistoric clay ;
Whoso drew the longest bow
Ran his brother down, you know,
 As we run men down to-day.

“Dowb,” the first of all his race,
Met the mammoth face to face
 On the lake or in the cave ;
Stole the steadiest canoe,
Ate the quarry others slew,
 Died—and took the finest grave.

When they scratched the reindeer-bone,
Some one made the sketch his own—
 Filched it from the artist—then,
Even in those early days,
Won a simple Viceroy's praise
 Through the toil of other men.

General Summary

Ere they hewed the Sphinx's visage,
Favoritism governed kissage,
Even as it does in this age.

Who shall doubt the secret hid
Under Cheops' pyramid
Was that the contractor did
 Cheops out of several millions ?
Or that Joseph's sudden rise
To Comptroller of Supplies
Was a fraud of monstrous size
 On King Pharaoh's swart civilians ?

Thus, the artless songs I sing
Do not deal with anything
 New or never said before.
As it was in the beginning,
Is to-day official sinning,
 And shall be for evermore.

Army Headquarters

Old is the song that I sing—

Old as my unpaid bills—

Old as the chicken that kitmutgars bring

Men at dak-bungalows—old as the Hills.

AHASUERUS JENKINS, of the "Operatic
Own,"

Was dowered with a tenor voice of super-
Santley tone.

His views on equitation were, perhaps, a
trifle queer ;

He had no seat worth mentioning, but oh !
he had an ear.

He clubbed his wretched company a dozen
times a day ;

He used to quit his charger in a parabolic
way ;

His method of saluting was the joy of all
beholders ;—

But Ahasuerus Jenkins had a head upon
his shoulders.

Army Headquarters

He took two months to Simla when the
year was at the spring,
And underneath the deodars eternally did
sing.

He warbled like a bulbul, but particularly at
Cornelia Agrippina, who was musical and
fat.

She controlled a humble husband, who, in
turn, controlled a Dept.,
Where Cornelia Agrippina's human sing-
ing-birds were kept
From April to October on a plump retaining
fee,
Supplied, of course, *per mensem*, by the
Indian Treasury.

Cornelia used to sing with him, and Jenkins
used to play ;
He praised unblushingly her notes, for he
was as false as they.
So when the winds of April turned the bud-
ding roses brown,
Cornelia told her husband : "Tom, you
mustn't send him down."

Army Headquarters

They haled him from his regiment, which
 didn't much regret him ;
They found for him an office-stool, and on
 that stool they set him,
To play with maps and catalogues three
 idle hours a day,
And draw his plump retaining fee—which
 means his double pay.

Now, ever after dinner, when the coffee-
 cups are brought,
Ahasuerus walleth o'er the grand piano-
 forte ;
And thanks to fair Cornelia, his fame hath
 waxen great,
And Ahasuerus Jenkins is a power in the
 State.

Study of an Elevation, in Indian Ink

This ditty is a string of lies.

But—how the deuce did Gubbins rise?

POTIPHAR GUBBINS, C.E.,
Stands at the top of the tree;
And I muse in my bed on the reasons that
led
To the hoisting of Potiphar G.

Potiphar Gubbins, C.E.,
Is seven years junior to Me;
Each bridge that he makes either buckles
or breaks,
And his work is as rough as he.

Potiphar Gubbins, C.E.,
Is coarse as a chimpanzee;
And I can't understand why you gave him
your hand,
Lovely Mehitabel Lee.

Study of an Elevation, in Indian Ink

Potiphar Gubbins, C.E.,
Is dear to the Powers that Be;
For They bow and They smile in an affable
style
Which is seldom accorded to Me.

Potiphar Gubbins, C.E.,
Is as certain as certain can be
Of a highly paid post which is claimed by a
host
Of seniors—including Me.

Careless and lazy is he—
Greatly inferior to Me.
What is the spell that you manage so well,
Commonplace Potiphar G.?

Lovely Mehitabel Lee,
Let me inquire of thee—
Should I have riz to where Potiphar is,
Hadst thou been mated to Me?

A Legend of the Foreign Office

*This is the reason why Rustum Beg,
Rajah of Kolazai,
Drinketh the "simpkin" and brandy peg,
Maketh the money to fly,
Vexeth a Government tender and kind,
Also—but this is a detail—blind.*

RUSTUM BEG, of Kolazai—

Slightly backward native State,—
Lusted for a C.S.I.—

So began to sanitate.

Build a Jail and Hospital—

Nearly built a City drain—

Till his faithful subjects all

Thought their ruler was insane.

Strange departures made he then—

Yea, Departments stranger still.

Half a dozen Englishmen

Helped the Rajah with a will—

A Legend of the Foreign Office

Talked of noble aims and high,
Hinted at a future fine
For the State of Kolazai,
On a strictly Western line.

Rajah Rustum held his peace;
Lowered octroi dues a half;
Organized a State Police;
Purified the Civil Staff;
Settled cess and tax afresh
In a very liberal way;
Cut temptations of the flesh—
Also cut the Bukhshi's pay;

Roused his Secretariat
To a fine Mahratta fury,
By a Hookum hinting at
Supervision of *dasturi*;
Turned the State of Kolazai
Very nearly upside-down;
When the end of May was nigh,
Waited his achievement crown.

A Legend of the Foreign Office

Then the Birthday Honors came.

Sad to state and sad to see,
Stood against the Rajah's name
Nothing more than *C.I.E.*!

* * * * *

Things were lively for a week

In the State of Kolazai.
Even now the people speak
Of that time regretfully—

How he disendowed the Jail—

Stopped at once the City drain;
Turned to beauty fair and frail—
Got his senses back again;
Doubled taxes, cesses, all;
Cleared away each new-built *thana*;
Turned the two-lakh Hospital
Into a superb *Zenana*;

Heaped upon the Bukhshi Sahib

Wealth and honors manifold;
Clad himself in Eastern garb;
Squeezed his people as of old.

A Legend of the Foreign Office

Happy, happy Kolazai!

Never more will Rustum Beg
Play to catch the Viceroy's eye.

He prefers the "simpkin" peg.

The Story of Uriah

*“ Now there were two men in one city ;
the one rich, and the other poor.”*

JACK BARRETT went to Quetta because they told him to.

He left his wife at Simla on three-fourths his monthly screw :

Jack Barrett died at Quetta ere the next month's pay he drew.

Jack Barrett went to Quetta. He didn't understand

The reason of his transfer from the pleasant mountain land :

The season was September, and it killed him out of hand.

Jack Barrett went to Quetta, and there gave up the ghost,

The Story of Uriah

Attempting two men's duty in that very
healthy post;

And Mrs. Barrett mourned for him five
lively months at most.

Jack Barrett's bones at Quetta enjoy pro-
found repose;

But I shouldn't be astonished if now his
spirit knows

The reason of his transfer from the Hima-
layan snows.

And when the Last Great Bugle Call adown
the Hurnai throbs,

When the last grim joke is entered in the
big black Book of Jobs,

And Quetta graveyards give again their
victims to the air,

I shouldn't like to be the man who sent
Jack Barrett there.

The Post that Fitted

*Tho' tangled and twisted the course of true love,
This ditty explains
No tangle's so tangled it can not improve
If the Lover has brains.*

ERE the steamer bore him Eastward, Sleary
was engaged to marry
An attractive girl at Tunbridge, whom he
called "My little Carrie."

Sleary's pay was very modest; Sleary was
the other way.

Who can cook a two-plate dinner on eight
paltry dibs a day ?

Long he pondered o'er the question in his
scantly furnished quarters—

Then proposed to Minnie Boffkin, eldest of
Judge Boffkin's daughters.

Certainly an impecunious subaltern was
not a catch,

But the Boffkins knew that Minnie mightn't
make another match.

The Post that Fitted

So they recognized the business, and, to
 feed and clothe the bride,
Got him made a Something Something
 somewhere on the Bombay side.
Anyhow, the billet carried pay enough for
 him to marry—
As the artless Sleary put it, “Just the
 thing for me and Carrie.”

Did he, therefore, jilt Miss Boffkin—im-
 pulse of a baser mind?
No! He started epileptic fits of an appall-
 ing kind.
(Of his *modus operandi* only this much I
 could gather:
“Pears’ shaving sticks will give you little
 taste and lots of lather.”)

Frequently in public places his affliction
 used to smite
Sleary with distressing vigor—always in
 the Boffkins’ sight.

The Post that Fitted

Ere a week was over Minnie weepingly re-
turned his ring,
Told him his "unhappy weakness" stopped
all thought of marrying.

Sleary bore the information with a chas-
tened holy joy—
Epileptic fits don't matter in political
employ—
Wired three short words to Carrie—took
his ticket, packed his kit,—
Bade farewell to Minnie Boffkin in one last,
long, lingering fit.

Four weeks later, Carrie Sleary read—and
laughed until she wept—
Mrs. Boffkin's warning letter on the
"wretched epilept."
Year by year, in pious patience, vengeful
Mrs. Boffkin sits
Waiting for the Sleary babies to develop
Sleary's fits.

Public Waste

Walpole talks of "a man and his price."

List to a ditty queer—

The sale of a Deputy-Acting-Vice-

Resident-Engineer,

Bought like a bullock, hoof and hide,

By the Little Tin Gods on the Mountain Side.

BY the Laws of the Family Circle, 'tis
written in letters of brass
That only a Colonel from Chatham can
manage the Railways of State,
Because of the gold on his breeks, and the
subjects wherein he must pass—
Because in all matters that deal not with
Railways his knowledge is great.

Now, Exeter Battleby Tring had labored
from boyhood to eld
On the Lines of the East and the West,
and eke of the North and the South ;

Public Waste

Many lines had he built and surveyed—im-
portant the posts which he held ;
And the Lords of the Iron Horse were
dumb when he opened his mouth !

Black as the raven his garb, and his heresies
jettier still—
Hinting that Railways required lifetimes
of study and knowledge ;
Never clanked sword by his side—Vauban
he knew not, nor drill—
Nor was his name on the list of the men
who had passed through the “ Col-
lege.”

Wherefore the Little Tin Gods harried their
little tin souls,
Seeing he came not from Chatham, jin-
gled no spurs at his heels,
Knowing that, nevertheless, was he first on
the Government rolls
For the billet of “ Railway Instructor to
Little Tin Gods on Wheels.”

