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POEMS

BY

AUBREY DE VERE



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POEMS

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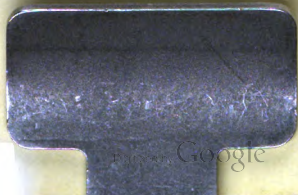
AUBREY DE VERE



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P O E M S

BY

AUBREY DE VERE.
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TO

THE VERY REVEREND

JOHN HENRY NEWMAN, D.D.

RECTOR OF THE CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY OF IRELAND,

ETC. ETC.

THIS VOLUME IS DEDICATED

WITH THE UTMOST RESPECT

AND GRATITUDE.

408687

INTRODUCTION.

NEARLY half of the present volume has been published before. Of the remaining poems few have been recently composed; though several have been retouched at a period later than that of their composition.

For one portion of them, that on "sacred subjects," some apology is, perhaps, due. Poetry, like every other authentic Art, finds, of course, her proper place among the Handmaidens of Religion. Her service, however, is twofold — direct and indirect: and when, without venturing to claim the title of sacred poetry, she yet treats directly on "sacred subjects," she may too often be charged with intruding into a region more elevated than her own. To Poetry commonly belongs rather the refracted and coloured beam than the white light; and the humblest is often the highest offering

which she can lay on the Altar. In illustrating that divine beauty which still hangs in broken gleams around a fallen world;—in tracing a love more than human which lives within the human affections;—in cherishing justice and truth as the foundations unremoved amid the fleeting pageantry of outward things;—and in thus inculcating fidelity to the righteous cause, especially when obscured or trampled down;—in doing these things, Poetry discharges a moral function, auxiliary to a higher teaching than her own: and thus much, without departing from her subordinate sphere, she cannot but do in proportion as her inspiration is pure, and her purpose sincere. In extenuation, then, of attempts which may be condemned as rash, I have only to observe that the sacred subjects touched on in the latter portion of this volume, belong, for the most part, rather to the border land of Religious Philosophy and Art, than to Religion, properly so called.

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P O E M S.

The Infant Bridal.

A TALE OF THE OLDEN TIME.

PART I.

1.

OF old between two nations was great war.

Its cause no mortal knew ; nor when begun ;
Therefore they combated so much the more,
The sire his sword bequeathing to the son :
Till gentleness and joy had wholly fled,
And well nigh every hand with blood was red.

2.

In vain the mother wept. Her sighs were blown
Away by the loud gust of popular rage.

In vain the young fair widow made her moan :

In vain the tender virgin would engage
Her love to gentler thoughts. He rushed to arms,
Proud of her beauty pale, and loud alarms.

B

3.

Glory, for Honour a blind substitute
 In hearts aspiring and a servile will,
 On to the battle chased them. Man and brute,
 Horseman and horse, by the same trumpet-thrill
 Were borne into the frenzy of red fields,
 Ghastly ere night with dead, upstaring from their shields.

4.

Glory at first, and after glory, Shame ;
 Shame to propose the compact, first to bend ;
 And Fear, which masks full oft in Valour's name,
 And doth false honour like a shade attend ;
 Fear to be thought to fear—these plagues did urge
 The maniacs forward with a threefold scourge.

5.

Both kingdoms raging thus in fever fit
 More direful every hour became their spleen :
 The sleeping boy full oft his brow would knit
 Against a foeman he had never seen :
 Full oft the man of venerable hairs
 Bowed to the dust his head depressed by griefs and cares.

6.

Valley and town lay drowned in tears and sorrow.
 Each noontide trembled with perturbed annoy :
 And no one dared expect a kinder morrow.
 To be a mother was no more a joy.
 Hope no more hovered o'er the cradle. Love
 Wept ; and no friend had heart such anguish to reprove.

7.

How often to a little sleeping child,
Smiling, and sleeping on the mother's knee,
That mother thus complained. "Ah, little child!
"God only knows if it be good for thee
"My comforter, my solace, to have come
"Down to this world so harsh and wearisome!

8.

"Happy awhile with me thy spirit dwells;
"Awhile contented 'mid the petty range
"Of daily things, to thee all miracles.
"For arms thou dost not sigh, nor pant for change.
"Thy dreams are bloodless: thou dost smile when sleeping,
"In Eden founts thy new-born fancies steeping.

9.

"Ah, must that brow, so clear, so smooth, so white,
"By a hard ruthless helm be one day prest?
"Ah, must the red lance in its murderous might
"One day pierce through, and gore that tender breast?
"Ah, little infant! must thou lie one day
"Far, far from me, cold clay upon cold clay?

10.

"Wherefore so fast do these thy ringlets grow?
"Stay little child, be always what thou art,
"That I may ever, while the rough winds blow,
"Clasp thee as now, and hide thee in my heart.
"Where found you those new words? I fear each day
"To hear thee cry, 'Mother, I must away.'

11.

“Is this to be a mother? I am none—

“And yet I fear to lose a gift not prized.

“Is this, ah God, to have a little son?

“Are these my prayers? my dreams thus realized?

“Defrauded of my own while visibly here,

“How can I hope, O child, to deck far off thy bier?”

PART II.

1.

THE hosts, in silence marching on all night,

At sunrise met upon the battle plain.

The monarchs there engaged in single fight:

There by a rival's hand was either slain.

Long time men stood in gloom, stern, and sad-hearted;

Then, bound by solemn vows, homeward in peace
departed.

2.

A counsel went there forth. Each King had left

Behind a blooming infant; one a boy,

A girl the other; both alike bereft;

Both innocent; both meet for love and joy;

Both heirs of sorrow. Holy Church these twain

Shall join in one, men cried; and peace be ours again.

3.

Who first devised the expedient no one knows.

Perhaps old sages, after long debate,
And loud lament of immemorial woes,

Bending their deep brows in a hall of State,
Conceived the project : and from Fancy sought
A cure for ills by rage fantastic wrought.

4.

Some chief perhaps, of all his sons bereft,

And now half blind in his forlorn old age,
Cried loud in anguish while his tower he left

To hide him in a moss-grown hermitage,
"Hear ye my words, and on your hearts engrain them,
"Love gave me many children : Hate hath slain them."

5.

Haply some maiden, for the war deserted,

Exclaimed, "I would that little warlike pair
"Had loved as long as war the loved hath parted."

Perhaps kind angels called her wish a prayer.
Enough : I tell an ancient legend, told
By better men than I, long dead and cold.

6.

While the young bride in triumph home was led,

They strewed beneath her litter branches green ;
And kissed light flowers, then rained them on a head

Unconscious as the flowers what all might mean.
Men, as she past them, knelt ; and women raised
Their children in their arms, who laughed and gazed.

7.

That pomp approaching woodland villages,
Or shadowing convents piled near rivers dim,
The church-bells from grey towers girt round with trees,
Reiterated their loud, wordless hymn ;
And golden cross, and snowy choir serene
Moved on, old trunks, and older towers between.

8.

An hour ere sunset from afar they spied
The city walls : dark myriads round them clinging :
Now o'er a carpeted expanse they glide ;
Now the old bridge beneath their tread is ringing :
They reach the gate—they pass the towers below—
And now once more emerge, a glittering show !

9.

O what a rapturous shout receives them, blending
Uncounted bells with chime of human voices !
That fortress old, as on they wind ascending,
Like the mother of some victor chief rejoices.
From every window tapestries wave : among
The steep & glittering roofs group above group they throng !

10.

The shrine is gained. Two mighty gates expanding
Let forth a breeze of music onward gushing,
In pathos lulled, yet awful and commanding ;
Down sink the crowds, at once their murmur hushing.
Filled with one soul, the smooth procession slowly
Advances with joined palms, cross-led, and lowly.

11.

Lo! where they stand in yon high, fan-roofed chamber—
Martyrs and Saints in dyed and mystic glass
With sumptuous haloes, vermeil, green and amber,
Flood the far aisles, and all that by them pass :
Rich like their painter's visions—in those gleams
Blazoning the burden of his Patmian dreams !

12.

A forest of tall lights in mystic cluster
Like fire-topped reeds, from their aerial station
Pour on the group a mild and silver lustre :
Beneath the blessing of that constellation
The rite proceeds—pure source whence rich increase
Of love henceforth, and piety, and peace.

13.

Small was the ring, and small in truth the finger !
What then ? the faith was large that dropped it down ;
A faith to Heaven that soared (for Hope had winged her)
And won from Heaven a perdurable crown.
A germ of Love, at plighting of that troth
Into each bosom sank ; and grew there with its growth.

14.

The ladies held aloft the bridal pair :
They on each other smiled, and gazed around
With unabashed delight, and generous air,
Their infant brows with golden circlet bound.
The prelates blessed them, and the nobles swore
True faith and fealty by the swords they bore.

15.

Home to the palace, still in order keeping,
That train returned ; and in the stateliest room
Laid down their lovely burden, all but sleeping,
Together in one cradle's curtained gloom :
And lulled them with low melody, and song,
And jest past lightly 'mid the courtly throng.

16.

Great is the sanctity of marriage rites—
Therefore of these will I no more declare.
Comus, away ! and ye, too curious Sprites,
Touch not that couch, that curtain's fringe forbear !
Sleep, little lovers, sleep at will, or wake—
Good night ! our worthless song must not your slum-
bers break.

PART III.

1.

AH, lovely sight ! behold them—creatures twain,
Hand in hand wandering through some verdant alley,
Or sunny lawn of their serene domain,
Their wind-caught laughter echoing musically ;
Or skimming in pursuit of bird-cast shadows
With feet immaculate the enamelled meadows.

2.

Tiptoe now stand they by some towering lily ;
And fain would peer into its snowy cave :
Now the boy bending o'er some current chilly,
The feebler backward draws him from the wave ;
But he persists, and gains for her at last
Some bright flower from the dull weeds hurrying past.

3.

Oft if some aged priest the cloister crossed,
Both hands they caught ; and bade him explicate
(That nought of good through idlesse might be lost)
At large all duties of the nuptial state.
And oft each other kissed with infant glee,
As though this were some great solemnity.

4.

In some old missal sometimes would they look,
Touching with awe the illuminated page ;
And scarce for tears the spectacle might brook
Of babes destroyed by Herod's murderous rage.
Here sank a Martyr in ensanguined vest :
With more familiar smile there beamed the Virgin blest.

5.

Growing, their confidence as quickly grew :
Light pet, and childish quarrel seldom came.
To make them lighter yet, and yet more few,
Their nurse addressed them thus—an ancient dame—
“ Children, what perfect love should dwell, I ween,
“ ’Twixt husband and young wife, ’twixt King and Queen.

6.

"The turtle, widowed of her mate, no more
 "Lifts her lone head ; but pines, and pining dies.
 "In many a tomb 'mid yon Cathedral hoar,
 "Monarch or Knight beside his lady lies :
 "Such tenderness and truth they shewed, that fate
 "No power was given their dust to separate.

7.

"Rachael, not less, and Ruth whereof men read
 "In book ordained our life below to guide,
 "Loved her own husband each, in word and deed,
 "Loved him full well, nor any loved beside.
 "And Orpheus too, and Pyramus, men say,
 "Though Paynim born, lived true, and so shall live for aye.

8.

"What makes us, children, to good Angels dear ?
 "Unblemished Truth, and hearts in sweet accord.
 "These also draw the people to revere
 "With stronger faith their King and Sovereign Lord.
 "Then perfect make your love, and amity
 "Always : but most of all if men are by."

9.

Such lore receiving oft-times hand in hand
 Those babes walked gravely : at the garden gates
 Meantime the multitude would flock and stand,
 And hooded nuns look downwards from their grates.
 These when the Princes marked, they moved awhile
 With loftier step, and more majestic smile :

10.

Or sat enthroned upon some broidered bank
 (The lowlier flowers in wrecks around them thrown)
 Shadowed with roses rising rank on rank :
 And there, now wreathed, now leaning into one,
 They talked, and kissed, again and yet again,
 To please good Angels thus ; and win good men.

11.

Swift rolled the years. The boy now twelve years old,
 Vowed to the Cross and honourable war,
 For Palestine deserts our northland cold.
 Her husband—playmate—is he hers no more !
 Up to his hand, now timid first she crept,—
 ‘ Farewell,’ he said : she sighed. He kissed her and she wept.

12.

A milk-white steed ; a crest whose snowy pride
 Like wings, or maiden tresses drooped apart :
 A Cross between : and (every day new dyed)
 Fair emblem on his shield, a bleeding heart,
 Marked him far off from all. Not mine to tell
 What fields his valour won : what knights before him fell.

13.

No barbarous rage that host impelled ; but zeal
 For Christian faith, and sacred rights profaned !
 And Triumph smiled upon the avenging steel
 That smote the haughty, and set free the chained.
 Foremost he fought. In Victory’s final hour
 Star-bright he shone from Salem’s topmost tower !

14.

Swift as that Fame, which like an Angel ran
Before him on a glory-smitten road,
Homeward the princely boy returned, a man.
A lovelier Angel graced their old abode—
But where his youthful playmate ? where ? half-dazed
Each on the other's beauty wondering gazed.

15.

Strange joy they found all day in wandering over
The spots in which their childish sports had been ;
Husband and wife whilome, now loved and lover,
A broken light brightened yet more the scene !
Night came : a gay yet startled bride he led,
Old rites scarce trusting, to the bridal bed.

16.

No more remains of all this grand old story.
They loved with love eternal : spent their days
In peace, in good to man, in genuine glory.
No spoils unjust they sought, nor unjust praise.
Their children loved them and their people blessed—
God grant us all such lives—in Heaven for aye such rest !

17.

But ye profane and unbelieving crowd !
Who dare to mock our childish bridal, cease !
Make answer first, and answer make aloud,
Unblest was that which gave two kingdoms peace ?
Much less, much less the high-souled Muse approves
Grey hairs in rage and hate, than infant loves !

King Henry the Second at the
Tomb of King Arthur.

PART I.

1.

WHY put the great in Time their trust ?
 Whate'er on earth we prize
 Of dust was made, and is but dust,
 For all its brave disguise.
 No boor but one day with the just
 May triumph in the skies !

2.

Ambition doth but chase a gleam.
 An idol toy the sword !
 The crown a mockery ; power a dream—
 For Christ alone is Lord.
 This lore King Henry learned :—Of him
 I will a tale record.

3.

The tourney past, in festival
Baron and knight were met :
Last pomp it was that graced the hall
Of great Plantagenet ;
A Prince for valour praised by all,
More famed for wisdom yet.

4.

The board rang loud with kingly cheer :
Light jest, and laugh, and song
Rang swiftly round from peer to peer :
Alone on that gay throng
The harper looked with eye severe,
The while in unknown tongue

5.

A mournful dirge abroad he poured ;
Sad strains, forlorn, and slow :
Poor wreck of music prized and stored
Long centuries ago
On Briton hills ere Saxon sword
Had stained as yet their snow.

6.

“Strike other chords,” the monarch cried ;
“Whate’er thy words may be,
“They sound the dirge of festal pride :
“Warriors, not monks are we !
“The melodies to grief allied
“No music make for me.”

7. .

The harper's eye with warlike fire
One moment shone ; no more.
His lips, but now compressed in ire,
A smile disdainful wore,
While forth from each resounding wire
Its fiercer soul he tore.

8.

Louder and louder pealed the strain,
More wild, and soul-entrancing :
Picturing now helmets cloven in twain ;
Now swords like meteors glancing ;
Now trampling hosts o'er hill and plain
Retreating and advancing.

9.

Each measure, mightier than the last,
Rushed forth, stern triumphs wooing ;
Like some great angel on the blast
From Heaven to Heaven pursuing
With outspread pinion, far and fast,
A host abhorred to ruin.

10.

The bard meanwhile with cold, stern air,
Looked proudly on the proud,
Fixing unmoved a victor's stare
On that astonished crowd—
'Till all the princes gathered there
Leaped up, and cried aloud :

11.

“What man, what chief, what crownèd head,
“Eternal heir of fame,
“Of all that live, or all the dead,
“This praise shall dare to claim ?”—
Then rose that British bard, and said,
“King Arthur is his name.”

12.

“What sceptre grasped King Arthur’s hand ?”
“The sceptre of this Isle.”
“What nations bled beneath his brand ?”
“The Saxon foe erewhile.”
“His tomb ?” was Henry’s next demand—
“He sleeps in yonder pile.”

13.

Forth went the King with all his train,
At the mid hour of night ;
They paced in pairs the silent plain
Under the red torch-light.
The moon was sinking in her wane,
The tower yet glimmered bright.

PART II.

1.

THROUGH Glastonbury's cloister dim
 The midnight winds were sighing ;
 Chaunting a low funereal hymn
 For those in silence lying,
 Death's gentle flock 'mid shadows grim
 Fast bound, and unreplying.

2.

Hard by, the monks their mass were saying ;
 The organ evermore
 Its wave in alternation swaying
 On that smooth swell upbore
 The voice of their melodious praying
 Toward heaven's eternal shore.

3.

Ere long a princely multitude
 Moved on through arches grey
 Which yet, though shattered, stand where stood
 (God grant they stand for aye !)
 Saint Joseph's church of woven wood
 On England's baptism day.

4.

The grave they found ; their swift strokes fell
Piercing dull earth and stone.
They reached ere long an oaken cell,
And cross of oak, whereon
Was graved, " Here sleeps King Arthur well,
" In the Isle of Avalon."

5.

The mail on every knightly breast,
The steel at each man's side,
Sent forth a sudden gleam : each crest
Bowed low its plumed pride :
Down o'er the coffin stooped a priest—
But first the monarch cried,

6.

" Great King ! in youth I made a vow
" Earth's mightiest son to greet ;
" His hand to worship ; on his brow
" To gaze ; his grace entreat.
" Therefore, though dead, till noontide thou
" Shalt fill my royal seat !"

7.

Away the massive lid they rolled—
Alas ! what found they there ?
No kingly brow, no shapely mould ;
But dust where such things were.
Ashes o'er ashes, fold on fold—
And one bright wreath of hair.

8.

Genevra's hair ! like gold it lay ;
For Time, though stern, is just,
And humbler things feel last his sway,
And Death reveres his trust.—
They touched that wreath ; it sank away
From sunshine into dust !

9.

Then Henry lifted from his head
The Conqueror's iron crown :
That crown upon that dust he laid,
And knelt in reverence down,
And raised both hands to heaven, and said,
"Thou God art King alone !

10.

"Lie there, my crown, since God decrees
"This head a couch as low.
"What am I better now than these
"Six hundred years ago ?
"Henceforth all mortal pageantries
"I count an idle show."

11.

Such words King Henry spake : and ere
The cloistral vaults had felt
Along their arches damp and bare
The last faint echo melt,
The nobles congregated there,
On that cold pavement knelt :

12.

And each his coronet down laid,
And Christ his King adored ;
And murmured in that mournful shade,
“Thou God alone art Lord.
“Like yonder hair, at last shall fade
“Each sceptre, crown, and sword.”

Epitaph.

HE roamed half round this world of woe,
Where toil and labour never cease ;
Then dropped one little span below,
In search of Peace.

And now to him mild beams and showers,
All that he needs to grace his tomb,
From loneliest regions, at all hours,
Unsought-for come.

The Solitary.

1.

A SAD Thought came there to my breast,
 And said, "I walk the world unblest :
 "I pray thee, let me be thy guest.
 "Each heart is full of its own care.
 "To me no space it deigns to spare.
 "A generous grief not one will bear.
 "The orb of earth like night I roam ;
 "But never found I yet a home :
 "Therefore at last to thee I come."

2.

I let him in—for youth is kind ;
 Nor dare I call its prompture blind ;
 Though bitter fruits remain behind.
 He stay'd a day with me; and then
 I could not let him go again :
 I said, "Abide a week or twain."
 All day he sang ; all night he kept
 Long vigils near me as I slept.
 Thus on into my heart he crept.

3.

He said, " If thou my lore wilt know,
 " And bear my heavenly pain below,
 " Then thou shalt taste no baser woe.
 " And, careless of thy proper weal,
 " Thou for thy suffering race shalt feel
 " Deep pity and eternal zeal.
 " And, dwelling in thy place alone,
 " Thou shalt look down, thyself unknown,
 " Upon all knowledge round thee strewn.

4.

O Lady! turn those eyes away :
 For when their beams upon me play,
 The whole wide world grows blank and grey!
 Disturb not thou a lonely fate.
 A milder beauty is my mate :
 And I to her am dedicate.
 Pass onward, beautiful as morn !
 Pass on, and shine on hearts forlorn.
 Pass on from me—but not in scorn.

5.

In thee collecting all her gleams,
 As from a centre Beauty beams—
 I catch that light on leaves and streams.
 In waving boughs, and winding shells,
 In buds, in clouds, thy beauty dwells :
 From all the birds thy music wells.

In thought familiar thus with thee,
Thine outward form I will not see ;
It jars upon my reverie.

6.

Nay, oft from lifeless shapes around,
My dazzled eyeballs seek the ground :
And my heart beats with awe profound.

I sit upon the dull grey shore ;
And hear the infinite waters roar—
One mournful sound for evermore.

I lean upon a rock my breast.
I love its coldness, heart-oppress'd.
I love its hardness, and its rest.

Song.

1.

BREATH divine of morning odours !
Breath of blossoms, breath of buds !
Onward borne in winged chorus,
Through the alleys and old woods ;
And thou stream, that lightly flowing,
Dost thy pretty mirth enforce ;

Flash, and laugh, and crystal ripple,
Hurrying in perpetual course !
O the joy to walk, low-singing,
Through those blooming vales, and say
Another morn hath stooped from heaven
With our aged earth to play !

2.

Phosphor, through my casement peeping,
On my folded eyelids shone ;
“Wake,” he sang, “no more of sleeping,
“Shadows melt, the night is gone !”
A bird that with the year is ripening,
One brief moment wakes to pour
Through the boughs wild jets of music,
Then sinks in sleep once more !
O the joy to walk, low-singing,
Through those blooming woods, and say
Another spring hath dropped from heaven
With our aged earth to play !

Song.

1.

SING the old song, amid the sounds dispersing
 That burden treasured in your hearts too long ;
 Sing it with voice low breathed, but never name her.
 She will not hear you, in her turrets nursing
 High thoughts, too high to mate with mortal song—
 Bend o'er her, gentle Heaven, but do not claim her !

2.

In twilight caves, and secret lonelinesses,
 She shades the bloom of her unearthly days ;—
 The forest winds alone approach to woo her.
 Far off we catch the dark gleam of her tresses ;
 And wild birds haunt the wood-walks where she strays,
 Intelligible music warbling to her.

3.

That Spirit charged to follow and defend her,
 He also, doubtless, suffers this love-pain ;
 And she perhaps is sad, hearing his sighing.
 And yet that face is not so sad as tender ;
 Like some sweet singer's, when her sweetest strain
 From the heaved heart is gradually dying !

Queen Bertha¹ at her Vespers.

1.

HALF kneeling yet, and half reclining,
 She held her harp against her knees :
 Aloft the ruddy roofs were shining,
 And sunset touched the trees.
 From the gold border gleamed like snow
 Her foot : a crown enriched her brow :
 Dark gems confined that crimson vest,
 Close-moulded on her neck and breast.

2.

In silence lay the cloistral court,
 And shadows of the convent towers :
 Well ordered now in stately sort
 Those royal halls and bowers.
 The organ's peal had just swept by—
 Bright arms lay quivering yet on high :
 Thereon the warriors gazed, and then
 Glanced lightly at the Queen again.

3.

While from her lip the wild hymn floated,
 Such grace in those uplifted eyes,
 And sweet, half absent looks, they noted
 That, surely, through the skies

(1) Queen Bertha was the wife of Ethelbert, first Christian King of Kent.

They deemed her soul went floating ever
Upon that song's perpetual river,
And, smiling from its joyous track,
Upon her heavenly face looked back.

Queen Bertha's Vigil.

1.

BESIDE the casement of her bower
So tall the garden pageants grew,
With every breeze each glimmering flower
Its moonlit dews waved through :
White in the radiance glanced the fawn ;
Flitted the hare from lawn to lawn ;
By close, broad firs, that flecked the sheen,
And barred with black the silver green.

2.

Far off, like mighty cliffs, their shade
Over a waste of waves that cast,
The castle walls o'er wood and glade
Flung down their darkness vast.
Answering a monarch's joyous call,
Far lands kept there high festival :
There flocked the noble and the fair—
The fairest, noblest was not there.

3.

And yet for her no flowers were blowing :
No listening dell or vale profound
Enjoyed her breath : for her was flowing
Nor glassy stream, nor stream of sound !
In vain the birds their raptures squandered :
The winds that through her chamber wandered,
And o'er her pillow brushed serene,
But found the place where she had been !

4.

The Moon, whose glory swelled with light
Each liliated slope and laurelled mound,
With touch more sharp and exquisite,
Defined one rock cross-crowned.
Like argent flames or spires of frost
Uprose that shape of stone, embossed
With breeze-worn sculptures quaint and mild
Of Maid and Angel, King and Child.

5.

There on her knees the Queen was praying :
On that cold marble leaned her breast ;
Prayer after prayer devoutly saying,
With palms together pressed.
There for her Lord she prayed aloud,
Prayed for her people, blind and proud—
That Heaven would chase away their night,
That God would bathe his heart in light !

Queen Bertha's Alms.

1.

GLAD as that thrill some princely birth
 With hushed yet rapturous omen gracing,
 The stir, as from her palace forth
 The young fair Queen came pacing.
 But here no pompous guard was set ;
 No flattering concourse gathered round :
 The poor about her gate were met :
 The readiest place the poorest found.

2.

Like youthful angels, all alert
 The Queen dispensed her bounteous load :
 On those whom keenest fates had hurt,
 Her earlier gifts bestowed.
 Her face the maniac's rage beguiled—
 She turned her now among the ring,
 And paused, above a poor blind child,
 The sweetest of her songs to sing !

3.

Kind gifts to some, kind words to more ;
 Kind looks to each and all she gave,
 Which on with them through life they bore,
 And down into their grave.

Around her feet the children crept,
 And kissed the grass those feet had trod ;
 Whilst eyes that many a year had wept,
 With tears of gladness gemmed the sod.

4.

The chiming of the convent bells
 Called her at last away to prayer :
 Farewell she smiled on their farewells—
 And turned ; when, unaware,
 An old grey man with hands outspread,
 She marked low-bent on quivering knee :
 Over his brow she stooped and said,
 “ A kiss is all I have for thee.”

Queen Bertha's Matin Song.

THE morning-star was rising—
 O'er ocean's tremulous crystal hung,
 His bright feet touched the billow,
 His glance o'er earth he flung.
 On the young Queen it played,
 Yet warm and disarray'd,
 As, leaping lightly from her pillow,
 The golden harp she swayed.

Hide not the clouds among,
 Brightest star, and fairest !
 Until her song those heavens along
 Between thy wings thou bearest.

1.

“Thou that on my dreams
 “All night long wert beaming,
 “O'er shining leaves and silver streams
 “Brighter now art gleaming !
 “Every fountain hath
 “Light thy keen smiles give her :
 “In every bay-leaf's dewy bath
 “Thy soft swift glances quiver !”
 Hide not the clouds among,
 Brightest star, and fairest !
 Until her song those heavens along
 Between thy wings thou bearest.

2.

“Heaven doth laugh above,
 “Earth below is gay,
 “And souls that walk 'twixt light and love
 “Shall walk in joy alway !
 “White as yon lily sweet,
 “That springs, while cold airs fan it,
 “A virgin-spouse her mate to greet
 “In thee, glad matin Planet !”
 Hide not the clouds among,
 Brightest star, and fairest !
 Until her song those heavens along
 Between thy wings thou bearest.

3.

" All the starry hosts,
 " And all the angelic band,
 " At once o'er all the ethereal coasts
 " Leap'd forth at God's command.
 " But surely from afar
 " 'Twas thee men saw on high,
 " When Darkness fled before the star
 " Of Christ's Nativity."
 Hide not the clouds among,
 Brightest star, and fairest!
 Until her song those heavens along
 Between thy wings thou bearest.

4.

" When the earth was made
 " Stars and angels sang :
 " When Christ was in the manger laid,
 " More loud the anthem rang.
 " But louder yet those choirs
 " The last great morn shall blend
 " Their heavenly songs and heavenly fires,
 " While thou dost last ascend !"
 Hide not the clouds among,
 Brightest star, and fairest !
 Until her song those heavens along
 Between thy wings thou bearest.

The Martyrs of Fatherland.

A CHORAL ODE.

“Dulce et decorum est pro patria mori.”

1.

Go forth, fierce Song, no idle chime !
 We fought and sang ; we sing and die ;
 But first into the tide of Time
 We fling the book of Prophecy.
 For ages we have fought this fight ;
 For ages fenced our land from wrong :—
 How long, Holy and Just, how long,
 Shall lawless might oppress the right ?
 No dreamy influence chains my song !
 Too long suspended it has hung,
 Like glaciers bending in their trance
 From cliffs, some hornèd valley's wall ;
 One flash—from God one ireful glance,
 To vengeful floods hath changed them all.
 Down, headlong torrents ('tis your hour
 Of triumph) on the Invading Power !

2.

Woe, woe to Tyrants! Who are they ?
 Whence come they ? Whither are they sent ?
 Who gave them first their baleful sway
 O'er ocean, isle, and continent ?

D

Wild beasts they are, ravening for aye ;
 Vultures that make the world their prey ;
 Pests ambushed in the noontide day ;
 Ill stars of ruin and dismay.
 We heard them coming from afar ;
 Heard, and rushed into the war.
 We kissed our fathers' graves, and rose ;
 And rushed to meet our country's foes. •

3.

Woe, woe to Tyrants ! Tyrants say
 That men were shaped but to obey.
 Dead spokes alone, to roll and reel
 Within their car's revolving wheel !
 Let them take heed ; for they have driven
 In frenzy o'er an alien plain,
 Till earth's deep groans are heard in heaven,
 And fire bursts from those wheels amain. --
 Not soon the stormy flames expire,
 When hearts, contagious in their ire,
 Burst forth, like forests catching fire.

4.

Or else this madness preys upon their spirit ;
 That all good things to man's estate that fall
 Come from their sacred prescience—they inherit
 Wisdom divine to nurse this mundane ball !

Yea, they apportion times ; with care dispensing
 The seasons ; when to sow, what days for reaping,
 What space for feeding, labouring, praying, sleeping ;

With stellar beams our harvests influencing ;

Forth from the heaven of high conceit diffusing
 Sunshine and breeze amid our murmuring grain ;
 Showering the former, and the latter rain—

Or else with groans their vacant hours amusing,
 And sending forth a famine to fulfil

On men of froward heart the counsels of their will !

Such airy dream to realize,

All rights, all landmarks they despise :

On every hearth the Invader's foot

Stands, impertunate and brute :

Round every bed a serpent creeps :

They make along the venomed wall

The hundred-footed whisper crawl—

But Vengeance in a moment leaps

Forth from the frowning caverns of her noontide sleeps !

5.

From heaven the curse was shaken

On this predestined head :

From thy hand the plague was taken ;

By a mightier vengeance sped.

Barbaric hosts like rain

Came flooding vale and plain :

I fought, but fought in vain :—

From the trance of war I waken.

Mine is the sorrow,

Mine, and for ever :
 Who can turn back again
 The shaft into the quiver ?
 Who can assuage my pain ?
 Who can make calm my brain ?
 Who can deliver ?

6.

But within me thoughts are rising,
 Severer thoughts, and soul sufficing :
 Swift, like clouds in exhalation,
 Come they rushing : whilst a glory
 Falls on locks this fiery Passion
 Turns from black to hoary !
 Voices round me born in clangour
 Sound the trump of things to be :
 And heavenly flashes of wise anger
 Give my spirit light to see
 The great Future, and aright
 Judge this judgment of to-night.

7.

I trembled when the strife began—
 Woman, my clasped hands trembled,
 With ill-timed weakness ill dissembled.
 But now beyond the strength of man,
 My strength has in a moment grown ;
 And I no more my griefs deplore
 Than doth a shape of stone.
 A marble shape, storm-filled, and fair
 With might resurgent from despair,

I walk triumphant o'er my woe :
For well I feel and well I know,
That God with me this wrong sustains,
And, in me swelling, bursts my chains !

8.

And dost thou make thy boast then of their lying
All cold, upon the mountain and the plain,
My sons whom thou hast slain ?
And that nor tears nor sighing
Can raise their heads again ?
My sons, not vainly have ye died,
For ye your country glorified !
Each moment as in death ye bowed,
On high your martyred souls ascended ;
Yea, soaring in perpetual cloud,
This earth with heaven ye blended—
A living chain in death ye wove ;
And rising, raised our world more near those worlds
above !

9.

They perish idly ? they in vain ?
When not a sparrow to the plain
Drops uncared for ! Tyrant ! they
Are radiant with eternal day !
And oft, unseen, on us they turn
Those looks that make us inly burn,
And swifter through our pulses flow
The bounding blood, their blood below !
How little cause have those for fear
Whose outward forms alone are here !

How nigh are they to Heaven, who there
 Have stored their earliest, tenderest care !
 Whate'er was ours of erring pride,
 This agony hath sanctified.
 Our destined flower thy blasts but tear
 Its sacred seed o'er earth to bear !
 O'er us the storm hath passed, and we
 Are standing here immovably
 Upon the platform of the Right ;
 And we are inwardly as bright
 As those last drops which hang like fire,
 Close-clustered on the piny spire,
 When setting suns their glories pour
 On yellow vales perturbed no more ;
 While downward from the eagle's wing
 One feather falls in tremulous ring,
 And far away the wearied storms retire.

10.

I heard, prophetic in my dreams,
 The roaring of tumultuous streams,
 While downward, from their sources torn,
 Came pines and rocks in ruin borne.
 Then spake that Storm to me and said,
 " Quake thou with awe, but not with dread :
 " For these are thrones and empires rolled
 " Down Time's broad torrent, as of old.
 " But thou those flowers remember well,
 " By foaming floods in peace that dwell ;
 " For thus 'mid wrecks of fear and strife,
 " Rise up the joys of hourly life ;

“ And all pure bonds and charities
“ Exhale their sweetness to the skies.
“ But woe to haughtier spirits. They,
“ At God’s command, are swept away,
“ Into the gulfs that know not day.”

11.

And now my song is sung. I go
Far up to fields of endless snow.
Alone till death I walk ; unsoiled
By air the tyrants have defiled.
Over a cheek no longer pale
I drop henceforth a funeral veil ;
And only dimmed and darkened see
The mountains I have looked on free.
Ye that below abide, unblest,
Paint now no more with flowers yon dells ;
Nor speak in tone like that which swells,
Loud-echoed from the freeman’s breast :
In sable garments walk, and spread
With searments black your buried dead.
Farewell to all : I go alone ;
And dedicate henceforth my days
To muse on God’s high will, and raise
My hands toward th’ eternal Throne.
And I beneath the stars will thread
The dark beads of my rosaries ;
And ofttimes earthward bow my head,
And listen ofttimes for the tread
Of some far herald, swiftly sent,
To crown with light a shape time-bent,

And dry a childless widow's eyes
 With tidings grave of high content,
 Wherein unheeded prophecies
 Shall have their great accomplishment!

To Burns's "Highland Mary."

1.

O LOVED by him whom Scotland loves,
 Long loved, and honoured duly
 By all who love the bard who sang
 So sweetly and so truly!
 In cultured dales his song prevails;
 Thrills o'er the eagle's aëry,—
 Ah! who that strain has caught, nor sighed
 For Burns's "Highland Mary?"

2.