Public Waste

Letters not seldom they wrote him, "Having the honor to state,"

It would be better for all men if he were laid on the shelf :

Much would accrue to his bank-book, and he consented to wait

Until the Little Tin Gods built him a berth for himself.

"Special, well paid, and exempt from the Law of the Fifty and Five,

Even to Ninety and Nine,"—these were the terms of the pact :

Thus did the Little Tin Gods (long may Their Highnesses thrive !)

Silence his mouth with rupees, keeping their Circle intact ;

Appointing a Colonel from Chatham, who managed the Bhamo State Line,

(The which was one mile and one furlong—a guaranteed twenty-inch gauge).

Public Waste ·

So Exeter Battleby Tring consented his
claims to resign,
And died on four thousand a month in
the ninetieth year of his age.

Delilah

*We have another Viceroy now ; those days are dead and
done*

Of Delilah Aberyswith and depraved Ulysses Gunne.

DELILAH ABERYSWITH was a lady—not too
young—

With a perfect taste in dresses, and a badly
bitted tongue,

With a thirst for information, and a greater
thirst for praise,

And a little house in Simla, in the Prehis-
toric Days.

By reason of her marriage to a gentleman in
power,

Delilah was acquainted with the gossip of
the hour ;

And many little secrets, of a half-official
kind,

Were whispered to Delilah, and she bore
them all in mind.

Delilah

She patronized extensively a man—Ulysses
Gunn—

Whose mode of earning money was a low
and shameful one.

He wrote for divers papers, which, as every-
body knows,

Is worse than serving in a shop or scaring
off the crows.

He praised her “queenly beauty” first ;
and, later on, he hinted

At the “vastness of her intellect,” with
compliments unstinted.

He went with her a-riding, and his love for
her was such

That he lent her all his horses, and—she
galled them very much.

One day, THEY brewed a secret of a fine
financial sort ;

It related to Appointments, to a Man and
a Report.

Delilah

'Twas almost worth the keeping (only
seven people knew it),
And Gunne rose up to seek the truth and
patiently ensue it.

It was a Viceroy's Secret, but—perhaps the
wine was red—
Perhaps an Aged Councillor had lost his
aged head—
Perhaps Delilah's eyes were bright, Delilah's
whispers sweet—
The Aged Member told her what 't were
treason to repeat.

Ulysses went a-riding, and they talked of
love and flowers ;
Ulysses went a-calling, and he called for
several hours ;
Ulysses went a-waltzing, and Delilah helped
him dance :
Ulysses let the waltzes go, and waited for
his chance.

Delilah

The summer sun was setting, and the summer air was still—

The couple went a-walking in the shade of Summer Hill ;

The wasteful sunset faded out in turkis-green and gold—

Ulysses pleaded softly, and—that bad Delilah told !

Next morn, a startled Empire learnt the all-important news ;

Next week, the Aged Councillor was shaking in his shoes ;

Next month, I met Delilah, and she did not show the least

Hesitation in affirming that Ulysses was a “beast.”

* * * * *

We have another Viceroy now—those days are dead and done

Of Delilah Aberyswith and most mean Ulysses Gunne !

What Happened

HURPEE CHUNDER MOOKERJEE, pride of
Bow Bazar,
Owner of a native press, "Barrishter-at-
Lar,"
Waited on the Government with a claim to
wear
Sabres by the bucketful, rifles by the pair.

Then the Indian Government winked a
wicked wink—
Said to Chunder Mookerjee, "Stick to pen
and ink;
They are safer implements; but, if you
insist,
We will let you carry arms wheresoe'er
you list."

What Happened

Hurpee Chunder Mookerjee sought the gun-
smith and
Bought the tuber of Lancaster, Ballard,
Dean, and Bland,
Bought a shiny bowie-knife, bought a town-
made sword,
Jingled like a carriage-horse when he went
abroad.

But the Indian Government, always keen
to please,
Also gave permission to horrid men like
these—

Yar Mahommed Yusufzai, down to kill or
steal,
Chimbu Singh from Bikaner, Tantia the
Bhil,

Killar Khan the Marri chief, Jowar Singh
the Sikh,
Nubbee Baksh Punjabi Jat, Abdul Huq
Rafiq—

He was a Wahabi; last, little Boh Hla-oo
Took advantage of the act—took a Snider
too.

What Happened

They were unenlightened men, Ballard
knew them not;
They procured their swords and guns
chiefly on the spot;
And the lore of centuries, plus a hundred
fights,
Made them slow to disregard one another's
rights.

With a unanimity dear to patriot hearts
All those hairy gentlemen out of foreign
parts
Said, "The good old days are back—let us
go to war!"
Swaggered down the Grand Trunk Road,
into Bow Bazar.

Nubbee Baksh Punjabi Jat found a hide-
bound flail;
Chimbu Singh from Bikaner oiled his
Tonk jezail;
Yar Mahommed Yusufzai spat and grinned
with glee
As he ground the butcher-knife of the
Khyberee.

What Happened

Jowar Singh the Sikh procured sabre, quoit,
and mace ;

Abdul Huq, Wahabi, took the dagger from
its place ;

While amid the jungle-grass danced and
grinned and jabbered

Little Boh Hla-oo and cleared the dah-blade
from the scabbard.

What became of Mookerjee ? Soothly, who
can say ?

Yar Mahommed only grins in a nasty way,
Jowar Singh is reticent, Chimbu Singh is
mute ;

But the belts of them all simply bulge with
loot.

What became of Ballard's guns ? Afghans
black and grubby

Sell them for their silver weight to the men
of Pubbi ;

And the shiny bowie-knife and the town-
made sword are

Hanging in a Marri camp just across the
Border.

What Happened

What became of Mookerjee? Ask Ma-
homed Yar

Prodding Siva's sacred bull down the Bow
Bazar.

Speak to placid Nubbee Baksh—question
land and sea—

Ask the Indian Congress-men—only don't
ask me !

Pink Dominoes

*"They are fools who kiss and tell," wisely has the poet
sung.*

*Man may hold all sorts of posts if he'll only hold his
tongue.*

JENNY and Me were engaged, you see,
On the eve of the Fancy Ball;
So a kiss or two was nothing to you
Or any one else at all.

Jenny would go in a domino—
Pretty and pink but warm;
While I attended, clad in a splendid
Austrian uniform.

Now, we had arranged, through notes ex-
changed
Early that afternoon,
At Number Four to waltz no more,
But to sit in the dusk and spoon.

Pink Dominoes

(I wish you to see that Jenny and Me
Had barely exchanged our troth;
So a kiss or two was strictly due
By, from, and between us both.)

When Three was over, an eager lover,
I fled to the gloom outside;
And a Domino came out also
Whom I took for my future bride.

That is to say, in a casual way,
I slipped my arm around her;
With a kiss or two (which is nothing to
you),
And ready to kiss I found her.

She turned her head, and the name she said
Was certainly not my own;
But ere I could speak, with a smothered
shriek
She fled and left me alone.

Then Jenny came, and I saw with shame
She'd doffed her domino;
And I had embraced an alien waist—
But I did not tell her so.

Pink Dominoes

Next morn I knew that there were two
Dominoes pink, and one
Had cloaked the spouse of Sir Julian Vouse,
Our big political gun.

Sir J. was old, and her hair was gold,
And her eye was a blue cerulean;
And the name she said when she turned
her head
Was not in the least like "Julian."

Now, wasn't it nice, when want of *pice*
Forbade us twain to marry,
That old Sir J., in the kindest way,
Made me his *Secretarry*?

The Man Who Could Write

*Shun—shun the Bowl! That fatal, facile drink
Has ruined many geese who dipped their quills in 't.
Bribe, murder, marry—but steer clear of Ink,
Save when you write receipts for paid-up bills in 't.
There may be silver in the “blue-black,”—all
I know of is the iron and the gall.*

BOANERGES BLITZEN, servant of the Queen,
Is a dismal failure—is a Might-have-been.
In a luckless moment he discovered men
Rise to high position through a ready pen.

Boanerges Blitzen argued, therefore, “ I
With the selfsame weapon can attain as
high.”

Only he did not possess, when he made the
trial,

Wicked wit of C-lv-n, irony of L—l.

The Man Who Could Write

(Men who spar with Government need, to
back their blows,
Something more than ordinary journalistic
prose.)

Never young Civilian's prospects were so
bright
Till an Indian paper found that he could
write :
Never young Civilian's prospects were so
dark,
When the wretched Blitzen wrote to make
his mark.

Certainly he scored it, bold and black and
firm,
In that Indian paper—made his seniors
squirm,
Quoted office scandals, wrote the tactless
truth—
Was there ever known a more misguided
youth ?

The Man Who Could Write

When the Rag he wrote for praised his
plucky game,

Boanerges Blitzen felt that this was Fame :
When the men he wrote of shook their
heads and swore,

Boanerges Blitzen only wrote the more.

Posed as Young Ithuriel, resolute and grim,
Till he found promotion didn't come to
him—

Till he found that reprimands weekly were
his lot,

And his many Districts curiously hot.

Till he found his furlough strangely hard to
win,

Boanerges Blitzen didn't care a pin :

Then it seemed to dawn on him something
wasn't right—

Boanerges Blitzen put it down to "spite."

Languished in a District desolate and dry ;
Watched the Local Government yearly pass
him by ,

The Man Who Could Write

Wondered where the hitch was ; called it
most unfair.

* * * * *

That was seven years ago—and he still is
there.

Municipal

"Why is my District death-rate low?"

Said Binks of Hezabad.

"Wells, drains, and sewage-outfalls are

My own peculiar fad.

I learnt a lesson once. It ran

Thus," quoth that most veracious man :

IT was an August evening, and, in snowy
garments clad,

I paid a round of visits in the lines of Heza-
bad ;

When, presently, my Waler saw, and did
not like at all,

A Commissariat elephant careering down
the Mall.

I couldn't see the driver, and across my
mind it rushed

That that Commissariat elephant had sud-
denly gone *musth*.

Municipal

I didn't care to meet him, and I couldn't
well get down,
So I let the Waler have it, and we headed
for the town.