I wandered on from hill to hill,
 I feared nor wind nor weather;
 For Burns beside me trode the moor,
 Beside me pressed the heather.
 I read his verse:—his life—alas!
 O'er that dark shades extended:—
 With thee at last, and him in thee,
 My thoughts their wanderings ended.

3.

His golden hours of youth were thine ;
Those hours whose flight is fleetest :
Of all his songs to thee he gave
The freshest and the sweetest.
Ere ripe the fruit, one branch he brake,
All rich with bloom and blossom ;
And shook its dews, its incense shook,
Above thy brow and bosom.

4.

And when his Spring, alas, how soon !
Had been by care subverted,
His Summer, like a god repulsed,
Had from his gates departed ;
Beneath the evening star, once more,
Star of his morn and even !
To thee his suppliant hands he spread,
And hailed his love "in heaven."

5.

And if his spirit in "a waste
Of shame" too oft was squandered,
And if too oft his feet ill-starred
In ways erroneous wandered ;
Yet still his spirit's spirit bathed
In purity eternal ;
And all fair things through thee retained
For him their aspect vernal.

6.

Nor less that tenderness remained
Thy favouring love implanted ;
Compunctious pity, yearnings vague
For love to earth not granted ;
Reserve with freedom, female grace
Well matched with manly vigour,
In songs where fancy twined her wreaths
Round judgment's stalwart rigour.

7.

A mute but strong appeal was made
To him by feeblest creatures :
In his large heart had each a part
That part had found in Nature's.
The wildered sheep, sagacious dog,
Old horse reduced and crazy ;
The field-mouse by the plough upturned,
And violated daisy.

8.

In him there burned that passionate glow,
All Nature's soul and savour,
Which gives its hue to every flower,
To every fruit its flavour.
Nor less the kindred power he felt ;—
That love of all things human,
Whereof the fiery centre is
The love man bears to woman.

9.

He sang the dignity of man,
Sang woman's grace and goodness ;
Passed by the world's half-truths, her lies
Pierced through with lance-like shrewdness.
Upon life's broad highways he stood,
And aped nor Greek nor Roman ;
But snatched from heaven Promethean fire
To glorify things common.

10.

He sang of youth, he sang of age,
Their joys, their griefs, their labours ;
Felt with, not for, the people ; hailed
All Scotland's sons his neighbours :
And therefore all repeat his verse—
Hot youth, or greybeard steady,
The boat-man on Loch Etive's wave,
The shepherd on Ben Ledi.

11.

He sang from love of song ; his name
Dunedin's cliff resounded :—
He left her, faithful to a fame
On truth and nature founded.
He sought true fame, not loud acclaim ;
Himself and Time he trusted :
For laurels crackling in the flame
His fine ear never lusted.

12.

He loved, and reason had to love,
The illustrious land that bore him :
Where'er he went, like heaven's broad tent
A star-bright Past hung o'er him.
Each isle had fenced a saint recluse,
Each tower a hero dying ;
Down every mountain-gorge had rolled
The flood of foemen flying.

13.

From age to age that land had paid
No alien throne submission ;
For feudal faith had been her Law,
And freedom her Tradition.
Where frowned the rocks had Freedom smiled,
Sung, mid the shrill wind's whistle—
So England prized her garden Rose,
But Scotland loved her Thistle.

14.

The land thus pure from foreign foot,
Her growing powers thus centred
Around her heart, with other lands
The race historic entered.
Her struggling dawn, convulsed or bright,
Worked on through storms and troubles,
Whilst a heroic line of kings
Strove with heroic nobles.

15.

Fair field alone the brave demand,
And Scotland ne'er had lost it :
And honest prove the hate and love
To objects meet adjusted.
Intelligible course was hers
By safety tried or danger :
The native was for native known—
The stranger known for stranger.

16.

Honour in her a sphere had found,
Nobility a station,
The patriots' thought the task it sought,
And virtue—toleration.
Her will and way had ne'er been crossed
In fatal contradiction ;
Nor loyalty to treason soured,
Nor faith abused with fiction.

17.

Can song be false where hearts are sound ?
Weak doubts—away we fling them !
The land that breeds great men, great deeds,
Shall ne'er lack bards to sing them.
That vigour, sense, and mutual truth
Which baffled each invader,
Shall fill her marts, and feed her arts,
While peaceful olives shade her.

18.

Honour to Scotland and to Burns !
 In him she stands collected.
 A thousand streams one river make—
 Thus Genius, heaven-directed,
 Conjoins all separate veins of power
 In one great soul-creation ;
 And blends a million men to make
 The Poet of the nation.

19.

Honour to Burns ! and her who first
 Let loose the abounding river
 Of music from the Poet's heart,
 Borne through all lands for ever !
 How much to her mankind has owed
 Of song's selectest treasures !
 Unsweetened by her kiss, his lips
 Had sung far other measures.

20.

Be green for aye, green bank and brae
 Around Montgomery's Castle !
 Blow there, ye earliest flowers ! and there,
 Ye sweetest song-birds, nestle !
 For there was ta'en that last farewell
 In hope, indulged how blindly ;
 And there was given that long last gaze
 "That dwelt" on him "sae kindly."

21.

No word of thine recorded stands ;
 Few words that hour were spoken :
Two Bibles there were interchanged,
 And some slight love-gift broken.
And there thy cold faint hands he pressed,
 Thy head by dewdrops misted ;
And kisses, ill-resisted first,
 At last were unresisted.

22.

Ah cease!—she died. He too is dead.
 Of all her girlish graces
Perhaps one nameless lock remains :
 The rest stern Time effaces—
Dust lost in dust. Not so: a bloom
 Is hers that ne'er can wither ;
And in that lay which lives for aye
 The twain live on together.

Sonnets.

—

COLONIZATION.

1848.

1.

ENGLAND, thy sinful past hath found thee out !

Washed was the blood-stain from the perfumed hand :
 O'er lips self-righteous smiles demure and bland,
 Flickered, though still thine eye betrayed a doubt,
 When round thy palace rose a people's shout—
 "Famine makes lean the Helots' helpless land."

What made them Helots? Gibbet, scourge, and brand,
 Plaguing with futile rage a faith devout.

England ! six hundred tyrannous years and more,
 Trampling a prostrate realm, that strength out-trod,
 Which twenty years availed not to restore.
 Thou wert thy brother's keeper—from the sod
 His life-blood crieth. Expiate thou that crime,
 Or bear a branded brow throughout all time.

2.

Fell the tall pines!—thou nobler Argo leap,
 Wide-winged deliverer, on the ocean floods;
 And westward waft the astonished multitudes
 That rot inert, and hideous Sabbath keep;
 Or, stung to madness, guiltier ruin heap
 On their own heads. No longer fabled Gods
 Subdue vexed waves with tridents and pearl rods;
 Yet round that barque heroic Gods shall sweep,
 And guard an infant Nation. Hope shall flush
 With far Hesperean welcome billows hoary.
 Valour and virtue, love and joy, and glory,
 A storm-borne Iris, shall before you rush;
 And there descending, where your towers shall stand,
 Look back, full-faced, and shout, "Britannia, land!"

3.

I heard, in deep prophetic trance immersed,
 The wave, keel-cut, kissing the ship's dark side:—
 Anon men shouted, and the cliffs replied:
 O what a vision from the darkness burst!
 Europe so fair a city never nursed
 As met me there. It clasped in crescent wide
 The gulf: it crowned the isles: the subject tide
 O'er-strode with bridges, and with quays coerced.
 In marble from unnumbered mountains robed,
 With altar-shaped acropolis and crest,
 There sat the queenly City, throned and globed.
 Full well that beaming countenance expressed
 The soul of a great people. From its eye
 Looked forth a second Britain's empery.

4.

How looks a mother on her babe, a bard
 On some life-laboured song ? With humble pride,
 And self-less love, and joy to awe allied :—
 So should a State that severed self regard,
 Her child beyond the waves. Great Nature's ward,
 And Time's, that child one day, with God for guide,
 Shall waft its parent's image far and wide ;
 Yea, and its Maker's, if by sin unmarred.
 Conquest I deem a vulgar pastime : trade
 Shifts like the winds ; and power but comes to go :
 But this is glorious, o'er the earth to sow
 The seed of Nations : darkness to invade
 With light : to plant, where silence reigned and death,
 The thrones of British law and towers of Christian faith.

5.

England, magnanimous art thou in name.
 Magnanimous in nature once thou wert ;
 But that which ofttimes lags behind desert,
 And crowns the dead, as oft survives it—fame.
 Can she whose hand a merchant's pen makes tame,
 Or sneer of nameless scribe ; can she whose heart
 In camp or senate still is at the mart,
 A Nation's toils, a Nation's honours claim ?
 Thy shield of old torn Poland twice and thrice
 Invoked : thy help as vainly Ireland asks,
 Pointing with stark, lean finger, from the crest
 Of western cliffs plague-stricken, to the West—
 Grey-haired though young. When heat is sucked from ice,
 Then shall a Firm discharge a Nation's tasks.

The Heart of Sorrow.—Ireland—1849.

SPRING.

1.

ONCE more, through God's high will and grace,
 Of hours that each its task fulfils,
 Heart-healing Spring resumes its place ;—
 The valley throngs and scales the hills,

2.

In vain. From earth's deep heart o'ercharged,
 The exulting life runs o'er in flowers ;—
 The slave unfed is unenlarged :
 In darkness sleep a Nation's powers,

3.

Who knows not Spring ? Who doubts, when blows
 Her breath, that Spring is come indeed ?
 The swallow doubts not ; nor the rose
 That stirs, but wakes not ; nor the weed.

4.

I feel her near, but see her not ;
 For these with pain uplifted eyes
 Fall back repulsed ; and vapours blot
 The vision of the earth and skies.

5.

I see her not—I feel her near,
As, charioted in mildest airs,
She sails through yon empyreal sphere,
And in her arms and bosom bears

6.

That urn of flowers and lustral dew,
Whose sacred balm, o'er all things shed,
Revives the weak, the old renews,
And crowns with votive wreaths the dead.

7.

Once more the cuckoo's call I hear ;
I know, in many a glen profound,
The earliest violets of the year
Rise up like water from the ground.

8.

The thorn I know once more is white ;
And, far down many a forest dale,
The anemones in dubious light
Are trembling like a bridal veil.

9.

By streams released that singing flow
From craggy shelf, through sylvan glades,
The pale narcissus, well I know,
Smiles hour by hour on greener shades.

10.

The honeyed cowslip tufts once more
The golden slopes ;—with gradual ray
The primrose stars the rock, and o'er
The wood-path strews its milky way.

11.

From ruined huts and holes come forth
Old men, and look upon the sky !
The Power Divine is on the earth :
Give thanks to God before ye die !

12.

And ye, O children worn and weak,
Who care no more with flowers to play,
Lean on the grass your cold, thin cheek,
And those slight hands, and whispering, say,

13.

“ Stern Mother of a race unblest,
“ In promise kindly, cold in deed ;—
“ Take back, O Earth, into thy breast,
“ The children whom thou wilt not feed.”

SUMMER.

1.

APPROVED by works of love and might,
The Year, consummated and crowned,
Has scaled the zenith's purple height,
And flings his robe the earth around.

2.

Impassioned stillness—fervours calm—
Brood, vast and bright, o'er land and deep :
The warrior sleeps beneath the palm ;
The dark-eyed captive guards his sleep.

3.

The Iberian labourer rests from toil ;
Sicilian virgins twine the dance ;
Laugh Tuscan vales in wine and oil ;
Fresh laurels flash from brows of France.

4.

Far off, in regions of the North,
The hunter drops his winter fur ;
Sun-stricken babes their feet stretch forth ;
And nested dormice feebly stir.

5.

But thou, O land of many woes !
What cheer is thine ? Again the breath
Of proved Destruction o'er thee blows,
And sentenced fields grow black in death.

6.

In horror of a new despair
His blood-shot eyes the peasant strains,
With hands clenched fast, and lifted hair,
Along the daily-darkening plains.

7.

“ Why trusted he to them his store ?
“ Why feared he not the scourge to come ? ”
Fool ! turn the page of History o'er,—
The roll of Statutes—and be dumb !

8.

Behold, O People ! thou shalt die !
What art thou better than thy sires ?
The hunted deer a weeping eye
Turns on his birthplace, and expires.

9.

Lo ! as the closing of a book,
Or statue from its base o'erthrown,
Or blasted wood, or dried-up brook,
Name, race, and nation, thou art gone.

10.

The stranger shall thy hearth possess ;
The stranger build upon thy grave :
But know this also—he, not less,
His limit and his term shall have.

11.

Once more thy volume, open cast,
In thunder forth shall sound thy name ;
Thy forest, hot at heart, at last
God's breath shall kindle into flame.

12.

Thy brook dried up a cloud shall rise,
And stretch an hourly widening hand,
In God's good vengeance, through the skies,
And onward o'er the Invader's land.

13.

Of thine, one day, a remnant left
Shall raise o'er earth a Prophet's rod,
And teach the coasts of Faith bereft
The names of Ireland, and of God.

AUTUMN.

1.

THEN die, thou Year—thy work is done :
The work ill done is done at last.
Far off, beyond that sinking sun
Which sets in blood, I hear the blast

2.

That sings thy dirge, and says—“ Ascend,
“ And answer make amid thy peers,
“ (Since all things here must have an end,)
“ Thou latest of the famine years !”

3.

I join that voice. No joy have I
In all thy purple and thy gold ;
Nor in the nine-fold harmony
From forest on to forest rolled :

4.

Nor in that stormy western fire,
Which burns on ocean's gloomy bed,
And hurls, as from a funeral pyre,
A glare that strikes the mountain's head ;

5.

And writes on low-hung clouds its lines
Of cyphered flame, with hurrying hand ;
And flings amid the topmost pines
That crown the steep, a burning brand.

6.

Make answer, Year, for all thy dead,
Who found not rest in hallowed earth ;
The widowed wife, the father fled,
The babe age-stricken from his birth.

7.

Make answer, Year, for virtue lost ;
For courage proof 'gainst fraud and force
Now waning like a noontide ghost ;
Affections poisoned at their source.

8.

The labourer spurned his lying spade ;
The yeoman spurned his useless plough ;
The pauper spurned the unwholesome aid,
Obtruded once, exhausted now.

9.

The weaver wove till all was dark,
And, long ere morning, bent and bowed
Above his work with fingers stark ;
And made, nor knew he made, a shroud.

10.

The roof-trees fall of hut and hall,
I hear them fall, and falling cry—
“One fate for each, one fate for all ;
“So wills the Law that willed a lie!”

11.

Dread power of Man ! what spread the waste
In circles, hour by hour more wide,
And would not let the past be past ?—
The Law that promised much, and lied.

12.

Dread power of God ! whom mortal years
Nor touch, nor tempt ; who sitt'st sublime
In night of night,—O bid thy spheres
Resound at last a funeral chime.

13.

Call up at last the afflicted race,
Whom man, not God, abolished.—Sore,
For centuries, their strife : the place
That knew them once shall know no more !

WINTER.

1.

FALL, snow, and cease not ! Flake by flake
The decent winding-sheet compose.
Thy task is just and pious ; make
An end of blasphemies and woes.

2.

Fall flake by flake ! by thee alone,
Last friend, the sleeping draught is given :
Kind nurse, by thee the couch is strewn—
The couch whose covering is from heaven.

3.

Descend and clasp the mountain's crest ;
Inherit plain and valley deep :
This night, in thy maternal breast,
A vanquished nation dies in sleep.

4.

Lo ! from the starry Temple gates
Death rides, and bears the flag of peace :
The combatants he separates ;
He bids the wrath of ages cease.

5.

Descend, benignant Power ! But O,
Ye torrents, shake no more the vale :
Dark streams, in silence seaward flow :
Thou rising storm, remit thy wail

6.

Shake not, to-night, the cliffs of Moher,
Nor Brandon's base, rough sea ! Thou Isle,
The Rite proceeds ! From shore to shore,
Hold in thy gathered breath the while.

7.

Fall, snow ! in stillness fall, like dew,
On temple's roof and cedar's fan ;
And mould thyself on pine and yew ;
And on the awful face of man.

8.

Without a sound, without a stir,
In streets and wolds, on rock and mound,
O, omnipresent Comforter,
By thee, this night, the lost are found !

9.

On quaking moor, and mountain moss,
With eyes upstaring at the sky,
And arms extended like a cross,
The long-expectant sufferers lie.

10.

Bend o'er them, white-robed Acolyte!
Put forth thine hand from cloud and mist,
And minister the last sad Rite,
Where altar there is none, nor priest.

11.

Touch thou the gates of soul and sense ;
Touch darkening eyes and dying ears ;
Touch stiffening hands and feet, and thence
Remove the trace of sin and tears.

12.

And ere thou seal those filmèd eyes,
Into God's urn thy fingers dip,
And lay, 'mid eucharistic sighs,
The sacred wafer on the lip.

13.

This night the Absolver issues forth :
This night the Eternal Victim bleeds :
O winds and woods—O heaven and earth !
Be still this night. The Rite proceeds !

Widowhood.

1848.

Not thou alone, but all things fair and good,
 Live here bereft, in vestal widowhood ;
 Or wane in radiant circlet incomplete.
 Memory, in widow's weeds, with naked feet,
 Stands on a tombstone. Hope, with tearful eyes,
 Stares all night long on unillumined skies.
 Virtue, an orphan, begs from door to door.
 Beside a cold hearth, on a stranger's floor,
 Sits exiled Honour. Song, a vacant type,
 Hangs on that tree, whose fruitage ne'er was ripe,
 Her harp, and bids the casual wind thereon
 Lament what might be, fabling what is gone.
 Our childhood's world of wonder melts like dew ;
 Youth's guardian genius bids our youth adieu ;
 And oft the wedded is a widow too.
 The best of bridals here is but a troth,—
 Only in heaven is ratified the oath :
 There, there alone, is clasped in full fruition
 That sacred joy which passed not Eden's gates :
 For here the soul is mocked with dream and vision ;
 And outward sense, uniting, separates.
 The Bride of Brides, a maid and widow here,
 Invokes her Lord, and finds—a Comforter :—

Her loftiest fane is but a visible porch
To sealed Creation's omnipresent Church.

Zealous that nobler gifts than earth's should live,
Fortune I praise—but praise her, fugitive.
The Roman praised her permanent ;¹ but we
Have learned her lore (and paid a heavy fee) ;
Have tracked her promise to its brake of wiles,
And sounded all the shallows of her smiles.
Fortune not gives but sells, and takes instead
A heart made servile, and a discrowned head.
Too soon she comes, and drowns in swamps of sloth
The soul contemplative and active—both ;
Or comes too late, and, with malignant art,
Leaps on the lance that rives the sufferer's heart ;
And showers her affluence on a breast supine.
Her best of gifts the usurer's seal and sign
Sustain, and pawn man's life to Destiny.
We are shapes transient, and the end is nigh.
Ah ! mightier things than man like man can die !

Between the ruin and the work half done
I sit : the raw wreck is the sorrier one.
Here drops an ancient Keep in slow decay :
There the unfinished Mole is washed away.
We sink, and none is better for our fall :
We suffer most : but suffering comes to all.
Our sighs but echoes are of earlier sighs ;
And in our agonies we plagiarize.
O'er all the earth old States in ruin lie,
And new Ambitions topple from their sky.

(1) "Laudo manentem."—HORACE.

' Greatness walks lame while clad in mortal mould ;
 The good are weak—unrighteous are the bold.
 Love by Self-love is murdered, or Distrust ;
 And earth-born Virtue has its "dust to dust."
 The future shall be as the present hour.
 The havoc past, again the slaves of Power
 Shall boast because once more the harvest waves
 In fraudulent brightness o'er a million graves.
 Why weep for ties once ours, relaxed or broken ?
 If weep we must, our tears are all bespoken.
 One thing is worthy of them, one alone—
 A world's inherent baseness, and our own.

Type of my country, sad, and chaste, and wise !
 Forgive the gaze of too regardful eyes :—
 I saw the black robe and the aspect pale,
 And heard in dream that country's dying wail.
 Like Night her form arose,—as shades in night
 Are lost, thy sorrowing beauty vanished from my
 sight.

The Irish Celt to the Irish Norman ;¹

OR, THE LAST IRISH CONFISCATION.

1849.

YOUR barque in turn is freighted. O'er the seas
 You seek a refuge at the Antipodes.
 Australia waits you. O my Lord, beware !
 Australia ! Floats not England's standard there ?

(1) See note (A).

Tyrconnell and Tyrone found rest more nigh :
 Rome guards their ashes, and St. Gregory.
 Their cause is mine—and foes, till now, were we ;
 Now friends, ashamed were I thy shame to see.
 Has Ruin no decorum ? Grief no sense ?
 Shall England house thee ? England drives thee hence !
 O worker of thy sorrows, with a vow
 Bind thou that head reduced, and careful brow,
 Wholly to root that idol from thy heart.
 Swear that thy race never shall have a part
 In aught that England boasts, achieves, confers :
 Her past is thine—thy future is not hers.

Loosed from the agony of fruitless strife,
 You stand, a lost man 'mid the wreck of life,
 And round you gaze. Sad Eva also gazed
 All round that bridal field of blood, amazed ;—
 Spoused to new fortunes . . . But your head is grey !
 Beyond your castle droops the dying day ;
 And, drifting down loose gusts of wailing wind,
 Night comes, with rain before and frost behind.
 Lean men that groped for sea-weeds on the shore
 All day, now hide in holes on fen and moor.
 The cliffs lean forth their brows to meet the scourge
 Of blast on blast : around their base the surge
 Welters in shades from iron headlands thrown :
 Through chasm and cave subaqueous thunders moan.—
 That sound thou lov'st ! Once more the Desmonds fall.
 To-night old wrongs shake hands in History's hall ;
 And, clashing through responsive vaults of Time,
 Old peals funereal marry chime to chime.

Of such no more ! Beside your fireless hearth
Sit one night yet : and, moody or in mirth,
Compare the past and present, and record
The fortunes of your order in a word.
England first used, then spurned it. Hour by hour,
For centuries her laws, her fame, her power
Hung on its hand. It gloried to sustain,
High o'er the clouds that sweep the Atlantic main,
The banner with her blazonries enrolled.
Then came the change, and it was bought and sold :
Then came the change, and ye received your due.
Sir, to your country had ye proved as true.
As to your England, she had held by you.
Ruin ye might have proved ; ye might have known,
Even then, the scorn of others—not your own !

Pardon hard words. Your race, not mine, is hard :
But wounds and work the hand too soft have scarred.
We are your elders—first-born in distress ;
And century-seasoned woes grow pitiless.
Hierarchs are we in pain, where you but learn :
We have an unction, and our Rite is stern.
If on our brows still hang ancestral glooms,
Forgive the children of the catacombs.
What have the dead to do with love or ruth ?
I died ; and live once more—I live for truth.
Hope and delusion trouble me no more :
Therefore, expatriate on my native shore,
Anguish and doubt shake other nerves, not mine :
I drop no tear into the bitter brine :
The world in which I move is masculine.

Why to Australia? Britain too was dear.
Must, then, the Britain of the southern sphere
Rack you in turn? Seek you once more to prove
The furies of a scorned, unnatural love
That cleaves to insult, and on injury feeds,
And, upon both cheeks stricken, burns and bleeds?
Son of the North, why seek you not once more
The coasts where sang the warrior Scald of yore?
If unhistoric regions you must tread,
Hallowed by no communion with the dead,
Never by saint, or sage, or hero trod;
Where never lifted fane upraised to God,
In turn, the hearts of sequent generations;
Where never manly races rose to nations,
Marshaled by knightly arm or kingly eye;
If, with new fortunes, a new earth you try,
Then seek, oh, seek her in her purity!
Drain not civilization's dregs and lees.
In many an island clipt by tropic seas,
Nature keeps yet a race by arts untamed,
Who live half-innocent and unashamed.
Ambition frets not them. In regions calm,
'Mid prairies vast, or under banks of palm,
They sing light wars and unafflicting loves,
And vanish as the echo leaves the groves!
Smooth space divides their cradles and their graves.
What are they? Apparitions—casual waves
Heaved up in life's successive harmony!
Brief smiles of nature followed by a sigh!
Why not with such abide awhile and die?

O, summoned ere thy death to that repose
The grave concedes to others; by thy foes
Franchised with that which friendship never gave—
A heart as free from tremours as the grave ;
Last of a race whose helm and lance were known
In furthest lands—now exiled from thine own !
Give thanks ! How many a sight is spared to thee,
Which we, thy sires in suffering, saw and see !
Thou hast beheld thy country, by the shocks
Of six long winters, driven upon the rocks
High and more high. Thou shalt not, day by day,
See her dismembered planks, the wreckers' prey,
Abused without remorse to uses base.
Thou hast beheld the home of all thy race,
Their lawns, their walks, and every grove and stream—
Their very tombs—pass from thee like a dream,
And leave thee bare. But thou shalt not behold
Thy woods devastated ; nor gathering mould
Subdue the arms high hung, and blight the bloom
Of pomps heraldic, reddening scroll and tomb ;
Nor the starred azure touched by mists cold-lipped,
Till choir and aisle are black as vault and crypt ;
Nor from the blazoned missal wane and faint
The golden age of martyr, maid, and saint ;
Umbria's high pathos, and the Tuscan might,
And all thy wondering childhood's world of light.
Thou shalt not see that cross thou lovedst so well
From minster towers rock-built, and hermit's cell,
Swept by the self-same blast that sent the hind
Shivering to caves, and struck a kingdom blind !

All that was thine, while seas between thee roll
And them, in some still cloister of thy soul
Shall live, as, in a mother's heart inisled,
Lives on the painless memory of a child
Buried a babe. One image all shall make
Still as the gleam of sunset-lighted lake
Kenned from a tower o'er leagues of wood and lawn ;
Or as perchance our planet looks, withdrawn
From some pure spirit that leaves her—to his sight
Lessening, not lost—a disk of narrowing light
Sole-hung in regions of pure space afar—
Of old the world he lived in, now a star !

Depart in peace ; and, if thou canst, forget—
England ? Not so, but that six-centuried debt
She owes, while the world lasts, to thine and mine.
Three centuries stood our country as a sign
Opprobrious, target for old sneers and saws—
Outlawed ; then England cursed her with her laws :
Cursed her with laws that equalled with the beasts
Her sentenced sons ; admitting to the feasts
Of Power those only willing to abjure
Faith, fame, and kindred for a worldly lure—
Reptiles, the spurner's foot who kissed and licked !
Knowledge was banned. A secular interdict
Enacted darkness, and to night consigned
By law a growing Nation's heart and mind ;
Proscribed was Industry, and each career
Hope rules. The sixth black century passed, and Fear
Unloosed the chains that Hate had fixed. Somewhile
A troubled sunshine cheered a panting isle.

Then came the end : then Famine came to reap
The fields Misrule and Madness, in their sleep
(Mother and son) had sown with weeds, not grain ;
Then Famine swooped upon the blasted plain,
An omnipresent vulture, and o'erspread
With her black wings the dying and the dead.
It was the closing of the dread account.
Europe looked on ; and from his specular mount
The Genius that records man's deeds looked down.
Not Earth alone grew dark before his frown
As added sins were piled on sins half shriven.
Dear was the hand by which the blow was given—
Dire was the blow ! Daily new arts were found
With which to fleece the bare, and beat the bound.
Calumny, like a cloud of locusts, hung
O'er the doomed race ; loosed was a nation's tongue ;
And they for Truth and Justice once so loud
Stood mute, or feebly echoed back the crowd.
Year after year dragged on the foul debate.
One, with dishonest red, pretended hate
Of those who trampled down their serfs ; the next
Pretended pity, and was sore perplexed
Their errors from their fathers' to divide :
A tear was in his eye—and yet he lied.
Statesmen who feared to think, were bold to preach—
“'Tis just the poor should hang upon the rich.”
The Name invoked of Justice raised a rod
Reversed, that smote the shrine and bruised the God.
Law sealed a proven, known, acknowledged lie ;
Law spake and said, “ Let there be anarchy ! ”

Law levelled down God's law : the labourer drave
Back from the field, the yeoman o'er the wave.
Law re-created chaos : high with low
Confused in Communism's common woe—
Woe to the weak, a master's law who trust !
In workhouse graves, with their mouths full of dust,
A "Pauper's right " graved on each fleshless breast,
Myriads of chartered castaways attest,
To history's latest limit, and beyond,
The worth of England's justice and her bond.

Daughter of Babel ! wasted with deep woe !
In this most wretched, that thou dost not know
How thou art naked, vaunting still for wealth
The social tumours that entomb thy health ;
O weak through seeming strength, O poor through pelf,
O atheist through idolatry of self ;
Blest and thrice-blest the man shall be by whom
Thy children,—not the offspring of thy womb,
But of the heart diseased and corrupt mind—
Pride, Passions, Prejudices, base and blind,
Shall be uplifted high as heaven, and hurled
Down on the stones, to disenchant the world !

Daughter of Babel ! they that loved thee most ;
They on whose tongue thou wert the hourly boast ;
They in whose soul thou wert, both day and night,
A shape sun-clad, or fount of hidd'n delight ;
They who, the dupes of Love, in passionate mood,
Thy footsteps errant o'er the world pursued,

And saw thy Future lordlier than thy Past ;
 They that enthroned thee in the regions vast
 Of earth not trodden yet ; whose fancy found,
 Mirrored in furthest seas, thine image crowned ;
 They that believed thee brave, and true, and just,
 And therefore trusted thee,—no more can trust ;
 Can flatter thee no more, no more revere
 Exterior Virtue's whited sepulchre.
 No part henceforth in them, their hopes, their cares,
 Hast thou. The loss is thine ; the pang is theirs.

The pang is theirs. Whom most thou injuredst, he,
 If Samuel mourned for Saul, laments for thee.
 For wise thou wert, though miserably snared
 Thou art by wisdom's secular reward ;
 And inward was thy greatness, though the crown
 Of well-earned fortune weighs that greatness down.
 In thee two Nations ever are at war—
 The one that rules not is the nobler far ;
 For thee two Spirits, of good and evil, strive—
 The one that boasts not saves thy soul alive.
 Of thine how many gave of their increase
 To feed the famished land ! Be with them peace !
 Pure hands, amid the unjust, to heaven they lift.
 The State, not less, conferred its golden gift :
 It brought no blessing. Darkness ruled the hour ;
 Panic, and Wrath, and proud intemperate Power
 Let loose a nation's hands, but sealed her eyes.—
 We cannot aid the sufferer we despise.

But the wind swells your sails. Why waste we breath ?
 My Lord, for thy soul's sake, and a good death,

Forget the things a Celt's unmannered pen
For thee records not, but for later men.
Since hope is gone, let peace be thine instead.
The snows which heap too soon that Norman head,
Should calm it ; and a heart that bleeds for aye
Has less to lose, and less to feel, each day.
Seek not thy joys when on the desolate shore
The raked rocks thunder, and the caverns roar,
And the woods moan, while shoots the setting sun
Discords of angry lights o'er billows dun.
Make white thy thoughts as is a vestal's sleep—
Bloodless : prolong, beside the murmuring deep,
Thy matutinal slumbers, till the bird
That tuned, not broke them, is no longer heard.
The flowers the children of the Stranger bring
Indulgent take : permit thy latest Spring
To lure from thee all bitterness and wrath :
Into Death's bosom, genial as a bath,
Sink back absolved. Justice to God belongs :
Soul deeply injured, leave with Him thy wrongs!

Justice, o'er angels and o'er men supreme,
Still in mid heaven sustains her balanced beam,
With whose vast scales, whether they sink or rise,
The poles of earth are forced to sympathise.
Unseen she rules, wrapped round in cloud and awe :—
Her silence is the seal of mortal law ;
Her voice the harmony of every sphere.
Most distant is she ever, yet most near ;
Most strong when least regarded. From her eyes
That light goes forth which cheers the brave and wise ;

And in the arm that lifts aloft her sword,
Whatever might abides on earth is stored.
Fret not thyself. Watch thou (and wait) her hand.
The thunder-drops fall fast. In every land
Humanity breathes quick, and coming storm
Looks through man's soul with flashes swift and warm :
The fiery trial and the shaken sieve
Shall prove the nations. What can live shall live.
Falsehood shall die ; and falsehoods widest based
Shall lie the lowest, though they fall the last.

Down from the mountain of their greatness hurled,
What witness bear the nations to the world ?
Down rolled, like rocks, along the Alpine stairs,
What warning voice is theirs, and ever theirs ?
Their ears the nations unsubverted close,
For who would hear the voice whose words are woes ?
Woe to ancestral greatness, if the dower
Of knightly worth confirm no more its power.
Woe to commercial strength, if sensual greed
Heap up like waves its insolent gold, nor heed
What solid good rewards the poor man's toil.
Woe to the Monarch, if the unholy oil
Of smooth-tongued flattery be his balm and chrism.
Woe to the State cleft through by social schism.
Woe to Religion, when the birds obscene
Of Heresy from porch to altar-screen
Range free ; while from the temple-eaves look down
Doubt's shadowy brood, ill-masked in cowl or gown.
Woe to the Rulers by the People ruled—
A People drowned in sense, and pride-befooled,

Trampling where sages once, and martyrs, trod.
—Ye nations, meet your doom, or serve at last your God!

But Thou, afflicted and beloved, O Thou
Who on thy wasted hands and bleeding brow—
Dread miracle of Love—from reign to reign,
Freshenest thy stigmata of sacred pain :
Lamp of the North when half the world was night—
Now England's darkness 'mid her noon of light ;
History's sad wonder, whom all lands save one
Gaze on through tears, and name with gentler tone :
O Tree of God that burnest unconsumed ;
O Life in Death, for centuries entombed ;
That art uprisen, and higher far shalt rise,
Drawn up by strong attractions to the skies :
Thyself most weak, yet strengthened from above—
Stricken of God, yet not in hate but love :
Thy love make perfect, and from Love's pure hate
The earthlier scum and airier froth rebate.
Be strong : be true. Thy palms not yet are won :
Thine ampler mission is but now begun.
Hope not for any crown save that thou wearest—
The crown of thorns ! Preach thou that cross thou bearest !
Go forth ! each coast shall glow beneath thy tread.
What radiance bursts from heaven upon thy head ?
What fiery pillar is before thee borne ?
Thy loved and lost ! They lead thee to thy morn !
They pave thy paths with light ! Beheld by man,
Thou walkest a shade, not shape, beneath a ban.
Walk on—work on—love on ; and, suffering, cry—
“ Give me more suffering, Lord, or else I die.”

Psyche; or, An Old Poet's Love.

1847.

I.

O ORIENT Isle that gave her birth!

O Delos of a holier sea!

O casket of uncounted worth!

How dear thou art to Love and me!

Thy whispering woods, in some soft dell,

Now charmed, now broke the Infant's rest;

Thy vales the wild-flower cherished well,

Predestined for the Virgin's breast.

May airs salubrious, gusts of balm,

On all thy shores incumbent, blow

Thy billow from the glassy calm,

And fringe thy myrtles with sea-snow.

My Psyche's lips thy zephyrs breathe;

My Psyche's feet thy pastures tread:—

O Isle of isles, around me wreath

Thine asphodels when I am dead.

II.

How blue were Ariadne's eyes,
When from the sea's horizon line,
At eve, she raised them on the skies !—
My Psyche, bluer far are thine.

How pallid, snatched from falling flowers,
The cheek averse of Proserpine,
Unshadowed yet by Stygian bowers !—
My Psyche, paler far is thine.

Yet thee no lover e'er forsook ;
No tyrant urged with love unkind :
Thy joy the ungentle cannot brook ;
Thy light would strike the unworthy blind.