The buggy was a new one, and, praise
Dykes, it stood the strain,
Till the Waler jumped a bullock just above
the City Drain ;
And the next that I remember was a hur-
ricane of squeals,
And the creature making toothpicks of my
five-foot patent wheels.

He seemed to want the owner—so I fled,
distraught with fear,
To the Main Drain sewage-outfall, while he
snorted in my ear—
Reached the four-foot drain-head safely,
and, in darkness and despair,
Felt the brute's proboscis fingering my
terror-stiffened hair.

Municipal

Heard it trumpet on my shoulder—tried to
crawl a little higher—

Found the Main Drain sewage-outfall
blocked, some eight feet up, with
mire ;

And for twenty reeking minutes, Sir, my
very marrow froze,

While the trunk was feeling blindly for a
purchase on my toes !

It missed me by a fraction, but my hair was
turning gray

Before they called the drivers up and
dragged the brute away.

Then I sought the City Elders, and my
words were very plain.

They flushed that four-foot drain-head, and
—it never choked again.

You may hold with surface drainage and
the sun-for-garbage cure

Till you've been a periwinkle shrinking
coily up a sewer.

Municipal

I believe in well-flushed culverts. . . .

This is why the death-rate's small.

And if you don't believe me, get *shikarred*
yourself.

That's all.

A Code of Morals

*Lest you should think this story true,
I merely mention I
Evolved it lately. 'Tis a most
Unmitigated—misstatement.*

Now, Jones had left his new-wed bride to
keep his house in order,
And hied away to Hurrum Hills, above the
Afghan border,
To sit on a rock with a heliograph ; but ere
he left he taught
His wife the working of the Code that sets
the miles at naught.

And Love had made him very sage, as
Nature made her fair ;
So Cupid and Apollo linked, *per* helio-
graph, the pair.

A Code of Morals

At dawn, across the Hurrum Hills, he
 flashed her counsel wise—
At e'en, the dying sunset bore her hus-
 band's homilies.

He warned her 'gainst seductive youths in
 scarlet clad and gold,
As much as 'gainst the blandishments pa-
 ternal of the old ;
But kept his gravest warnings for (hereby
 the ditty hangs)
That snowy-haired Lothario, Lieutenant-
 General Bangs.

'Twas General Bangs, with Aide and Staff,
 that tittupped on the way,
When they beheld a heliograph tempes-
 tuously at play ;
They thought of Border risings, and of
 stations sacked and burnt—
So stopped to take the message down—and
 this is what they learnt :—

A Code of Morals

“Dash dot dot, dot, dot dash, dot dash dot”
twice. The General swore.

“Was ever General Officer addressed as
‘Dear’ before ?

‘My Love,’ i’ faith ! ‘My Duck,’ Gad-
zooks ! ‘My darling popsy-wop !’

Spirit of great Lord Wolseley, *who* is on
that mountain top ?”

The artless Aide-de-camp was mute ; the
gilded Staff were still,

As, dumb with pent-up mirth, they booked
that message from the hill ;

For, clear as summer’s lightning flare, the
husband’s warning ran :—

“Don’t dance or ride with General Bangs—
a most immoral man.”

(At dawn, across the Hurrum Hills, he
flashed her counsel wise—

But howsoever Love be blind, the world at
large hath eyes.)

A Code of Morals

With damnatory dot and dash he helio-
graphed his wife
Some interesting details of the General's
private life.

The artless Aide-de-camp was mute ; the
shining Staff were still,
And red and ever redder grew the General's
shaven gill.
And this is what he said at last (his feelings
matter not) :
“I think we've tapped a private line. Hi !
Threes about there ! Trot !”

All honor unto Bangs, for ne'er did Jones
thereafter know
By word or act official who read off that
helio. ;
But the tale is on the Frontier, and from
Michni to *Mooltan*
They know the worthy General as “that
most immoral man.”

The Last Department

*Twelve hundred million men are spread
About this Earth, and I and You
Wonder, when You and I are dead,
What will those luckless millions do?*

“NONE whole or clean,” we cry, “or free
from stain

Of favor.” Wait a while, till we attain
The Last Department, where nor fraud
nor fools,

Nor grade nor greed, shall trouble us again.

Fear, Favor, or Affection—what are these
To the grim Head who claims our services?

I never knew a wife or interest yet
Delay that *pukka* step miscalled “decease”;

When leave long overdue none can deny;

When idleness of all Eternity

Becomes our furlough, and the mari-
gold

Our thriftless, bullion-minting Treasury.

The Last Department

Transferred to the Eternal Settlement,
Each in his strait, wood-scantled office pent,
 No longer Brown reverses Smith's
 appeals,
Or Jones records his Minute of Dissent.

And One, long since a pillar of the Court,
As mud between the beams thereof is
 wrought;
 And One who wrote on phosphates for
 the crops
Is subject-matter of his own Report.

(These be the glorious ends whereto we
 pass—
Let Him who Is go call on Him who Was;
 And He shall see the *mallie* steals the
 slab
For currie-grinder, and for goats the grass.)

A breath of wind, a Border bullet's flight,
A draught of water, or a horse's fright—
 The droning of the fat *Sheristadar*
Ceases, the punkah stops, and falls the
 night

The Last Department

For You or Me. Do those who live decline
The step that offers, or their work resign ?

Trust me, To-Day's Most Indispensables,
Five hundred men can take your place or
mine.

OTHER VERSES

“As the Bell Clinks”

As I left the Halls at Lumley,
Rose the vision of a comely
Maid last season worshipped dumbly,
 Watched with fervor from afar;
And I wondered, idly, blindly,
If the maid would greet me kindly.
That was all—the rest was settled
 By the clinking tonga-bar.
Yea, my life and hers were coupled
 By the tonga coupling-bar.

For my misty meditation,
At the second changing-station,
Suffered sudden dislocation,
 Fled before the tuneless jar
Of a Wagner *obbligato*,
Scherzo, double-hand *staccato*,
Played on either pony's saddle
 By the clacking tonga-bar—
Played with human speech, I fancied,
 By the jiggling, jolting bar.

“ *As the Bell Clinks* ”

“ She was sweet,” thought I, “ last season ;
But ’twere surely wild unreason
Such tiny hope to freeze on

As was offered by my Star,
When she whispered, something sadly,
‘ I—we feel your going badly ! ’ ”

“ *And you let the chance escape you ?* ”

Rapped the rattling tonga-bar.

“ *What a chance, and what an idiot !* ”

Clicked the vicious tonga-bar.

Heart of man—oh, heart of putty !

Had I gone by Kakahutti,

On the old Hill-road and ruddy,

I had ’scaped that fatal car.

But his fortune each must bide by—

So I watched the milestones slide by,

To “ *You call on Her to-morrow !* ”—

Fugue with cymbals by the bar ;

“ *You must call on Her to-morrow !* ”—

Post-horn gallop by the bar.

Yet a further stage my goal on—

We were whirling down to Solon,

With a double lurch and roll on,

“ *As the Bell Clinks* ”

Best foot foremost, *ganz und gar*—

“ She was *very* sweet,” I hinted.

“ If a kiss had been imprinted— ? ”

“ ‘ *Would ha’ saved a world of trouble !* ’ ”

Clashed the busy tonga-bar.

“ ‘ *Been accepted or rejected !* ’ ”

Banged and clanged the tonga-bar.

Then a notion wild and daring,

’Spite the income tax’s paring,

And a hasty thought of sharing—

Less than many incomes are,

Made me put a question private,

You can guess what I would drive at.

“ *You must work the sum to prove it,* ”

Clanked the careless tonga-bar.

“ *Simple Rule of Two will prove it,* ”

Lilted back the tonga-bar.

It was under Khyraghaut I

Mused: “ Suppose the maid be haughty—

(There are lovers rich—and forty)—

Wait some wealthy Avatar ?

“ *As the Bell Clinks* ”

Answer, monitor untiring,
’Twixt the ponies twain perspiring!”
“ *Faint heart never won fair lady,*”
 Creaked the straining tonga-bar.
“ *Can I tell you ere you ask Her ?*”
 Pounded slow the tonga-bar.

Last, the Tara Devi turning,
Showed the lights of Simla burning,
Lit my little lazy yearning
 To a fiercer flame by far.
As below the Mall we jingled,
Through my very heart it tingled—
Did the iterated order
 Of the threshing tonga-bar—
“ *Try your luck—you can’t do better !*”
 Twanged the loosened tonga-bar.

An Old Song

So long as 'neath the Kalka Hills the tonga-
horn shall ring,

So long as down the Solon dip the hard-held
ponies swing,

So long as Tara Devi sees the lights o' Simla
town,

So long as Pleasure calls us up, and Duty
drives us down,

If you love me as I love you,

What pair so happy as we two?

So long as Aces take the King, or backers
take the bet,

So long as debt leads men to wed, and mar-
riage leads to debt,

An Old Song

So long as little luncheons, Love, and scandal
hold their vogue,

While there is sport at Annandale or whis-
key at Jutogh,

If you love me as I love you,

What knife can cut our love in two ?

So long as down the rocking floor the raving
polka spins,

So long as Kitchen Lancers spur the mad-
dened violins,

So long as through the whirling smoke we
hear the oft-told tale,—

“Twelve hundred in the Lotteries,” and

Whatshername for sale,

If you love me as I love you,

We'll play the game, and win it too.

So long as Lust or Lucre tempt straight
riders from the course,

So long as with each drink we pour black
brewage of Remorse,

An Old Song

So long as those unloaded guns we keep
beside the bed

Blow off, by obvious accident, the lucky
owner's head,

If you love me as I love you,

What can Life kill or Death undo?

So long as Death 'twixt dance and dance
chills best and bravest blood,

And drops the reckless rider down the rotten,
rain-soaked *khud*,

So long as rumors from the North make
loving wives afraid,

So long as Burma takes the boy and typhoid
kills the maid,

If you love me as I love you,

What knife can cut our love in two?

By all that lights our daily life or works our
lifelong woe,

From Boileaugunge to Simla Downs and
those grim glades below,

An Old Song

Where, heedless of the flying hoof and
clamor overhead,
Sleep, with the gray langur for guard, our
very scornful Dead,
If you love me as I love you,
All Earth is servant to we two.

By Docket, Billet-doux, and File, by Moun-
tain, Cliff, and Fir,
By Fan and Sword and Office-box, by Corset,
Plume, and Spur,
By Riot, Revel, Waltz, and War, by Wo-
men, Work, and Bills,
By all the life that fizzes in the everlasting
Hills,
If you love me as I love you,
What pair so happy as we two ?

Certain Maxims of Hafiz

I

If it be pleasant to look on, stalled in the
packed *serai*,

Does not the Young Man try Its temper and
pace ere he buy ?

If She be pleasant to look on, what does the
Young Man say ?

“Lo! She is pleasant to look on—give Her
to me to-day!”

II

Yea, though a Kafir die, to him is remitted
Jehannum

If he borrowed in life from a native at sixty
per cent. per annum.

III

Blister we not for *bursati*? So, when the
heart is vext,

The pain of one maiden's refusal is drowned
in the pain of the next

Certain Maxims of Hafiz

IV

The temper of chums, the love of your wife,
and a new piano's tune—
Which of the three will you trust at the end
of an Indian June ?

V

Who are the rulers of Ind—to whom shall
we bow the knee ?
Make your peace with the women, and men
will make you L. G.

VI

Does the woodpecker flit round the young
ferash ? Does grass clothe a new-
built wall ?
Is she under thirty, the woman who holds
a boy in her thrall ?

VII

If She grow suddenly gracious—reflect. Is
it all for thee ?
The black-buck is stalked through the bul-
lock, and Man through jealousy.

Certain Maxims of Hafiz

VIII

Seek not for favor of women. So shall you
find it indeed.

Does not the boar break cover just when
you're lighting a weed ?

IX

If He play, being young and unskilful, for
shekels of silver and gold,

Take His money, my son, praising Allah.
The kid was ordained to be sold.

X

With a "weed" among men or horses, verily
this is the best—

That you work him in office or dog-cart
lightly—but give him no rest.

XI

Pleasant the snaffle of Courtship, improving
the manners and carriage.

But the colt who is wise will abstain from
the terrible thorn-bit of Marriage.

Certain Maxims of Hafiz

XII

As the thriftless gold of the *babul*, so is the
gold that we spend
On a Derby Sweep, or our neighbor's wife,
or the horse that we buy from a friend.

XIII

The ways of man with a maid be strange,
yet simple and tame
To the ways of a man with a horse, when
selling or racing that same.

XIV

In public Her face turneth to thee, and
pleasant Her smile when ye meet.
It is ill. The cold rocks of El-Gidar smile
thus on the waves at their feet.
In public Her face is averted ; with anger
She nameth thy name.
It is well. Was there ever a loser content
with the loss of the game ?

Certain Maxims of Hafiz

XV

If She have spoken a word, remember thy
lips are sealed ;

And the Brand of the Dog is upon him by
whom is the secret revealed.

If She have written a letter, delay not an
instant, but burn it.

Tear it in pieces, O Fool, and the wind to
Her mate shall return it !

If there be trouble to Herward, and a lie of
the blackest can clear,

Lie, while thy lips can move or a man is
alive to hear.

XVI

My son, if a maiden deny thee, and scuf-
flingly bid thee give o'er,

Yet lip meets with lip at the lastward—get
out ! She has been there before.

They are pecked on the ear and the chin and
the nose who are lacking in lore.

Certain Maxims of Hafiz

XVII

If we fall in the race, though we win, the
hoof-slide is scarred on the course.
Though Allah and Earth pardon Sin, re-
maineth forever Remorse.

XVIII

“By all I am misunderstood!” if the Matron
shall say ; or the Maid :—
“Alas! I do not understand,” my son, be
thou nowise afraid.
In vain in the sight of the Bird is the net of
the Fowler displayed.

XIX

My son, if I, Hafiz, thy father, take hold of
thy knees in my pain,
Demanding thy name on stamped paper, one
day or one hour—refrain.
Are the links of thy fetters so light that thou
cravest another man’s chain ?

The Grave of the Hundred Head

*THERE'S a widow in sleepy Chester who
weeps for her only son :
There's a grave on the Pabeng River—a
grave that the Burmans shun :
And there's Subadar Prag Tewarri who
tells how the work was done.*

A Snider squibbed in the jungle, somebody
laughed and fled,
And the men of the First Shikaris picked up
their Subaltern dead,
With a big blue mark in his forehead and
the back blown out of his head.

Subadar Prag Tewarri, Jemadar Hira Lal,
Took command of the party—twenty rifles
in all—
Marched them down to the river as the day
was beginning to fall.

The Grave of the Hundred Head

They buried the boy by the river, a blanket
over his face ;

They wept for their dead Lieutenant, the
men of an alien race ;

They made a *samadh* in his honor—a
mark for his resting-place.

For they swore by the Holy Water, they
swore by the salt they ate,

That the soul of Lieutenant Eshmitt Sahib
should go to his God in state—

With fifty file of Burman to open him
Heaven's gate.

The men of the First Shikaris marched till
the break of day,

Till they came to the rebel village, the vil-
lage of Pabengmay—

A *jingal* covered the clearing, calthrops
hampered the way.

Subadar Prag Tewarri, bidding them load
with ball,

The Grave of the Hundred Head

Halted a dozen rifles under the village wall;
Sent out a flanking-party with Jemadar
Hira Lal.

The men of the First Shikaris shouted and
smote and slew,
Turning the grinning *jingal* onto the howl-
ing crew.
The Jemadar's flanking-party butchered the
folk who flew.

Long was the morn of slaughter, long was
the list of slain ;
Five score heads were taken, five score heads
and twain ;
And the men of the First Shikaris went
back to their grave again,—

Each man bearing a basket red as his palms
that day,
Red as the blazing village—the village of
Pabengmay.
And the “*drip-drip-drip*” from the baskets
reddened the grass by the way.

The Grave of the Hundred Head

They made a pile of their trophies high as a
tall man's chin,
Head upon head distorted, set in a sightless
grin,
Anger and pain and terror stamped on the
smoke-scorched skin.

Subadar Prag Tewarri put the head of the
Boh
On top of the mound of triumph, the head
of his son below,
With the sword and the peacock-banner,
that the world might behold and
know.

Thus the *samadh* was perfect, thus was the
lesson plain
Of the wrath of the First Shikaris—the price
of a white man slain ;
And the men of the First Shikaris went
back into camp again.

Then a silence came to the river, a hush fell
over the shore,

The Grave of the Hundred Head

And Bohs that were brave departed, and
Sniders squibbed no more ;
For the Burmans said that a *kullah's* head
must be paid for with heads five score.

*There's a widow in sleepy Chester who
weeps for her only son ;
There's a grave on the Pabeng River—a
grave that the Burmans shun ;
And there's Subadar Prag Tewarri who
tells how the work was done.*

The Moon of Other Days

BENEATH the deep veranda's shade,
When bats begin to fly,
I sit me down and watch—alas !—
Another evening die.
Blood-red behind the sere *ferash*
She rises through the haze.
Sainted Diana ! can that be
The Moon of Other Days ?

Ah! shade of Little Kitty Smith,
Sweet Saint of Kensington!
Say, was it ever thus at Home
The Moon of August shone,
When arm in arm we wandered long
Through Putney's evening haze,
And Hammersmith was Heaven beneath
The Moon of Other Days ?

The Moon of Other Days

But Wandle's stream is Sutlej now,
And Putney's evening haze
The dust that half a hundred kine
Before my window raise.
Unkempt, unclean, athwart the mist
The seething city looms,—
In place of Putney's golden gorse
The sickly *babul* blooms.

Glare down, old Hecate, through the dust,
And bid the pie-dog yell ;
Draw from the drain its typhoid-germ,
From each bazaar its smell ;
Yea, suck the fever from the tank,
And sap my strength therewith :
Thank Heaven, you show a smiling face
To Little Kitty Smith !

The Overland Mail

(Foot-Service to the Hills)

IN the Name of the Empress of India, make
way,

O Lords of the Jungle, wherever you
roam!

The woods are astir at the close of the day—
We exiles are waiting for letters from
Home.

Let the robber retreat—let the tiger turn
tail—

In the Name of the Empress, the Overland
Mail!

With a jingle of bells, as the dusk gathers
in,

He turns to the foot-path that heads up
the hill—

The Overland Mail

The bags on his back and a cloth round his
chin,

And, tucked in his waist-belt, the Post
Office bill:

“Despatched on this date, as received by the
rail,

Per runner, two bags of the Overland Mail.”

Is the torrent in spate? He must ford it or
swim.

Has the rain wrecked the road? He must
climb by the cliff.

Does the tempest cry “Halt”? What are
tempests to him?

The Service admits not a “but” or an
“if.”

While the breath’s in his mouth, he must
bear without fail,

In the Name of the Empress, the Overland
Mail.

From aloe to rose-oak, from rose-oak to fir,
From level to upland, from upland to
crest,

The Overland Mail

From rice-field to rock-ridge, from rock-
ridge to spur,

Fly the soft-sandalled feet, strains the
brawny brown chest.

From rail to ravine—to the peak from the
vale—

Up, up through the night goes the Overland
Mail.

There's a speck on the hillside, a dot on the
road—

A jingle of bells on the foot-path below—
There's a scuffle above in the monkey's
abode—

The world is awake, and the clouds are
aglow.

For the great Sun himself must attend to
the hail :

“ In the Name of the Empress, the Overland
Mail ! ”

What the People Said

(June 21st, 1887)

By the well where the bullocks go
Silent and blind and slow—
By the field where the young corn dies
In the face of the sultry skies,
They have heard, as the dull Earth hears
The voice of the wind of an hour,
The sound of the Great Queen's voice :—
“ My God hath given me years,
Hath granted dominion and power ;
And I bid you, O Land, rejoice ! ”

And the Ploughman settles the share
More deep in the grudging clod ;
For he saith : “ The wheat is my care,
And the rest is the will of God.
He sent the Mahratta spear
As He sendeth the rain,

What the People Said

And the *Mlech*, in the fated year,
 Broke the spear in twain,
And was broken in turn. Who knows
 How our Lords make strife ?
It is good that the young wheat grows—
 For the bread is Life."