A golden flame invests thy tresses :
An azure flame invests thine eyes :
And well that wingless form expresses
Communion with relinquished skies.

Forbear, O breezes of the West,
To waft her to her native bourne ;
For heavenly, by her feet impressed,
Becomes our ancient earth outworn.

On Psyche's life our beings hang :
In Psyche life and love are one :—
My Psyche glanced at me and sang,
" Perhaps to-morrow I am gone !"

III.

PSYCHE'S BATH.

O stream beloved ! O stream unknown !
In which my love has bathed !
Be still thy fount unvexed with floods
Thy marge by heats unscathed.

How oft her white hand tempted thine !
How oft, by fears delayed,
Ere yet her light had filled thy depth,
With thee her shadow played !

Thy purity encompassed hers ;
Thy crystal cased my pearl ;
Of founts, the fairest fount embraced
Of girls, the loveliest girl !

The sweetest maid that ever yet
Unbound a blameless breast,
Or flung a cloud of modest locks
Around her for a vest.

May still thy lilies round thee wave,
As shaken by a sigh !
Thy violets, blooming where she gazed,
Bloom first and latest die !

May better bards, when I am gone,
Like birds salute thy bower ;
And each that sings thee grow in heart
A virgin from that hour.

IV.

PSYCHE'S STUDY.

The low sun smote the topmost rocks,
Ascending o'er the eastern sea :
Backward my Psyche waved her locks,
And held her book upon her knee.

No brake was near, no flower, no bird,
No music but the ocean wave,
That with complacent murmur stirred
The echoes of a neighbouring cave.

Absorbed my Psyche sat, her face
Reflecting Plato's sun-like soul ;
And seemed in every word to trace
The pent-up spirit of the whole.

Absorbed she sat in breathless mood,
Unmoved as kneeler at a shrine,
Save one slight finger that pursued
The meaning on from line to line.

As some white flower in forest nook
Bends o'er its own face in a well ;
So seemed the virgin in that book,
Her soul, unread before, to spell.

Sudden, a crimson butterfly
On that illumined page alit :—
My Psyche flung the volume by,
And sister-like, gave chase to it !

V.

I saw at morn the locks your hands
With laurel crowned the other day ;
And marked a silver tress, and looked
Another way.

Amid the woods to-day I saw
A sight for many a month unseen ;
A golden bough, a crimson leaf,
Among leaves green.

When first we roamed those woods, the lark
Chaunted to God her cherub song :
To his fond mate the uxorious thrush
Sang low, and long.

The wood-dove murmured to herself
Of joy to be renewed anon :
The cuckoo's note dissolved in heaven,
Like snow in sun.

And all the birds in lawns rock-girt,
And all the birds in sylvan cells,
Blew loud their jewelled flutes ; and chimed
Their silver bells.

But ah ! to-day upon the bough,
I saw the wintry red-breast stand :—
Like mourner's ring he seemed on some
New-plighted hand.

His head he tossed, and twittered shrill,
As one who cared not what he sung:
The pine-tree's fallen cone I snatched,
And at him flung.

Soothe thou the winter! but thy note
Troubles, not cheers the autumnal glen:—
Off, bird! nor shake the unsteady hearts
Of maids and men!

Alas! my Psyche, many a year
Of what they call my life is flown;
Their lapse I knew not; but thy light
My loss makes known.

VI.

Nearer yet, by soft degrees,
Nearer nestling by my side,
Her arm she propped upon my knees;
Her head, ere long, its place supplied.

Mysteriously a child there lurked
Within that soaring spirit wild:
Mysteriously a woman worked
Imprisoned in that fearless child.

One thought before me, like a star,
Rolled onward ever, always on:
It called me to the fields afar,
In which triumphant palms are won.

The concourse of far years I heard
 Applausive as a summer sea :—
My trance was broken—Psyche stirred ;—
 “ Is Psyche nothing then to thee ? ”

VII.

Ah, that a light-lifted hand
 Should thus man's soul depress or raise,
And wield, as with a magic wand,
 A spirit steeled in earlier days !

Ah, that a voice whose speech is song,
 Whose pathos weeps, whose gladness smiles,
Should melt a heart unmoved so long,
 And charm it to the Syren Isles !

Ah, that one presence, morn or eve,
 Should fill deserted halls with light :
One breeze-like step, departing, leave
 The noonday darker than the night !

Thy power is great : but Love and Youth
 Conspire with thee. With thee they dwell :
From those kind eyes with tenderest ruth
 On mine they look and say, “ Farewell ! ”

VIII.

Love ! Love the avenger ! Had I deemed
There lived such beauty, ere too late ;
But once of Psyche had I dreamed,
How different had been my fate !

I heard of Virtue, and believed :
But till that glorious face I saw,
Her image, in my soul conceived,
Possessed me less with love than awe.

It was mine own infirmity :—
I heard, believed ; but faith was weak :
The Syren-Muse for ever nigh,
Forbade me heavenly lights to seek.

Deposed I stand by power divine :
The robes of Song are changed for chains ;
To love my Psyche—this is mine ;
To love—not seek her—this remains.

IX.

PSYCHE DRAWING.

Of mind all light, and tenderest-handed,
She sketched, untaught, an infant's face :
And as the ideal Thought expanded,
Stamped, line by line, a deepening grace.

Not pilotless her fancy dreamed,
Though borne through shoreless seas and air :
From native regions on her beamed,
The archetypes of True and Fair.

As when the Spring, with touches pure,
Evolves some blossom, hour by hour ;
So Psyche's Thought became mature,—
So Psyche nursed her human flower.

The billowy locks—the look intense—
The eyes so piercing, sweet, and wild !—
I cried, inspired by sudden sense,
“ Thus Psyche looked, an infant child ! ”

X.

PSYCHE'S REMORSE.

A word unkind, yet scarce unkind,
Was sweetened by so soft a smile ;
It lingered long in heart and mind,
Yet hardly woke a pang the while.

At night she dreamed that I was dead ;
And wished to touch (yet feared to stir)
The heavy hands beside me laid,
Incapable of love and her.

We met at morning:—still her breast
Rose gently with a mournful wave :
And of the flowers thereon, the best
She gave ; and kissed before she gave.

XI.

PSYCHE SINGING.

Between the green hill and the cloud
The skylark loosed his silver chain
Of rapturous music, clear and loud,—
My Psyche answered back the strain.

A glory went along the sky ;
She sang, and all dark things grew plain ;
Hope, starlike, shone ; and Memory
Flashed like a cypress gemmed with rain.

Once more the skylark recommenced ;
Once more from heaven his challenge rang :
Again with him my Psyche fenced ;
At last the twain commingled sang.

Then first I learned the skylark's lore ;
Then first the words he sang I knew :
My soul with rapture flooded o'er,
As breeze-borne gossamer with dew.

XII.

Wert thou a child, O then the joy,
Thy hand in mine to roam the woods,
And teach the adventurous girl or boy
To scale the rocks, nor fear the floods !

What joy the page of ancient lore
To turn : thy dawn of thought to watch :
And from thy kindling eyes once more
The sunrise of old times to catch !

Wert thou an infant, then my arms
Might lift thee in the light ; and I
The captive were of infant charms :—
From such at least no need to fly.

Wert thou my sister, Love would swear
To own thenceforth no haughtier name.
Whatever form that soul might wear,
The spell would be to me the same.

It is not love that rules my heart,
Nor aught by mortals named or known :
I know but this ;—when near thou art,
I live. I die when thou art gone.

XIII.

As when, deep chaunts abruptly stayed,
The Thoughts that, music-born, advanced,
In tides of puissance, music swayed,
And waves that in the glory danced,

Contract, subside ; and leave at last,
Where late the abounding floods were spread,
A vale of darkness, grim and vast,
A buried river's rocky bed ;

Thus, when thou goest, my heart, my life,
Descend to dim sepulchral caves ;
My world, but late with rapture rife,
Becomes a world of rocks and graves.

Come back ! From mountain-cells afar,
My soul's strong river shall return :
Come back ! Again the morning star
Shall shine against the exhaustless urn.

XIV.

My Psyche laid her silken hand
Upon my silvering head ;
And said, "To thee shall I remand
The light of seasons fled ?"

The child bent o'er me as she spake ;
And, leaning yet more near,
A tress that kissed me for Love's sake,
Removed from me a tear.

Psyche, not so ; lest life should grow
Near thee too deeply sweet ;
And I who censure death as slow,
Should fear her far-off feet.

Eternal sweetness, love, and truth,
Are in thy face enshrined ;
The breathing soul of endless youth
On wafts thee like a wind.

Those eyes, where'er they chance to gaze,
Might wake to songs the dumb!
Breathe thou upon my blighted bays,—
Rose-odoured they become!

Yet go, and cheer a happier throng:
For Death, a spouse dark-eyed,
On me her eyes has levelled long,
And calls me to her side.

O'er that not distant coast, even now,
What shape ascends? A Tomb.
Farewell, my Pysche;—why shouldst thou
Be shadowed by its gloom?

XV.

“ Can Love be just? can Hope be wise?
“ Can Youth renew his honours dead?”
On me my Psyche turned her eyes;
And all my great resolves were fled.

Psyche, I said, when thou art nigh
Transpicious grow the mists of years.
I cannot ever wholly die
If on my grave should drop thy tears.

Nor thine a part in mortal hours:
Thy flower nor autumn knows, nor May:
Thou bendest from sidereal bowers
A shape supernal, bright for aye.

Though I be nothing, yet the best
 To thee no gift of price could give:—
 Fall then, in radiance, on my breast,
 And in thy blessing bid me live!

XVI.

Pure lip coralline, slightly stirred;
 Thus stir; but speak not! Love can see
 On you the syllables unheard
 Which are his only melody.

Pure, drooping lids; dark lashes wet
 With that un hoped-for, trembling tear;
 Thus droop, thus meet; nor give me yet
 The eyes that I desire, yet fear.

Hands lightly clasped on meekest knee;
 All-beauteous head, as by a spell
 Bent forward; loveliest form, to me
 A lovely soul made visible:—

Speak not! move not! More tender grows
 The heart, long musing. Night may plead,
 Perhaps, my part; and, at its close,
 The morning bring me light indeed.

XVII.

“Such beauty was not born to die!”
That thought above my fancy kept
Hovering like moonbeams tremulously;
And as its lustre waned, I slept.

Deep Love kept vigil. Where she sate
Methought I sought her. Ah the change!
Youth freezes at the frown of Fate;
And Time defied will have revenge.

The summer sunshine of her head
Had changed to moonlight tresses grey:
O'er all her countenance was spread
A twilight as of dying day.

Dim as a misty tree ere morn,
Sad as a tide-deserted strand,
She sate, with roseless lip forlorn;—
I knelt, and, reverent, kissed her hand.

I loved her. Whom I loved of yore,
A shape all radiant from the skies,
I loved that hour; and loved far more,
So sweet in this unjust disguise.

A human tenderness, a love,
More deep than loves of prosperous years,
Through all my spirit rose and strove,
And, cloud-like, o'er her fell in tears.

XVIII.

She leaves us: many a gentler breast
 Will mourn our common loss like me:
 The babe, her hands, her voice caressed,
 The lamb that couched beside her knee.

The touch thou lovest—the robe's far gleam—
 Thou shalt not find, thou dark-eyed fawn!
 Thy light is lost, exultant stream:
 Dim woods, your sweetness is withdrawn.

Descend, dark heavens, and flood with rain
 Their crimson roofs; their silence rout:
 Their vapour-laden branches strain;
 And force the smothered sadness out!

That so the ascended moon, when breaks
 The cloud, may light once more a scene
 Fair as some cheek that suffering makes
 Only more tearfully serene:—

That so the vale she loved may look
 Calm as some cloister roofed with snows,
 Wherein, unseen, in shadowy nook,
 A buried Vestal finds repose.

XIX.

Ah! Grief had but begun to grieve
 When thus I trifled with my sighs;—
 Who brings what Psyche brought must leave
 The loss no song can harmonize.

She brought me back the buried years ;
And glorious in her light they shone :
Once more their sun is set ; and tears
Deface their care-worn aspects wan.

Old joys, old sorrows,—ghosts unlaid,—
In every dirge-like breeze go by :
Loved phantoms haunt the unwholesome shade :—
Ah then revived they but to die ?

They die, like music: like a tide
They ebb through darkness far away :
Till, meeting Lethe, side by side
The rivers roll that love not day.

XX.

Spring returned! the pallid spectre,
Winter, died in mist away ;
Spring returned! but to protect her,
Wore, awhile, a mantle grey.

To the rocks the snow retreated ;
Flashed in light late-tawny rills ;
Stronger-voiced the young lambs bleated
From the breasts of greener hills.

Spring advanced ; and children wondered
At the daffodil no more :
Violet banks in woods they plundered,
And on sand-hills by the shore.

Lilac triumphed over crocus:

Thorns their green heads steeped in foam:—

“Without Psyche spring-flowers mock us,”

Sighed the valleys, “waft her home.”

Like a girl o'er hill and hollow,

April through a sun-burst ran:

Chasms of azure echoed, “Follow,

“Follow, follow me, who can!”

Like a beauteous, married maiden,

Moving through her marriage day,

Sweets withholding, yet sweet-laden,

Moved, with tenderer footstep, May.

But the year, one gift denying,

Granting part, denied the whole:

And the valleys languished, crying,

“Where, O Spring-tide, is thy Soul?”

XXI.

Like a youthful matron, Summer

Came: but young and aged cried,

“Wherefore, beautiful new-comer,

“Lingers Psyche from thy side?”

“Streams, late stirred by woodland forces,

“Darkling sleep in pool and cleft;

“Or but show the shining courses

“Which the Dragon-fly has left.

“ Glens that, thrilled with vernal passion,

“ From river's mouth to eagle's nest

“ Sent the lightning-like vibration,

“ Sleep as sleeps a sea at rest.

“ Sleep the valleys, self-enfolden :

“ Sleep the mountains, crowned with light :

“ Forest temples, green and golden,

“ Vault in sleep a silent night.

“ Birds that sang, their wild notes blending,

“ When Love troubled first their house,

“ Sleep, contentedly suspending

“ Quiet nests on placid boughs.

“ Spring has well fulfilled her mission ;

“ Nature rose in hill and holt :

“ Now the stillness of fruition

“ Lulls the exquisite revolt,

“ Why should we alone be cheated ?”—

Summer smiled ; and from her breast

Drew the blossom long-entreated ;

And the suppliant vales had rest.

XXII.

Psyche trod once more her garden :—

Softer bloom was o'er her thrown :

Richer seemed her smile, but graver :

On she moved—no more alone.

Flower with flower consorting fairly,
 Flower from flower disparting soft,
 Moved my lily 'mong her lilies,
 Moved at times, and halted oft.

Blushed for pride the flower accepted ;
 Drooped, downcast, its rival spared :
 In her hand a red rose trembled ;
 And a myrtle better fared.

“Tell our Psyche, rose deep-hearted,
 “All that heart in sweetness proves,”
 Sang her playmates:—“Ask, O myrtle,
 “Ask, has Psyche then no loves?”

—“Ah who with happy lip shall stoop,
 “And o'er that palm extended linger?”
 Sang the Stranger:—“Who shall drop
 “The love-ring down that tapering finger?”

XXIII.

Cold Spring, I sing thee not, although
 Thy wave has cooled abandoned hands :
 Sing thou, cold-lipped, in whispers low,
 The praises of thy shells and sands.

Dark cave that, lenient, in the woods
 Didst breathe thy darkness o'er my day ;
 I sing thee not, though sullen moods
 Relaxed in thee, and waned away.

The Shepherd youth whose love is fled,
Lies outcast in some lonely place:
But o'er his eyes her veil is spread,
And airy kisses touch his face.

Beneath that veil his eyes may stream ;
Beneath that heaven his heart may heave :
The day goes by him like a dream,
And comfort comes to him at eve.

He sings: her name makes sweet his strains.
Such solace suits a stripling's years—
For age what healing herb remains ?
Nor love, nor hope, nor song, nor tears.

XXIV.

What art thou ? If thou livest, I know
That thou art good, and true, and fair :
But there are dreams that whisper low,
“Thou dreamest! thy passion paints the air.

“Grief sat upon thy heart for years :—
“That heart, by light bewildered now,
“All that it missed beholds, through tears,
“Throned on a single, beaming brow.

“Or else thy Fancy, tired of dust,
“Unsphered a Spirit. Self-enthralled,
“It worships now, because it must,
“An Idol pride at first enstalled.

H

- "Or else the pathos of the past
 "Above thy present moves in power ;
 "And o'er thy dusty day hath cast
 "This dewdrop from its matin hour.

 "In her thou lov'st the times gone by ;
 "In her the joys possessed, not missed :—
 "It was not Hope, but Memory
 "Thy dreaming lids that bent and kissed.

 "In her the dewy lawns forlorn
 "Thou lov'st ; the gleams along them flung ;
 "The witcheries of the awakening morn ;
 "The echo of its latest song.

 "Thou treadest once more Castalia's brink :—
 "Far down, thy youth finds rest from trouble :
 "And thou that sawest it slowly sink
 "Dost watch its latest breaking bubble."

XXV.

PSYCHE'S BRIDAL SONG.

When now had come the marriage day,
 The church was decked, and nigh the hour,
 My Psyche said, "One other lay,
 "To bless the bride, and bless the bower !"

 My Psyche's eyes in gladness swim ;
 His gladness, doubled in her breast :
 All that she is, and has, to him
 She gives, not doubting ; and is blest.

She walks on air ; she lifts her brow
Like one inspired:—Such light as flushes
The Alps at morn, upon its snow
Is stayed, in glory, not in blushes.

Her world of dream has ta'en its flight!
The shadow passed: the substance came:
A soul that long had fed on light
Love touched, and kindled into flame.

They met: twin Powers together drawn:—
Twin nurslings of the summer weather:
Twin eagles soaring through the dawn ;
Henceforth they soar and sink together.

Ah heart of hearts ! ah life of life !
My Psyche to another given !—
The vow that changes Maid to Wife
Is pledged to-day, and heard in heaven !

And must she change ? And must that wing
So buoyant, fall from out its sky ?
Then fairest, purest, o'er thee fling
The lightest-robed mortality !

That mortal life's less heavenly part
May, touched by heaven, grow half divine
And, sacramented in thy heart,
The essential love of loves be thine.

That joys which pass, like flowers may strew
Thy path to blessings that remain :
And what they lack of deep and true,
May be supplied by sacred pain.

But hark, the bridal bells! and lo!
In shadow now, and now in sun,
With suave and swan-like movement slow
That white procession winding on!

Ah! now her other life begins!
The soft submission, humble pride:
The smile tear-dipp'd; the loss that wins;
The life transfused and multiplied.

Even now, large heart, thy wish is this:—
That from that altar love might stream,
And bathe a sorrowing world in bliss!
That wish shall end not like a dream.

Good works, good will, shall round her spread;
The desert blossom, and the waste:
The poor man's prayer her golden head
Shall crown with lustres ne'er displaced.

With joy the villages shall glow,
And many a hut in wood and wild,
When comes the babe that comes to show
How Psyche looked, an infant child.

Go now, my Psyche: meet the throngs
That sprinkle flowers and banners wave;—
Take, Psyche, take, my last of songs;
And keep a garland for a grave.

Miscellaneous Sonnets.

Miscellaneous Sonnets.

I.

COLD, pure, reviving, med'cinable gales,
 Sea-born, nor charged with breath of herb or flower,
 That far o'er moonlight seas, perhaps this hour,
 Trouble some sleeping pilot's whispering sails,
 And pour into his ear consoling tales
 Of ivy murmuring round a known church tower ;—
 Crystalline airs, in love and pitying power,
 Serving that God whose love o'er all prevails :
 Hither in mercy also come, and lean
 One moment on those lids and o'er this breast !
 O cooled by all the shadows of your caves ;
 O fresh from mountain snows or loneliest waves ;
 O pure from haunts where man hath never been ;
 Come with ethereal dews and endless rest !

II.

ON THE DEATH OF A GOOD KING.

HONOUR that dies not, grief that lives for aye,
 And the benedictions of the suffering poor,
 Come to thy grave ;—and there, as at the door
 Of Heaven, their brows in mute expectance lay ;
 A mighty nation stands uncrowned this day :
 This day a widowed people's heart is sore ;
 A sire this day each household doth deplore ;
 Each head hath lost its helm, each hand its stay.
 Great king ! a nation smiled upon thy birth ;
 A nation's prayers, thy guards, each night watched round thee.
 Now thou obey'st the summons of the earth,
 Behold ! a nation's duteous tears have crowned thee :
 And millions at thy tomb to thee have given
 A portion of their heart to waft with thee to heaven !

III.

ON THE FALL OF A USURPER.

I WISHED thee length of years ! the courtly crowd
 Wished it less truly, and less fervently.
 Thou livest ! How many a head miscrowned hath bowed
 In specious death ! The slow shaft missed not thee.
 Thou livest a posthumous life ; reserved to see
 The Future's verdict—laughter long and loud :—
 Melted thy throne beneath thee like a cloud ;
 Like snow thy puissance vanished. Mockery
 Answered when that usurping hand invoked
 Thy host their hundred thousand swords to bare.
 Unknown, alone,—uncrowned because uncloaked,
 Thou fled'st ; nor friend nor foe demanded where.
 Thou livest ! A King Batavian William died :—
 By which the nations were disedified.

IV.

P O L A N D.

Lo, as a prophet, old, and fierce, and gaunt,
 Spurning the plains, when some detested foe
 His country and his country's hearths lays low,
 Makes in the mountain walls his caverned haunt ;
 There lurks ; thence leans ; half blind, yet vigilant,
 Watches red morning tinge the ensanguined snow ;
 And bends his ear, and says, " Thy foot is slow,
 " Deliverer ! see thy vengeance be not scant "—
 Not otherwise a trampled Nation waits,
 Regioned in fell resolve : her heart thus feeds
 On iron : muses thus on coming fates :
 Revels in rapture of predestined deeds :
 And finds at last the hour, and finds the way :—
 Let sceptre-wielding Rebels fear that day !

V.

TO THE NOBILITY OF ENGLAND, 1848.

PRINCES of England, undeposed as yet,
 While panic-stricken thrones around you quake,
 And perplexed kings themselves their sceptres break,
 With a firm hand your house in order set.
 If sound ye be at heart, external threat
 That soundness can but probe to prove. Awake !
 Hold fast your birthright for the people's sake :
 Let high and low discharge their mutual debt.
 Things hollow must collapse ; effete decay :
 But that which stablished first Nobility—
 Valour and Truth—if these abide, her stay,
 While live the nations she can never die.
 Be true to England : to yourselves be true :
 And England shall work out her furthest fates by you.

VI.

TO HONOUR.

BRIGHT and majestic Spirit ! faithful mate
 Of all true Virtue, and that generous Fame
 Which guards a spotless, seeks a glorious name
 From Love not Pride ; but seeks, content to wait,
 And prompt to share it—Angel of the State !
 Sanctioning Order with religious awe ;
 Taking the harshness and the sting from Law ;
 Scorn from the lowly, envy from the great ;—
 Come to this region of thine ancient sway !
 With thy heroic and inspiring smile
 Illume our perils and our fears beguile !
 Was it not here that Alfred built his throne,
 And high-souled Sydney waived a throne away ?—
 The land is strong which thou hast made thine own.

VII.

NATIONAL STRENGTH.

WHAT is it makes a Nation truly great ?
 Her sons : her sons alone : not theirs, but they !
 Glory and gold are vile as wind and clay
 Unless the hands that grasp them, consecrate.
 And what is that in man by which a State
 Is clad in splendour like the noontide day ?
 Virtue—Dominion ebbs, and Arts betray :
 Virtue alone endures. But what is that
 Which Virtue's self doth rest on ; that which yields her
 Light for her feet, and daily, heavenly bread ;
 Which from demoniac pride, and madness shields her,
 And storms that most assail the loftiest head ?
 The Christian's humble faith—that faith which cheers
 The orphan's quivering heart, and stays the widow's tears,

VIII.

ON A CONVENT.

GLORIOUS the thought ; not mortal the design,
 Defamed by fools, in earthly hearts to raise
 Unearthly citadels of prayer and praise :
 Revering, to renounce all bonds that twine
 With heavenly, human love : through Grace divine
 To rise o'er Virtue's secondary ways ;—
 Hidden to live with God : and by his gaze,
 Illumed yet veiled, like noontide stars to shine !
 Glorious the deed each waste and wilderness
 And isle beleaguered by the raging main
 To thrill with Christian chaunts and psalmic strain ;
 And make a conquered world her Lord confess !
 Ye that conventual pomps denounce, begin
 By fixing in your hearts conventual discipline.

IX.

A CONVENT SCHOOL IN A CORRUPT CITY.

HARK how they laugh, those children at their sport !
 O'er all this city vast that knows not sleep
 Labour and Sin their ceaseless vigil keep :
 Yet hither still good Angels make resort.
 Innocence here and Mirth a single fort
 Maintain : and though in many a snake-like sweep
 Corruption round the weedy walls doth creep,
 Its track not yet hath slimed this sunny court.
 Glory to God, who so the world hath framed
 That in all places children more abound
 Than they by whom Humanity is shamed.
 Children outnumber men : and millions die
 (Who knows not this ?) in blameless infancy,
 Sowing with innocence our sin-stained ground.

X.

THE reason why we love thee dost thou ask ?
 We love for many reasons joined in one.
 Because thy face is fair to look upon :
 Because, when pains or toils our hearts o'ertask,
 In sunny smiles of thine they love to bask :
 Because thou honourest all, and harmest none :
 Because thy froward moods so soon are gone :
 Thy many faults and foibles were no mask.
 Because thou art a woman. Unto me
 A gracious woman is a child mature ;
 Docile, and gentle, though with many a lure
 Enriched, and, in a soft subjection, free.
 A sanguine creature, full of winning ways ;
 Athirst for love, and shily pleased with praise.

XI.

TROIILUS AND CRESSIDA.

I.

HAD I been worthy of the love you gave,
 That love withdrawn had left me sad but strong :
 My heart had been as silent as my tongue ;
 My bed had been unfevered as my grave :
 I had not striven for what I could not save :
 Back, back to heaven my great hopes I had flung :—
 To have much suffered, having done no wrong,
 Had seemed to me that noble part the brave
 Account it ever. What this hour I am
 Affirms the unworthiness that in me lurked :
 Some sapping poison through my substance worked,
 Some sin not trivial, though it lacked a name,
 Which ratifies the deed that you have done
 With plain approval. Other plea seek none.

XII.—TROILUS AND CRESSIDA.

2.

GIVE me one kiss, sweet love, and so farewell !
 Those magic lips, when they were all my own,
 To me were dearer than the loftiest throne
 That ever made a conqueror's bosom swell.
 Those youthful eyes retain their luminous spell :
 Fairer those brows, that droop like flowers o'erblown,
 For the dim, dubious shadow o'er them thrown :
 Still on that cheek the pure carnations dwell !
 —Softly of infidelity ashamed,
 Yet with recovered freedom softly pleased,
 She sighed :—her hand unwillingly released,
 Withdrew, yet something seemed to leave behind :—
 She's gone ! so fleets the fleeting stream unblamed ;
 So fleets the unquestioned cloud, the unchallenged wind !

XIII.

URANIA.

URANIA ! Voice of Heaven, sidereal Muse !—
 Lo, through the dark vault issuing from afar,
 She comes, reclining on a lucid star.
 Her dark eyes, trembling through celestial dews,
 The glory of high thoughts far off diffuse :
 While the bright surges of her refluent hair
 Stream back, upraised upon sustaining air
 Which lifts that scarf deep-dyed in midnight hues
 To a wide arch above her hung like heaven.
 —I closed my eyes. Athwart me, like a blast,
 Music as though of jubilant gods was driven.
 Once more I gazed. That form divine had passed
 Earth's dark confine. The ocean's utmost rim
 Burned yet a moment : then the world grew dim.

XIV.

ON A PORTRAIT.

A DEEP still Sorrow, beautiful and bland,
 Across those brooding brows and eastern eyes
 Rests, as a broad shade on the mountain lies—
 How few that Sorrow's cause shall understand !
 Methinks, the years to come, a tragic band,
 Move, heard by him, with funeral harmonies,
 Up life's dim vale : and prescience, vainly wise,
 Shadows a fair face with prophetic hand—
 'Tis but a picture—Stranger, grief-betrayed,
 Weep not ! The man not portrait hadst thou seen,
 For early death then justly hadst thou prayed
 To shield the mourner with the grave's kind screen
 From woes, his portion destined from his birth,—
 O noble souls, what do ye here on earth ?

XV.

VIRGIN ! at placid morn, and when the airs
 Of evening fan her flushed and throbbing sky,
 Send up, like homeward doves, thy thoughts on high,
 And mingle with those gentle thoughts thy prayers.
 Blameless thou art : but One there is who dares
 Assail for ever, and remorselessly
 The soul of finest grain and purest dye ;
 And in the softest herbage sprinkles tares.
 Virgin ! that Power which sends the winds of even
 To rock the blossoms on the boughs of May,
 That Power the Spirits of the Mind obey,
 And come and go at His command alone.
 Yea, but for Him the loftiest star of Heaven
 Would drop, supplanted, from his glittering throne.

XVI.

TO A JUST LAWYER.

DEFRAUDED Justice, long a wanderer driven
 From Law, her Temple, holy kept of old,
 Though now the money-changers' strongest hold,
 Invoked not vainly aid from thee : and Heaven
 To thee that voice heroical hath given
 Wherewith to all thy brethren thou hast called,
 Standing alone among them disenthralled,
 All chains of custom, fear, and interest riven.
 Young Priest of Justice, what was their reply ?
 " Justice herself this human sacrifice
 " Requires : if thou wouldst serve her, rob and lie ;
 " So keeps the State her needful equipoise"—
 Such answer thou didst scorn ; and hast for this,
 Attained, fully to see its utter hollowness.

XVII.—A CHURCHYARD.

1.

It stands a grove of cedars vast and green,
 Cathedral-wise disposed, with nave and choir,
 And cross-shaped transept lofty and serene ;
 And altar decked in festival attire
 With flowers like urns of white and crimson fire ;
 And chancel girt with vine-trailed laurel screen ;
 And aisles high arched with cypresses between—
 Retreats of mournful love, and vain desire.
 In the dusk porch a silver fount is breathing
 Its pure, cold dews upon the summer air :
 Round it are blooming herbs, and flowers (the care
 Of all the angels of the Seasons) wreathing
 Successively their unbought garniture
 Round the low graves of the beloved poor.

XVIII.—A CHURCHYARD.

2.

BUT when the winds of night begin to move
 Along the murmuring roofs, deep music rolls
 Through all the vaults of this Cathedral grove ;
 A midnight requiem for departed souls !
 Piercing the fan-like branches stretched above
 Each chapel, oratory, shrine and stall ;
 Then a pale moonshine falls or seems to fall
 On those cold grave-stones—altars reared by love
 For a betrothal never to be ended ;
 And on the slender plants above them swinging ;
 And on the dewy lamps from these suspended ;
 And sometimes on dark forms in anguish clinging,
 As though their bosoms to the senseless mould
 Some vital warmth would add—or borrow of its cold.

XIX.

CONSTANCY OF CHARACTER.

MAN'S mind should be of marble, not of clay :
 A rock-hewn temple, large, majestic, bare ;
 Not decked with gewgaws, but with life-long care
 And toil heroic shaped to stand for aye :
 Not like those plaster baubles of the day,
 In which the lightest breath of praise or prayer
 Crumbles the gauds wherewith they garnished are :
 In which we dare not think, and cannot pray ;—
 In which God will not dwell. O Constancy !
 Where thou art wanting all our gifts are naught !
 Friend of the martyrs—both of those who die,
 And those who live—beneath that steadfast eye
 The breast-plates and the beaming helms were wrought
 Of all our far-famed Christian chivalry !

XX.

FALSE FRIENDSHIP.

ALAS, dear friends, we do each other wrong,
 For we long years in love conjoined have been ;
 Many vicissitudes, and strange, have seen ;
 Joyed oft, wept oft, outgrown our griefs ere long :
 Yet what we were, still are we. Love is strong,
 Though vigilant hate of all things base and mean,
 To raise her votaries, and with fire make clean ;
 But we her awful aids away have flung.
 Over complacent Friendship weakly doted
 On virtues, oft through dim tears magnified,
 Till Friendship, o'er-indulgent, scarcely noted
 The faults hard-by ; or, noting, feared to chide ;
 Therefore dishonoured Friendship asks too late,
 "My seat inglorious must I abdicate ?"

XXI.

FREE born, it is my purpose to die free.
 Away, degrading cares ; and ye not less,
 Delights of sense and gauds of worldliness ;—
 I have no part in you, nor you in me.
 They that walk brave wear the world's livery :
 Their badge of service is their sumptuous dress.
 Seek then your prey in gilded palaces ;
 Revere my hovel's humble liberty.
 Are there no flowers on earth, in heaven no stars,
 That we must place in such low things our trust ?
 Let me have noble toils, if toil I must ;—
 The Patriot's task, or Friendship's sacred cares.
 Beside my board that man shall break no crust,
 Who sells his birthright for a feast of dust.

XXII.

THE POETRY OF LIFE.

DIAN! thy brother of the golden beams
 Is hailed for ever as the Lord of Song,
 Master of manly verse, and mystic dreams :—
 Doth, then, no female lyre to thee belong?
 Say, is that pearly bow whose crescent gleams,
 Above black pine-woods lifted, or low-hung
 "Twixt hornèd rocks, or troubling midnight streams,
 With immelodious chord, and silent, strung?
 Ah no, not so! Thou too art musical!
 The world is full of poetry unwrit;
 Dew-woven nets that virgin hearts enthrall;
 Darts of glad thought through infant brains that flit;
 Hope and pursuit; loved bonds, and fancies free;—
 Poor were our earth of these bereft and thee!

XXIII.

PAINTER, in endless fame most sure to live,
 If thou my Celia's face reveal to men,
 Thy heart, all other schools forsaking, give
 To him whom Parma boasts her citizen.
 All gladdening forms, with exquisitest ken
 Scan thou like him; and sift as with a sieve
 From each its dross:—then fix the fugitive,
 Painting that Joy which mocks the poet's pen.
 The new-born fountain, and the sea-bird's grace,
 Be dear to thee. Whole hours, where violets gleam,
 Muse thou on eyes as blue, and lids as white.
 Where, under chestnut boughs, the moon's pale light
 Glimmers o'er banks of primrose, sit and dream
 Of those soft lustres on her innocent face!

XXIV.

INCOMPATIBILITY.

FORGIVE me that I love you as I do,
 Friend patient long ; too patient to reprove
 The inconvenience of superfluous love.
 You feel that it molests you, and 'tis true.
 In a light bark you sit, with a full crew.
 Your life full-orbed, compelled strange love to meet,
 Becomes, by such addition, incomplete :—
 Because I love I leave you. O adieu !
 Perhaps when I am gone the thought of me
 May sometimes be your acceptable guest.
 Indeed you love me : but my company
 Old time makes tedious ; and to part is best.
 Not without Nature's will are natures wed :—
 O gentle Death, how dear thou mak'st the dead !

XXV.

THE happiest lovers that in verse have writ,
 After all vows to perfect beauty paid,
 Full oft their hymns of triumph intermit,
 And harp and brow with funeral chaplets shade.
 A Babylonian choir on earth they sit
 In garb of exiles. Sadly they upbraid
 Beauty and Joy that only bloom to fade,
 And Love and Hope to Death and Ruin knit.
 What shall we say ? Have poets never loved ?
 (For small that love which fears that love can die):
 Have those that earthly immortality
 Dispense, the name itself a mockery proved ?
 Or of the Spirit of Life so full are they
 That with Death's shadow they are pleased to play ?