Then far and near, as the twilight drew,
 Hissed up to the scornful dark
Great serpents, blazing, of red and blue,
That rose and faded, and rose anew,
 That the Land might wonder and mark.
"To-day is a day of days," they said ;
 "Make merry, O People all !"
And the Ploughman listened and bowed his
 head :
"To-day and to-morrow God's will," he said,
 As he trimmed the lamps on the wall.

"He sendeth us years that are good,
 As He sendeth the dearth.
He giveth to each man his food
 Or Her food to the Earth.

What the People Said

Our Kings and our Queens are afar—
On their peoples be peace!—
God bringeth the rain to the Bar,
That our cattle increase.”

And the Ploughman settled the share
More deep in the sun-dried clod:—
“Mogul, Mahratta, and *Mlech* from the
North,
And White Queen over the Seas—
God raiseth them up and driveth them forth
As the dust of the ploughshare flies in the
breeze;
But the wheat and the cattle are all my care,
And the rest is the will of God.”

The Undertaker's Horse

“ To-tschin-shu is condemned to death. How can he drink tea with the Executioner ? ”—Japanese Proverb.

THE eldest son bestrides him,
And the pretty daughter rides him,
And I meet him oft o' mornings on the
Course ;
And there wakens in my bosom
An emotion chill and gruesome
As I canter past the Undertaker's Horse.

Neither shies he nor is restive,
But a hideously suggestive
Trot, professional and placid, he affects ;
And the cadence of his hoof-beats,
To my mind, this grim reproof beats :—
“ Mend your pace, my friend,—I'm coming.
Who's the next ? ”

The Undertaker's Horse

Ah! stud-bred of ill-omen,
I have watched the strongest go—men
Of pith and might and muscle—at your
heels,
Down the plantain-bordered highway,
(Heaven send it ne'er be my way!)
In a lacquered box and jetty upon wheels.

Answer, sombre beast and dreary,
Where is Brown, the young, the cheery,
Smith, the pride of all his friends and half
the Force?

You were at that last dread *dak*
We must cover at a walk.
Bring them back to me, O Undertaker's
Horse!

With your mane unhogged and flowing,
And your curious way of going,
And that businesslike black crimping of
your tail,
E'en with Beauty on your back, Sir,
Pacing as a lady's hack, Sir,
What wonder when I meet you I turn pale!

The Undertaker's Horse

It may be you wait your time, Beast,
Till I write my last bad rhyme, Beast,
Quit the sunlight, cut the rhyming, drop the
 glass,
Follow after with the others,
Where some dusky heathen smothers
Us with marigolds, in lieu of English grass.

Or, perchance, in years to follow,
I shall watch your plump sides hollow,
See Carnifex (gone lame) become a corse,
See old age at last o'erpower you,
And the Station Pack devour you,
I shall chuckle then, O Undertaker's Horse!

But to insult, gibe, and quest I've
Still the hideously suggestive
Trot that hammers out the grim and warn-
 ing text ;
And I hear it hard behind me,
In what place soe'er I find me :—
“Sure to catch you sooner or later. Who's
 the next ?”

The Fall of Jock Gillespie

THIS fell when dinner-time was done—
 'Twixt the first and the second rub—
That oor mon Jock cam' hame again
 To his rooms ahint the Club.
An' syne he laughed, an' syne he sang,
 An' syne we thocht him fou,
An' syne he trumped his partner's trick,
 An' garred his partner rue.

Then up and spake an elder mon,
 That held the Spade its Ace—
“God save the lad! Whence comes the
 licht
 That wimples on his face?”
An' Jock he sniggered, an' Jock he smiled,
 An' ower the card-brim wunk :—

“I'm a' too fresh fra' the stirrup-peg—
 May be that I am drunk.”

The Fall of Jock Gillespie

“There’s whusky brewed in Galashiels,
An’ L. L. L. forbye ;
But never liquor lit the low
That keeks fra’ oot your eye.

“There’s a thrid o’ hair on your dress-coat
breast,
Aboon the heart a wee ?”

“Oh! that is fra’ the lang-haired Skye
That slobbers ower me.”

“Oh! lang-haired Skyes are lovin’ beasts,
An’ terrier dogs are fair ;
But never yet was terrier born
Wi’ ell-lang gowden hair!

“There’s a smirch o’ pouter on your breast,
Below the left lapel ?”

“Oh! that is fra’ my auld cigar,
Whenas the stump-end fell.”

“Mon Jock, ye smoke the Trichi coarse,
For ye are short o’ cash,
An’ best Havanas couldna leave
Sae white an’ pure an ash.

The Fall of Jock Gillespie

“This nicht ye stopped a story braid,
An’ stopped it wi’ a curse—
Last nicht ye told that tale yoursel’,
An’ capped it wi’ a worse!
Oh! we’re no fou! Oh! we’re no fou!
But plainly we can ken
Ye’re fallin’, fallin’, fra’ the band
O’ cantie single men!”

An’ it fell when *sirris*-shaws were sere,
An’ the nichts were lang and mirk,
In braw new breeks wi’ a gowden ring,
Oor Jockie gaed to the Kirk.

Arithmetic on the Frontier

A GREAT and glorious thing it is
To learn, for seven years or so,
The Lord knows what of that and this,
Ere reckoned fit to face the foe—
The flying bullet down the Pass,
That whistles clear, “All flesh is grass.”

Three hundred pounds per annum spent
On making brain and body meeter
For all the murderous intent
Comprised in “villanous saltpetre”!
And after—ask the Yusufzaies
What comes of all our 'ologies.

A scrimmage in a Border station—
A canter down some dark defile—
Two thousand pounds of education
Drops to a ten-rupee *jezail*—
The Crammer's boast, the Squadron's pride,
Shot like a rabbit in a ride!

Arithmetic on the Frontier

No proposition Euclid wrote,
 No formulæ the text-books know,
Will turn the bullet from your coat,
 Or ward the tulwar's downward blow.
Strike hard who cares, shoot straight who
 can—
The odds are on the cheaper man.

One sword-knot stolen from the camp
 Will pay for all the school expenses
Of any Kurrum Valley scamp
 Who knows no word of moods and
 tenses;
But, being blessed with perfect sight,
Picks off our messmates left and right.

With home-bred hordes the hillsides teem,
 The troopships bring us one by one,
At vast expense of time and steam,
 To slay Afridis where they run.
The "captives of our bow and spear"
Are cheap—alas! as we are dear.

The Betrothed

“ You must choose between me and your cigar.”

OPEN the old cigar-box, get me a Cuba
stout—

For things are running crossways, and
Maggie and I are out.

We quarrelled about Havanas—we fought
o'er a good cheroot;

And I know she is exacting, and she says I
am a brute.

Open the old cigar-box—let me consider a
space—

In the soft blue veil of the vapor, musing
on Maggie's face.

Maggie is pretty to look at—Maggie's a lov-
ing lass;

But the prettiest cheeks must wrinkle, the
truest of loves must pass.

The Betrothed

There's peace in a Laranaga, there's calm in
a Henry Clay;
But the best cigar in an hour is finished
and thrown away—

Thrown away for another as perfect and
ripe and brown;
But I could not throw away Maggie for
fear o' the talk o' the town!

Maggie, my wife at fifty—gray and dour
and old—
With never another Maggie to purchase for
love or gold!

And the light of Days that have Been the
dark of the Days that Are,
And Love's torch stinking and stale, like
the butt of a dead cigar—

The butt of a dead cigar you are bound to
keep in your pocket—
With never a new one to light, though it's
charred and black to the socket.

The Betrothed

Open the old cigar-box—let me consider a
while—

Here is a mild Manila—there is a wifely
smile.

Which is the better portion—bondage bought
with a ring,

Or a harem of dusky beauties, fifty tied in
a string ?

Counsellors cunning and silent, comforters
true and tried,

And never a one of the fifty to sneer at a
rival bride.

Thought in the early morning, solace in
time of woes,

Peace in the hush of the twilight, balm ere
my eyelids close—

This will the fifty give me, asking naught in
return,

With only a *Suttee's* passion—to do their
duty and burn.

The Betrothed

This will the fifty give me. When they are
spent and dead,
Five times other fifties shall be my servants
instead.

The furrows of far-off Java, the isles of the
Spanish Main,
When they hear my harem is empty, will
send me my brides again.

I will take no heed to their raiment, nor
food for their mouths withal,
So long as the gulls are nesting, so long as
the showers fall.

I will scent 'em with best vanilla, with tea
will I temper their hides,
And the Moor and the Mormon shall envy
who read of the tale of my brides.

For Maggie has written a letter to give me
my choice between
The wee little whimpering Love and the
great god Nick o' Teen.

The Betrothed

And I have been servant of Love for barely
a twelvemonth clear,
But I have been Priest of Partagas a matter
of seven year;

And the gloom of my bachelor days is
flecked with the cheery light
Of stumps that I burned to Friendship and
Pleasure and Work and Fight.

And I turn my eyes to the future that Mag-
gie and I must prove—
But the only light on the marshes is the
Will-o'-the-Wisp of Love.

Will it see me safe through my journey, or
leave me bogged in the mire?
Since a puff of tobacco can cloud it, shall I
follow the fitful fire?

Open the old cigar-box—let me consider
anew—
Old friends, and who is Maggie, that I
should abandon *you*?

The Betrothed

A million surplus Maggies are willing to
bear the yoke;
And a woman is only a woman, but a good
cigar is a Smoke.

Light me another Cuba ; I hold to my first-
sworn vows—
If Maggie will have no rival, I'll have no
Maggie for spouse!

Griffen's Debt

IMPRIMIS, he was "broke." Thereafter left
His regiment, and, later, took to drink ;
Then, having lost the balance of his friends,
"Went Fantee"—joined the people of the
land,
Turned three parts Mussulman and one
Hindu,
And lived among the Gauri villagers,
Who gave him shelter and a wife or twain,
And boasted that a thorough, full-blood
sahib
Had come among them. Thus he spent his
time,
Deeply indebted to the village *shroff*
(Who never asked for payment), always
drunk,
Unclean, abominable, out-at-heels,
Forgetting that he was an Englishman.