XXVI.

A POET TO A PAINTER.

THAT which my fault has made me, O paint not:
 Paint me as that which I desire to be.
 The unaccomplished good that died in thought,
 Deep buried in my heart, seek out, set free;
 And all I might have been concede to me:
 The veil my errors and the world have wrought
 Remove: the cloud disperse: erase the blot:
 Bid from my brow the temporal darkness flee.
 In that celestial and pure fount, whereof
 Some drops affused my childhood, bathe me wholly;
 And shield me from my own deserts: lest they
 Who now but see me by the light of love
 A sterner insight learn from thee one day;
 And love pass from them like some outworn folly.

XXVII.

THE FALL OF BACON.

APOLOGIST for a great man, take heed!
 Needs he such aid? Of errors worse is none
 Than fond excuses urged for deeds ill-done
 By men whose actions mould a nation's creed.
 They that in might of mind their race exceed,
 And walk this earth like Spirits from the sun,
 By them should Virtue's palms not less be won:—
 These if they reach not, let the victim bleed!
 And who shall dare lament them? All are frail,
 Though Nemesis the meaner culprit slights.
 Adversity and Justice, hail, O hail!
 Sacred the laurelled head your lightning smites.
 Him from the prosperous herd ye raise, and down
 On crowns of fortune drop a kinglier crown.

Spring Song.

THE infant Year with infant freak,
 Intent to dazzle and surprise,
 Played with us long at hide and seek ;
 Turned on us now, now veiled her eyes.

Between the pines for ever green,
 And boughs by April half attired,
 She glanced ; then sang, once more unseen,
 " The unbeheld is more desired."

With footstep vague, and hard to trace,
 She crept from whitening bower to bower ;
 Now bent from heaven her golden face,
 Now veiled her radiance in a shower.

Like genial hopes and thoughts devout
 That touch some sceptic soul forlorn,
 And herald clearer faith, and rout
 The night, and antedate the morn,

Her gifts. But thou, all beauteous May,
 Art come at last. Oh, with thee bring
 Hearts pure as thine with thee to play,
 And own the consummated Spring.

To hands by deeds unblest defiled
 In vain the whiteness of thy thorn :
 Proud souls, where lurks no more the child,
 For them thy violet is unborn.

For breasts that know nor joy nor hope
 Thy songstress sings an idle strain:
 Thy golden-domed laburnums drop
 O'er loveless hearts their bowers in vain.

Second Spring Song.

THE mother of the Heavenly Child
 Who made the world and who redeemed,
 The maid and mother undefiled;—
 She died, or else to die she seemed.

Once more above the late entombed
 They bent. What found they? Vacant space.
 To heaven had Mary been assumed,
 And only flowers were in the place.

O happy Earth, elected sphere!
 Dream blissful dreams in vale and grove!
 Thou too thy Maker's voice shalt hear;
 Thou too thy great Assumption prove.

The Earth shall be renewed. The skies
 Shall bloom with glories unrevealed:
 And every spring but typifies
 The wonders then to be unsealed.

Even now, behold, the year that died
 Revives. The winds of south and east
 Have blown upon our shores, and cried,
 "Prepare, prepare, the Paschal Feast."

I TAKE the gift you give me, friends,
 With grateful smiles, and lessening tears,
 And I let go that friendly foe,
 The memory of past years.

Fair wrecks of friendship—alms well-meant
 I take, though one to alms not used.
 The rich in love are proud; but I
 Have seen my state reduced.

My share was mine. I never strove
 Your chief of kindness to engross;
 And now, a bankrupt, mourn that none
 Is richer for my loss.

What interest have I to believe
 The fault was rather yours than mine?
 I take the gift you give; the rest
 Unquestioned I resign.

Song.

1.

SEEK not the tree of silkiest bark
 And balmiest bud,
 To carve her name, while yet 'tis dark,
 Upon the wood.

The world is full of noble tasks,
 And wreaths hard-won :
 Each work demands strong hearts, strong hands,
 Till day is done.

2.

Sing not that violet-veinèd skin ;
 That cheek's pale roses ;—
 The lily of that form wherein
 Her soul reposes !
 Forth to the fight, true man, true knight !
 The clash of arms
 Shall more prevail than whispered tale
 To win her charms.

3.

The warrior for the True, the Right,
 Fights in Love's name.
 The love that lures thee from that fight
 Lures thee to shame.
 That love which lifts the heart, yet leaves
 The spirit free ;
 That love, or none, is fit for one
 Man-shaped like thee.

1.

HEART, wingèd once ; self-doomed
 To pine in bonds the saddest :
 Strong spirit, self-entombed
 Within the vaults thou madest :
 Thy Will it is, thy Will
 That holds thee prisoner still.

2.

O soul, in vain thou strainest
 Against thy prison bar ;
 Of all vain things the vainest
 Our poor, half efforts are.
 Wholly be free,—till then
 Thou dost but hug thy chain.

Song.

1.

THOUGH oft beguiled, my friend, before,
 Still, still permit me to beguile ;
 Denounce not harshly, but deplore
 My laugh, and it may end a smile.
 To children more akin than you
 We women are—we give them birth—
 If we are sometimes childish too,
 Be men, nor war with childish mirth!

2.

Once on my head your hand you laid ;
 I shook it thence ;—but 'twas an art
 To hide from you how near it weighed
 On that which shook beneath—my heart
 Go not : be cold, be stern, be mute ;
 Yet stay : lest I, who cannot choose
 But tremble sometimes at thy suit,
 At last should tremble to refuse.

To —.

WE know that ofttimes gain is loss :
 Believe, sad heart, that loss is gain.
 From golden ore to clear the dross—
 This is thy sacred function, Pain.

The sleep is past of musing sloth :
 The tyranny of Self is o'er :
 Thou knowest by faith and suffering both,
 The truths thou knewest by rote before.

Cloud-temples—thoughts on thoughts up-piled—
 Are vain ; more vain the Stoic heart.
 His own wild spleen—a chance—a child—
 Can vanquish Merlin's magic art.

And well the enfranchised soul might bless
 The wounds a poor self-love would hide,
 Then when our veriest foolishness
 Breaks down the bulwarks of our pride.

Ah ! not within us lies our strength,
 Nor yet around us ; but above !
 We seek, and vainly seek : at length
 We rise to heaven for Truth and Love :

Drawn on through realms of light and rest,
 Where God is known as God, and reigns ;—
 Not to possess, but be possessed,
 Our last of wishes, first of gains.

Lines written at Halsteads.

NOV. 1845.

1.

FOUR years ago beside this lake,
 O'er which the mountain shadows close,
 I walked in sadness for the sake
 Of one who could no more partake
 That grave joy it bestows.

2.

"Since she is gone," I said, "ah why
 "Have they not here her ashes laid?
 "Here strayed her feet in infancy:
 "The studious girl was glad to lie
 "Under yon oak-tree's shade.

3.

"By Old-church, (dear to her,) a spot -
 "Once consecrate, twice sanctified;
 "Beneath its yew she slumbers not,
 "Nor in the adjoining garden plot,
 "Nor by the water's side.

4.

"Ah that but once the Lark might sing
 "Above his sister Poet's bed!
 "(For she sang also.) Ah that Spring
 "Her tardy northern flowers might fling
 "O'er that belovèd head!"

5.

Such thoughts were mine : the mood is gone ;
Once more, I stand this lake beside :
Maturer thoughts, and wisdom won
From years that like a dream are flown,
Cheer me instead, yet chide.

6.

As deeply, with a purer heart,
She loved these mountains which I love ;
And, loving, left them. Torn apart
From them and from the Poet's art,
She neither wept nor strove.

7.

Amid the stress of daily life
She, for ethereal stillness framed,
Advanced ; 'mid scenes for others rife
With petty troubles, care, and strife,
Uncrippled and unmaimed.

8.

The call of Duty was a call
To her more constant and more strong
Than voice of wintry waterfall,
Which from the mountain's echoing wall
Increases all night long.

9.

The humblest tasks of day and hour,
If Duty's light around them shone,
Challenged her breast with mightier power
Than Placefell's brow or Yewcrag's bower,
Illumined by moon or sun.

10.

We dwell not in the sacred fane,
But seek for strength supernal there,
Elsewhere to use it. Not in vain
Did vales and hills her youth sustain,
For loftier loves prepare.

11.

In crowded street and clamorous mews,
Her face its placid candour kept:
Her heart, like flowers refreshed by dews
The mountain's noontide mists diffuse,
In endless sabbath slept.

12.

To all her gentle ways was bound
A grace from woodland memories caught:
Her voice retained that touching sound,
(Pathos not plaintive though profound)
Contented rills first taught.

13.

Surely in sleep the torrents poured,
For her their requiem: and the wind,
And many a valley wind-explored,
Answering in full harmonic chord,
Their solemn burthen joined.

14.

In dreams unvanquished by the dawn
She saw red dawn the darkness rout:
Gradations saw of mountain lawn,
And ridge behind ridge, far withdrawn,
In "linked sweetness long drawn out:"

15.

Saw tracts high up of whitening grass,
(Sunshine of Earth when Heaven's had failed)
The crimson Birch-grove's feathery mass
By rain drops in a warm, still pass
With silver drapery veiled.

16.

The dark gold of the autumnal gorse,
The auburn of the faded fern,
She saw. Thy murmur, Aira Force !
Kept pure its Arethusan course,
'Mid dirge of billows stern.

17.

If ever now she moves to earth
That eye fast fixed upon the Throne,
In vale or city, south or north,
What sees she ? All things nothing worth,
Save virtuous tasks well done.

18.

Then rightly rests in death her head,
Where life to her its duties gave :
Among the poor she clothed and fed,
And taught, and loved, and comforted,
Rightly remains her grave.

A Farewell to Naples.

—

I.

A GLORIOUS amphitheatre, whose girth
 Exceeds three-fold th' horizons of the north,
 Mixing our pleasure in a goblet wide,
 With hard, firm rim through clear air far-described ;
 Illumined mountains, on whose heavenly slopes,
 Quick, busy shades rehearse, while Phcebus drops,
 Dramatic parts in scenic mysteries ;
 Far-shadowing islands, and exulting seas,
 With cities girt, that catch, till day is done,
 Successive glances from the circling sun,
 And cast a snowy gleam across the blue :—
 A gulf that, to its lake-like softness true,
 Reveres the stillness of the syren's cell,
 Yet knows the ocean's roll, and loves it well ;
 A gulf where Zephyr oft, with noontide heat
 Oppressed, descends to bathe his sacred feet,
 And, at the first cold touch, at once reviving,
 Sinks to the wings in joy, before him driving
 A feathery foam into the lemon groves ;—
 Evasive, zone-like sands and secret coves ;
 Translucent waves that, heaved with motion slow,
 On fanes submerged a brighter gleam bestow ;
 Fair hamlets, streets with odorous myrtles spread,
 Bruised by processions grave with soundless tread,

That leave (the Duomo entered) on the mind
 A pomp confused, and music on the wind ;
 Smooth, mounded banks like inland coasts and capes,
 That take from seas extinct their sinuous shapes,
 And girdle plains whose growths, fire-fed below,
 In Bacchanal exuberance burst and blow ;
 A light Olympian and an air divine—
 Naples ! if these are blessings, they are thine.

2.

Thy sands we paced in sunlight and soft gloom ;
 From Tasso's birthplace roamed to Virgil's tomb.
 Baia ! thy haunts we trod, and glowing caves
 Whose ambushed ardours pant o'er vine-decked waves.
 Thy cliffs we coasted, loitered in thy creeks,
 O shaggy island ¹ with the five grey peaks !
 Explored thy grotto, scaled thy fortress, where
 Thy dark-eyed maids trip down the rocky stair,
 With glance cast backward, laugh of playful scorn,
 And cheek carnationed with the lights of morn.
 The hills Lactarean lodged us in their breast :
 Shadowy Sorrento to her spicy rest
 Called us from far with gales embalmed, yet pure ;
 Her orange brakes we pierced, and ranged her rifts obscure.
 Breathless along Pompeii's streets we strayed
 By songless fount, mosaic undecayed,
 Voluptuous tomb, still forum, painted hall,
 Where wreathed Bacchantes float on every wall ;
 Where Ariadne, by the purple deep,
 Hears not those panting sails, but smiles in sleep ;

(1) Capri.

Where yet Silenus grasps the woodland cup,
And buried Pleasure from its grave looks up.
Lastly, the great Vesuvian steep we clomb ;
Then, Naples ! made once more with thee our home.
We leave thee now—but first, with just review,
We cast the account, and strike the balance true—
And thus, as forth we move, we take our last adieu.

3.

From her whom genius never yet inspired,
Or virtue raised, or pulse heroic fired ;
From her who, in the grand historic page,
Maintains one barren blank from age to age ;
From her, with insect life and insect buz,
Who, evermore unresting, nothing does ;
From her who, with the future and the past
No commerce holds ; no structure rears to last :
From streets where spies and jesters, side by side,
Range the rank markets, and their gains divide ;
Where Faith in Art, and Art in sense is lost,
And toys and gewgaws form a nation's boast ;
Where Passion, from Affection's bond cut loose,
Revels in orgies of its own abuse ;
And Appetite, from Passion's portals thrust,
Creeps on its belly to its grave of dust ;
Where Vice her mask disdains, where Fraud is loud,
And nought but Wisdom dumb and Justice cowed ;—
Lastly, from her who planted here unawed,
'Mid heaven-topped hills, and waters bright and broad,
From these but nerves more swift to err has gained,
And the dread stamp of sanctities profaned ;

And, girt not less with ruin, lives to show
 That worse than wasted weal is wasted woe,—
 We part ; forth issuing through her closing gate,
 With unreverting faces, not ingrate.

1844.

Lines.

FROM coral caves and sunless mines,
 And prone expanse of snows and sands,
 Whereon, while shadowing eve declines,
 The solitary exile stands :

From blasted fields and branded coasts,
 And citted deserts black with fire ;
 From putrid swamps where conscript hosts
 A foe behold not, yet expire ;—

At last ascending, claim your place,
 Nor fear to answer ban with ban,
 And smite the Insulter on his face,
 Ye manlier faculties of man,

That, long in rising, rise at last ;
 And, winged with lightning, thunder-zoned,
 The turrets shake, and scare the feast
 Of malefactors crowned and throned.

The blood of Catherine fires the Czar :—
 Teach it less proudly to rebel !
 False priests baptize an impious war ;—
 The homicidal synods quell !

From Arctic regions, and the shore
 Medea left of old, make way !
 The heart of Poland beats once more :
 The nuns of Minsk await their day.

Modern Philosophy.

1.

ARE these thy Prophets ? England, speak !
 Shall Strength be mastered by the weak ?
 Shall we, in times gone by
 For spiritual things who strove, submit
 (By ease seduced or scared by wit)
 To worship of a lie ?

2.

Woe to the land if this be so !
 The heights infected, vales below
 Will soon with plague be rife.
 The philosophic sceptre rules,
 Vicar of Faith—or foe—the schools
 That rule the walks of life.

3.

Pass then before us in review !
 Rise, modern teachers ! claim your due
 Of honour, love, or fear.
 First comes the chemist Locke, who taught
 That minds in crucibles are wrought
 Supplied through eye or ear.

4.

The man who dreamed that fleshly seed
 Those great creative thoughts could breed,
 Which stamp us truly men.
 Away ! From God we come : with awe
 From God those Truths ideal draw,
 That mock the senses' ken.

5.

Paley beside him takes his stand ;
 His pupil, graced with gown and band—
 What scroll is that he rears ?
 Behold the Gospel, new-translated,
 Of "selfishness well-calculated :"
 Well motivated hopes and fears !

6.

From human hearts wouldst thou expel
 The demons with a demon spell ?
 Sophist and Sadducee !
 Thy work is vain : thy work is woe :—
 Jesus they know and Paul they know ;
 But have not heard of thee,

7.

Who next ? A monk of modern cheer,
An economic sage draws near ;
 And, 'mid the fancied wreck
Of instincts old as earth, declares
" I'll make the planets move in squares
 With my ' preventive check ! "

8.

Task easier than to tear apart,
For Mammon's service, heart from heart ;
 Those genial streams to freeze,
That cleanse our valleys and make sound,
Yet fertilize earth's utmost bound,—
 The nuptial charities !

9.

Of old monastic virtue left
Such bonds behind ; and, thus bereft,
 Brought forth the soul's increase.
The mountain plains of ice and stone
It ploughed ; and reaped what God had sown :—
 Below, the plains had peace !

10.

Of old, where natural Love had sway,
The chains were flax that barred its way :
 Through deserts, and o'er floods
The warrior led a fearless bride ;
And city towers were soon descried
 O'er forest solitudes.

11.

Alas ! with us had Faith been strong,
 Or Nature's yearnings, not so long
 Had we these shames endured !
 Glassed in the church's font serene
 Reason her god-like face had seen,
 And seen it unobscured.

12.

Duty, erect, severe, and hard,
 Had won her own sublime reward
 Then most when seeking none.
 On all the highways of our life,
 Now mired with shame and dinned with strife,
 The light of heaven had shone.

13.

No lawyer—faithful to his fee—
 Had found in "average good" a plea :
 No statesman then had made
 The "nation's wealth" his first, great aim ;
 Nor to her greatness and her fame
 Preferred her growth in trade.

14.

O ye who watch those springs cloud-girt
 Of Thought, that soon their heights desert,
 And sweep by field and town !
 Keep pure your precious charge ! Their breath
 Can steep in dews of life or death
 A nation's laurel crown !

A Protestant's Musings at Rome.

THANKS be to Heaven! yon grove of sombre pines,
 Whose several tops, like feathers in one wing
 Folded o'er one another, hang in air,
 From the great City hides me. From its sound,
 Low but mysterious, urgent, agitating,
 Not distance only, but those rifted walls
 Immense (how oft at noontide have I watched
 The long green lizard from their fissures glance,
 And glide from thicket-mantled tower to tower),
 Not less protect me. Thanks once more to Heaven!
 This nook in which I lie, this grassy isle,
 Amid the burnt brake nested, hath no name:
 No legend haunts it. Unalarmed I turn,
 Confronted by no despot from the grave,
 By no inscription challenged. If this spot
 Was trod of old by consul or by king,
 It is my privilege to be ignorant:
 They lived and died. If here the Roman twins
 Tugged at the she-wolf, they have had their day.
 Yon lambs have now their hour; and I, a stranger,
 Following the path their feet have worn, here find
 Their cool recess, and share it. Pretty thrush!
 Possess thy soul in peace, and sing at will,
 Sharpening thy clear expostulating note,

Or softening, 'mid the branches. Thou art free!
Save that hereditary song no tie
Connects thee with the past. Complacent stream!
Sufficient to solicit and reward
An unconstrained attention, thou to me
(A lover of the torrents ere I heard them)
This day art dearer far than Alpine floods,
In whose abysmal voices all the sounds
Of all the vales are met and reconciled.
From admiration I desire repose;
Rest from that household foe, a beating heart;
Yea, from all thought exemption, save such thoughts
As, lightly wafted towards us, leave us lightly,
And, like the salutation of those winds
That curl yon ilex leaves, if sweets they bring,
Bequeath a sweeter freshness. Three weeks since
To me this dell of grass had seemed a prison,
And hours here spent ignoblest apathy.
The change, whence comes it? Fevered nights and days
Make answer. Answer thou, mysterious City,
Whose shade eclipsed the world a thousand years!
Tomb, aqueduct, and porch I visited,
And strove with adulating thoughts to clasp;
And could not: for as some vast tree, the sire
Of woods, flings off the span of infant arms,
So by its breadth and compass Rome rebuked
My sympathies. The "lesser," verily,
"Is of the greater blessed;" and Love, a gift,
Falls back, repulsed, from that which scorns its aid;
From that which, solitary in its vastness,
Admits no measurement, nor condescends

To be in portions grasped; from that which yields
No crevice to the climber's hand or foot;
Whose height o'erawes our winged aspirations,
Like some steep cliff of ocean in whose shade
The circling sea-birds wail. And yet unable,
With soul-unburdening love, to clasp thee, Rome,
Much more was I unable to forget thee.
I mused in city wastes, where pitying Earth
Takes back into her breast huge fragments strewn
Around, like bones of savage beasts extinct:
From wreck to wreck I roamed. My very dreams
Nestled in obscure haunts and vaults unhealthy.
Ruin on ruin pressed, rivals in death,
Like grave dislodging grave in churchyards choked.
Triumphant Pillar, and vain-glorious Arch
Towered in blue sky. Voluptuous Baths laid bare
Colossal vice: and one great* Temple, meet
For that promiscuous worship Statecraft loves,
Lifted its haughty dome and pillared front.
I sought Cornelia's house, but found instead
The Cæsars' Palace, and the Coliseum;
That theatre of blood, where sat enthroned,
Swollen with the rage of Roman merriment,
The Roman people, like an idol served
With human victims!

From its own excess
Triumphant Evil suffers confutation.
Not here where, tested by the extreme it reached,
The Imperial instinct stands unmasked—not here
Can the sword's conquests subjugate the soul.

* The Pantheon.

A lucid interval perforce is ours,
By these memorials sobered. Warlike sounds
Confirm, not break a sleeper's martial dream;
And energies of mind shut out full oft
That truth to babes revealed. The race that here
Trode down their brethren daily, in their day
Might plead some poor excuse. Each war to them
Some singular necessity might urge,
Or final peace impledge: but we who stand
Outfaced by all the congregated trophies
They reared that gloried in their shame; who pace
O'er Tullia's way to reach Domitian's halls;
Who in one choir behold the British Queen
And earliest Sabine maid; who hear at once
The wail of Veii and the falling roofs
Of Carthage, till monotonous becomes
The cry of nations, and the tale of blood
A tedious recitation; we who scan,
Marbled in Rome, the form of injured Earth,
And trace her wounds, and count each accurate pang
In that dread victim by Rome's talon and beak
Grav'n and recorded;—we are scantily moved
On martial sway to dote. What magic, then,
Draws us to Rome? What Spirit bids the nations
Send up their tribes to one Metropolis—
To her whom many hate—whom many fear;
Not many love! Luxurious wealth has spread
No velvet o'er the Roman streets, nor hung
The spoils of Cashmeer, Persia, Samarcand
● On either side the way. No flattering dream
Of Fame restored, and ancient life renewed,

Looks forth from heaven into a young man's eyes,
Then drops and plants its tent on Tyber's bank.
The tawny Tyber is no mountain rill
Where Fancy slakes her thirst. The Sage shrinks back,
And in the Roman Sibyl's bleeding book
Will read no line.
The future here is mortgaged to the past;
Hope breathes no temporal promise o'er that plain
On which Malaria broods: amid the tombs
Her foot moves slowly; and where Hope is lame
The social forces languish.

Whence the spell

That draws us, then, to Rome. In arms, no more
It lives:—perchance it rules in sovran Art?
The reign of Art is over. To uprear
A prostrate column on its crumbling base
Is here her chief of triumphs! Art remains—
Here, as elsewhere, a living power no more:
Her lifeless body, stretched across the street,
Blocks up the public ways. The artist's study,
Of old a hermit's cell, where Mind recluse,
Pillowed on stores aforetime rung from Thought
By Passion, by Experience drawn from Life,
Saw visions as in Patmos, and set forth
The shapes it saw, is now a wrangling shop
In all the regal cities of the world,
For them that buy and sell. In ancient time
The painter was a preacher, whose sage hand
Pictured high thought. If Martyrdom that Thought,
The radiant face of confessor unmoved,

Expressed full well that death which is a birth
Into the realms of light. If Faith that Thought,
Lo! where St. Jerome, eremite and saint,
A dweller among rocks, himself a rock,
Wasted and gaunt, fast-worn, and vigil-blind,
Dying, draws near in faith (with both hands clasped,
And awe-struck lip) to Him the invisible,
And on that "Last Communion" hanging, rests
The weight of all his being! If he mused
On purity, ah, mark that seer (nor young,
Nor female) who a lily holds, and reads
Writ in its depths the life white-robed of them
Who follow still the Lamb! How oft, how gladly,
On such fair picture, found in village church
Or loneliest convent, has my spirit fed!
But here in Rome, the centre once of Art,
Here, as elsewhere, her mission Art hath lost:
Her health is here in rank abundance drowned.
The living paint for profit. Pictures old
Are to inglorious eminence reduced;
And, from the spots that gave them meaning torn,
Hang now in brute confusion ranged round halls
Where Vanity sits umpire. Art of old,
Handmaid of Faith; prophet that witness bore
Of God, not self, nor came in her own name;
Initiate in the Ideal Truth that spans
The actual scope of things; and thence advanced
To stand great Nature's meek Interpreter,
Is now a painted queen; and keeps her court
In galleries whose marble labyrinths
Like cities peopled by a race of stone,

Branch forth unnumbered. Breathlessly we turn ;
And sigh for stillness, sigh for utter peace,
For darkness, or assuasive twilight drawn
In dewy gentleness o'er pastures broad,
Whose cool serenity of blue and green
Lures the tense spirit forth, and in a bath
Of relaxation soft, soothes and contents it—
Too much of ostentatious aid unasked !
Are we so weak within ? Can we advance
No step without a crutch ? no lessons learn,
Save lessons thrust upon us ? Can we catch
In Nature's music manifold no voice
But sad confessions of her nothingness ?
Trust we in dead things only ? Nature lives !
Her moving clouds, the rapture of her waves ;
Her rural haunts domestic ;—nooks sunwarmed,
Endeared to babe and greybeard ;—her expanse
Of fruitful plains, with hamlet, hall, and tower,
Homestead and hedge, in autumn's glistening air
Drawn out at eve, or by the ferment dazed
Of summer sunrise, or on vernal noon
Melting in pearly distance like our dreams
For man's far welfare ;—her mysterious glens,
That with the substance of one shade are thronged,
And other habitant have none, that speak
Of God and God alone ;—transpierce the heart
With wisdom less imposed on man than won
From man's resources. Nature's demonstrations,
Maternal, not scholastic, need have none
Of diagram. Her own face is their proof,
Subduing in the pathos of its smiles,

Or power of eye. And being infinite
Her life is all in every part; her lore
In lowliest shape is perfect. Thou frail flower,
Anemoné! that near my grassy couch,
By a breath shaken which I scarcely feel,
Thy gracious head as though in worship, bowest
Down on thy mother's lap—in thee, in thee
(I seek no further) lives that power supreme,
Whereof the artists boast. Immaculate Beauty
In thy humility doth dominate;
Is of thy tremblings proud; and, gladly clothed
In thy light garb of colours and fair forms,
Looks up and smiles. I pluck thee from thy bed—
Lie lightly on a breast that weary grows
Of haughtier burthens! Cool a fevered heart,
That seeking better things hath sought in vain.
Be thou my monitor: let me sum up.
What have I chiefly learned from human life?
That life as brief as thine is to be praised:
That life's best blessings are the joys we tread
To death unseen, chasing inventions vain:
That he who made thee, made the heavens and earth,
And man: and that in Him is life alone;
To serve Him freedom and to know Him peace.—
Thine ancestress that bloomed in Paradise,
Possessed no softer voice to celebrate
(Joining the visual chorus of all worlds)
Her great Creator's glory!

Hark that peal!
From countless domes that high in sunlight shake;

A thousand bells roll forth their harmonies.
The City, by the noontide flame oppressed,
And sheltered long in sleep, awakes. Even now,
Along the Pincian steep, with youthful step
To dignity subdued, collegiate trains
Follow their grave preceptors. Courts grass-grown,
That echoed long some fountain's lonely splash,
Now ring more loudly, smitten by the steeds
Of prince, or prelate of the Church, intent,
On some majestic Rite. That peal again !
And now the linked procession moves abroad,
Untwining slowly its voluminous folds.
It pauses—through the dusky archway drawn,
It vanishes—upcoiled at last, and still,
Girdling the Coliseum's central cross,
The sacred serpent rests. With stealthy motion
So slid the Esculapian snake of old
Forth from the darkness. In Hesperian isle
So rested, coiled around the mystic stem,
The watcher of the fruit. The day draws on.
The multitudinous thrill of quickening life
Vibrates through all the city, while its blood
Flows back from vein to vein. That sound prevails
In convent walks by rustling robe trailed o'er.
Like hum of insects unbeheld it throbs
Through orange-scented, cloistral gardens dim.
It deepens with the concourse onward borne
Between those statued Saints that guard thy bridge,
St. Angelo, and past the Adrian Tomb.
It swells within those colonnades whose arms
Receive once more the concourse from all lands—

The lofty English noble, student pale
From Germany, diplomatist from France,
Far Grecian patriarch, or Armenian priest,
Or Royal Exile. From thy marble roofs,
St. Peter's, in whose fastnesses abide,
Like Arab tribe encamped, the bands ordained
To guard them from the aggressive elements—
From those aerial roofs, to whispering depths
Of Crypts where kneels the cowl'd monk alone,
The murmur spreads, like one broad wind that lifts
Ere morn the sighing shrouds of fleet becalmed.
The churches fill; the relics forth are brought:
Screened by rich fretwork the monastic apse
Resounds the hoarse chant, like an ocean cave:
And long ere yet those obelisks which once
Shadowed the Nile, o'er courts Basilican
Protrude their evening shades, like silver stars,
Before white altars glimmering, lights shall burn,
And solitary suppliants lift their hands
To Christ, for ever present, to His Saints,
And to His Martyrs, whom the Catacombs
Hid in their sunless bosoms.

Rome, O Rome !

Surely thy Strength is here ! Three hundred years
The faithful people lived among the Tombs ;
The Catacombs were their Metropolis.
There in the darkness thirty Pontiffs ruled ;
And died, save two, by martyrdom. The Rite,
Dread, and tremendous, yoking earth and heaven,
The Christian Sacrifice, was offered there,

A tomb the altar ; and, for relics, blood
Of him who last confessed. The pictured walls
To Mary and to Peter witness still.
Here is thy Strength, O Rome ! Sun-clad, above,
The emperor triumphed, and the people triumphed !
The Nubian lion, and the Lybian pard
Roared for their prey ! Above thy tawny wave,
Tyber, the world's increase went up each day :
Daily from Rome the legions passed whose arms
Flashed back in turn the sunrise of all lands.
Through every gate the embassies of Kings
Advanced with gifts. But in the Catacombs
The faithful people, circled by their dead,
Worshipped their God in peace. Three hundred years
Passed like three days : and lo ! that Power went forth
Which conquered Death. Then Hell gave up her prey.
That hour the kingdoms of this world became
The kingdoms of the Lord, and of His Christ.
The Prince of this world, from his throne, upreared
On subject thrones of every land, was hurled :
The Empire quintessential that absorbed
All its precursors, lay a ruin : God
His Family on earth a Kingdom made,
And Sion built on buried Babylon.
The Sacrament of Obedience paid to God
Through Man, His Vicar, glorified, that hour,
Subjection ; and the Apostles reigned at Rome—
Reigned from their tombs, and conquered from their dust.
Behold the mystery of the ages ! Man
Wrought it, unconscious !—History is mad,
Or finds its meaning here. One mystery vast

Solves here Philosophy's uncounted riddles :
Time and its tumults here is harmonized :
Hope here is found or nowhere !

As a mist

That strives no longer, swept by quiring winds
From some peaked mountain, my oppression leaves me.
The world is mine once more. Refreshed I rise ;
And gales of life from that celestial bourne
Whereto we tend strike on me. With soft shock
Yon almond bower lets fall its summer snow.
The sun is setting. The despotic day
Which, blessing earth with increase, suffered none
To lift a grateful eye, hath heard his doom ;
And round him folds his robes, blood-stained and golden,
With dignity to die. Like haughty hopes
From one reduced by sickness, from the clouds
Their pageantries are melting : and ere long
No hue save that translucent, tender green,
Will speak of pomps gone by. The increasing wind,
Incumbent on the pine-grove's summit broad,
Gathers in volumed strength. Within its vaults
An omnipresent and persistent whisper
Waxes in loudness. Well might I believe
The hosts angelic, who with guardian care,
Urging belike the seasons in their course,
Circle the earth, even now on wings outspread
Were rustling o'er me, countless as sea-sands.
Glorious and blessed armies! free ye are
From man's uncertainties, and free not less,
From man's illusions! Passing in one flight

Calpé and Athens,—all that makes renowned
This many-mountained, many-citied globe,
To you our schemes of worldly rule must seem
Like some poor maniac's towers in charcoal sketched
(Airy possession) on his cell's bare wall ;
Our science like that knowledge won from touch
By one born blind ; our arts like gems minute,
Poor fragments crumbled from your spheres eterne !
Pity us, then, bright Spirits, for ye know
The weakness of our strength ; the poverty
Ye know, which we for wealth misdeem,—exchanging
The gold of Truth Unchangeable and One
(Shared, not divided) for the baser coin
Of Truth in portions, scattered through the world.
Ye know the sad vacuity of hearts
With trifles filled, and thence from Him averse
In love for whom is clasped the love of all things,
And their possession. Starlike in your ken,
By distance, and the barriers of the nations,
And all that haze which men call ancientness,
Unfooled ye are. For you the Church of God,
Unwrinkled as the ocean, wears for aye
Its Pentecostal glory. All things that live,
And die not—all realities divine,
Live in the light of an eternal Present
And prime perpetual. Him whom we revere
As patriarch, ye behold a white-haired babe,
Poor, heaven-protected infant of fourscore.
His course accomplished, still in him ye see
His mother's new delight,—a bud dried up ;
Dropt from the human stem at noon ; ere night

Blown forth into the darkness. Spirits blest!
The sun that runs before you rises ever ;
For ever sets ; reigns ever throned at noon :
Past, Present, Future mingle in your sight,
And Time its tortuous stream spreads to a lake
Girt by, and imaging, Eternity,
Between whose mirror and the infinite vault
Ye in the radiance bask.

Bask on, bright Spirits!

Bathe in the beam of Godhead ; or fulfil
With awe your ministries of love ; in Man
That seeing which they saw not who of old
The Galilean mocked. By death absolved—
By perfected Obedience rendered free,
Man o'er the ruins of the world shall rise ;
Yea, from the height of heaven, the throne of God,
Shall gaze upon a universe renewed—
His Image o'er that universe shall cast
And o'er your shining hosts :—His hand shall raise ;
And, with the voice supreme blending his own,
Shall bless you, and pronounce you "very good."

Sonnet.

EARLY FRIENDSHIP.

THE half-seen memories of childish days
When pains and pleasures lightly came, and went ;
The sympathies of boyhood rashly spent
In fearful wanderings through forbidden ways ;
The vague, but manly, wish to tread the maze
Of life to noble ends ; whereon intent,
Asking to know for what man here is sent,
The bravest heart must often pause, and gaze—
The firm resolve to seek the chosen end
Of manhood's judgment, cautious and mature :
Each of these viewless bonds binds friend to friend
With strength no selfish purpose can secure ;—
My happy lot is this, that all attend
That friendship which first came, and which shall last
endure. S. E. S. R.

Sonnet.

—
DRUDGERY.

PLEASANT it is, at close of weary day,
When all is out of sight that vexed the mind
To dull routine or petty task confined,—
Pleasant with intermitting chat to say
“This easy converse fully doth repay
“The morning’s labour.” Search! and you shall find
That only toil upon some work assigned
Can fit foundation for such leisure lay.
My friends are gone; these things I think and feel,
As o’er the dewy grass a path I make:
Some distant wagon with its labouring wheel
Betrays the silence which it seems to break;
Slow, heavy perfumes o’er the garden steal;
The flickering branches in the moonbeam shake.