Griffen's Debt

You know they dammed the Gauri with a
dam,
And all the good contractors scamped their
work,
And all the bad material at hand
Was used to dam the Gauri—which was
cheap,
And, therefore, proper. Then the Gauri
burst,
And several hundred thousand cubic tons
Of water dropped into the valley, *flop!*
And drowned some five and twenty vil-
lagers,
And did a lakh or two of detriment
To crops and cattle. When the flood went
down,
We found him dead, beneath an old dead
horse,
Full six miles down the valley. So we
said
He was a victim to the Demon Drink,
And moralized upon him for a week,
And then forgot him. Which was natu-
ral.

Griffen's Debt

But in the valley of the Gauri, men
Beneath the shadow of the big new dam
Relate a foolish legend of the flood,
Accounting for the little loss of life
(Only those five and twenty villagers)
In this wise : On the evening of the flood,
They heard the groaning of the rotten
dam,
And voices of the Mountain Devils. Then
An incarnation of the local God,
Mounted upon a monster neighing horse,
And flourishing a flail-like whip, came
down,
Breathing ambrosia, to the villages,
And fell upon the simple villagers
With yells beyond the power of mortal
throat,
And blows beyond the power of mortal
hand,
And smote them with the flail-like whip, and
drove
Them clamorous with terror up the hill,
And scattered, with the monster neighing
steed,

Griffen's Debt

Their crazy cottages about their ears,
And generally cleared those villages.
Then came the water, and the local God,
Breathing ambrosia, flourishing his whip,
And mounted on his monster neighing
steed,
Went down the valley with the flying
trees
And residue of homesteads, while they
watched
Safe on the mountain-side these wondrous
things,
And knew that they were much beloved of
Heaven.

Wherefore, and when the dam was newly
built,
They raised a temple to the local God,
And burned all manner of unsavory things
Upon his altar, and created priests,
And blew into a conch, and banged a bell,
And told the story of the Gauri flood
With circumstance and much embroidery.

Griffen's Debt

So he, the whiskified Objectionable,
Unclean, abominable, out-at-heels,
Became the tutelary Deity
Of all the Gauri Valley villages ;
And may in time become a Solar Myth.

In Springtime

My garden blazes brightly with the rose-
bush and the peach,
And the *koil* sings above it, in the *siris*
by the well ;
From the creeper-covered trellis comes the
squirrel's chattering speech,
And the blue-jay screams and flutters
where the cheery *sat-bhai* dwell.

But the rose has lost its fragrance, and the
koil's note is strange ;
I am sick of endless sunshine, sick of
blossom-burdened bough.
Give me back the leafless woodlands where
the winds of Springtime range—
Give me back one day in England—for
it's Spring in England now !

In Springtime

Through the pines the gusts are booming,
o'er the brown fields blowing chill ;
From the furrow of the ploughshare
streams the fragrance of the loam ;
And the hawk nests on the cliff-side and the
jackdaw in the hill—
And my heart is back in England 'mid
the sight and sounds of Home.

But the garland of the sacrifice this wealth
of rose and peach is ;
Ah! *koil*, little *koil*, singing on the *siris*
bough,
In my ears the knell of exile your ceaseless
bell-like speech is—
Can *you* tell me aught of England, or of
Spring in England now ?

Two Months

In June

No hope, no change ! The clouds have shut
us in

And through the cloud the sullen Sun
strikes down

Full on the bosom of the tortured Town.
Till Night falls heavy as remembered sin
That will not suffer sleep or thought of
ease.

And, hour on hour, the dry-eyed Moon
in spite

Glares through the haze and mocks with
watery light

The torment of the uncomplaining trees.

Far off, the Thunder bellows her despair

To echoing Earth, thrice parched. The
lightnings fly

In vain. No help the heaped-up clouds
afford,

Two Months

But wearier weight of burdened, burning
air.

What truce with Dawn? Look, from
the aching sky,

Day stalks, a tyrant with a flaming
sword!

In September

AT dawn there was a murmur in the trees,
A ripple on the tank, and in the air
Presage of coming coolness — every-
where

A voice of prophecy upon the breeze.

Up leapt the Sun and smote the dust to
gold,

And strove to parch anew the heedless
land,

All impotently, as a King grown old

Wars for the Empire crumbling 'neath
his hand.

One after one, the lotos-petals fell

Beneath the onslaught of the rebel year

In mutiny against a furious sky ;

Two Months

And far-off Winter whispered, "It is well !
Hot Summer dies. Behold, your help is
near !
For when men's need is sorest, then
come I."

The Galley-Slave

OH, gallant was our galley from her carven
steering-wheel
To her figurehead of silver and her beak of
hammered steel;
The leg-bar chafed the ankle, and we gasped
for cooler air,
But no galley on the water with our galley
could compare!

Our bulkheads bulged with cotton, and our
masts were stepped in gold—
We ran a mighty merchandise of niggers in
the hold;
The white foam spun behind us, and the
black shark swam below,
As we gripped the kicking sweep-head and
we made that galley go.

The Galley-Slave

It was merry in the galley, for we revelled
now and then—

If they wore us down like cattle, faith, we
fought and loved like men!

As we snatched her through the water, so
we snatched a minute's bliss,

And the mutter of the dying never spoiled
the lovers' kiss.

Our women and our children toiled beside
us in the dark—

They died, we filed their fetters, and we
heaved them to the shark—

We heaved them to the fishes, but so fast the
galley sped,

We had only time for envy, for we could
not mourn our dead.

Bear witness, once my comrades, what a
hard-bit gang were we—

The servants of the sweep-head, but the
masters of the sea!

The Galley-Slave

By the hands that drove her forward as she
 plunged and yawed and sheered,
Woman, Man, or God or Devil, was there
 anything we feared ?

Was it storm ? Our fathers faced it, and a
 wilder never blew ;
Earth that waited for the wreckage saw the
 galley struggle through.
Burning noon or choking midnight, Sick-
 ness, Sorrow, Parting, Death ?
Nay, our very babes would mock you, had
 they time for idle breath !

But to-day I leave the galley, and another
 takes my place ;
There's my name upon the deck-beam—let
 it stand a little space.
I am free—to watch my messmates beating
 out to open main,—
Free of all that Life can offer—save to
 handle sweep again.

The Galley-Slave

By the brand upon my shoulder, by the gall
of clinging steel,
By the welts the whips have left me, by the
scars that never heal,
By eyes grown old with staring through the
sun-wash on the brine,
I am paid in full for service—would that
service still were mine!

Yet they talk of times and seasons, and of
woe the years bring forth—
Of our galley swamped and shattered in the
rollers of the North ;
When the niggers break the hatches, and
the decks are gay with gore,
And a craven-hearted pilot crams her crash-
ing on the shore.

She will need no half-mast signal, minute-
gun, or rocket-flare ;
When the cry for help goes seaward, she
will find her servants there.

The Galley-Slave

Battered chain-gangs of the orlop, grizzled
drafts of years gone by,
To the bench that broke their manhood they
shall lash themselves and die.

Hale and crippled, young and aged, paid,
deserted, shipped away—
Palace, cot, and lazaretto shall make up the
tale that day,
When the skies are black above them, and
the decks ablaze beneath,
And the top-men clear the raffle with their
clasp-knives in their teeth.

It may be that Fate will give me life and
leave to row once more—
Set some strong man free for fighting as I
take a while his oar.
But to-day I leave the galley. Shall I curse
her service, then ?
God be thanked—whate'er comes after, I
have lived and toiled with Men !

L' Envoi

(To whom it may concern)

THE smoke upon your Altar dies, the flowers
decay ;

The Goddess of your sacrifice has flown
away.

What profit, then, to sing or slay
The sacrifice from day to day ?

“ We know the Shrine is void,” they said,
“ the Goddess flown ;

Yet wreaths are on the Altar laid—the Altar-
stone

Is black with fumes of sacrifice,
Albeit She had fled our eyes.

“ For, it may be, if still we sing and tend
the Shrine,

Some Deity on wandering wing may there
incline ;

And, finding all in order neat,
Stay while we worship at Her feet.”

The Conundrum of the Workshops

WHEN the flush of a new-born sun fell first
on Eden's green and gold,
Our father Adam sat under the Tree and
scratched with a stick in the mould;
And the first rude sketch that the world had
seen was joy to his mighty heart,
Till the Devil whispered behind the leaves,
"It's pretty—but is it art?"

Wherefore he called to his wife, and fled to
fashion his work anew—
The first of his race who cared a fig for the
first most dread review;
And he left his lore to the use of his sons—
and that was a glorious gain—
When the Devil chuckled, "Is it art?" in
the ear of the branded Cain.

They builded a tower to shiver the sky and
wrench the stars apart,

The Conundrum of the Workshops

Till the Devil grunted behind the bricks,
 “ It’s striking—but is it art ? ”

The stone was dropped at the quarry-side,
 and the idle derrick swung,
While each man talked of the aims of art,
 and each in an alien tongue.

They fought and they talked in the north
 and the south, they talked and they
 fought in the west,

Till the waters rose on the jabbering land,
 and the poor Red Clay had rest—

Had rest till the dank blank-canvas dawn
 when the dove was preened to start,
And the Devil bubbled below the keel, “ It’s
 human—but is it art ? ”

The tale is old as the Eden Tree—as new as
 the new-cut tooth—

For each man knows ere his lip-thatch grows
 he is master of art and truth ;

And each man hears as the twilight nears,
 to the beat of his dying heart,

The Devil drum on the darkened pane,
 “ You did it—but was it art ? ”

The Conundrum of the Workshops

We have learned to whittle the Eden Tree
to the shape of a surplice-peg ;
We have learned to bottle our parents twain
in the yolk of an addled egg ;
We know that the tail must wag the dog, as
the horse is drawn by the cart ;—
But the Devil whoops, as he whooped of old,
“ It’s clever—but is it art ? ”

When the flicker of London sun falls faint
on the club-room’s green and gold,
The sons of Adam sit them down and scratch
with their pens in the mould—
They scratch with their pens in the mould of
their graves ; and the ink and the an-
guish start
When the Devil mutters behind the leaves,
“ It’s pretty—but is it art ? ”

Now, if we could win to the Eden Tree
where the four great rivers flow,
And the wreath of Eve is red on the turf as
she left it long ago,

The Conundrum of the Workshops

And if we could come when the sentry slept,
and softly scurry through,
By the favor of God we might know as
much—as our father Adam knew.

The Explanation

LOVE and Death once ceased their strife
At the Tavern of Man's Life.