S. E. S. R.

Sonnet.

OLD AND MODERN LEARNING.

THE learning of old times was as a stream
Through many an untrodden glen that held its way,
Smooth-flowing, clear, and silent as a dream
To the calm precincts of a cloister grey;
In which the sculptured fount would doubtless seem
A Station fit, where holy men each day
Might read the gracious Word, and muse, and pray,
“Send us the living water, Lord Supreme!”
The learning of these days doth rush along
By humblest hut and proudest palace bowers,
Like a broad torrent, troubled, loud, and strong;
Each sloping bank, throughout the circling hours,
Is crowded by an eager, restless throng—
They crush to dust the few remaining flowers.

S. E. S. R.

Sonnets written in Travel.

I.

ST. PETER'S BY MOONLIGHT.

Low hung the moon when first I stood in Rome:
Midway she seemed attracted from her sphere,
On those twin Fountains shining broad and clear
Whose floods, not mindless of their mountain home,
Rise there in clouds of rainbow mist and foam.
That hour fulfilled the dream of many a year:
Through that thin mist, with joy akin to fear,
The steps I saw, the pillars, last, the dome.
A spiritual Empire there embodied stood:
The Roman Church there met me face to face:
Ages, sealed up, of evil and of good
Slept in that circling colonnade's embrace.
Alone I stood, a stranger and alone,
Changed by that stony miracle to stone.

II.

PONTIFIC SERVICE IN THE SISTINE CHAPEL.

FORTH from their latticed and mysterious cells
 The harmonies are spreading, onward rolled :
 Ere long, by counter tides met and controlled,
 Midway more high the gathering tumult swells.
 It sinks—a breeze the incense cloud dispels:—
 Once more Sibylline forms, and Prophets stoled
 Look down, supreme of Art's high miracles,
 Upon the Church terrene. Once more, behold,
 With what an awful majesty of mien
 The kingly Priest, his holy precincts rounding,
 Tramples the marbles of the sacred scene:—
 The altar now he nears, and now the throne ;
 As though the Law were folded in his zone,
 And all the Prophets in his skirts were sounding.

III.

THE PILLAR OF TRAJAN.

DEGRADING Art's augustest minist' rings,
 Yon Pillar soars, with sculptured forms embost,
 Whose grace at that ambitious height is lost.
 Lo! as the stony serpent twines its rings
 Priests, coursers, heralds, warriors, slaves, and kings,
 Mingle, a tortuous mass confused and crost ;
 Whilst Art, least honoured here where flattered most,
 Deplores in vain her prostituted springs,
 By a fallen Angel at their source ill-stirred ;
 Unholy—thence unhealing!—What is aid,
 Vouchsafed, upon conditions that degrade,
 To one who her allegiance hath transferred?—
 O Attic Art brought low, that here dost stand
 Full-fed, but hooded, on a tyrant's hand!

IV.

THE ARCH OF TITUS.

I stood beneath the Arch of Titus long ;
On Hebrew forms there sculptured long I pored ;
Till fancy, by a distant clarion stung,
Woke: and methought there moved that arch toward
A Roman triumph. Lance and helm and sword
Glittered ; white coursers tramped and trumpets rung :
Last came, car-borne amid a captive throng,
The laurelled son of Rome's imperial lord.
As though by wings of unseen eagles fanned
The Conqueror's cheek, when first that arch he saw,
Burned with the flush he strove in vain to quell—
Titus! a loftier arch than thine hath spanned
Rome and the world with empery and law ;—
Thereof each stone was hewn from Israel!

V.

THE CAMPAGNA SEEN FROM ST. JOHN LATERAN.

Was it the trampling of triumphant hosts
That levelled thus yon plain, sea-like and hoary ;
Armies from Rome sent forth to distant coasts,
Or back returning clad with spoils of glory ?
Around it loom cape, ridge, and promontory :
Above it sunset shadows fleet like ghosts,
Fast-borne o'er keep and tomb, whose ancient boasts,
By Time confuted, name have none in story.
Fit seat for Rome! for here is ample space,
Which greatness chiefly needs—severed alone
By yonder aqueducts, with queenly grace
That sweep in curves concentric ever on,
(Bridging a world subjected as a chart)
To that great City, head of earth, and heart.

VI.

BIRDS IN THE BATHS OF DIOCLETIAN.

EGERIAN warbler! unseen rhapsodist!
 Whose carols antedate the Roman spring;
 Who, while the old grey walls, thy playmates, ring,
 Dost evermore on one deep strain insist;
 Flinging thy bell-notes through the sunset mist!
 Touched by thy song rich weeds and wall-flowers swing
 As in a breeze, the twilight crimsoning
 That sucks from them ærial amethyst—
 O for a Sibyl's insight to reveal
 That lore thou sing'st of! Shall I guess it? nay!
 Enough to hear thy strain—enough to feel
 O'er all the extended soul the freshness steal
 Of those ambrosial honeydews that weigh
 Down with sweet force the azure lids of day.

VII.—THE “MISERERE” IN THE SISTINE CHAPEL.

1.

FROM sadness on to sadness, woe to woe,
 Searching all depths of grief ineffable
 Those sighs of the Forsaken sink and swell,
 And to a piercing shrillness, gathering, grow.
 Now, one by one, commingling now they flow:
 Now in the dark they die, a piteous knell,
 Lorn as the wail of exiled Israel,
 Or Hagar weeping o'er her outcast. No—
 Never hath loss external forced such sighs!
 O ye with secret sins that inly bleed,
 And drift from God, search out, if ye are wise,
 Your unrepented infelicities:
 And pray, whate'er the punishment decreed,
 It prove not exile from your Maker's eyes.

VIII.—THE “MISERERE” IN THE SISTINE CHAPEL.

2.

THOSE sounds expiring on mine ear, mine eye
 Was by a corresponding impress spelled:
 A vision of the Angels that rebelled
 Still hung before me through the yielding sky,
 Sinking on plumes outstretched imploringly.
 Their Tempter's hopes and theirs for ever quelled,
 They sank, with hands upon their eyes close-held,
 And longed, methought, for death, yet could not die.
 Down, ever down, a mournful pageant streaming
 With the slow, ceaseless motion of a river,
 Inwoven choirs to ruin blindly tending,
 They sank. I wept as one who weeps while dreaming,
 To see them, host on host, by force descending
 Down the dim gulfs, for ever and for ever.

IX.—THE RENAISSANCE, AND SAVONAROLA.

1.

PAINTER, that on these sacred convent walls
 The symbols paintest of the fleeting Hours,
 Reserve thine art, poor spoil from pagan bowers,
 To deck withal the rich man's secular halls.
 Are these the Hours? ærial Bacchanals
 With urn down-bent or basket heaped with flowers,
 Through sunshine borne—light Zephyr's paramours?
 —Thralls though we be, we are not Pleasure's thralls!
 When God with thunder and his prophets' voice
 The temples where of old he chose to dwell
 Chooses to shake and summon, cleanse or quell,
 How impious sounds thy summons to rejoice!
 Erase thy work: kneel on the tombstones bare:
 Thine eye with fastings purge: make firm thy hand with prayer.

X.—THE RENAISSANCE, AND SAVONAROLA.

2.

THEN rise, and paint the Hours; and launch them forth
 Like sequent arrows hurled from God's right hand;
 Or eagles of the ocean, borne to earth
 By solid storm their wings no more withstand.
 Yet calm in speed, a stern, predestined band,
 In meditative might or gloomy mirth
 Speed them, dread forms of elemental birth—
 And let one bear the trump, and one the brand.
 Fix thou their mighty eyes those dark locks under
 Massed o'er their fervid foreheads, like a cloud
 Whose heart is flame. And be their faces bowed,
 As though they listened to unsleeping thunder;
 The breaking of the billows of Time's sea
 On the far confines of Eternity.

XI.

FRESCOES BY MASACCIO.

WELL hast thou judged that sentence, "Had ye Faith,
 "Ye could move mountains." In those forms I see
 What God at first appointed man to be;
 His image crowned, triumphant over death.
 Born of that Word which never perisheth,
 Those Prophets here resume the empery
 By sin in Eden lost. Their eye, their breath
 Cancels disease; lays prone the anarchy
 Of Passion's fiercest waves. Secret as Fate,
 Like Fate's the powers they wield are infinite.
 Their very thoughts are laws: their will is weight—
 On as they move in majesty and might
 The demons yield their prey, the graves their dead:
 And to her centre Earth is conscious of their tread.

XII.

GIOTTO'S CAMPANILE AT FLORENCE.

ENCHASSED with precious marbles, pure and rare,
 How gracefully it soars, and seems the while
 From every polished stage to laugh and smile,
 Playing with sportive gleams of lucid air!
 Fit resting-place methinks its summit were
 For a descended Angel! happy isle,
 Mid life's rough sea of sorrow, force, and guile,
 For Saint of royal race, or Vestal fair,
 In this seclusion—call it not a prison—
 Cloistering a bosom innocent and lonely.—
 O Tuscan Priestess! gladly would I watch
 All night one note of thy loud hymn to catch
 Sent forth to greet the sun, when first, new-risen,
 He shines on that aërial station only!

XIII.

OLD PICTURES AT FLORENCE.

THRICE happy they who thus before man's eyes
 Restored the placid image of his prime;
 Illustrating th' abortive shows of Time
 With gleams authentic caught from Paradise.
 Those Godlike forms are men!—Impure disguise
 By us now suffered! O for wings to climb
 Once more to Virtue's mountain seats sublime,
 And be what here we poorly recognise!
 From these fair pictures our Humanity
 Looks down upon us kindly. 'Tis no dream:—
 Truth stands attested by Consistency:
 And all the Virtues here in peace supreme
 So meet, so blend, that in those Forms we see,
 The sum of all we are and fain would be.

XIV.

ON A PICTURE BY COREGGIO AT PARMA.

PAINT thou the pearl gates of the Morning Star,
 Loftiest of Painters, and the loveliest ;
 For only of thy pencil worthy are
 Those ever-smiling mansions of the blest.
 Thyself when homeward called to heavenly rest
 Couldst scarce have marked our earth's receding bar :
 No happier shapes could greet thee, near or far,
 Than oft in life thy radiant fancy drest.
 God, when he framed the earth, beheld it good.
 The light from his approving smile that shone
 For thee waned never from her features wan :
 Before thine eyes, unfallen and unrenewed,
 Still moved that Race supreme and fairest made ;
 And Love and Joy, twin stars, still on their foreheads played.

XV.

COREGGIO'S CUPOLAS AT PARMA.

CREATURES all eyes and brows, and tresses streaming,
 By speed divine blown back :—within, all fire
 Of wondering zeal, and storm of bright desire ;
 Round the broad dome the immortal throngs are beaming :
 With elemental powers the vault is teeming.
 We gaze, and, gazing, join the fervid choir,
 In spirit launched on wings that ne'er can tire
 Like those that buoy the breasts of children dreaming.
 The exquisitest hand that e'er in light
 Revealed the subtlest smile of new-born pleasure,
 The depth here fathoms and attains the height ;
 Is strong the strength of heavenly hosts to measure ;
 Draws back the azure curtain of the skies,
 And antedates our promised Paradise.

XVI.—TO ITALY.

1.

O ITALY, how beautiful thou wert,
 If in thee dwelt an answerable soul!
 Fair in each feature, perfect in each part,
 That, that thou lack'st which should inspire the whole.
 Thine are all gifts of nature, all of art;
 Yet a slow sadness we cannot control
 Steals, as we gaze, o'er the dejected heart,
 And our checked Passion meets too soon its goal.
 Beyond the mark of Virtue thou hast shot,
 (For only Virtue's ornaments are thine)
 And so fallen short of Greatness. Solid Thought,
 Strength, courage, prudence—all save Truths divine
 Thou hast corrupted. Therefore falls thy hand,
 Prone, and unscathed of its old command.

XVII.—TO ITALY.

2.

O'ER-MASTERING passion, an enervate will,
 Demand the Despot. The quick, petulant guest
 Of joys inglorious, this inglorious rest
 Of absolute submission follows still
 With self-ordained succession; doth fulfil
 The providence of Nature. Ye detest
 Bondage—alas! her ill for you is best;
 And Freedom's good for you were utmost ill.
 Her fortress is the hearth, to you not dear:
 Her throne the patriot's heart paternal there:
 Her shrine the mind that doth itself revere:
 Her sanction this, that Freedom is the air
 By action breathed, and Virtue's natural sphere:
 Duty the name that all her standards bear.

M

XVIII.—GENOA.

AH! what avails it, Genoa, now to thee
 That Doria, feared by monarchs, once was thine?
 Univied ruin! in thy sad decline
 From virtuous greatness, what avails that he*
 Whose prow descended first the Hesperean sea,
 And gave our world her mate beyond the brine,
 Was nurtured, whilst an infant, at thy knee?—
 All things must perish—all but things divine.
 Flowers, and the stars, and virtue;—these alone,
 The self-subsisting shapes, or self-renewing,
 Survive. All else are sentenced. Wisest were
 That builder who should plan with strictest care,
 (Ere yet the wood was felled or hewn the stone,)
 The aspect only of his pile in ruin!

 XIX.—A PICTURE BY ANDREA DEL SARTO, IN THE
 CATHEDRAL OF PISA.

ARE there not virtues which we know not of?—
 By man unnamed because not met with here;
 Perchance too lofty for this lowly sphere;
 Our great and glorious heritage above,—
 Yet here in virtues which we know and love
 Dimly foreshown? Thus dimly to the seer,
 In instincts of brute tribes that round us move
 Rehearsed, the attributes of man appear.
 Madonna! I have hung day after day
 On thy strange beauty with a devout eye;
 And now, all passion, marvel, ecstasy
 Rebuked, or harmonized, or worn away,
 I gaze; and ask what I have asked; and stay
 Lingerin', and vainly hoping a reply.

* Columbus.

XX.—THE CAMPO SANTO AT PISA.

1.

THERE needs not choral song, nor organ's peeling:—
 This mighty cloister of itself inspires
 Thoughts breathed like hymns from spiritual choirs;
 While shades and lights, in soft succession stealing,
 Along it creep, now veiling, now revealing
 Strange forms, here traced by painting's earliest sires,—
 Angels with palms; and purgatorial fires;
 And saints caught up, and demons round them reeling.
 Love, long remembering those she could not save,
 Here hung the cradle of Italian Art:
 Faith rocked it: like a hermit child went forth
 From hence that Power which beautified the earth.
 She perished when the world had lured her heart
 From her true friends, Religion and the grave.

XXI.—THE CAMPO SANTO AT PISA.

2.

LAMENT not thou: the cold winds, as they pass
 Through the ribbed fret-work with low sigh or moan,
 Lament enough: let them lament alone,
 Counting the sear leaves of the innumerable grass
 With thin, soft sound like one prolonged—alas!
 Spread thou thy hands on sun-touched vase, or stone
 That yet retains the warmth of sunshine gone,
 And drink warm solace from the ponderous mass.
 Gaze not around thee. Monumental marbles,
 Time-clouded frescoes, mouldering year by year,
 Dim cells in which all day the night-bird warbles—
 These things are sorrowful elsewhere, not here:
 A mightier Power than Art's hath here her shrine:
 Stranger! thou tread'st the soil of Palestine!

XXII.

WRITTEN IN TASSO'S HOUSE AT SORRENTO.

O LEONORA, here thy Tasso dwelt,
 Secure, ere yet thy beauty he had seen:
 Here with bright face and unterrestrial mien
 He walked, ere yet thy shadow he had felt.
 From that green rock he watched the sunset melt,
 On through the waves: yon cavern was his screen,
 When first those hills, which gird the glowing scene,
 Were thronged with heavenly warriors, and he knelt
 To hail the vision! Syren baths to him
 Were nothing; Pagan grot, or classic fane,
 Or glistening pavement seen through billows dim.
 Far, far o'er these he gazed on Judah's plain;
 And more than manhood wrought was in the boy—
 Why did the Stranger meddle in his joy?

XXIII.

THE SIBYL'S CAVE AT CUMA.

CUMEAN Sibyl! from thy sultry cave
 Thy dark eyes level with the sulph'rous ground
 Through the gloom flashing, roll in wrath around.
 What see they? Coasts perpetual Earthquakes pave
 With ruin; piles half buried in the wave;
 Wrecks of old times and new in lava drowned;—
 And festive crowds, sin-steeped and myrtle-crowned,
 Like idiots dancing on a Parent's grave.
 And they foresee. Those pallid lips with pain
 Suppress their thrilling whispers. Sibyl, spare!
 Could Wisdom's voice divide yon sea, or rear
 A new Vesuvius from its flaming plane,
 Futile the warning! Power despised! forbear
 To deepen guilt by counsel breathed in vain!

XXIV.

VENICE BY DAY.

THE splendour of the Orient, here of old
Throned with the West, upon a waveless sea,
Her various-vested, resonant jubilee
Maintains, though Venice hath been bought and sold.
In their high stalls of azure and of gold
Yet stand, above the servile concourse free,
Those brazen steeds—the Car of Victory
Hither from far Byzantium's porch that rolled.
The wingèd Lions, Time's dejected thralls,
Glare with furled plumes. The pictured shapes that glow
Like sunset clouds condensed upon the walls,
Still boast old wars, or feasts of long ago :
And still the sun his amplest glory pours
On all those swelling domes and watery floors.

XXV.

VENICE IN THE EVENING.

ALAS ! mid all this pomp of the ancient time,
And flush of modern pleasure, dull Decay
O'er the bright pageant breathes her shadowy grey.
As on from bridge to bridge I roam and climb
It seems as though some wonder-working chime,
(Whose spell the Vision raised and still can sway)
To some far source were ebbing fast away :
As though, by man unheard, with voice sublime
It bade the sea-born Queen of Cities follow
Her Sire into his watery realm far down—
Beneath my feet the courts sound vast and hollow ;
And more than Evening's darkness seems to frown
On sable barks that, swift yet trackless, fleet
Like dreams o'er dim lagune and watery street.

XXVI.

IN A CATHEDRAL.

THIS work indeed is glorious : fit the shrine—
 For God ?—Not so, but fit for God-like men
 Divinely joined in rites which make divine.
 Lo ! like a stream that, toiling through a glen,
 Its own breath veils at times from human ken,
 Yon white Procession curves its distant line ;
 Now seen through columns like a grove of pine,
 Anon in clouds of incense veiled again.
 Those roofs high-arched, like hands upraised in prayer,
 Invoke, as plainly as the Litanies
 They echo, Him whose seat is everywhere—
 Great God ! the race that reared their mighty span
 Obey an Alien's sceptre ! O that man
 Were worthier of his nobler faculties !

XXVII.

LEONARDO'S "LAST SUPPER" AT MILAN.

COME ! if thy heart be pure, thy spirits calm.
 If thou hast no harsh feelings, or but those
 Which self-reproach inflicts—ah no, bestows ;
 Her wounds, here probed, find here their gentlest balm.
 O the sweet sadness of that lifted palm !
 The dreadful Deed to come His lips disclose :
 Yet love and awe, not wrath, that count'nance shows,
 As though they sang even now that ritual psalm
 Which closed the Feast piacular.—Time hath done
 His work on this fair picture ; but that Face
 His outrage awes. Stranger ! the mist of years,
 Between thee hung and half its heavenly grace,
 Hangs there, a fitting veil ; nor that alone—
 Gaze on it also through a veil of tears !

XXVIII.

THE MILANESE SCHOOL.

WHAT memory of a being ere his birth
 Possessed Luini with the idea strange
 Of that Sibylline beauty ? Hall or Grange,
 Palace or Hut, whate'er we know on earth,
 Holds nothing like it. Sadness here and mirth
 So blend, or so into each other range,
 We deem them ancient foemen that exchange
 Love-vows, and sit henceforth beside one hearth.
 Those half-closed eyes with mournful penetration
 Look on through all things ; yet a furtive smile
 Brightens her thin, smooth, shadowy face the while :—
 Methinks that subtle-visaged creature hears
 The narrowing thread of Life in soft gyration
 Drawn out ; or closing of the fatal shears !

XXIX.

THE CATHEDRAL OF MILAN.

WITH steps subdued, silence, and labour long,
 I reached the marble roofs. Awe vanquished dread.
 White were they as the summit of Mont Blanc,
 When noontide parleys with that mountain's head.
 The far-off Alps, by morning tinged with red,
 Blushed through the spires that round in myriads sprung :
 A silver gleam the wind-stirred poplars flung
 O'er Lombardy's green sea below me spread.
 Of these I little saw. In trance I stood ;
 Ere death, methought, admitted to the skies :
 Around me, like a heavenly multitude
 Crowning some specular mount of Paradise,
 Thronged that Angelic concourse robed in stone :
 The sun, ascending, in their faces shone !

XXX.

BYZANTINE MOSAICS AT RAVENNA.

TRACED on dim gold, in azure vaults enshrined,
 Dreary adornments of each glaring space,
 Those figures lean lack not a terrible grace !
 Like cloud-rack dragged along the wintry wind,
 Forth stream at large their grey locks unconfined.
 A vulture's foot each hand might seem : each face
 Reports of wilds where, mid the ferine race,
 Couched hungry seers and prophets vigil-blind.
 Rocks, forests, caves, before me rise austere !
 And that strong Church in childhood wandering wide,
 By visions nursed, by tempests lullabied :
 And hymns of warlike blast I seem to hear ;
 Victorious hymns no pen of scribe records :—
 Fly, scattered Fiends ! stand back, terrestrial Lords !

XXXI.

THE "SANTA CASA" AT LORETTO.

A POET'S, not a pilgrim's, vow was mine :
 And with unworthy eyes, though pleased, I scanned
 That house walled round with sculptured forms divine,
 Labour illustrious of a Tuscan hand :
 If Angels hither from earth's holiest strand
 Wafted the hut those sumptuous walls enshrine,
 Not less the artist here with potent wand
 Wafts back the wanderer's soul to Palestine :
 There lays, there lulls it in a peaceful haven,
 O'er which, distinct as stars o'er sleeping seas,
 All Christian truths and Human, blended, bow,
 Embodied in those gospel imageries.
 Of song-raised temples we have heard ere now—
 Lo, here a visible hymn in marble graven !

XXXII.

WRITTEN WHILE SAILING ON THE GULF OF LEPANTO.

ALL round they lie, deep breath to breath replying,—
 Those outworn seamen in their well-earned sleep :
 From the blue concave to the dim blue deep
 No sound beside. Fluttering all night, or sighing,
 Since morn the breeze delicious hath been dying,
 And now is dead. On yonder snowy steep
 The majesty of Day diffused is lying ;
 Whilst Evening's Powers in silence seaward creep,
 From glens that violet-shade the lilac vest
 Of Delphi's hills. Ye mariners, sleep well !
 Run slowly, golden sands, and noiselessly.
 There stands the great Corinthian citadel :
 Parnassus there : Rest, wearied pinnacle, rest !
 Sleep, sacred air ! sleep on, marmorean sea !

XXXIII.

THE SETTING OF THE MOON NEAR CORINTH.

FROM that dejected brow in silence beaming
 A light it seems too feeble to retain,
 A sad, calm, tearful light through vapour gleaming,
 Slowly thou sinkest on the Ægean main ;
 To me an image, in thy placid seeming
 Of some fair mourner who will not complain ;
 Of one whose cheek is pale, whose eyes are streaming,
 Whose sighs are heaved unheard,—not heaved in vain.
 And yet what power is thine ? as thou dost sink,
 Down sliding slow along that azure hollow,
 The great collected Deep thy course doth follow,
 Amorous the last of those faint smiles to drink ;
 And all his lifted fleets in thee obey
 The symbol of an unpresuming sway.

XXXIV.—TO A MOUNTAIN IN SWITZERLAND.

1.

FROM all the glittering towers and spires star-bright
 That fret thy crystal bastions far below,
 With what an awful grace yon dome of snow
 Ascends, and swelling, grows upon our sight ;
 White as an infant's spirit, or the might
 Of grey hairs in a monarch ! Soft and slow,
 Dark clouds across thy Pine-wood vesture flow,
 But touch not, mountain king, that sovran height.
 The avalanche, borne down in solid flood,
 Thunders unechoed mid those seats divine :
 And heaven's great diadem of starry globes
 Is all thou seest, for thine own white robes
 Shut out the world—Never shall foot of mine
 Assail the region of thy solitude.

XXXV.—TO A MOUNTAIN IN SWITZERLAND.

2.

LEAD to this spot Ambition's outcast son,
 With unslaked hopes burning from youth to age ;—
 That snowy vault, its latest crimson frown,
 With cold aspect his fever shall assuage.
 Lead hither him who, pining in the cage
 Of love remembered when the loved is gone,
 Feeds on one thought, and that a poisonous one ;—
 Haply that free expanse may disengage
 His heart from earth—that region whence there seems
 To heaven one short step only. To this spot
 Be thou, bewildered maniac, also brought ;
 Gaze on that calmness, and forget thy dreams ;
 While noontide slumbers on its breezeless height,
 While kissed by rose-lipped Morn, or crowned by starry Night.

XXXVI.—TO A MOUNTAIN IN SWITZERLAND.

3.

THE Spirits of the midnight and noonday
 On thee, great mount, obsequiously attend :
 Within thy skirts shadow and sunlight play ;
 And the stars hail thee as their earthly friend.
 From their immortal charge the Twins descend ;
 The Plough awhile forgets his heavenly way ;
 The Pleiads from their shining cloisters stray ;
 And the crowned Archer doth his bow unbend.
 Thy vastness draws the sphere above thee nearer :
 —Or is it that our hearts by thee are raised ;
 And, strengthened thus, delight with vision clearer
 To pore on starry wonders unamazed,
 Earth's noblest shape forsaking for the sky—
 As life when sweetest makes it sweet to die ?

XXXVII.

THE CHAPEL OF TELL, (ON THE LAKE OF LUCERNE.)

ON this green platform with its chapel small
 Embowered, the centre of the mountain land,
 Take, holy Freedom, take for aye thy stand ;
 And hither from all regions ever call
 Thy sons to thy perpetual festival :—
 Or bid them drink, a sacramental band,
 From Grutli's founts, that rose at thy command,
 There where the three Deliverers vowed the fall
 Of Power unjust. Night heard those whispered tones ;—
 Have they not found large echoes in the world ?
 Have they not been like God's own thunder hurled
 In ruin down on all opprobrious thrones ?
 All sway that, deifying lawless might,
 On that doth build, and not on God and on the right ?

XXXVIII.

THE MOUNTAIN MUSE.

WHERE shall we spread the couch of thy repose ?
 For here below thou find'st no worthy dwelling ;
 Rise then where Alp o'er Alp, like clouds up-swelling,
 Above th' attempt of eagle's wing enclose
 Inviolate spaces of suspended snows :—
 There, while the floods far down are faintly knelling,
 And hooded Evening, star by star, is telling
 Her rosary dim-seen through skies of rose—
 There, thy large eyes steadfast and open keeping,
 Olympia, rest ! what tune in mournful choir
 The mighty winds, through endless pinewoods sweeping,
 Draw from those chords, their melancholy lyre,
 Eolian tones of elemental weeping ;
 And the last gleams of dying day expire.

XXXIX.

TO A FLOWER ON THE SKIRTS OF MONT BLANC.

WITH heart not yet half-rested from Mont Blanc,
 O'er thee, small flower, my wearied eyes I bent,
 And rested on that humbler vision long.
 Is there less beauty in thy purple tent
 Outspread, perchance a boundless firmament
 O'er viewless myriads which beneath thee throng,
 Than in that mount whose sides, with ruin hung,
 Frown o'er black glens and gorges thunder-rent ?
 Is there less mystery ? Wisely if we ponder,
 Thine is the mightier marvel. Life in thee
 Is strong as in cherubic wings that wander,
 Seeking the limits of Infinity ;—
 Life, life to be transmitted, not to expire
 Till yonder snowy vault shall melt in the last fire !

XL.

THE MOUNTAIN LANGUAGE.

SILENT to watch great rivers at their rise,
 And downward track them to the murmuring deep ;
 The sunlit storm to follow as it flies,
 Broken, through purple glens ; in lingering sweep
 To hear the forest sigh, the torrent leap ;—
 These things, great Nature's tragic agonies,
 What lesson teach they which the soul should prize
 As precious, and the memory strive to keep ?
 "Lift up your hearts !" O strange and mystic words !
 Sounds truly eucharistic !—Nothing mean
 Is heard in them, or common, or unclean.
 This is the mountain language. Sense affords
 An instrumental medium : but the Spirit
 Draws near in faith ; and God, that hour, is near it !

XLI.

A TYROLESE VILLAGE.

THIS village, thronged with churches, needeth none.
 Each house like some old missal rich and quaint,
 Is blazoned o'er with prophet, seer, and saint :
 Each court and street a sanctity hath won.
 Here a great Angel stands, crowned with the sun :
 Magdalene there pours her perpetual plaint ;—
 There o'er her child the Maiden without taint
 Bends, as His mercy bends o'er worlds undone.
 Of earth's proud centres none like this recalls
 That mystic City in the realms supernal
 Built upon God ; whose light is God alone.
 The very stones cry out : the eloquent walls
 Plainly confess that name the proud disown ;
 The Father's glory, and the Son eternal.

XLII.

THE CATACOMBS AT ROME.

WHOEVER seeks for penitential days,
 And vows that fitly on such days attend,
 A region apt, his wanderings here may end.
 These caverns, winding in sepulchral maze,
 Are stronger than the desert's loneliest ways,
 Thoughts meek and sad with lofty thoughts to blend:—
 Descend, great Pontiff! Sovran Priests, descend!
 Let all the Princes of the Church praise
 With annual rites their sceptred hands to God!
 Kings of the nations, purpling those strange glooms
 With robes imperial, on your faces sink;—
 Sink, and be saved, in those dread catacombs!
 And deeply of the inspiring incense drink
 That rises from the dust the Martyrs trod!

XLIII.

THE APPIAN WAY.

AWE-STRUCK I gazed upon that rock-paved way,
 The Appian Road; marmorean witness still
 Of Rome's resistless stride and fateful Will,
 Which mocked at limits, opening out for aye
 Divergent paths to one imperial sway.
 The nations verily their parts fulfil;
 And War must plough the fields which Law shall till;
 Therefore Rome triumphed till the appointed day.
 Then from the Catacombs, like waves, up-burst
 The Host of God, and scaled, as in an hour,
 O'er all the earth the mountain seats of Power.
 Gladly in that baptismal flood immersed
 The old Empire died to live. Once more on high
 It sits; now clothed with immortality!

Poems on Sacred Subjects.

Persecution.

AN ODE.

1.

THERE was silence in the heavens
 When the Son of Man was led
 From the Garden to the Judgment;
 Sudden silence, strange, and dread!
 All along the empyreal coasts,
 On their knees the immortal hosts
 Watched, with sad and wondering eyes,
 That tremendous sacrifice.

2.

There was silence in the heavens
 When the Priest his garment tore;
 Silence when that Twain accursèd
 Their false witness faintly bore.
 Silence (though a tremor crept
 O'er their ranks) the Angels kept
 While that judge, dismayed though proud,
 Washed his hands before the crowd.

3.

But when Christ His cross was bearing,
 Fainting oft, by slow degrees,
 Then went forth the angelic thunder,
 Of legions rising from their knees.

N

Each bright Spirit grasped a brand ;
 And lightning flashed from band to band :
 An instant more had launched them forth,
 Avenging terrors, to the earth.

4.

Then from God there fell a glory,
 Round and o'er that multitude ;
 And by every fervent Angel
 With hushing hand another stood ;—
 Another, never seen before,
 Stood one moment and no more !—
 —Peace, brethren, peace ! to us is given
 Suffering : vengeance is for Heaven !

The Martyrdom.

ANGELS.

BEARING lilies in our bosom,
 Holy Agnes, we have flown,
 Missioned from the Heaven of Heavens
 Unto thee, and thee alone.
 We are coming, we are flying,
 To behold thy happy dying.

AGNES.

Bearing lilies far before you,
 Whose fresh odours backward blown
 Light those smiles upon your faces,
 Mingling sweet breath with your own,
 Ye are coming—smoothly, slowly—
 To the lowliest of the lowly.

ANGELS.

Unto us the boon was given ;
One glad message, holy maid,
On the lips of two blest Spirits,
Like an incense-grain was laid ;
As it bears us on like lightning
Cloudy skies are round us bright'ning.

AGNES.

I am here, a mortal maiden ;
If our Father aught hath said,
Let me hear his words and do them—
Ought I not to feel afraid,
As ye come, your shadows flinging
O'er a breast to meet them springing ?

ANGELS.

Agnes ! there is joy in Heaven !
Gladness like the day is flung
O'er the spaces never measured ;
And from every Angel's tongue
Swell those songs of impulse vernal,
All whose echoes are eternal.

Agnes ! from the depth of Heaven
Joy is rising like a spring,
Borne above its grassy margin,
Borne in many a crystal ring ;
Each o'er beds of wild flowers gliding,
Over each low murmurs sliding.

When a Christian lies expiring,
 Angel choirs, with plumes outspread,
 Bend above his death-bed singing,
 That, when Death's mild sleep is fled,
 There may be no harsh transition
 While he greets the heavenly Vision.

AGNES.

Am I dreaming, blessed Angels?
 Late ye floated two in one;
 Now a thousand radiant Spirits
 Round me weave a glistening zone!
 Lilies as they wind, extending;
 Roses with those lilies blending.

See! the horizon's ring they circle;
 Now they gird the zenith blue;
 And now o'er every brake and billow
 Float like mist, and flash like dew.
 All the earth with life o'er-flowing,
 Into heavenly shapes is growing!

They are rising: they are rising:
 As they rise, the veil is riven!
 They are rising: I am rising:
 Rising with them into heaven:—
 Rising with those shining legions
 Into Life's eternal regions.

O D E.

1.

THE marvels of the seas and earth,
 Their works and ways, are little worth
 Compared with Man their lord:
 He masters Nature through her laws;
 And therefore not without a cause
 Is he by all adored.

2.

Lord of the mighty eye and ear,
 Each centering an immortal sphere
 Of empire and command:
 Lord of the heavenly breast and brow,
 The step that makes all creatures bow,
 And the earth-subduing hand.

3.

And yet not loftier soars the state
 Of Man o'er shapes inanimate,
 In majesty confest,
 Than among men, that man, by Faith
 Assured in life, confirmed in death,
 Uptowers above the rest!

4.

For God is with him: and the end
 Of all things, downward as they tend,
 Toward their term and close,
 A sov'reign throne for him prepares;
 And makes of vanquished pains and cares
 A couch for his repose!

5.

While kingdoms lapse, and all things range,
 He rules a world exempt from change ;
 He sees as Spirits see :
 And garners ever more and more,
 While years roll by, an ampler store
 Of glorious liberty—

6.

Yea, ten times glorious when at last
 His spirit, all her trials past,
 Stands up, prepared to die ;
 And, fanning wide her swan-like plumes,
 A glory flings across the glooms
 Through which her course must lie.

 Lines.

THE lights o'er yonder snowy range,
 Shine yet, intense and tender ;
 Or, slowly passing, only change
 From splendour on to splendour.

Before the dying eyes of Day
 Immortal visions wander ;
 Dreams prescient of a purer ray
 And morn spread still beyond her.

Lo! heavenward now those gleams expire,
 In heavenly melancholy ;
 The barrier mountains, peak and spire,
 Relinquishing them slowly.