Called for wine, and threw—alas !—
Each his quiver on the grass.

When the bout was o'er, they found
Mingled arrows strewed the ground.

Hastily they gathered then
Each the loves and lives of men.

Ah, the fateful dawn deceived !
Mingled arrows each one sheaved :

Death's dread armory was stored
With the shafts he most abhorred :

Love's light quiver groaned beneath
Venom-hearted darts of death.

The Explanation

Thus it was they wrought our woe
At the tavern long ago.
Tell me, do our masters know,
Loosing blindly as they fly,
Old men love while young men die ?

The Gift of the Sea

THE dead child lay in the shroud,
And the widow watched beside ;
And her mother slept, and the Channel
swept
The gale in the teeth of the tide.

But the widow laughed at all.

“ I have lost my man in the sea,
And the child is dead. Be still,” she said,
“ What more can ye do to me ? ”

And the widow watched the dead.

And the candle guttered low,
And she tried to sing the Passing Song
That bids the poor soul go.

And “ Mary take you now,” she sang,
“ That lay against my heart.”

And “ Mary smooth your crib to-night,”
But she could not say “ Depart.”

The Gift of the Sea

Then came a cry from the sea,
But the sea-rime blinded the glass,
And "Heard ye nothing, mother?" she
said ;
" 'Tis the child that waits to pass."

And the nodding mother sighed.
" 'Tis a lambing ewe in the whin ;
For why should the christened soul cry out
That never knew of sin ?"

" Oh, feet I have held in my hand,
Oh, hands at my heart to catch !
How should they know the road to go,
And how should they lift the latch ?"

They laid a sheet to the door
With the little quilt atop,
That it might not hurt from the cold or
the dirt,
But the crying would not stop.

The widow lifted the latch
And strained her eyes to see,
And opened the door on the bitter shore
To let the soul go free.

The Gift of the Sea

There was neither glimmer nor ghost,
There was neither spirit nor spark,
And "Heard ye nothing, mother?" she
said ;
" 'Tis crying for me in the dark."

And the nodding mother sighed.
" 'Tis sorrow makes ye dull ;
Have ye yet to learn the cry of the tern,
Or the wail of the wind-blown gull ?"

" The terns are blown inland,
The gray gull follows the plough.
'Twas never a bird, the voice I heard—
O mother, I hear it now !"

" Lie still, dear lamb, lie still ;
The child it passed from harm—
'Tis the ache in your breast that broke
your rest,
And the feel of an empty arm."

She put her mother aside.

" In Mary's name, let be !

The Gift of the Sea

For the peace of my soul I must go," she
said ;
And she went to the calling sea.

In the heel of the wind-bit pier,
Where the twisted weed was piled,
She came to the life she had missed by
an hour,
For she came to a little child.

She laid it into her breast,
And back to her mother she came ;
But it would not feed, and it would not
heed,
Though she gave it her own child's
name.

And the dead child dripped on her breast,
And her own in the shroud lay stark ;
And " God forgive us, mother," she said ;
" We let it die in the dark !"

The Ballad of East and West

*OII, East is East, and West is West, and
never the twain shall meet,
Till Earth and Sky stand presently at
God's great Judgment Seat ;
But there is neither East nor West, Border,
nor Breed, nor Birth,
When two strong men stand face to face,
though they come from the ends of the
earth.*

Kamal is out with twenty men to raise the
Border-side,
And he has lifted the Colonel's mare that is
the Colonel's pride :
He has lifted her out of the stable-door be-
tween the dawn and the day,
And turned the calkins upon her feet, and
ridden her far away.

The Ballad of East and West

Then up and spoke the Colonel's son that
led a troop of the Guides :—

“Is there never a man of all my men can
say where Kamal hides ?”

Then up and spoke Mahommed Khan, the
son of the Ressaldar :—

“If ye know the track of the morning-mist
ye know where his pickets are.

At dusk he harries the Abazai—at dawn he
is into Bonair ;

But he must go by Fort Bukloh to his own
place to fare.

So if ye gallop to Fort Bukloh as fast as a
bird can fly,

By the favor of God, ye may cut him off
ere he win to the Tongue of Jagai.

But if he be passed the Tongue of Jagai,
right swiftly turn ye then—

For the length and the breadth of that grisly
plain is sown with Kamal's men.

There is rock to the left, and rock to the
right, and low lean thorn between,

The Ballad of East and West

And ye may hear a breech-bolt snick where
never a man is seen."

The Colonel's son has taken a horse, and a
raw rough dun was he,

With the mouth of a bell, and the heart of
Hell, and the head of the gallows-
tree.

The Colonel's son to the Fort has won ;
they bid him stay to eat—

Who rides at the tail of a Border thief, he
sits not long at his meat.

He's up and away from Fort Bukloh as fast
as he can fly,

Till he was aware of his father's mare in the
gut of the Tongue of Jagai—

Till he was aware of his father's mare, with
Kamal upon her back,

And when he could spy the white of her
eye, he made the pistol crack.

He has fired once, he has fired twice, but
the whistling ball went wide.

"Ye shoot like a soldier," Kamal said.

"Show now if ye can ride."

The Ballad of East and West

It's up and over the Tongue of Jagai, as
blown dust-devils go—

The dun he fled like a stag of ten, but the
mare like a barren doe.

The dun he leaned against the bit and
slugged his head above,

But the red mare played with the snaffle-
bars as a maiden plays with a glove.

There was rock to the left, and rock to the
right, and low lean thorn between,

And thrice he heard a breech-bolt snick,
though never a man was seen.

They have ridden the low moon out of the
sky, their hoofs drum up the dawn—

The dun he went like a wounded bull, but
the mare like a new-roused fawn.

The dun he fell at a watercourse—in a
woful heap fell he,

And Kamal has turned the red mare back,
and pulled the rider free.

He has knocked the pistol out of his hand—
small room was there to strive—

The Ballad of East and West

“’Twas only by favor of mine,” quoth he,
“ye rode so long alive :
There was not a rock for twenty mile, there
was not a clump of tree,
But covered a man of my own men with his
rifle cocked on his knee.
If I had raised my bridle-hand, as I have
held it low,
The little jackals that flee so fast were feast-
ing all in a row :
If I had bowed my head on my breast, as I
have held it high,
The kite that whistles above us now were
gorged till she could not fly.”

Lightly answered the Colonel’s son : “ Do
good to bird and beast,
But count who come for the broken meats
before thou makest a feast.
If there should follow a thousand swords to
carry my bones away,
Belike the price of a jackal’s meal were
more than a thief could pay.

The Ballad of East and West

They will feed their horse on the standing
crop, their men on the garnered grain ;
The thatch of the byres will serve their fires
when all the cattle are slain.

But if thou thinkest the price be fair,—thy
brethren wait to sup—

The hound is kin to the jackal-spawn,—
howl, dog, and call them up !

And if thou thinkest the price be high, in
steer and gear and stack,

Give me my father's mare again, and I'll
fight my own way back ! ”

Kamal has gripped him by the hand and set
him upon his feet.

“ No talk shall be of dogs,” said he, “ when
wolf and gray wolf meet.

May I eat dirt if thou hast hurt of me in
deed or breath ;

What dam of lances brought thee forth to
jest at the dawn with Death ? ”

Lightly answered the Colonel's son : “ I
hold by the blood of my clan :

The Ballad of East and West

Take up the mare for my father's gift—by
God, she has carried a man ! ”

The red mare ran to the Colonel's son and
nuzzled against his breast.

“ We be two strong men,” said Kamal then,
“ but she loveth the younger best.

So shall she go with a lifter's dower, my
turquoise-studded rein,

My broidered saddle and saddle-cloth, and
silver stirrups twain.”

The Colonel's son a pistol drew and held it
muzzle-end.

“ Ye have taken the one from a foe,” said
he; “ will ye take the mate from a
friend ? ”

“ A gift for a gift,” said Kamal straight; “ a
limb for the risk of a limb.

Thy father has sent his son to me—I'll send
my son to him ! ”

With that he whistled his only son, that
dropped from a mountain-crest—

The Ballad of East and West

He trod the ling like a buck in spring, and
he looked like a lance in rest.

“Now, here is thy master,” Kamal said,
“who leads a troop of the Guides,
And thou must ride at his left side, as shield
on shoulder rides.

Till death or I cut loose the tie, at camp and
board and bed,
Thy life is his—thy fate it is to guard him
with thy head.

So thou must eat the White Queen's meat,
and all her foes are thine,
And thou must harry thy father's hold for
the peace of the Border-line:
And thou must make a trooper tough, and
hack thy way to power—
Belike they will raise thee to Ressaldar
when I am hanged in Peshawur.”

They have looked each other between the
eyes, and there they found no fault;
They have taken the Oath of the Brother-in-
Blood on leavened bread and salt;

The Ballad of East and West

They have taken the Oath of the Brother-in-
Blood on fire and fresh-cut sod,
On the hilt and the haft of the Khyber
knife, and the Wondrous Names of
God.

The Colonel's son he rides the mare, and
Kamal's boy the dun,
And two have come back to Fort Bukloh
where there went forth but one.
And when they drew to the Quarter-Guard,
full twenty swords flew clear—
There was not a man but carried his feud
with the blood of the mountaineer.
“Ha' done ! ha' done !” said the Colonel's
son. “Put up the steel at your sides!
Last night ye had struck at a Border thief—
to-night 'tis a man of the Guides !”

*Oh, East is East, and West is West, and
never the two shall meet,
Till Earth and Sky stand presently at
God's great Judgment Seat ;*

The Ballad of East and West

*But there is neither East nor West, Border,
nor Breed, nor Birth,
When two strong men stand face to face,
though they come from the ends of
the earth.*

The Last Suttee

[Not many years ago a King died in one of the Rajpoot States. His wives, disregarding the orders of the English against *suttee*, would have broken out of the palace had not the gates been barred. But one of them, disguised as the King's favorite dancing-girl, passed through the line of guards and reached the pyre. There, her courage failing, she prayed her cousin, a baron of the court, to kill her. This he did, not knowing who she was.]

UDAI CHAND lay sick to death

In his hold by Gungra hill.

All night we heard the death-gongs ring

For the soul of the dying Rajpoot King,

All night beat up from the women's wing

A cry that we could not still.