Thus shine, O God! our mortal powers,
 While grief and joy refine them—
 And when in death they fade, be ours
 Thus gently to resign them!

Nocturn Hymn.

Now God suspends its shadowy pall
 Above the world, yet still
 A steely lustre plays o'er all,
 With evanescent thrill.

Softly, with favouring footstep, press,
 Among those yielding bowers;
 Over the cold dews colourless,
 Damp leaves and folded flowers.

Sleep, little birds, in bush and brake!
 'Tis surely ours to raise
 Glad hymns, ere humbler choirs awake
 Their anthem in God's praise.

The impatient zeal of faithful love
 Hath forced us from our bed;
 But doubly blest repose will prove,
 After our service said!

How dim, how still this slumbering wood!
 And O, how sweetly rise
 From clouded boughs, and herbs bedewed,
 Their odours to the skies!

Sweet, as that mood of mystery,
 When thoughts, that hide their hues
 Reveal their presence only by
 The sweetness they diffuse.

But hark! o'er all the mountain verge,
 The night-wind sweeps along;
 O haste, and tune its echoing surge
 To a prelusive song;

A song of thanks and laud to Him
 Who makes our labour cease;
 Who feeds with love the midnight dim—
 And hearts devout with peace.

The Moralist and the Christian.

1.

“WITHIN man's heart, his natural heart,
 “Those virtues bud and blow
 “Which Faith pretends to give; and Art
 “In empty types would show.
 “Great Nature must I then desert?
 “Abjure her gifts?” Not so.

2.

Such flowers, where'er you find them, cull:
 But pardon those who cry,
 “The Good is like the Beautiful,
 “It blossoms but to die.”—
 And yet Christ came not to annul
 Such natural piety.

3.

He came to strengthen what is good,
 Yet here grows weak and dies:
 The life we cannot lead, yet would,
 He came to realize;
 To wash it in atoning blood,
 And crown it in the skies.

4.

Sell all thou hast, and purchase this!
 And count it cheap to buy
 With merits Pride alone can miss,
 Faith, Hope, and Charity;—
 With dreams of man his Maker's bliss,
 With dust those worlds on high!

Magdalene in the Desert.

1.

SAY, who that woman kneeling sole
 Amid yon desert bare?
 The cold rain beats her bosom,
 The night-wind lifts her hair—
 It is the holy Magdalene,
 O listen to her prayer.
 “Lord, I have prayed since eventide:
 “And midnight now hath spread
 “Her mournful pall abroad o'er all
 “The living and the dead.
 “The stars each moment shine more large,
 “Down-gazing from the skies—
 “O Father of the sorrowful,
 “Turn thus on me Thine eyes!”

2.

Hark, thunder shakes the cliff far off!
 The woods in lightning glare;
 The eagle shivers in her nest,
 The lion in his lair:
 And yet, now trembling and now still,
 She makes the same sad prayer.
 "Lord of the sunshine and the storm!
 "The darkness and the day!
 "Why should I fear if Thou art near?
 "And Thou art near alway!
 "Thus in the wilderness, Thy Son
 "Was tempted, Lord, by Thee:
 "He triumphed in that awful strife—
 "O let Him plead for me."

3.

How often must that woman pray?
 How long kneel sighing there?
 O joy to see the Holy Cross
 Clasped to a breast so fair!—
 Speak louder, blessed Magdalene,
 And let me join thy prayer.
 "Lord! Thou hast heard my plaints all night;
 "And now the airs of morn
 "My forehead fan, my temples wan,
 "My face, and bosom worn!
 "O! o'er my weak and wildered soul,
 "Make thus Thy Spirit move;
 "That I may feel the light once more,
 "And answer love with love!"

Adam refuses the Presents of the Evil Race.¹

1.

ENTHRONED, and mantled in a snow-white robe,
 Man's sire I saw, the Lord of all the globe ;
 High-priest of all the Church, and Prophet sure
 Of Him, whose promised kingdom shall endure
 Until the last of Adam's race is dead.
 Nor crown, nor mitre rested on his head ;
 Yet kings with awe had viewed him ! Deep and slow
 His speech ; the words I knew not, nor could know ;
 But wept to hear, amid their golden sound,
 A melancholy echo from the ground.
 Ages were flown since Adam's lifted hand
 Had plucked, insurgent 'gainst Divine command,
 That fruit, a sacrament of death, which gave
 Perpetual life a forfeit to the grave :
 Yet still those orbs, their Maker once that saw,
 Governed the nations of the world with awe.
 Mournful they looked, as though their sorrowing weight
 Reposed for aye on Eden's closing gate ;
 Mournful, yet lustrous still those lordly eyes,
 First mortal mirror of the earth and skies ;

(1) The arts and sciences were invented by the descendants of Cain ; who were the first to build cities, wage wars, and substitute complicated systems of society for the Patriarchal.

And still with piercing insight filled, as when
God's new-made creatures passed beneath their ken,
While he decreed, in his celestial speech,
Prophetic names, symbolical, for each.
All round, checkering the steep with giant shade,
His mild and venerable race were laid,
For dance and song no wreaths as yet had won :
Many their strong eyes bent upon the sun ;
Some on a sleeping infant's smiling face,
Wherein both Love and Faith were strong to trace
The destined patriarch of a future race !

2.

Then through the silent circle, winged with joy,
A radiant herald moved, a shepherd boy.
Wondering he stepped ;—ere long, like one afraid,
A tribute at those feet monarchical laid,
A Lyre, gem-dowered from many a vanished isle.
Thereon the Father gazed without a smile :
But some fair children with the bright toy played ;
While sound so rapturous thrilled the echoing glade,
That Seers, cave-hid, looked up with livelier cheer ;
And the first childless mother wiped away a tear !

3.

And next there came, as one who comes from far,
A branded warrior, gloomy from the war.
Dark was his face, yet bright ; and stern as though
It bent o'er that of an expiring foe,
Retorting still, with sympathetic glare,
The imprecating anguish imaged there !

A tribute too that warrior brought, a shield
 Graven with emblems of a death-strewn field,
 And placed it at the Patriarch's feet, and spoke.
 "Certain Oppressors reared an impious yoke,
 "And passed beneath it brethren of their race ;
 "Therefore we rose, and hewed them from their place."
 All pale the Patriarch sat—long time his eye
 Fixed on the deepening crimson of the sky,
 Where sanguine clouds contended with the dun :
 Then turned, and whispered in the ear of one,
 Who, on his death-bed, whispered to his son—
 That man beheld the Deluge !

Fragments on Truth.

THE SEARCH.

THE Way, the Truth, the Life ! Ah ! would that they
 Who follow Truth, pursued it by that way
 Which Truth itself hath 'stablished, and made broad !
 Christ is the Truth : and Christ alone the road.
 "To him that doth My will, to him alone,"
 Thus saith the Lord of Truth, "will I be known."
 To him that follows Truth in peace, not strife,
 Truth will become the mystic seed of Life.
 A little while we seek for Truth ; and then
 Earthward we turn, and seek ourselves again.
 We ask for knowledge, and we ask for fame,
 For mental beauty masked in Truth's great name ;

An exercise for strength, a bait for wit,
A mark for boastful skill, unprized when hit;—
For all but Truth. On earth condemned to roam,
Unloved, or else ill-loved, Truth sighs for home,
Because we are unlike her. Truth is One,
But we like dust divided—thence undone :
And Truth is spiritual ; she appears
Only to spiritual eyes and ears.
Too proud for aid, for self-support too weak,
Thou neither knowest, O man, to find her, nor to seek !

Ye, who for Truth are clamouring, first declare,
Her light to you if granted, could ye bear ?
Each flattering dream abjure, each coloured ray,
And face life's statue in its awful grey ?
Even then a thousand bars obstruct your way !
Courage he needs, the aspiring strength of faith,
Who seeks for light in darkness, life in death ;
And love he needs, whose open eyelids keep
Vigil eternal in a world of sleep ;
And hope, the virgin valour of a breast
Which reaps in action a sublimer rest ;
Meekness he needs, for ofttimes he shall find
Truth's broken beams in lowliest dews enshrined ;
And purity, for he as oft must mount,
And seek them sparkling in their heavenly fount :
Patience he needs to wait, and zeal to meet
The earliest light of her celestial feet ;
Humility, her sov'reign crown to wear
With awe—for oft success becomes our deadliest snare.

NOVELTY AND PRACTICAL UNBELIEF.

THAT Truth, whose strangeness chiefly lured us on,
 Upon the palate palls, as soon as known.
 We hold, yet have it not ; with jealous care
 Guarding the treasure we no more can share.
 We feel it going ; dare not let it fly ;
 And, in our anguish, scarce have power to cry ;
 " O for the plaints, the prayers of long ago,
 " That what the heart believed the mind might know :
 " Now, and henceforth, more hopelessly we grieve
 " That, what we know, we can no more believe !
 " So ill may Truth assuage a selfish thirst—
 " So much our latter state is sharper than our first."

UNITY OF OBJECTIVE TRUTH.

TRUTHS are but relative ; and day by day,
 Assume new phases while they waste away :
 But Truth is absolute and whole ; one heart,
 One soul, one spirit, all in every part:
 Her vesture Truth divides not ; she bestows
 All on her votaries, nothing on her foes.
 Plunderers! for favourite truths who spoil Truth's stem!
 Alas for you!—those truths—alas for them !
 Torn from the tree, ere long they lose their bloom,
 Poor faded chaplets on the spoiler's tomb :
 And of their leaves decaying or decayed,
 The poison draughts of future times are made !

Spiritual Guidance.

WE all the old sad tale have heard
 Of babes in that dark wood who perished ;
 And of the sweet and pious bird,
 Their leaf-strewn grave that cherished.

Hark, children, to a tale as true :
 And, if you catch its meaning, pray
 As kind a friend to wait on you,
 And guide you on your way.

Where'er my pilgrim footsteps rove
 These labyrinthine forests wide,
 A little, silver-pinioned dove
 Attends me as my guide !

There's sunshine wheresoe'er she moves ;
 She wafts upon her wings a freight
 Of lustre through the faded groves,
 And pine-boughs desolate.

Sometimes, to chide the laggard Spring,
 Beyond my feeble sight she flies :
 But then a feather from her wing
 Oft dropt, her place supplies !

Returning, in her pearlèd beak
 A branch of some blest fruit she bears ;
 And thus, when cold I grow, or weak,
 My failing strength repairs.

Nor doubt I, with her gracious aid,
 To reach, ere yet my life is o'er,
 The shrine with light divine arrayed
 In this grey forest's core—

O wanderers in a darker maze !
 If such a guide our steps attend,
 Why walk ye up and down the ways
 Of evil without end ?

The Prodigal.

I LIVE : my days not yet are spent.
 Grace may at last to me be given,
 When least I hope it, to repent
 On earth ; and pass from earth to heaven.

But they, my friends of earlier years,
 They traverse other seas and lands :
 My heart alone their footsteps hears :
 I grasp no more their answering hands.

o

From me one grave reproof, yet kind,
 Had wrought, perchance, their endless rest :
 For men by such strange links are joined,
 That oft the worst can aid the best.

The barque my rashness over-set
 Was filled with many men : the day
 Descends : upon the margin yet
 I sit, and murmur, " Where are they ?"

Association of Ideas.

I.

" THOSE destined Thoughts that haunt my breast,
 " And throb, and heave, and swell,
 " Impatient of their painful rest,
 " And state invisible,
 " Those Thoughts at last must meet the day,
 " And with me dwell, or on me prey :
 " On me, on me those Thoughts must call,
 " And act, and live, and move abroad—
 " I am the mother of them all :
 " Be Thou their Father, God !"

2.

Thus prayed I ; musing on that law
 By which the children of the brain
 Their linked generations draw
 (A melancholy train)
 From moods long past, which feigned to die ;
 But in whose quickening ashes lie
 Immortal seeds of pain or pleasure
 No foot can crush, no will control,
 No craft transmute, no prescience measure—
 Dread harvests of the ripening soul !

 Reality.

LOVE thy God, and love Him only :
 And thy breast will ne'er be lonely.
 In that one great Spirit meet
 All things mighty, grave, and sweet.
 Vainly strives the soul to mingle
 With a being of our kind :
 Vainly hearts with hearts are twined ;
 For the deepest still is single.
 An impalpable resistance
 Holds like natures still at distance.
 Mortal ! love that Holy One !
 Or dwell for aye alone.

Humanity.

1.

EARTH'S green expanse : her dawn's one wave of light :
 Her soft winds creeping o'er the forest tall :
 Her silence ; and the comfort of her night—
 Are these then all ?
 All thou canst give to me,
 Humanity ?

2.

Tears running down the track of buried smiles :
 Time's shades condensed into the sable pall :
 Hope that deserts ; and Gladness that beguiles—
 Are these then all ?
 All thou canst give to me,
 Humanity ?

3.

I saw a Spirit dark 'twixt Earth and Heaven,
 Holding a cup in both hands lest it fall—
 O friends ! a mournful life to us were given,
 If Earth were all !
 But He who lives for aye hath looked on thee,
 Humanity.

Via Intelligentia.

O WASH thine eyes with many a bitter tear ;
 And all things shall grow clear.
 Bend that proud forehead nearer to the ground ;
 And catch a far foot's sound.
 Say ! wouldst thou know what faithful suppliants feel ?
 Thou, too, even thou, must kneel.
 Do but thy part ; and ask not why or how :
 Religion is a Vow.
 They sang not idle songs ; pledges they made
 For thee, an infant, laid
 In the Church's lucid bosom. These must thou
 Fulfil, or else renounce ! Fulfil them *now*.
 A Cross, and not a wreath was planted on thy brow.

Religious Hypochondria.

FORWARD, a step or two, where'er we go
 We gaze ; not on the spot our feet are treading :
 Reading, we look along, or glance below,
 Unconscious of the letters we are reading.
 The Future moulds the Present. Do not halt
 To probe, or mourn, each felt, or fancied fault ;
 " Steadfast by Faith," who treads where Hope hath trod,
 Following her winged Sister to the throne of God !

Liberalism.

1.

“LET them alone,” men cry.

“I lie, thou liest, they lie :

“What then ? Thy neighbour’s folly hurts not thee !”
 Error is Freedom ! such the insensate shout
 Of crowds that, like a Pæan, hymn a Doubt :
 Indifference thus the world calls Charity.

2.

Charity mourns the sin it doth condemn ;
 Condemns the sin it weeps for : and reproves
 The more, the more it loves.
 Those whom it loves it heals—
 Zeal for its God it feels :
 Pity for them.

3.

“Battles at last shall cease.”
 At last, not now : we are not yet at home.
 The time is coming, it will soon be come,
 When those who dare not fight
 For God, or for the right,
 Shall fight for peace !

Law and Grace.

1.

It is not true, that unto us, enrolled
 Within Christ's band, the Law exists no longer :
 But this is true ; that we, who sank of old,
 Oppressed beneath that armour's weight of gold,
 Sustain it now in glory, being stronger !

2.

The Form remains : but is a form no more
 To eyes inspired, that see
 Through bondage Liberty ;
 And, in His earthly shape, their God adore.
 To Love, all things are Love :
 To Grace, all things are Grace :
 And humble Faith can never move
 In an unholy place !

3.

Within, but not beneath, the Law we dwell.
 That wall, of old our prison's circuit, now
 (Girding the citted mountain's sov'reign brow)
 Is but the bulwark of man's citadel.
 Large views beyond are given :
 Safe views of all the earth ; and healing airs of Heaven.

4.

Within the Temple of the Law we stand ;
 As once without it stood
 That awe-struck multitude ;
 And on the marble Tables lay our hand.
 There, like the Priest of old, our God we meet :
 And stand up boldly by the Mercy-Seat.

The Soul's Waste.

1.

COULDST thou but keep each noble thought
 Thou fling'st in words away,
 With quiet then thy night were fraught,
 With glory crowned thy day.
 But thou too idly and too long
 From bower to bower hast ranged ;
 And Nature, trifled with, not loved,
 Will be at last avenged !

2.

With pleasure oft, but ne'er with awe,
 Thou gazest on the skies :
 And from thy lips all zephyrs draw
 Their amplest harmonies.
 Beware ! the hour is coming fast,
 When every warbled tone,
 That brims our hearts with joy, shall yield
 No sweetness to thine own.

An Epitaph.

WHY number days and years ill spent ?
 The course of millions why recal ?
 O gentle stranger ! be content :
 My tale is but the tale of all.

The evil ways I found but rough :
 I found a Saviour strong to save.
 O stranger ! ask no more—enough.
 From thee a prayer is all I crave.

Alms.

SPEAK to the end, poor Orphan. I
 Am poor—thou canst not poorer be :
 Yet, having nought to give thee, why
 That nothing give ungraciously.

Inscriptions for Day-side Fountains and Oratories.

By this rude altar, gentle guest !
 Repose : and, resting, pray that rest
 With him who reared it, and with thee,
 Abide, through all eternity.

IN this cool shadow, grateful guest !
 Repose : and humbly drink ;
 And muse on Him who found no rest :
 And now, and always think
 Of that, His last great thirst, which He
 Endured for those thou lov'st, and thee.

BENEATH the Cross upsprings the Fount ;
 And Heaven bends wide above.
 Delve as you may, O friend, or mount,
 Nought else you find but Love.

As o'er the marble brink you lean,
 This Well, glad guest, becomes your mirror :—
 May every glass in which are seen
 Your spirit's face, your moral mien,
 Cause you as little terror.

SUBSIDING now, those waters bright
 Thine own face offer to thy view :—
 May every well of pure delight
 Yield thee thy Maker's too.

Ceremonial.

MERE inward Feelings, self-supplanted, perish.
 Things outward, void of soul, are void of life :
 Both classes then, or neither, we must cherish ;
 And learn to harmonize their natural strife.
 Christ, that in Heaven our visible nature wears,
 Permits the union, consecrates it, shares :
 And man with his own heart must be at one
 Who fain would live with God in unison.

The electric flame, by which, through air dispersed,
 All life of herb or animal is nursed,
 Consumes us, when compacted and intense !
 Spirit we are ; yet spirit bound in Sense :
 In Sense fast bound, though working daily through,
 'Till Sense grows Spirit to the Spirit's eye—
 But Faith drops low, when Fancy soars too high :
 We cannot clasp a rosary of dew !

Songs.

I.

1.

HER sable tresses swelled more bright :
 New beams her dark eyes flung :
 Upon her purple vest the light
 Changed, shifting with her song.
 Her breath, like flame, now went, now came :
 Strange joy her pulses shook :
 While face and form gleamed wild and warm,
 Like a bather's from a brook.

2.

She sang the Martyrs of the Faith !
 As loud as Angel choirs :
 She sang the songs which they in death
 Hurled, fire-like, through their fires !
 But now more slow her murmurs flow :
 Her smiles serenely play,
 Like light on leaves a breath upheaves,
 Upheaves to meet the day.

3.

Sing, sing for ever, Music's child !
 While hearts long parched and sear
 Re-open fresh and undefiled,
 And Syrian Saints draw near.
 Benignant airs! all wintry cares
 Thy songs before them roll !
 Auspicious winds! their grace unbinds
 The field-flowers of the soul !

II.

ST. THECLA.

WITHIN the crowded fane she knelt,
 As if before God's throne:
 Nought heard, saw nought; alone she felt:
 Alone with Christ alone.

Amid the desert knelt the maid;
 Alone, yet not alone;
 Praying with all that ever prayed
 Before the eternal Throne.

The lily she kissed, but dared not pluck;
 It was sacred to her lord:
 Yet she that gave the young lions suck
 The virgin's feet adored.

No wealth was hers in fields or flocks:
The poor had all her gold:
But honey gushed from the sunny rocks,
And in milk the streamlet rolled.

O blissful maid, through light and shade
So bright a path was thine;
Round hill and glade thy lustre played,
And still o'er earth doth shine!

III.

ST. CECILIA'S SONG.

LIE mute henceforward, Lyre and Harp!
Far Pipe, and airy horn—
Even they too sudden sound, too sharp,
To hymn the Virgin-born.

O for a voice that like the gush
Of Love to Heaven might swell;
And yet in mystery hide, and hush
What words should never tell!

With eye abashed, and whisper low,
We name the name most dear:
When most with holy Love we glow
Most trembles holy Fear.

Alone the Maiden knelt, when o'er
 Her fell the Sacred Shade!
 Alone the mystic Babe she bore,
 And in the manger laid.

Breathe softly then each awful note—
 How low, how soft soe'er
 Its sound, to God the praise will float,
 Uplifted by the prayer.

IV.

MARTHA AND MARY.

1.

“O SISTER! leave you thus undone
 “The bidding of the Lord?
 “Or call you this a welcome? Run,
 “And deck with me the board.”
 Thus Martha spake; but spake to one
 Who answered not a word:
 For she kept ever singing;
 “There is no joy so sweet
 “As musing upon one we love;
 And sitting at his feet!”

2.

“ O Sister ! must my hands alone
 “ His board and bath prepare ?
 “ His eyes are on you ! raise your own :
 “ He'll find a welcome there ! ”
 Thus spake again, in loftier tone
 That Hebrew woman fair.

But Mary still kept singing,
 “ There is no joy so sweet,
 “ As musing upon him we love ;
 “ And resting at his feet ! ”

V.

CONSOLATIONS.

1.

OUR vale of Life at either end
 Is spanned by gates of gold ;
 And when the wind against them strains,
 Such harmony is rolled
 From every echoing valve and bar,
 Right on through all the vale afar,
 That cliffs, and woods, the air, the ground,
 With rapture tremble in the sound.

2.

This Earth is not so far from Heaven :
 Bright Angels from the skies,
 To Faith revealed, where Sense is sealed,
 Descend : and prayers uprise.

Deep Sabbath of the trusting breast,
 The Solstice of a realm of rest,
 Rich antepasts we have in thee
 Of glory and eternity!

VI.

WARNINGS.

1.

AGAINST her cheek a breath was playing,
 She felt it raise her hair ;
 And then was shaped its gradual music
 To one slow word—"Beware."
 A breeze it came, to haunt yet cheer ;
 Its sweetness robbed her heart of fear.

2.

"Beware—because the sun shines brightly ;—
 "Because the flowers are fair ;—
 "Thus bright, thus gay were bowers of Eden,
 "While danced that fruit in air,
 "And waved o'er Eve's uplifted brow—
 "As life o'er thee is waving now."

Song

FOR THE FEAST OF THE PURIFICATION.

"A pair of turtle doves or two young pigeons."

SOLE in a cedar-girdled vale,
 Lone rocks and mighty streams among,
 A dove sang like the nightingale ;
 And this the spirit of her song.

1.

Love, from Sorrow disunited,
 Weeps no more a beauty blighted ;
 Love and Constancy no more,
 Inharmonious fates deplore.
 Love and Joy at last are met,
 And tangled in a bridal net :
 For our earth hath been partaker
 Of the presence of her Maker !

2.

Who that wondrous joy may tell,
 Virgin Mother ! when thine eyes
 On the new-born Infant fell ?
 I alone can sing thereof :
 I, the little primal dove !
 Happier I than she that erst
 The olive found ; or she, the first
 That cooed, and loved in Paradise !

P

3.

Boast no longer, nightingale!
 Songs that shake the watery vale,
 Till, like wings, the dark leaves shiver,
 And lights o'er all the dew-wreaths quiver—
 Sailing through the crimson west,
 Swan! no more that wild hymn vaunt,
 Which makes the clouds of sunset pant,
 And fans the flame on Hesper's crest!

4.

I a loftier strain can sing,
 "Love o'er all things Lord and King."
 While I chaunt it, myrtles flower;
 O'er rough ocean rose-leaves shower;
 Sunless caves beneath are glowing;
 Deep-mouthed shells with song o'erflowing:
 Angels carol: and the earth
 Moves in livelier measures forth!

5.

Jubilate, Jubilate!
 Heaven descends, O Earth, to mate ye!
 Sing, ye Torrents! all night o'er us,
 Sing, ye Stars, our burthen's chorus!
 Jubilate, Jubilate!
 Everlasting joys await ye,
 Sorrowing mortals, weak and worn—
 Love hath triumphed: Christ is born!

Hymns

FOR THE CANONICAL HOURS.

I.

(FOR NOON.)

"The Earth is the Lord's."

1.

LORD of the Lords of all the earth!
 Lord of the souls of men!
 From Thee all heavenly gifts have birth;
 To Thee return again!

2.

The lightnings flashed from off Thy throne,
 Fill Heaven and Earth with light;
 And by that living flame alone,
 Men read the world aright.

3.

On every crown and sceptre shed,
 Thy beams of glory shine;
 And burn round every Father's head,
 That rules by right Divine.

4.

The Priests by thee anointed, stand
 Beside his altar, each;
 And all the Wise, a Prophet-band,
 What Thou hast taught them teach.

5.

And those who heal the sick, and those
Who plead for the distressed,
Or guard the land from godless foes,
By Thee are sent, and blessed.

6.

Thy voice, O Father, rolls around
The world for evermore ;
The speech we know not, but the sound
In silence we adore.

7.

The Heavens themselves repose thereon :
Thereon the Earth is stayed :
And seasons change, and rivers run,
By Thee ordained and swayed.

8.

The fearful of their cunning boast :
The haughty of their sword :
But we, and all the Heavenly Host,
Will glory in the Lord.

Glory to God the Father ;
Glory to God the Son ;
And 'Glory to the Holy Ghost ;
Th' eternal Three in One.

II.

(For Three p. m.)

PEACE.

1.

WE lead a gentle life below :
 Our days, that seem to pass,
 Glide on and blend—before Thy throne
 Thus spreads the sea of glass.

2.

One image fills that crystal sea ;
 One light o'er all doth shine :
 Yet every separate drop hath power
 That radiance to enshrine.

3.

Nor less in unity and light,
 True brethren, we abide ;
 "Like drops of Hermon's dew," that still
 Into each other slide.

4.

Eternal glory, thanks and praise
 To Thee, O God, to Thee,
 Who buildest all the peace of men,
 Upon that prime decree :

5.

That he who loves the Lord his God,
 Should hold all creatures dear ;
 And whoso fears his God, henceforth
 Should feel no baser fear.

Glory to God forever,
 From Angels and from men ;
 The Father, Son, and Holy Ghost,
 For evermore. Amen.

III.

(For Six p. m.)

1.

“HE giveth His beloved sleep.”
 The haughty sow the wind :
 The storm they sow ; the tempest reap ;
 But rest they cannot find.

2.

In sleep itself their furrowed brows,
 That care-worn mark retain ;
 Avenger of the guilt it shows,
 The curse and brand of Cain !

3.

Rest is of God—He doth not sleep ;
 But while His children rest,
 His hand outstretched, and still, doth keep,
 O'er earth, their shadowed nest.

4.

His holy Angels chaunt around,
 To chase dark dreams away ;
 That slumbers innocent and sound,
 May leave serene the day.

Glory to God forever,
 From Angels and from men ;
 The Father, Son, and Holy Ghost,
 For evermore. Amen.

IV.

(For Nine p. m.)

1.

IN that cold cave with spices sweet
 When Christ, our Lord, lay dead,
 An Angel sat beside His feet,
 An Angel by His head.

2.

All night their eyes to Heaven they raised,
 (Their wings around Him spread)
 All day on those dark eyelids gazed—
 But not a word they said.

3.

And when the morn sabbatical
 Its Paschal light had spread,
 A chrysome robe o'er Earth's dark ball,
 To Heaven those Angels sped.

4.

Keep, holy Angels, keep, O keep
 Such vigil by our bed:
 Calm visions from the urns of sleep,
 O'er us calm visions shed!

5.

But when we wake to morning life,
 And night's pure calm is fled ;
 Stay near us in our daily strife,
 Or we are worse than dead !

Glory to God the Father,
 The Son, and Holy Ghost,
 Henceforth for ever from mankind,
 And from the heavenly Host.

V.

(For Midnight.)

1.

THE stars shine bright while earth is dark !
 While all the woods are dumb,
 How clear those far off silver chimes
 From tower and turret come !

2.

Chilly but sweet the midnight air :
 And lo ! with every sound,
 Down from the ivy-leaf a drop
 Falls glittering to the ground.

3.

'Twas night when Christ was born on earth ;
 Night heard His faint, first cry ;
 While Angels carolled round the star
 Of the Epiphany.

4.

Alas! and is our love too weak
To meet Him on His way?
To pray for nations in their sleep?
For Love then let us pray!

5.

Pray for the millions slumbering now:
The sick, who cannot sleep:
O may those sweet sounds waft them thoughts
As peaceful, and as deep.

6.

Pray for the' unholy, and the vain:
O may that pure-toned bell
Disperse the Demon Powers of Air,
And evil Dreams dispel!

7.

Pray for the aged, and the poor;
The crown-encompassed head;
The friends of youth, now far away;
The dying; and the dead.

8.

And ever let us wing our prayer
With praise: and ever say
Glory to God, who makes the night
Benignant as the day!

Glory to God forever,
The Father, and the Son,
And Thee, O Holy Ghost, by whom
All things are knit in one.

VI.

(For Three a. m.)

1.

A LOW sweet voice from out the brake
Provoked a loud reply :
Now half the birds are half awake,
They feel the morning nigh.

2.

Fainting beneath her load of dreams,
The Moon inclines her brows,
Expectant, towards those mightier beams
That grant her toils repose.

3.

Long streaks, the prophets of the Sun,
Illume the dusk, grey hill :
But still the heart of Heaven is dun ;
The day is virgin still !

4.

O Christ! ere yet beheld on earth,
How oft, incarnate Word,
Thy Prophets heralded Thy birth!
Alas, how seldom heard!

5.

Rise, holy Brethren, rise, and sing
A prayer: and while we pray,
The morn shall fan with heavenly wing
Our lethargy away.

6.

Burst Thou, O God, these chains of flesh!
These languid eyes inspire:
Our spirits make as morning fresh,
And pure as solar fire:

7.

And grant us, fronting thus the East,
When all the heavenly Powers
Come forth to deck the bridal feast,
A place among Thy bowers!

8.

Come, Lord and Master! come and take
At last Thy ransomed home:
Bid all Thy faithful dead awake—
And may Thy Kingdom come!

Glory to God the Father,
Glory to God the Son,
And glory to the Holy Ghost,
'Till time be past and done.

VII.

(For Six a. m.)

CHRIST OUR EXAMPLE.

1.

WITH virgin heart, undazzled eye,
 The Virgin-born went on,
 Each snare surmounted or passed by,
 Until His task was done.

2.

With bleeding feet, but lifted head,
 The waste of life He trod:
 Tinging, each step, with holy red,
 The consecrated sod.

3.

Those steps our earth doth yet retain:
 And when dark vapours hide
 That Sun which lights our pilgrim-train,
 She too can be our guide.

4.

Father of Him and us! Thy grace
 On us and all bestow,
 Who seek the goal He sought, to trace
 His footmarks here below!

5.

O joy to follow Him in hope,
 For days, for months, for years:
 Our steps in turn o'er His to drop;
 And o'er His blood our tears!

Glory to God the Father
 From Angels, and from men,
 The Father, Son, and Holy Ghost,
 For evermore. Amen.

VIII

(*For Nine a. m.*)

TO THE SPIRIT.

1.

THE wind rang out from depths of woods,
 And pealed through valleys bent
 Among the echoing hills like tubes
 Of some vast instrument.
 Its sound we heard; but know not whence
 It came, nor whither went.

2.

The wind upon our forehead blows.
 In gleams of lambent flame
 The sunbeams flash from wave and leaf:
 The hour is now the same
 As when to Christ's anointed Twelve
 That promised Spirit came.

3.

The sound as of a rushing wind
 Before His wings He flung:
 And leaped on those uplifted brows
 In many a flaming tongue!—
 O breathe on us Thy seven-fold powers:
 O dwell our hearts among!

4.

Live Thou in Christ's mysterious Vine,
 Until her branches spread
 Among the stars—to them as flowers
 'Mid locks of one new-wed:
 And clasp, in their descending arch,
 The Earth's wide bridal-bed!

Glory to God the Father,
 Glory to God the Son,
 And Thee, O Holy Ghost, by whom
 All things are knit in one.

 Hymn

FOR THE FEAST OF THE HOLY INNOCENTS.

1.

LET the Proto-martyr rest,
 Earliest honoured of the dead.
 John! upon thy Saviour's breast
 Drop once more that saintly head!
 All the Church is met to-day
 Unto God to sing, and pray;
 Remembering those, the Babes, to whom was given
 First for their Lord to die, and meet Him first in Heaven!

2.

Yield the children readiest place.
 Tender parents, near them stand!
 From each mother's tearful face
 All that little awe-struck band

Well may learn, and aptly teach
 That God's electing love can reach
 (Winding untracked its own mysterious way)
 Souls which have only learned to suffer and obey.

3.

As from some Hesperian Isle
 Ravished rose-leaves, loosely strewn,
 Through a dark lake's dim defile
 When the morning breeze hath blown—
 Such were ye: so smooth the breath
 That snatched you, blushing, on to death.
 Mourn, Rachel, mourn no longer! lest your sighs
 Overtake those vernal souls soft journeying to the skies!

4.

Blessed infants, timely caught
 From a mortal mother's breast,
 That wondering Angels might be taught
 What of earth is best!
 They with food of heavenly grain
 Meet your lips; your forms sustain;
 And teach you words of heavenly lore; and keep
 A low and dulcet chaunt around you while you sleep.

5.

Hark, I hear them as they bend
 O'er your cots, and gently sway them;
 Angels' songs with ours they blend:
 Night or morn they never stay them.
 "Glory be to God," they cry,
 "To, and from Eternity:
 "To God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost,
 "All glory be from men, and from the Angel host."

Hymn

TO THE MEEK.

“Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth.”

1.

MEEK souls! whose humble faith can prize
 Those heavenliest gifts of man,
 Obedience, and Self-sacrifice—
 Life's first, last, only plan
 By which we mount “from grace to grace”
 Toward our celestial resting-place!

2.

All hail! the haughty from their towers
 Look down on you with scorn—
 On you, scarce seen—like meadows' flowers
 Grass-hid, that perfume morn!
 Unmarked the while, for them ye pray:
 Earth's salt, that keeps her from decay.

3.

Taught by the Church, and by the Spirit,
 Ye know that all things good
 Are yours, unsought; that ye inherit
 By virtue of your blood,
 Old Adam's blood in Christ made pure,
 Whate'er is worthy to endure.

4.

Therefore while haughtier hands up-pile
 Their Babel-towers of sun-burned clay
 On yielding sand, volcanic isle,
 A brief and perilous stay ;
 Ye dwell in tents, removed at will :—
 They fall ; yet safe their inmates still !

5.

“What man shall reign”—No matter who !
 Alas ! we rave, and fret,
 We press, we struggle, we pursue ;
 For what ? for Power—and yet
 On us submissive Angels wait,
 Pleased with their mild Diaconate.

6.

O place us on the lowliest ground,
 That we, thus low, may see,
 Upreared above us, and around,
 Rank, Order, and Degree :
 Terrace o'er terrace ranged on high,
 To lure, and rest, the heavenward eye !

7.

All Earth is yours ; her mild increase ;
 Her lore through types laid bare ;
 Her generous toils ; her grateful ease ;
 Her duties ; and whate'er
 To nature, with a “natural art”
 Freedom and heavenly peace impart.

9

8.

Nature to docile hearts, and minds
That sympathise with her,
In sunniest calms, or dreariest winds
Alike doth minister:
Dark days her fasts the Fancy calls,
And bright her moving festivals.

9.

The soul, uncumbered with a load
Of self-dependent care,
Moves forth on equal plumes abroad,
A spirit of the air:
Its own identity forsakes;
Its own all shapes of beauty makes.

10.

How much that Genius boasts as hers,
And fancies hers alone,
On you, meek Spirits, Faith confers!
The proud have further gone,
Perhaps, through life's deep maze—but you
Alone possess the labyrinth's clue.

11.

To you the costliest spoils of Thought
Wisdom, unclaimed, yields up:
To you her far-sought pearl is brought,
And melted in your cup.
To you her nard and myrrh she brings,
Like orient gifts to infant kings.

12.

The "single eye" alone can see
All Truths around us thrown,
In their eternal unity:
The humble ear alone
Has power to grasp, and time to prize,
The sweetness of life's harmonies.

13.

Notions, to Thought made visible,
Are but the smallest part
Of those immortal Truths, which dwell
Self-radiant in man's heart.
With outward beams are others bright—
But God has made you "full of light."

14.

One science well ye know; the Will
Of God, to man laid bare:
One art have mastered; to fulfil
The part assigned you there:
If other, meaner lore ye sought,
This first ye learned—to need it not!

15.

Empiric Laws, that hide the grace
Of human life, as hard
As iron mask upon a face
From answering eyes debarred,
Form but a lucid veil to you,
With all the Godhead shining through.

16.

Yes, Angels prompt us, Spirits fence!
But ye, a Father's hand
Who trace through all His Providence,
Discern that Angel-band.
'Tis yours alone their choirs to mark
Descending to our precincts dark.

17.

One half of all our cares and woes
Exist but in our thought:
And lightly fall the rest on those
With them who wrestle not.
The feather scarcely feels that gale
Which bursts the seaman's strongest sail.

18.

Yourselves not loving, room have ye
For love of all your kind:
And ye revere the mystery
Of Love Divine enshrined
In human ties, that, day by day,
Some portion lose of mortal clay.

19.

And dearer far become the names
Of Father, Child, and Wife
To those who feel their heavenly claims:
And holier earthly Life
To those who in that myriad mirror
See thus their Lord undimmed by error.

20.

In Kings you see Him on His throne:
In Priests before the shrine:
In suffering men you hear Him groan—
Thus life becomes divine;
Each shower with Fountal grace imbued,
And Eucharistic all your food!

21.

Your virtues shall not die with you,
Or those you leave behind;
Destined each year to bloom anew,
And ampler space to find
For boughs o'er earth that spread and wave,
Though centered in your silent grave.

22.

That Race ordained so long to be
Sole witness here of God,
Formed but a single Family:
Yea, scattered now abroad,
Are still his seed whose marvelling eyes
First saw them star-like in the skies!

23.

What, though the long-lived Patriarchs saw
Their offspring as the sands!
To those who see them not, that Law
Unchanged, and changeless stands:
That Law which honours in the dust
The souls that placed with God their trust.

24.

Even now in each fair infant's face
 The eye of Faith can see
 A mild and patriarchal grace,
 A Regal dignity—
 He sits by future throngs half hid;
 His throne that living pyramid!

25.

Hail, noble Spirits, hail, O hail!
 While bleats the lamb or cooes the dove,
 Your gentle kind shall never fail;
 Nor earth wax faint in love.
 Hail, kings of peace: to you are given
 Flower-crowns on earth, star-crowns in Heaven!

A Carol from the Catacombs.

1.

THE fount of Time and sensuous Life
 How foams it forth like bubbles
 The tumult of its ceaseless strife—
 Vain pleasures, vainer troubles!
 But thou, pure Font! the procreant bower
 Of Heavenly generation,
 Thy souls, immortalized each hour,
 Up-send'st in exhalation!

2.

How base the feasts in which, not Sense,
But Souls sense-captived, wallow!
The feasts of blank Intelligence
How haughty, yet how hollow!
But thou, all-blissful Eucharist!
Art stored with all true pleasures :
For thou art Christ ; and, hid in Christ,
Are Heaven's eternal treasures.

3.

Rome rules, a Goddess, in the day :—
Tower-crowned, her head she raises.
The lions roaring for their prey,
They celebrate her praises.
But Faith in you, O Catacombs!
Finds seats more high and ample :
The martyrs' tombs exalt your glooms
O'er pyramid and temple.

4.

Thus sang they in the caves close sealed,
Yet bright with God's great lustre.
Their hymn their lurking-place revealed—
And lo, in sudden muster,
Down rushed the Babylonian world :—
Within the Coliseum,
To heaven once more the martyrs hurled
Ter sanctus" and "Te Deum !"

Hymn

FOR THE FEAST OF THE ANNUNCIATION.

1.

SUBSIDING from those heavenly wings the air
 Lies motionless: yet on that forehead fai
 Still hangs a pearly gloom, as if the shade
 Of those departing pinions
 On her brow were stayed.
 Still sits she on that virgin bed
 From which so late she reared her head;
 Forward she bends in prayer.
 Her hands upon her heart are crossed;
 Her heart in heavenly vision lost.
 Her silver lids are closing—mark,
 A tear is trembling on their lashes dark.
 It falls: to earth that tear is given:
 That sigh an echo finds in Heaven!

2.

O joyful Virgin, henceforth blessed ever
 Among all nations! cause for joy thou hast.
 Not vain henceforth shall prove man's great endeavour;
 Henceforth no more his Future
 Shall be but as the Past.
 Henceforward wise, good men
 Shall toil no more in vain

The seeds of Hope, and Love, and Peace to sow
 Among their kind below.
 Faith, mover of the mountains,
 From Earth's o'er-burdened heart
 The Sinai mount at last shall raise:
 The Law hath done its part!
 Henceforth men shall not gaze
 On the stars with blank amaze,
 And vainly pine for wings to bear them
 From the tumult of Life's mart.
 No more self-caused afflictions!
 No more self-willed transgressions!
 But Gladness, Benedictions,
 And humbly-toned Confessions;
 And anthem, and loud hymn
 Sent up from earth responsive to the harping Cherubim!

3.

Are such the thoughts whose radiant trains are passing,
 Thrice-hallowed Virgin, through that pure, calm breast,
 Which swells to meet them, as the ocean glassing
 In its tide-wave those splendours .
 That woke it from its rest?
 Knowledge with men is stored
 By many a slow degree;
 But all thy shining lore is poured
 In a gentle stream on thee!
 'Tis Hope thy brow doth gird
 With that second, heavenlier bow:
 'Tis Love, that, breathing hymns unheard,
 Warms sweetly with faint crimson
 Thy lips, through which they flow!

Thou tastest first the joy of all thy kind :
 Grace first in thee fulfils her earthly mission ;
 Thy tearful eyes, to outward objects blind,
 Of God and Heaven have deep and full fruition !
 O second Eve !—But she
 Said not, “ Even as Thy word, so be it unto me ! ”

4.

Mournful, till now, to the o'er-experienced ear,
 Mournful were all the harmonies of earth,
 As Autumn's dirge over the dying Year:
 Yea, more than sadness blended
 With melodies of mirth.
 The ocean, murmuring on the shore,
 Breathed inland far a sad “ no more : ”
 The winds but left their midnight cells
 To fill the day with lorn “ farewells. ”
 'Tis o'er ! The reign of force is o'er :
 The arm of flesh is Lord no longer :
 More dear henceforth is peace than war :
 The weak henceforward is the stronger.
 Earth's fountains, touched by breath Divine,
 Gush up, henceforth, in bridal wine !
 Now children (creatures lowly)
 Point upward to the sky :
 Honour henceforth is holy,
 And Virgin Purity !
 In star-pierced thickets the night bird
 Translates henceforth each rapturous word
 That she all day in Heaven hath heard—
 Peace, peace ! misdoubting Earth, be dumb !
 Her Christ His power shall take : His kingdom it shall come !

5.

Lo! round her feet celestial flowers are lying!—
 The breath pathetic of those mild perfumes,
 Comes it from them, or from her blessed sighing?

Lo! silver gleams alternate

With diviner glooms!

The air, at every pore alive,
 Sings like the golden murmur of the hive.
 All round a paradisaal light is glowing.

Down, down the Virgin sinks by slow degrees:
 Her tender hands unfold; her tresses flowing
 O'er that declining brow, upon her knees.
 Daughter of God—Mother Elect—low-bent
 She kneels; and adoration is consent.

Two beams of light, down-shining from above,
 Fall, on her bosom one, one on her head;
 Between those two great beams on plumes outspread,
 Hovers and gleams the everlasting Dove!

Hymn

FOR THE BUILDING OF A COTTAGE.

1.

LAY foundations deep and strong
 On the rock, and not the sand—
 Morn her sacred beam has flung
 O'er our ancient land.
 And the children through the heather
 Beaming joy from frank bright eyes
 Dance along; and sing together
 Their loud ecstasies.

Children, hallowed song to-day !
Sing, aloud ; but, singing, pray.
Orphic measures, proudly swelling,
 Lifted cities in old time :
Build we now a humbler dwelling
 With a lowlier rhyme !
Unless God the work sustain,
Our toils are vain ; and worse than vain.
Better to roam for aye, than rest
Under the impious shadow of a roof unblest !

2.

Mix the mortar o'er and o'er,
 Holy music singing :
Holy water o'er it pour,
 Flowers and tresses flinging !
Bless we now the earthen floor :
 May good Angels love it !
Bless we now the new-raised door :
 And that cell above it !
Holy cell, and holy shrine
For the Maid and Child divine !
Remember thou that see'st her bending
 O'er that babe upon her knee,
All Heaven is ever thus extending
 Its arms of love round thee !
Such thought thy step make light and gay
As yon elastic linden spray
On the smooth air nimbly dancing—
Thy spirits like the dew glittering thereon and glancing !

3.

Castles stern, in pride o'er-gazing
Subject leagues of wolds and woods;
Palace fronts their fretwork raising
'Mid luxurious solitudes;
These, through clouds their heads uplifting,
The lightning challenge and invoke:
His balance Power is ever shifting—
The reed outlasts the oak.
Live, thou cottage! live and flourish,
Like a bank that spring showers nourish,
Bright with field-flowers self-renewing,
Annual violets, dateless clover—
Eyes of flesh thy beauty viewing
With a glance may pass it over;
But to eyes that wiser are
Thou glitterest like the morning star!
O'er wise hearts thy beauty breathes
Such sweets as morn shall waft from those new-planted
wreaths!

4.

Our toils—not toils—are all but ended;
The day has wandered by:
Her gleams the rising moon has blended
With the azure of the sky:
Yet still the sunset lights are ranging
On from mossy stem to stem;
Low winds, their odours vague exchanging,
Chaunt day's requiem.
Upon the diamonded pains
The crimson falls with fainter stains.

More high in heavenward aspiration
 The gables shoot their mystic lines :
 While now, supreme in grace as station,
 The tower-like chimney shines.
 An altar stands that tower beneath :—
 Pure be its flame in life and death !
 Now westward point the arched porch—
 Crown with a Cross the whole—our cot becomes a Church !

5.

Strike once more a livelier measure,
 Circling those fair walls again :
 Songs of triumph, songs of pleasure
 Well become you, gladsome train !
 Mark that shadowy roof : each angle
 Angel heads and wings support :
 Those the woodbine soon must tangle,
 These the rose shall court ;
 And mingling closer hour by hour,
 Enclose ere long a Sabbath bower—
 There shall the Father oft at even
 Entone some ancient hymn or story,
 Till earth once more grows bright as heaven
 With days of long past glory ;
 When Sainly Warriors ranged abroad
 To cleanse the world from Force and Fraud :
 When Zeal was humble ; Honour strong :
 And Virtue moved alone the angelic scourge of Wrong !

6.

O happy days ! exhaustless dower
 Of blameless joys, and hours well spent,
 Renewed while moons their radiance shower
 Upon the Acacia's silver tent ;

Or airs of balmiest mornings thrill,
 And swell with renovated play
 The breasts of children, childish still,
 And innocent alway.
 O'er them light flit our woes and jars,
 As shades o'er lilies, clouds o'er stars—
 Even now my fancy hears the cooing
 Of doves from well-known perch or croft ;
 The bees even now the flowers are wooing
 With sleepy murmur soft.
 Glad home, from menial service pure,
 Nor want, nor wealth thy grace obscure !
 Here all the ties are sacred ties :
 Here Toil eludes its curse, and Life asks no disguise.

7.

Kings of the earth ! too frail, too small
 This humble tenement for you ?
 Then lo ! from Heaven my song shall call
 A statelier retinue !
 They come, the twilight ether cheering,
 (Not vain the suppliant song, not vain)
 Our earth on golden platform nearing :
 On us their crowns they rain !
 Like Gods they stand, the portal
 Lighting with looks immortal !
 Faith, on her chalice gazing deep :
 And Justice with uplifted scale :
 Meek Reverence ; pure, undreaming Sleep :
 Valour in diamond mail !

There Hope with vernal wreath : hard by
 Indulgent Love ; keen Purity ;
 And Truth, with radiant forehead bare :
 And Mirth, whose ringing laughter triumphs o'er Despair.

8.

Breathe low—stand mute in reverent trance !

Those Potentates their mighty eyes
 Have fixed. Right well that piercing glance
 Roof, wall, and basement tries !

Foundations few that gaze can meet—

Therefore the Virtues stay with few :
 But where they once have fixed their seat,
 Her home Heaven fixes too !

They enter now, with awful grace,
 Their dedicated dwelling place.

In tones majestic yet tender

They chaunt their consecration hymn,
 From jewelled breasts a sacred splendour
 Heaving through shadows dim.

The Rite is done : the seed is sown :

Leave, each his offering, and be gone !

Stay, ye for whom were raised these walls—

Possession God hath ta'en : and now His guests He calls.

Hymn

FOR GOOD FRIDAY.

1.

O LAMB of God! on whom alone
 Earth's penal weight of sin was thrown,
 Have mercy, Saviour, on Thine own.
 For thou art Man. The Virgin gave
 To Thee her breast; the earth a grave.
 If smiles, while Infant yet, on Thee
 Were found, Thy Mother knows, not we.
 A man o'er Lazarus lulled asleep,
 With them that wept Thou too didst weep.
 Thy tears in dust of Salem sunk,
 Ere yet her heart Thy blood had drunk.
 All griefs of mortals Thou hast known—
 Have mercy, Saviour, on Thine own.

2.

O Lamb of God, on whom was laid
 The debt all worlds had never paid,
 Have mercy, Saviour; hear and aid.
 For Thou art God. With God, behold,
 Thou sat'st upon the throne, of old :—
 Dread throne surpassing depth and height,
 Eternal throne, and infinite!
 Yet pity reached Thee there for man,
 Ere worlds were made, or pain began.

R

With Abel bleeding Thou didst lie,
 With Isaac forth wast led to die;
 With Stephen stoned; and since, and yet,
 With all Thy Martyrs' blood art wet.

3.

O Lamb of God, on whom alone
 Earth's penal weight of sin was thrown,
 Have mercy, Saviour, on Thine own.
 Again the depths are stirred: we wait
 Before the shrine's forbidding gate,
 We stand in sable garments clad:
 The infant at the breast is sad.
 This day unconsecrated lies
 The Host: unraised the Sacrifice!
 Tremble the altars disarrayed:
 The mighty temples are dismayed:
 Their chaunts are dead: nor lamp, nor light,
 Save from the Sepulchres at night.

4.

O Lamb of God, on whom was laid
 The debt all worlds had never paid,
 Have mercy, Saviour; hear and aid.
 Again rings out that sound abhorred:
 Again, O widowed Church, the sword
 Pierces thy sacred heart—the cry
 Of "Crucify Him, Crucify."
 The Priest his garment rends again;
 Once more blaspheme that perjured Twain;
 Once more the upbraiding voice foretold
 Peals through dark shades from gardens cold.
 —Prince of the Apostles! ah that we,
 Like thee who fall, might weep like thee!

5.

O Lamb of God, on whom alone
 Earth's penal weight of sin was thrown,
 Have mercy, Saviour, on Thine own.

By each step along that road :
 By that Cross, thine awful load :
 By the Hebrew women's wail :
 By the sponge, and lance, and nail :
 By Mary's martyrdom, when she
 In Thee died, yet offered Thee :
 By that mocking crowd accursed :
 By Thy dreadful, unquenched thirst :
 By Thy three hours' agony :
 And by that last unanswered cry—

6.

O Lamb of God, on whom was laid
 The debt all worlds had never paid,
 Have mercy, Saviour, hear and aid.

Like shapes at God's last trump new-risen,
 My sins time-buried rise—and listen.
 The veil is rent; the rocks are riven;
 And demons sweep yon darkened heaven.
 Three crosses bar the black on high—
 That Thief beside Thee hung so nigh,
 How rolls he now on Thee his eye;
 Nor sees beyond Thee hills or sky!
 Thus, Christ, we turn from all to Thee.
 "Miserere Domine."

Washing the Altar.

—
1.

POUR forth the wine-floods rich and dark,
 Over the altar-stone :
 The time is short ; the yew-trees, hark,
 How mournfully they moan—
 It is the sacred blood of Christ,
 By angels poured o'er earth ;
 While sable turns to amethyst,
 And death to the new birth.

2.

O'er all the altar pour the wine,
 With joyful strength amain ;
 The streams alone from God's great vine
 Can clear that altar's stain—
 It is the Saviour's wondrous blood :—
 The ensanguined planet now
 Ascends from this baptismal flood,
 As bright as Christ's own brow.

3.

The flood that cleanses on and in
 Roll, sacred brethren, roll ;
 But Thou whose suffering purged our sin,
 O wash each sinful soul—
 It is the atoning blood of Him
 By Whom all worlds are shriven :
 Who lights with love our midnight dim,
 And changes earth to Heaven.

Self-Sacrifice.

1.

WHEN Christ let fall that sanguine shower
 Amid the garden dew,
 O say what amaranthine flower,
 In that red rain up grew?
 If yet below the blossom grow,
 Then earth is holy yet:
 But if it bloom forgotten, woe
 To those who dare forget!

2.

No flower so healing and so sweet
 Expands beneath the skies;
 Unknown in Eden—there unmeet—
 Its name? Self-sacrifice!
 The very name we scarce can frame;
 And yet that flower's dark root
 The monsters of the wild might tame;
 And Heaven is in its fruit.

3.

Alas! what murmur spreads around?
 "The news thereof hath been:
 "But now no more the man is found
 "Whose eye that flower has seen."
 Then nobles all! leave court and hall,
 And search the wide world o'er:
 For whoso finds this Sanggreall
 Stands crowned for evermore!

A Tale

OF THE MODERN TIME.

PART I.

1.

AN old man once I knew whose aged hair
 A summer brilliance evermore retained:
 Youthful his voice and full, not flawed nor spare;
 His cheek all smooth, and like a child's engrained,
 Or marble altar innocently stained
 With roses mirrored in its tablet white—
 Like May his eye: his foot-fall slow but light.

2.

Yet no one marvelled at him: of his ways
 Rarely men spake, as of the buried dead;
 And dropped him from their lips with trivial phrase.
 "Gentle he was, and kind," the neighbours said,
 "Albeit an idle life, and vain, he led."
 Odours he loved from flowers at twilight dim;
 And breath and song of morn: children loved him.

3.

I have beheld him on a wintry plant
 An eye delighted bending full an hour!
 As though the Spring o'er every tendril scant
 Crept 'neath his ken. Methought he had the power
 To see the growing root plain as the flower.
 O'er a leaf's margin he would pore and gaze
 As o'er some problem of the starry maze!

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THE
FORMATION OF CHRISTENDOM.

Part I.—The Christian Faith and the Individual.

BY

T. W. ALLIES, K.C.S.G.

THE CARDINAL ARCHBISHOP OF WESTMINSTER has addressed the following letter to the head of one of the English Colleges, urging the careful perusal of this work on all ecclesiastical students, and others who wish to grasp the precise nature and scope of the Church's mission to the world, both pagan and modern :

Archbishop's House, London, S.W.,
June 4th, 1894.

Very Rev. dear——,—Mr. Allies has just re-published, in a cheap and popular edition, his volume entitled *The Formation of Christendom*. It is one of the noblest historical works I have ever read. Now that its price has placed it within the reach of all, I earnestly pray that it may become widely known and appreciatively studied. We have nothing like it in the English language. It meets a need which becomes greater daily with the increase of mental culture and the spread of education. No English work that I know exhibits the mission of the Church to the world, to the pagan world, to the civilised world, and I might add to the modern world (which is both pagan and civilised in marked degrees)

[P. T. O.]

in a more eloquent, a more fascinating, or a more convincing manner. If any man desires to ennoble his own estimate of the Catholic Church, let him read this book. If any man's soul is capable of rising to a lofty ideal of life, as a living member of Catholic Christendom, let him understand the part that Christ has taken (and is still taking) in the formation of Christendom, as is shown from trustworthy sources by the pen of Mr. Allies.

If you desire to enlarge the mind of the youth committed to your care, to inspire noble thoughts, to kindle generous resolves, to lift up Churchmen to the level of their Church, you cannot do better than commend a serious perusal of this volume. I used to urge, even while none but the expensive first edition was accessible, that it ought to be made a text-book for every ecclesiastical student, whether destined for home or foreign missions, for a Religious house, or for the world. I rejoice, therefore, that at least the difficulty of price has now been removed.

I strongly recommend you to press the perusal of this book upon your ecclesiastical students, and not only upon them, but, as you have opportunity, upon the attention of lay men and women also. In proportion as they take a serious view of life will they become braced and encouraged by this noble portraiture of the Church's life and action in the world.

I am persuaded that nothing wiser could be done than to place this book in the hands of many educated men and women who are inquiring into the claims of the Church, and are searching for an answer to the problems which stand out before their consciences. They need, not controversy, but the light of history, to illumine their soul. They will find it here. Wishing you every blessing,

Believe me, Very Rev.—,

Your faithful and devoted servant,

HERBERT CARDINAL VAUGHAN.

BENZIGER BROTHERS,
NEW YORK, CINCINNATI, CHICAGO.

4.

Over a rose his palm he loved to curve
 As though it brought him warmth from out the ground.
 Instinctively his step would often swerve
 Following slow streams that down in darkness wound:
 His body there he bent above the sound,
 Heard but by him. A virgin world he trod,
 As though it were the vesture of a god.

5.

I wondered at him long: but youth and awe
 Restrained me from demanding of his story.
 At last, it chanced one day, this man I saw
 Reclining 'neath an oak rifted and hoary,
 Last tree of a wild, woodland promontory.
 Far round, below, the forest deep and warm
 Lay waving in the light of an illumined storm.

6.

I placed me at his feet: his eyes were closed—
 Celestial brightness hung upon his mien,
 And all his features, tranquilly composed:
 I gazed on him, and cried, "Where hast thou been
 "In youth? What done, what read, what heard, what seen?"
 Irreverent was the inquest: yet the man
 Looked on me with a smile, and thus began.

7.

The Tale, true told, of every Human Being
 Were awful—yet upon each new-born child,
 As though none else there lived, the Eye All-seeing
 Rested in glory! Heaven looked down and smiled:
 And choirs of joyful Angels undefiled
 Around the cradle sang, and evermore
 In youth walked near him, after, and before.

8.

Stranger ! the veil of Sense in mercy hides
 The perils round us, as the mercies ! Say,
 Amid the forest—on the mountain sides—
 What miles of mazes hast thou tracked to-day ?
 Had some black chasm girt visibly thy way,
 Couldst thou secure have wandered thus ? Not so—
 The danger is not ours while danger none we know.

9.

My life hath been a marvel. Thine no less.
 If thou that marvel hast not yet discerned,
 Lament not therefore. Unto wretchedness
 That knowledge grew for which our parents yearned.
 The best and happiest ofttime least have learned
 Of Man's dread elements—what dust—what spirit—
 That which we are, what have, what make, and what inherit.

10.

Action in trance, in panic Thought were lost,
 If all we are we knew ourselves to be.
 O'er a great deep, now calm, now tempest-tossed,
 Rises one rock ; but, hid below the sea,
 That rock slants down—a mountain ! Such are we—
 Our being's summit only o'er the deeps
 Ascends : the rest is blind, and in the abysses sleeps.

11.

In Man the Finite from the Depth ascends—
 Centre is Man of all men hear or see ;
 Chapel where Time with Incorruption blends,
 Where Dust is wedded to Divinity.
 All but omnipotent in Will is he.
 Freedom his awful privilege ! Like a God
 He walks at noon ; at night lies cold beneath the sod.

12.

Thou seekest Knowledge: every lore we prize
 But as a lamp thereby ourself to know.
 Stranger! 'tis well within to turn our eyes
 If we look heavenward, having turned them so.
 Horror unnamed, and phantom forms of woe
 Rebuke the haughtier quest. With single aim
 If thou my tale require, receive in joy the same.

PART II.

1.

HAPPY my childhood was; devout and glad:
 My youth was full of glory, joy, and might,
 Like some volcanic morn, and tempest-clad,
 In tropic regions, when from gulfs of night
 Day leaps at once to the empyreal height.
 Strength without bound in spirit, body, and soul,
 I felt: and in my rapture mocked control.

2.

In the madness of that strength, I went abroad
 Where'er Ambition called, or Passion led:
 Full many a deep my ploughing bark hath scored:
 Full many a plain hath echoed to my tread:
 All enterprise I sought: all books I read:
 All thoughts I pondered, murmuring in my mirth
 That text, "Be thou, O Man, the Lord of Earth."

3.

Deeply I studied, in all tomes and tongues,
 The Historic legend, Philosophic page :
 More deeply yet those earlier mythic songs
 Built up by Bard for legislative Sage,
 Himself a builder up, from age to age,
 Of States—true poems—Policies sublime,
 Wherein well-balanced Functions metre make, and rhyme.

4.

All Art and Science at the Gentile feast
 Of Western pride advanced, I knew right well :
 And laughed to mark the great Book of the East
 Push on through all, as through a garden dell
 Bright with frail flowers, and paved with glittering shell,
 Some Asian Elephant. I sought within
 For God, and there alone ; and recked not of my sin.

5.

Corporeal instincts only I denied :
 My larger concupiscence temperance feigned.
 Humble oft seemed I through the excess of pride,
 And calm of conscious strength. No muscle strained ;
 That which the eye desired, the hand attained.
 Too proud for Pride's less triumphs, I had sworn
 To shun them ; or, first won, to fling them back in scorn.

6.

Was I then wicked? Child! applauding nations,
 Such question asked, had called me great and good.
 I loved my kind—but more their acclamations :
 My thoughts were birds of prey, and snatched that food
 From weak and strong to gorge their infant brood :—
 Much knowing, this I knew not. But the hour
 Was come that proved at last my fancied power.

7.

One day a mountain's summit I was pacing:
Through cloudy chasms the sunbursts fell thereon;
Over its plain the mighty winds were racing,
Quiring Eolian anthems in loud tone.
Long time I walked in pride, and walked alone:
And what I was revolved—and turned again,
To mark the far off towns and visible main.

8.

Man I considered then: and I looked forth
Upon the works and wonders of his hand:
The deep his beaten road, his palace earth;
Commanding all things; yet beneath command
Of Mind—whereof I grasped the magic wand.
—Fronting the sun, that set in blood, I saw
Man's shape against its disk; and yet I felt not awe.

9.

All treasures of my Thought again I spread
Unrolled as in a map before my eyes;
And walked among them with a conqueror's tread,
That moves o'er fields of hard-won victories,
Dreaming of mightier yet. A long disguise
Fell from me in that rapture; and I trod
A worshipper no longer but a God!

10.

Towards me a throne descended through the air—
When lo! the crown of my demoniac Pride
Updrawn, raised up my horror-stricken hair!
For, wheresoe'er I wandered, by my side
Another step appeared to tread and glide:
No mortal form was near: and in the abyss
Of heaven, the mountain floors are echoless.

11.

I stopped; it stopped: I walked; it walked: I turned:
My fears I mocked, unworthy of a man,
Then a cold poison from that heart self-spurned
Welled forth: and I, with eyes unfiled, began
Once more my life and inmost heart to scan:
Till suddenly what shape in soul I was
Before me I beheld plainly as in a glass.

12.

Then my disease I knew; but not the cure.
Lightning, sent flaming from the breast of heaven,
Revealed my sins long-hid, from lure to lure:
Beams from the eyes of God, like shafts were driven
Against me: to her depth my soul was riven,
Whereof each portion, conscious and amazed,
In stupor of despair upon the other gazed.

13.

Thus on my throne, that marble mountain height,
My Soul I saw! I went I know not whither.
Down like a tempest fell from heaven the night:
I heard the sea, and rushed in panic thither;
By ghost-like clouds, and woods my step made wither,
And rock, and chasm that seemed to gape and sever,
I rushed—and rushed, methought, for ever and for ever.

PART III.

1.

I WOKE in a great cavern of the main.

The wave rolled in, upon its strong breast bearing
A storm of icy wind and cloudy rain,

With sound as if of souls that died despairing:

The billows, that rough beach harrowing and tearing,
Thundered far off: while morning, just begun,
Peered dimly through the spray, and through the shadows dun.

2.

That shore was piled with death, like Nature's bier.

There, whitening spread a sea-beast's mouldering bones:
The rifted wings of a dead eagle here.

Over the wet cliff went funeral moans.

Yet calm at first I paced those wave-washed stones,
Whose crash the deadlier sound awhile could quell
Of that low step close by, my spirit's knell.

3.

Still, still, where'er I turned that step would follow.

My fate above me hung as by a thread:

Beneath me yawned the earth, a vast veiled hollow!

To battle-fields, athirst for death I fled.

Yet there, while headlong hosts beside me sped,
That footstep still I heard and knew from all;
Now harsh, now dull as moth fretting a coffin's pall.

4.

Thick, thick like leaves from autumn's skeleton woods,
The shafts went by me, and as idly went.
Then back I turned into my solitudes,
As slow, in sullen cloud of rage o'er-spent,
As mountain beast into dim forest tent,
With hunger unabated, when the night
Melts; and the eastern wolds spread wide in hated light.

5.

Stranger! I tell you part: I speak not all.
Thenceforth I walked alone; and joined my kind
Only when lured by some black funeral:
On capital cities oft, with watchings blind,
I gazed, what time rushed forth the freezing wind
Between their turrets and the wintry stars;
All day I lay in tombs, or caves dim-lit with spars.

6.

On peaks eclipsing to its rim the ocean
Hath been my dwelling: rivers I have seen
Whose sound alone dispersed a gradual motion
O'er cloud-like woods, their deep primeval screen.
Sand-worlds my feet have trod beneath the sheen
Of spheres unnamed. From zone to zone I fled,
As though each land in turn grew fire below my tread.

7.

But Heaven had ended now my time of sorrow
When most I seemed in penal horror bound:
Dreamless one night I slept, and on the morrow
Strange tears now first amid the dew I found
Wherewith my heavy hair and cheeks were drowned.
And in my heart, fanned by that morning air,
There lay, as I walked on, my childhood's long-lost prayer.

8.

Wearied, I sat upon a sunny bank,
 Ridged o'er a plain yet white with virgin snows,
 Though now each balmy noon, and midnight dank,
 Lightened the burden of the vernal rose;
 My eyes (their wont it was till daylight's close)
 Fixed on my own still shadow—in that light
 Intense—keenly defined, and dark as night.

9.

I hung above it: sudden, by that shade
 Another shadow rested; faint and dim:
 At first I thought my tears the phantom made;
 Then cried, "I do but dream it, form and limb."
 In horror then abroad I seemed to swim:
 Then my great agony grew calm and dumb;
 For now I knew indeed my destined hour was come.

10.

My spirit's foe was now the spoil to claim:
 My heart's chill seemed his hand upon my heart—
 O marvel! clearer while that shade became,
 No mocking fiend, I saw, no lifted dart;
 But a dejected Mourner! down, apart,
 His head declined: one hand in grief he pressed
 Upon the heaving shadow of a sorrowing breast.

11.

The other round my neck was thrown, so fair,
 So kind, so gentle, none thereon might gaze,
 Nor feel that Love alone had placed it there!
 There dropped the cloud of my Self-haunted days.
 He who for years had tracked my wandering ways
 Had followed me in love! O Virgin-born,
 Thy shadow was the light of my eternal morn!

12.

Stranger! there came a joy to me that hour ;
 Such joy, that never can it leave my soul.
 All Heaven, condensed to one ambrosial flower,
 Fell on my bosom—Truth's inviolate whole!
 Obedience was the way ; Love was the goal:
 God, the true Universe, around me lay:
 Systems and suns thenceforth were motes in that clear ray!

13.

From that time saw I what 'tis Heaven to see,
 That God is God indeed, and good to Man.
 Theist then first. Who Love's Reality
 Hath proved, forgets himself to probe and scan.
 Knowledge for him remits her ancient ban:
 Back fly those demons, outwardly to sin
 That lure the soul or turn our inquest sad within!

14.

Then looked I up; and drank from Heaven that light
 Which makes the world within, and world around
 Alone intelligible, pure, and bright:
 My forehead then, but not by me, was crowned:
 Then my lost youth, no longer sought, was found:
 My penance then complete; or turned to pain
 So sweet, the enamoured heart embraced it like a gain.

15.

My kind, new-vested in the eternal glory
 Of God made Man, glorious to me became.
 Thenceforth those crowns that shine in mortal story
 I deemed it grief to bear, madness to claim.
 To be a man seemed now man's loftiest aim.
 True Rule seemed this—to wait on one the least
 Of those who fight God's fight, or join His kingly feast.

16.

Then the Three Virtues bade me kneel and drink:

Then the Twelve Gifts fell from the heavenly tree:

Then from the Portals Seven, and crystal brink,

Dread Sacraments and sweet came down to me.

Then saw I plain that Saintly Company,
Through whom, as Living Laws, that world which Sense
Conceals, is ruled of God, by Prayer's omnipotence.

17.

Thus in high trance, and the way unitive,

I watched one year: which sabbath ended, God
Stirred up once more my nest, and bade me live,

Active and suffering. So again I trod

The temporal storm, and wrestled with the flood;
And laboured long; and, by His grace, behold,
Two grains I brought, or three, to swell the hills of gold.

18.

Lastly, my faculties of body and mind

Decayed, through God's high will and boundless love;
And from the trunk whereon they grew declined,
As leaves from trees, or plumes from moulting dove.

Thenceforth, more blest, I soared no more, nor strove;
But sat me down, and wait the end, as waits,
Sun-warmed, a beggar by great palace gates.

19.

Stranger! this tale of one man's life is over.

No knowledge mine in youth have I unlearned;
But I the sense was gifted to discover

Of lore possessed long since, yet undiscerned:
Truths which, as abstract or remote, I spurned
In youth, as real most my heart now prizes;
And, what of old looked real, now as dream despises;

20.

Or but like dreams reveres. Hollow and vain
 To me the pageants of this world appear ;
 Or truth but symbolled to the truthful brain.
 The future world I find already here ;
 The unbeholden palpable and dear :
 Firm as a staff to lean on ; or a rod
 Of power miraculous, and sent by God.

21.

Stranger, farewell ! Far off a bell is tolling :
 A bridal or a funeral bell—whate'er
 It chaunts, in harmony the tones are rolling.
 All bells alike summon mankind to prayer !
 Yea, and for me those twain one day shall pair
 Their blended chimes to one. When I am dead
 Stain not with tears my grave—it is a bridal bed.

22.

He ceased. The inmost sense of that I heard
 I know not : yet, because the man was wise,
 His legend I have written word for word.
 All things hold meaning—to unclouded eyes
 Where eagle never flew are auguries.
 It may be then this weed some balm doth bear ;
 Some cure for sight long dim—some charm against despair.

Sonnets.

Sonnets.

—

I.