All night the barons came and went,

The lords of the outer guard:

All night the cressets glimmered pale

The Last Suttee

On Ulwar sabre and Tonk jezail,
Mewar headstall and Marwar mail,
That clinked in the palace yard.

In the Golden room on the palace roof
All night he fought for air;
And there was sobbing behind the screen,
Rustle and whisper of women unseen,
And the hungry eyes of the Boondi Queen
On the death she might not share.

He passed at dawn—the death-fire leaped
From ridge to river-bed,
From the Malwa plains to the Abu scaurs;
And wail upon wail went up to the stars
Behind the grim zenana-bars,
When they knew that the King was
dead.

The dumb priest knelt to tie his mouth
And robe him for the pyre.
The Boondi Queen beneath us cried,
“See, now, that we die as our mothers died,
In the bridal-bed by our master’s side!
Out, women!—to the fire!”

The Last Suttee

We drove the great gates home apace;
 White hands were on the sill:
But ere the rush of the unseen feet
Had reached the turn to the open street,
The bars shot down, the guard-drum beat—
 We held the dove-cot still.

A face looked down in the gathering day,
 And, laughing, spoke from the wall:
“Ohé, they mourn here : let me by—
Azizun, the Lucknow nautch-girl, I!
When the house is rotten, the rats must fly,
 And I seek another thrall.

“For I ruled the King as ne'er did Queen—
 To-night the Queens rule me!
Guard them safely, but let me go,
Or ever they pay the debt they owe
In scourge and torture!” She leaped be-
 low,
 And the grim guard watched her flee.

They knew that the King had spent his
 soul
 On a North-bred dancing-girl;

The Last Suttee

That he prayed to a flat-nose Lucknow god,
And kissed the ground where her feet had
 trod,
And doomed to death at her drunken nod,
 And swore by her lightest curl.

We bore the King to his fathers' place,
 Where the tombs of the Sun-born stand;
Where the gray apes swing, and the pea-
 cocks preen
On fretted pillar and jewelled screen,
And the wild boar couch in the house of
 the Queen
 On the drift of the desert sand.

The herald read his titles forth;
 We set the logs aglow:
"Friend of the English, free from fear,
Baron of Luni to Jeysulmeer,
Lord of the Desert of Bikaneer,
 King of the Jungle,—go!"

All night the red flame stabbed the sky
 With wavering wind-tossed spears;

The Last Suttee

And out of a shattered temple crept
A woman who veiled her head and wept,
And called on the King—but the great King
 slept,
And turned not for her tears.

Small thought had he to mark the strife—
 Cold fear with hot desire—
When thrice she leaped from the leaping
 flame,
And thrice she beat her breast for shame,
And thrice like a wounded dove she came
 And moaned about the fire.

One watched, a bow-shot from the blaze,
 The silent streets between,
Who had stood by the King in sport and
 fray,
To blade in ambush or boar at bay,
And he was a baron old and gray,
 And kin to the Boondi Queen.

He said: “O shameless, put aside
 The veil upon thy brow!

The Last Suttee

Who held the King and all his land
To the wanton will of a harlot's hand!
Will the white ash rise from the blistered
brand?
Stoop down and call him now!"

Then she: "By the faith of my tarnished
soul,
All things I did not well
I had hoped to clear ere the fire died,
And lay me down by my master's side,
To rule in Heaven his only bride,
While the others howl in Hell.

"But I have felt the fire's breath,
And hard it is to die!
Yet if I may pray a Rajpoot lord
To sully the steel of a Thakur's sword
With base-born blood of a trade abhorred,"—
And the Thakur answered, "Ay."

He drew and struck: the straight blade
drank
The life beneath the breast.

The Last Suttee

“I had looked for the Queen to face the
flame,
But the harlot dies for the Rajpoot dame.
Sister of mine, pass, free from shame—
Pass with thy King to rest!”

The black log crashed above the white;
The little flames and lean,
Red as slaughter and blue as steel,
That whistled and fluttered from head to
heel,
Leaped up anew—for they found their meal
On the heart of—the Boondi Queen!

The Ballad of the "Clampherdown"

It was our war-ship "Clampherdown"
Would sweep the Channel clean ;
Wherefore she kept her hatches close
When the merry Channel chops arose,
To save the bleached marine.

She had one bow-gun of a hundred ton,
And a great stern-gun beside ;
They dipped their noses deep in the sea,
They racked their stays and stanchions free
In the wash of the wind-whipped tide.

It was our war-ship "Clampherdown"
Fell in with a cruiser light
That carried the dainty Hotchkiss gun
And a pair o' heels wherewith to run
From the grip of a close-fought fight.

She opened fire at seven miles—
As ye shoot at a bobbing cork ;

The Ballad of the "Clampherdown"

And once she fired, and twice she fired,
Till the bow-gun drooped like a lily tired
That lolls upon the stalk.

"Captain, the bow-gun melts apace,
The deck-beams break below;
'Twere well to rest for an hour or twain,
And botch the shattered plates again."
And he answered, "Make it so."

She opened fire within the mile—
As ye shoot at the flying duck;
And the great stern-gun shot fair and true,
With the heave of the ship, to the stainless
blue,
And the great stern-turret stuck.

"Captain, the turret fills with steam,
The feed-pipes burst below—
You can hear the hiss of helpless ram,
You can hear the twisted runners jam."
And he answered, "Turn and go!"

It was our war-ship "Clampherdown,"
And grimly did she roll;

The Ballad of the "Clampherdown"

Swung round to take the cruiser's fire,
As the White Whale faces the Thresher's
 ire,
When they war by the frozen Pole.

"Captain, the shells are falling fast,
And faster still fall we;
And it is not meet for English stock
To bide in the heart of an eight-day clock
The death they cannot see."

"Lie down, lie down, my bold A. B.—
We drift upon her beam;
We dare not ram—for she can run;
And dare ye fire another gun,
And die in the peeling steam?"

It was our war-ship "Clampherdown"
That carried an armor-belt;
But fifty feet at stern and bow
Lay bare as the paunch of the purser's sow
To the hail of the Nordenfeldt.

"Captain, they lack us through and through;
The chilled-steel bolts are swift!

The Ballad of the "Clampherdown"

We have emptied the bunkers in open sea,
Their shrapnel bursts where our coal should
be."

And he answered, "Let her drift."

It was our war-ship "Clampherdown"
Swung round upon the tide;
Her two dumb guns glared south and
north,
And the blood and the bubbling steam ran
forth,
And she ground the cruiser's side.

"Captain, they cry the fight is done;
They bid you send your sword."
And he answered, "Grapple her stern and
bow.
They have asked for the steel. They shall
have it now
Out cutlasses and board!"

It was our war-ship "Clampherdown"
Spewed up four hundred men;

The Ballad of the "Clampherdown"

And the scalded stokers yelped delight,
As they rolled in the waist and heard the
 fight
Stamp o'er their steel-walled pen.

They cleared the cruiser end to end,
 From conning-tower to hold.
They fought as they fought in Nelson's
 fleet;
They were stripped to the waist, they were
 bare to the feet,
As it was in the days of old.

It was the sinking "Clampherdown"
 Heaved up her battered side—
And carried a million pounds in steel
To the cod and the corpse-fed conger-eel
 And the scour of the Channel tide.

It was the crew of the "Clampherdown"
 Stood out to sweep the sea,
On a cruiser won from an ancient foe,
As it was in the days of long-ago,
 And as it still shall be.

The Vampire

As suggested by the Painting by Philip Burne-Jones

A FOOL there was and he made his prayer
(Even as you and I!)

To a rag and a bone and a hank of hair
(We called her the woman who did not
care),

But the fool he called her his lady fair
(Even as you and I!)

*Oh the years we waste and the tears we
waste*

*And the work of our head and hand
Belong to the woman who did not know
(And now we know that she never could
know)*

And did not understand.

The Vampire

A fool there was and his goods he spent

(Even as you and I!)

Honor and faith and a sure intent

(And it wasn't the least what the lady
meant),

But a fool must follow his natural bent

(Even as you and I!)

Oh the toil we lost and the spoil we lost

And the excellent things we planned

*Belong to the woman who didn't know
why*

(And now we know she never knew why)

And did not understand.

The fool was stripped to his foolish hide

(Even as you and I!)

Which she might have seen when she threw
him aside—

(But it isn't on record the lady tried)

So some of him lived but the most of him
died—

(Even as you and I!)

The Vampire

*And it isn't the shame and it isn't the
blame*

That stings like a white-hot brand.

*It's coming to know that she never knew
why*

*(Seeing at last she could never know why)
And never could understand.*

Our Lady of the Snows

A NATION spoke to a nation,
A Queen sent word to a throne :
Daughter am I in my mother's house,
But mistress in my own.
The gates are mine to open
As the gates are mine to close,
And I set my house in order,
Said the Lady of the Snows.

Neither with laughter nor weeping,
Fear or the child's amaze,
Soberly under the white man's law
My white men go their ways.
Not for the Gentile's clamor,
Insult or threat of blows,
Bow we the knee of Baal,
Said our Lady of the Snows.

Our Lady of the Snows

My speech is clear and single,
I talk of common things,
Words of the wharf or market-place
And the ware the merchant brings.
Favor to those I favor,
But a stumbling-block for my foes,
Many there be that hate us,
Said our Lady of the Snows.

I called my chiefs to council,
In the din of a troubled year,
For the sake of a sign ye would not see
And a word ye would not hear.
This is our message and answer,
This is the path we chose,
For we be also a people,
Said our Lady of the Snows.

Carry the word to my sisters,
To the Queens of the East and South,
I have proved faith in the heritage
By more than a word of mouth.

Our Lady of the Snows 25

They that are wise may follow,
Ere the world's war-trumpet blows.
But I, I am first in the battle,
Said our Lady of the Snows.

A nation spoke to a nation,
A Queen sent word to a throne :
Daughter am I in my mother's house,
But mistress in my own.
The gates are mine to open
As the gates are mine to close,
And I abide in my mother's house,
Said our Lady of the Snows.

42267

Press of J. J. Little & Co.
Astor Place, New York



07
10

UC SOUTHERN REGIONAL LIBRARY FACILITY



A 000 671 272 3