LOVE to the tender ; peace to those who mourn ;
 Hope to the hopeless, hope that does not fail,
 Whose symbol is the anchor, not the sail ;
 Glory that spreads to Heaven's remotest bourn,
 And to its centre doth again return
 Like music ; health revisiting the frail ;
 Freedom to those who pine in dungeons pale ;
 Sorrows which God hath willed and Christ hath worn !
 Omnipotence to be the poor man's shield ;
 Light, uncreated light, to cheer the blind ;
 Infinite mercy sent to heal and bind
 All wounds encountered in life's well-fought field ;
 These are God's gifts to man ;—nor these alone :
 Himself He gives to all who make those gifts their own.

II.

LAW AND GRACE.

YES, I remember : once beneath a yoke
 We walked, with jealous pride and painful fear :
 Then a stern footstep sounded ever near ;
 And, when that Presence dread His silence broke,
 Austere and cold as if a statue spoke,
 Each marble sentence smote upon my ear ;
 Yet "Thou shalt not" was all that I could hear—
 So swiftly from its trance my spirit woke.
 The sun was rising. Floods of light divine,
 Golden, and crimson on the mountains played.
 I saw the village spire like silver shine :
 Eolian music filled the echoing shade :
 And I could hear, through all the murmuring glen,
 Music of moving Gods come down to live with men.

III.

LAW AND ANARCHY.

ONE mighty Thought, the sure though secret germ
 Of all the unbidden thoughts which throng the brain ;
 One deep Emotion, centre, soul, and term
 Of all the heart's desires that wax and wane ;
 One living Law to quicken and constrain ;
 To keep our acts and days in unison—
 These we must have ; these three must have in one ;
 Or we have thought and felt and lived in vain.
 O'er the great deep within us Darkness broods :
 And though, beneath the Spirit that moves thereon,
 Some waves, aspiring in their solitudes,
 Swell up with gleams from loftier regions won,
 The Soul is still a chaos 'till God's Word
 Rolls through it, and in Light her answer back is poured.

IV.

CHURCHES.

A CASTLE strongly built, and eminent
 Above Time's battle-plain, defaced and gory;
 A palace, where, in robes of kingly glory
 Our spirits rest; among parched sands, a tent;
 One sunlit isle in a vexed element;
 A gallery, graced with all the pictured story
 Of earth and man; a high observatory,
 Whence eyes of seers for aye on Heaven are bent:—
 Such is yon Church: and round its tapering spire
 I see, descending like a heavenly crown,
 Immortal forms, a wreathed and beautiful choir,
 Bearing in golden urns and baskets down
 Angelic food; and scattering with the sound
 Of hymns and chaunted psalms those demons hovering
 round!

V.

YE praise the humble: of the meek ye say,
 "Happy they live among their lowly bowers;
 "The mountains, and the mountain-storms are ours."
 Thus, self-deceivers, filled with pride alway,
 Reluctant homage to the good ye pay,
 Mingled with scorn like poison sucked from flowers—
 Revere the humble; godlike are their powers:
 No mendicants for praise of men are they.
 The child who prays in faith "Thy will be done"
 Is blended with that Will Supreme which moves
 A wilderness of worlds by Thought untrod;
 He shares the starry sceptre, and the throne:
 The man who as himself his neighbour loves
 Looks down on all things with the eyes of God!

VI.

THAT depth of love the Church doth bear to thee
 Thou knowest not yet; for thou not yet hast felt
 The beatings of an infant's bosom melt
 Into thine own; and all that mystery
 Whereby, nought-seeing—caring not to see—
 The creature, instinct-taught, its food doth draw
 By a sweet pressure and benignant law
 Forth from its mother's breast perpetually.
 But, by the blessings of thy future hearth,
 By all its order, sanctity, and peace,
 Resist not Her whose meek and tearful eyes
 Followed the wanderer ever from Her birth;
 Whose shadow charmed thy sleep; whose litanies
 Soft as Spring's breath woke first thy soul's increase!

VII.

BE still, ye Senates: hear, and God will speak.
 "Through all the world, in every clime and zone,
 "Will I the glory of my Name make known:
 "And men alike or nations, if they seek,
 "Shall find Me: yea, the humble and the weak,
 "Shall sit beside Me, throned upon My throne;
 "Seeing successive Babels lying prone,
 "And God's consummate triumph in the meek."
 O then, that nations had but faith to see
 That, as each separate heart its powers doth draw
 From one great fountain of Humanity,
 So, by a solemn and unchanging law,
 Upon the Kingdom God hath raised must all
 The kingdoms of the earth find rest—or fall.

VIII.

THE VASTNESS OF THE GOSPEL LOST IN ITS SIMPLICITY.

FROM end to end we glance; from Adam's fall
 To Christ's triumphant death and victory,
 At once—those mysteries that between them be
 By man are known but scantily, if at all:
 And thus in time our marvel waxes small;
 Thus gazing down into an air-like sea
 Its depth eludes us from its purity,
 And treasures ours so cheaply vainly call
 For gratitude or gladness. On we go,
 Unmoved beneath a heaven of awe-struck eyes;
 While purer beings, Angel minds that know
 The cost of that great boon which we despise,
 Look down on us, suspended from their skies,
 With deeper awe than men on God bestow.

IX.

FAME.

ASPIRING souls! henceforward without blame
 Revere in Faith, and fearlessly obey
 That hope which wings you o'er the righteous way:
 Glory your spur may be, though not your aim.
 Love hath its archetype, nor less hath Fame
 In Heaven; there shines that light whereof one ray
 Is Fame below: re-echoed thence for aye,
 Spread the great echoes of God's sacred Name.
 God's living Words through all the worlds sent forth;
 Support those worlds by them ordained and made.
 True Glory is God's sentence, rightly weighed.
 His Lips establish all things: and his Eyes
 Kindle the universal sacrifice,
 And everlasting, of the Heavens and Earth!

X.

FELICITAS AT HER MARTYRDOM.

SILENCE, ye crowds! how dare ye thus make start
 An infant, feeding at its mother's breast,
 Feeding on sacred food, and sacred rest?
 Vain are your cries, your pity vain. Depart!
 But ye, dread masters in death's fatal art,
 Torturers! remain: and try, though shame-opprest,
 Once more your skill; fulfil the dread behest:
 Her head ye shall not bow, nor shake her heart.
 —The Lady's eyes alternately were bent
 On Heaven, and on her child; a grave, sweet smile
 Tenderly circling her pale lips the while;
 Until at last the infant was content:
 Then drooped her lids, and sighing o'er his sigh,
 The mother's spirit sought its native sky.

XI.

BLESSED is he who hath not trod the ways
 Of secular delights; nor learned the lore
 Which loftier minds are studious to abhor.
 Blessed is he who hath not sought the praise
 That perishes, the rapture that betrays:
 Who hath not spent in Time's vainglorious war
 His youth: and found, a school-boy at fourscore,
 How fatal are those victories which raise
 Their iron trophies to a temple's height
 On trampled Justice: who desires not bliss,
 But peace; and yet when summoned to the fight,
 Combats as one who combats in the sight
 Of God and of His Angels, seeking this
 Alone, how best to glorify the right.

XII.—EVIDENCES OF RELIGION.

1.

LETTERS there be too large for us to read:
 Words shouted mock the sense, and beat the air—
 Emblazon not in such a type thy creed:
 Through such a trumpet peal not thou thy prayer.
 Truth has her Saxon friends, of whom beware—
 No alien help, or haughty, doth she need:
 To him who seeks her, pure in heart and deed,
 Her pledges and her proofs are everywhere.
 Whate'er we hear or see; whate'er doth lie
 Round us in Nature; all that human thought
 In Science, or in Art, hath found, or wrought,
 Stand fixed as notes on Truth's immortal book.
 What need we more? a Commentary? look
 Through all the mighty roll of History!

XIII.—EVIDENCES OF RELIGION.

2.

YE who would build the Churches of the Lord!
 ' See that ye make the western portals low:
 Let no one enter who disdains to bow.
 High Truths profanely gazed at, unadored,
 Will be abused at first, at last abhorred;
 And many a learned, many a lofty brow
 Hath rested, pillowed on a humbler vow
 Than keen logicians notice or record.
 O stainless peace of blest Humility!
 Of all who fain would enter, few, alas!
 Catch the true meaning of that kind, sad eye;
 While thou, God's portress, stationed by the door,
 Dost stretch thy cross so near the marble floor,
 That children only, without bending, pass.

(1) An ancient custom.

XIV.

THE golden fruits of Earth's autumnal store
 Are ours: and yet we know not how they grow.
 Ours are the cooling winds that o'er us blow,
 Albeit their causes we in vain explore.
 And what if Heaven be willing to bestow,
 Like Earth, her gifts, yet hide her secret lore?
 How to enjoy them, be it ours to know,
 And to be grateful: seek for nothing more.
 Unanswerable questions but disturb
 That Faith through which alone Knowledge is won.
 O Friend! walk boldly forward in the Sun,
 Its vital warmth contented to absorb;
 And to reflect its light. Others shall see
 In thee, that radiance unbeheld by thee.

XV.

CONSECRATION OF A NEW HOUSE.

I BLESS thy new-raised threshold: let us pray
 That never faithless friend, insulting foe
 O'er this pure stone their hateful shadows throw:
 May the poor gather round it day by day.
 I bless this hearth: thy children here shall play:
 Here may their graces and their virtues blow:
 May sin defile it not; and want and woe
 And sickness seldom come, nor come to stay.
 I bless thy House. I consecrate the whole
 To God. It is His Temple. Let it be
 Worthy of Him, confided thus to thee.
 Man's dwelling like its lord enshrines a soul:
 It hath great destinies, wherein do lie
 Self-sown, the seeds of Immortality.

XVI.

WHAT man can hear sweet sounds and dread to die?
 O for a music that might last for ever!
 Abounding from its sources like a river
 Which through the dim lawns streams eternally!
 Virtue might then uplift her crest on high,
 Spurning those myriad bonds that fret and grieve her:
 Then all the powers of hell would quake and quiver
 Before the ardours of her awful eye.
 Alas for Man with all his high desires,
 And inward promptings fading day by day!
 High-titled honour pants while it expires,
 And clay-born glory turns again to clay.
 Low instincts last: our great resolves pass by
 Like winds whose loftiest pæan ends but in a sigh.

XVII.

THE ALEXANDRIAN VERSION OF THE SCRIPTURES.

BESIDE a little humble Oratory
 There sat a noble lady all alone:
 Over her knees a parchment lay, whereon
 Her slender fingers traced the Gospel story.
 Old Nile flowed noiseless by: through vapours dun
 A low-hung moon let forth its last faint glory
 On all the dark green flats, and temples hoary,
 That grey and ghostly through the morning shone—
 Theckla! Mankind will ne'er forget that zeal
 Which, ere the night-bird stays her melody,
 Raises thee daily to the Church's needs:
 No doubts, no fears hast thou—thou dost not feel
 The cold, damp winds of morning as they sigh,
 Murmuring forlorn through leagues of murmuring reeds!

XVIII.

RELIGIOUS ANTIQUARIANISM.

I SAW a wild-swan flying toward the West,
 Following the traces of a sunken Sun.
 The sky grew momentarily more pale ; yet on
 She urged her indefatigable quest ;
 Faint crimson lights suffusing still that breast,
 Out of whose deep recesses forth she flung
 Exhausted wailings of immortal song ;
 Wind-scattered dirges, psalmody unblest !
 Sad lover of the Past ! in vain that flight !
 A law there is that bids the earth roll round,
 And marvellously marries day and night.
 Truth lives and works. Yet drop not to the ground !
 Once more the orb thou lovest on thee shall rise,
 Far-shining from the East of thine abandoned skies.

XIX.

Now, now, ye kings and rulers of the earth,
 Lift up your eyes unto the hills eterne,
 Whence your salvation comes. From Earth's dark urn
 The great floods burst ! From each ancestral hearth
 Look forth, ye bold and virtuous poor, look forth :
 The meteor signs of woes to come discern ;
 And whence the danger be not slow to learn :
 Then greet it with loud scorn, and warlike mirth.
 The banner of the Church is ever flying !
 Less than a storm avails not to unfold
 The cross emblazoned there in massive gold—
 Away with doubts and sadness, tears and sighing :
 It is by Faith, by Patience, and by dying,
 That we must conquer, as our sires of old !

XX.

SIMPLICITY AND STEADFASTNESS OF MIND.

WHEN plain and city, garden, mount and wood,
 Under the Flood's blank tablet lay unseen,
 Three objects only met thy vision keen,
 Angel of Earth! in that wild solitude:
 The Sun; that shining and unshadowed flood:
 And (heaven-ward lifted on its tide serene)
 The Ark, sole-drifting where a world had been—
 No meaner image lured thine eye from God.
 Our eyes are full of idols: O! that we
 From those soul-murdering gewgaws of the day,
 Might turn, and fix our gaze immovably
 Upon God's Church, tracking its marvellous way
 Over the ocean of God's awful Love—
 And on that steadfast Sun which lights her from above.

XXI.

SPIRITUAL TIES SYMBOLIZED THROUGH NATURAL.

FATHER!—the childless Angels cannot call
 Upon their God, by that most sacred name!
 Brother!—the seed of Adam, one and all,
 With Christ Himself true brotherhood we claim.
 King, Prophet, Priest!—the whole predestined frame
 Of life in one symbolic mould is cast;
 To prove of Heaven a mystic antepast,
 And a pure language to reveal the same.
 But we have scorned that old and simple life;
 And, building social Babels, fain to reach,
 Yea storm high Heaven itself, through hate and strife
 Confused that Catholic and Godlike speech:
 Therefore God's face is dark as in a glass
 To us—the Patriarchs saw Him face to face.

XXII.

PENITENCE.

FROM grave to grave I pace, inwardly sighing,
 "Is not this place for my repentance meet?"
 Borne through dark boughs the night-winds unreplying
 The unanswered question mournfully repeat.
 To you I turn, under the damp grass lying,
 O Friends; and pray you from your dusk retreat
 To breathe a spirit of sorrow holy and sweet,
 Over this heart dried up, in languor dying.
 And thou, in Palestine's cold shadows sleeping,
 'Mid dust with tears of thine so often blent,
 Give me one gush of thy perpetual weeping,
 Holy Saint Mary, ever penitent!
 Night after night fresh dews revive the flowers:—
 Ah! that one Baptism should alone be ours!

XXIII.

DISCIPLINE OF THE CHURCH. (PENITENTIAL I.)

BATHS of the Church! seclusions sad, yet dear!
 Amid your cloistral caves, and shadowy cells,
 That dark-stoled hermitress, Repentance, dwells,
 Haunting your loneliest shades with patient cheer;
 And agitating oft with hallowing tear
 The streams Bethesda of your healing wells;
 Or murmuring low her grief-taught oracles
 For souls too weak to feel, too proud to hear.
 "Alas! world-wearied Spirits, fly no more!
 "These springs make strong the feeble knees: these dews
 "Efface the lines of lingering care; infuse
 "Immortal youth through bosoms of threescore:—
 "Draw near. The Angels shall your introit sing,
 "Fanning your weary foreheads with assuasive wing."

XXIV.

DISCIPLINE OF THE CHURCH. (PENITENTIAL II.)

Too much of mirth—too many smiles—depart,
 Vain phantoms of the Sense, false baits of sin!
 One hour for holy mourning who may win
 Amid the clamour of the world's loud mart?
 A sigh throws wide the portals of the heart:
 Pure Spirits enter: good resolves begin:
 How wholesome then that care, how kind that art,
 The highways of man's life o'ershadowing
 With cypress thickets, at wide intervals,
 And gardens bowered 'mong cedar-darkened rifts,
 Hollowed with dewy vaults, and silent halls;
 Where smooth once more the soul her forehead lifts,
 And pleasurably spreads a widening eye,
 Shrunk up too long and dimmed by the sun's tyranny!

XXV.

PENITENTIAL SEASONS.

“LARGE as the beads of this dark rosary
 “Was each successive drop that slowly fell
 “Down from my Saviour's temples, audible
 “To the earth's beating heart. O agony!
 “I had forgotten them! forget not me,
 “Thou merciful Redeemer. Like a knell
 “My sinful Past salutes me! Let me dwell
 “Henceforth in that sad garden, Lord, with Thee.”
 Even thus the Holy Church (with lifted palms
 On her wet eyelids pressed; and forehead pale
 Depressed beneath a dusk, funereal veil)
 Chaunteth all night her penitential psalms:
 Nor from her mournful litanies can cease
 Until the sun shall rise, and give her peace.

XXVI.

MAGDALENE.

LET the Repentant on Thy head, O Lord!
 Lavish their precious ointments, odours sweet.
 Tears let the Pardoned bring, an offering meet
 For hearts long heavy, now to peace restored.
 I am a wretched creature, self-abhorred.
 When I would shed my tears upon Thy feet,
 Unholy Shame, and Sorrow's wasting heat
 Dry up the streams, which else these eyes had poured
 Profusely forth for days, and months, and years.
 But heavenly mourning is a gift from Heaven;
 Distilled like honey-dews, at fall of even,
 Upon our thirsting palms with touch benign.
 Therefore, O Lord, an humble prayer is mine:
 Grant Thou this weary soul the "gift of tears."

XXVII.

ON A PICTURE OF THE MAGDALENE.

WEEPER perpetual, of whom men say
 Not that she lived so long, "but so long wept;"
 And in her fond imagination crept
 (Fearful, yet fond) to those blest feet each day:
 There knelt to wash them: there to wipe them lay:
 There in her shining locks caught them and kept:
 And hallowed thus, a tender love-adept,
 Thenceforth those glittering tresses never grey!—
 Fulfilled Thy Master's word hath been! Where'er
 Thy Lord is preached art thou remembered, making
 Repentance to sad hearts dear, and yet dearer.
 Thine eyes like heavens by midnight rains left clearer,
 How oft we see thee thus through deserts bare,
 Thy sad yet solaced way in silence taking!

XXVIII.

DISCIPLINE OF THE CHURCH. (COMMEMORATIVE.)

WITH solemn forms, benign solitudes,
 (But each a Sacramental type and pledge
 Of Grace,) the Church inweaves a sheltering hedge
 Around her garden vale in the wild woods;
 Giving Heaven's calm to Nature's varying moods.
 She plants a cross on every pine-girt ledge:
 A chancel by each river's liliated edge.
 Where'er her Catholic dominion broods,
 Behold how two Infinities are mated,
 The Mighty and Minute, by the control
 Of Love or Duty, linked with care sublime!
 On earth no spot, no fleeting point of time,
 Within our mind no thought, within our soul
 No feeling, doth she leave unconsecrated.

XXIX.—THE BEATIFIC VISION OF THE EARTH.

1.

GLAD childhood's dream of marvels past, we rise,
 Still on our cheeks the flush of sleep remaining;
 And roam the wastes of Earth, our eyelids straining
 The glories of that dream to realize:—
 Nor seek in vain. Stream, bird, or cloud replies,
 (Echoes that mock young passion's amorous feigning):
 Fancy shines starlike forth 'mid daylight waning,
 And Hope the night-bird sings 'neath shrouded skies.
 At last the charm is broken: day by day
 Drops some new veil, until the countenance bare
 Of that ice-idol, blank Reality,
 Confronts us full with cold, and loveless eye—
 Then dies our heart, unless that Faith we share
 Whose touch makes all things gold, and gives us youth
 for aye.

XXX.—THE BEATIFIC VISION OF THE EARTH.

2.

HAIL, Earth, for man's sake cursed, yet blessing man!
 The Saviour trod thine herbage, breathed thine air:
 Henceforward, not alone through symbols, fair,
 Thou showest, delivered from thine ancient ban,
 Memorial bloom withheld since death began:
 Thy Maker's glory doomed at last to share,
 Even now that light transfiguring thou dost wear
 For us, which once adorned His forehead wan—
 "All things are new." O sing it, heavenly choirs!
 And ye, the choir of God's great Church below,
 The Poets! sound it on your deep-toned lyres:
 From every mountain-top the tidings blow—
 "All things are new." The Earth hath thrown aside
 Her mourning weeds, and sits a pale, and veiled bride.

XXXI.—THE BEATIFIC VISION OF THE EARTH.

3.

COWERING beneath a semilucid veil,
 A semilucid bridal veil of snow,
 Which from the wreath that binds her temples pale
 Down to her white and slender feet doth flow,
 She sits. I hear her breathings soft and low:
 They shake the vine-leaves in that garland frail—
 Like Mary's when she heard th' Angelic "Hail,"
 Dimly I see her blushes come and go.
 And now, that veil thrown back, her head she raises,
 Fixing upon the stars her star-like eyes—
 As though she felt that Heaven on which she gazes
 Her bosom rises: lo! her hands, they rise:
 She also rises. Time it is to meet
 Her Lord, and bless "the light of His returning feet."

XXXII.

MORAL APPLICATION OF MIRACLES.

IF thou art blind with error like a hood
 Bound o'er thine eyes: if thy distempered ears
 Catch now no more the music of the spheres:
 If one thou art of that great multitude
 Which faints for lack of wisdom's manna food:
 If thou art dumb, and canst not say thy prayers;
 Fevered with weakness, palsied with despairs,
 Possessed by legioned Passion's demon brood:
 If thou with sin, as with a leprosy,
 Art foul; among the tombs naked and bound—
 Oh! think of Him who walked Earth's suffering ground
 Healing, and giving peace: before whose feet
 The natural laws of mortal misery
 Melted like frost before the vernal heat.

XXXIII.

TO ———.

How oft that haughty and far-flashing eye,
 Have I not seen thee upward fiercely raise,
 Or on the dark earth root thy tyrannous gaze
 As on a scroll, with piercing scrutiny!
 Great scorn it seemed and great indignity
 That aught should mock thy search:—and yet that haze
 Which veils the loftiest, deepest things, obeys
 Be sure, the cloud-compelling Power on high.
 Our life is finite—let the mind be so;
 And therefore bound the spirit's appetites.
 Some things we cannot, some we should not know:
 Wisdom there is that weakens, lore that blights—
 He too that walks among the eternal lights,
 Casts, as He moves, His sacred shade below!

XXXIV.

THE CONSTELLATION OF THE PLOUGH.

TYPE of celestial labour, toil divine,
 That nightly downward from the glistening skies
 Showerest thy light on these expectant eyes !
 Around thee in their stations ever shine
 Full many a radiant shape and emblemed sign ;
 Swords, sceptres, crowns, bright tresses, galaxies
 Of all that soaring fancy can devise—
 Yet none, methinks, so truly great as thine!
 On, ever on ! while He who guides thee flings
 His golden grain along the azure way
 Do thou thy sleepless work, and toiling, say,
 “ O men, so sedulous in trivial things,
 “ Why faint amid your loftier labours ? Why
 “ Forget the starry seed, and harvests of the sky ? ”

XXXV.

NATURAL RELIGION.

SEARCH ye the Heart of man until ye find
 That which is deepest. Raise your eyes again
 Up through the loftiest region of his Mind :
 And in each spacious, and serene domain
 The same calm Presence ye shall mark enshrined :
 The Thought of God—For pleasure, or for pain,
 It fills the one great soul of all our kind :
 And Conscience to her breast this Truth doth strain.—
 Away with blind, empiric argument
 To 'stablish that which is the ultimate,
 The ground, o'er which all other notions pass !
 Man may distort God's Image, not create—
 We dim (too closely o'er the semblance bent)
 With our own breath pure Reason's mystic glass.

XXXVI.

It was not with your gold, nor with your merit,
 You bought that peace celestial now your own.
 You did not those heart-quickenings inherit,
 Like youthful princes born to grace a throne.
 These are the fruits of that eternal Spirit,
 Who showers His grace on faith, and faith alone:
 Whose yoke but steadies those who gently bear it,
 Whose Presence can but through His Gifts be shown.
 These are the proofs, th' assurance which you thought
 That you were seeking; while, intent to shun
 Truth's living Lord, yourself alone you sought.
 Now you have found yourself in Him, and won
 The bloodless triumphs of the fields He fought:
 The rest your own right hand must teach—Ride on!

XXXVII.

RELIGIOUS LITERATURE.

STRANGER! yet friend! who from the ways unblest
 Of common life retired, art pleased to rove
 Religion's Pleasance bound, and Golden Grove,
 By woodland odours, sportive gleams carest,
 That lure thee forward in thine easy quest
 Of Wisdom bowered with Beauty and with Love;
 Beware! a Presence that thou deemest not of
 Is here concealed. From out the air-rocked nest
 Of every leaf, looks forth some Dream divine.
 The grass thou treadest—the weeds, are cyphered o'er
 With mystic traces, and sibylline lore.
 Each branch is precious as that golden bough
 Hung by Æneas (ere he passed below)
 Upon the sable porch of Proserpine.

XXXVIII.

THE DYING PLATONIST.

FAIN would I call that Night which spreads so fast
 Out of the vault of Death's abysmal skies,
 A gentle gloom like that of thy dark eyes.
 Fain would I say that we, like children, cast
 Our blind-fold faces with a timid haste
 Into a mother's lap—ere long to rise
 Some little forfeit and some sweet surprise
 The playful Future of a playful Past.
 But ah! it is not so. Reality
 Makes a dread language of this ebbing breath;
 Preaching those awful homilies of Death
 Which sound so like each other at their close.
 The least of Sins is *Infinite*: it throws
 A shade into the face of the Most High.

XXXIX.—INITIATIVE FAITH.

YOU ask us for a sign, misdoubting friend,
 And you will then believe. A thousand eyes
 To the same point fixed in the same clear skies
 Are raised at once—a thousand foreheads bend
 Before one breeze, by you unfelt. Attend.
 He is not humble, and he is not wise,
 Who deems no star is there, that breeze denies,
 Because his science cannot comprehend
 How shines that light, or whence that zephyr blows,
 Or whether Alpine or Caucasian snows
 Have cast their coolness on its wings serene.
 If you see nought, O! trust the eyes of those
 Who read dark tablets by that light unseen:
 Desire, believe, and pray: Peace comes where Faith
 hath been.

XL.

CONVERSION.

LOUD as that trumpet doomed to raise the dead
 God's voice doth sometimes fall on us in fear:
 More often with a music low yet clear,
 Soft whispering, "It is I: be not afraid."
 And sometimes, mingling strangely joy with dread,
 It thrills the spirit's caverned sepulchre,
 Deep as that voice which on the awe-struck ear
 Of him, the three-days-buried, murmuring, said
 "Come forth"—and he arose. O Christians, hail
 As brethren all on whom our glorious Sun,
 At morn, or noon, or latest eve, hath shone
 With light, and life: and neither mourn nor rail
 Because one light, itself unchanging, showers
 A thousand colours on a thousand flowers.

XLI.

THE COMMUNION OF SAINTS.

How many precious influences meet
 In this frail flower, the orphan of the year!
 To her the Sun, her little span to cheer,
 Sends down two momentary heralds, heat
 And light, and pours his tribute at her feet:
 Yea, every atom of earth's solid sphere
 Shoots forth attractions that concentrate here,
 And in this lowly creature's pulses beat.
 Then wherefore fear that any human soul,
 Small though it be, is worthless in His sight
 Whose Mercy, like His Power, is infinite?
 Why doubt that God's eternal Love can reach
 At once the vital soul of all and each;
 And one vast Sympathy inspire the whole?

XLII.

SAD is our youth, for it is ever going,
 Crumbling away beneath our very feet:
 Sad is our life, for onward it is flowing
 In current unperceived, because so fleet:
 Sad are our hopes, for they were sweet in sowing,
 But tares, self-sown, have over-topped the wheat:
 Sad are our joys, for they were sweet in blowing—
 And still, O still, their dying breath is sweet.
 And sweet is youth, although it hath bereft us
 Of that which made our childhood sweeter still:
 And sweet is middle life, for it hath left us
 A nearer Good to cure an older Ill:
 And sweet are all things, when we learn to prize them
 Not for their sake, but His who grants them or denies
 them!

XLIII.

EVANESCENCE OF THE PATRIARCHAL RELIGION.

HERMES! unearthly were those melodies
 That closed the lids of Argus! one by one
 His hundred orbs, by a sweet force pressed down,
 Yielded successively, like Heaven's bright eyes
 When moonlight spreads along her glistening skies.
 Smiling he sank, more pleased the more undone,
 Inebriate, while through those thin lids the sun
 Shone warmly without light!—Thy sorceries,
 Faith of the Pagan world, so fair of old,
 Worked like those songs! Procession, Legend, Rite,
 Sapped thus transmitted Truth by spells of Art:
 'Till the ever-waking spirit in man's heart
 Relinquished at the last its sacred hold
 Of God's prime creature, beatific Light!

XLIV.—SORROW.

COUNT each affliction, whether light or grave,
 God's messenger sent down to thee. Do thou
 With courtesy receive him: rise and bow:
 And, ere his shadow pass thy threshold, crave
 Permission first his heavenly feet to lave.
 Then lay before him all thou hast. Allow
 No cloud of passion to usurp thy brow,
 Or mar thy hospitality; no wave
 Of mortal tumult to obliterate
 The soul's marmoreal calmness. Grief should be
 Like joy, majestic, equable, sedate;
 Confirming, cleansing, raising, making free;
 Strong to consume small troubles; to commend
 Great thoughts, grave thoughts, thoughts lasting to the
 end.

XLV.—MEDITATION.

WHAT is more glorious than a noble Thought?
 What is more blessed?—In that thought to dwell:
 To build your bower within it; scoop a cell;
 Inlay with precious ores a secret grot,
 A hermit's place of rest: to wander not;
 But lean in peace above its caverned well,
 Yielding to that pure runnel's murmuring spell,
 Or sound of sighing forests heard remote.
 Such holy promptings moved of old our sires
 Those vast cathedrals cruciform to raise
 That make us dwell *within* the Cross: and still,
 Sweet as the gradual breeze from all their choirs
 Moving with dawning day o'er wood and hill,
 The thoughts by those grey Minsters quickened to God's
 praise!

XLVI.

NATURE AND GRACE.

THAT Light which is the Life alone can give
 The living Power which makes us love the Light:
 Love it in Faith, and with the Godlike might
 Of Love, to Love's one object cling and cleave—
 But we can only have what we receive.
 Instinctively man's eye discerns the Right;
 But this we lack—the strength to scale its height,
 That we with it might dwell, and in it live.
 Science and Song, their constellated wings
 Waving from Eastern unto Western skies,
 Soar but to sink. Not any bird that flies
 Mounts straight ascending:—Grace, and Grace alone
 Shoots heavenward, as from yonder altar-stone
 The sacrificial flame triumphant springs!

XLVII.

UNIVERSAL HISTORY.

METHOUGHT I gazed upon a dusky Round,
 Our mortal planet's monumental urn—
 Around its orb with many a spiral turn
 Ascending, a Procession slowly wound.
 There saw I laurelled poets, kings renowned;
 Prophets I saw from earth's remotest bourne:
 There saw I maids and youths, old men forlorn,
 And conquerors full-armed, and captives bound.
 A Funeral pomp methought it seemed far down
 In pale relief; and, side by side, therein
 Hooded, there paced, a Sorrow and a Sin:
 Midway in ampler ring, and vision clear,
 A Sacrifice embraced that mighty sphere—
 Above, a lovely Bridal was its crown.

XLVIII.

TRUTH.

CENTRE of Earth! keystone of Heaven's great dome!
 In thee the world's vast arches rest suspended :—
 Within thy zodiac's belt round all extended
 The orb of Knowledge evermore doth roam.
 Thou art the lamp and hearth of each man's home—
 How many wondrous powers in thee are blended!
 By thee we live; by thee from death defended,
 We find a second cradle in the tomb.
 In thee all good things breathe; without thee die:
 Strength, Justice, Loyalty, (Truth's noble thrall)
 Song, Science, all the Loves; yea most of all,
 Though deemed too oft thy rival, Charity,
 Whose golden arrows swift as sunbeams fly,
 And scatter seeds of life where'er they fall!

XLIX.—ASPIRATION AND RESIGNATION.

1.

At times I lift mine eyes unto "the Hills
 Whence my Salvation cometh"—aye, and higher;
 And, (the mind kindling with the heart's desire,)
 Mount to that realm nor blight nor shadow chills:
 With concourse of bright forms that region thrills:
 I see the lost one midmost in the choir:
 From heaven to heaven, on wings that ne'er can tire,
 I soar; and God Himself my spirit fills.
 If that high rapture lasted need were none
 Of aid beside, nor any meaner light,
 Nothing henceforth to seek, and nought to shun :—
 But my soul staggers at its noonday height;
 And, stretching forth blind hands, a shape undone,
 Drops back into the gulfs of mortal night.

L.—ASPIRATION AND RESIGNATION.

2.

THEN learn I that the Fancy's saintliest flight
 Gives or a fleeting, or a false relief :
 And fold my hands and say, " Let grief be grief,
 " Let winter winter be, and blight be blight!"
 O Thou all-wise, all-just, and infinite !
 Whate'er the good we clasped, the least, the chief,
 Was thine, not ours, and held by us in fief—
 Thy Will consummate in my will's despite!
 " Blessed the Dead:" and they not less are blest
 Who, dead to earth, in full submission find
 (Buried in God's high Will) their Maker's rest.
 Kneeling, the blood-drops from their Saviour's feet,
 Their brows affusing, makes their Passion sweet ;
 And in his sepulchre they sleep enshrined.

LI.—PRAYERS FOR THE CONVERSION OF ENGLAND.

1.

ABOVE the futile world of things that seem,
 Above the beauteous wreck of things that were,
 Above the horizon Eden, falsely fair,
 Of hope terrestrial, and the Poet's dream,
 Ascend, sole strength of man ! Swift as the beam
 Of sunrise, hurled, though late, through arctic air,
 Rise, might divine of universal prayer,
 And clasp with myriad arms the throne supreme !
 From Earth's expanse rise like the exhalation
 Sent up from ocean touched at morn with gold :
 Rise like the censer-cloud, the altar-fire.
 Blind, old, and chained, a proud yet prostrate nation
 Waits her deliverance. Higher mount and higher!
 " Deus id vult." In heaven the bells have tolled.

LII.—PRAYERS FOR THE CONVERSION OF ENGLAND.

2.

OH for no nation, but the race of man,
 How wide a joy, and for the heavenly host,
 When England, flinging far her insular boast,
 And issuing, queen-like, through eclipse and ban,
 Uplifts once more her eagle eyes to scan
 That sovrán, sole, and sunlike Truth, long lost,
 Which crowns, a never-ceasing Pentecost,
 That See where Priestly Unity began.
 It must be so. The sceptred hand whereon
 The secular future of the world is stayed
 Shall rise, its matricidal madness gone,
 Vestal once more. Once more, with saints to aid,
 England shall lift that conquering cross on high
 Which gave her Constantine his victory.

LIII.—GRACE DIEU.

WHEN Francis Beaumont wandered in old time
 Beside that stream which throws, as then it threw,
 A music sweeter than the poet's rhyme
 O'er the grey ruins of "forlorn Grace Dieu,"
 How oft, while bat and owl around them flew,
 Mourned the great Bard the blood-stained Monarch's crime ;
 How often yearned to hear that convent chime
 Which, century after century, shook the dew
 From Charnwood's forest branches eve and dawn !
 Phillipps ! God's Grace it was thy heart that stirred !
 All praise to Him, the Angelus is heard,
 Once more from hill and woodland, crag and lawn :
 And yon Cistercian abbey on the height
 Once more "with psalms resoundeth, and the chaunted rite."

LIV.

"SLEEP dwell within thine eyes, peace in thy breast."
 To-night the memory of thy native hills,
 To-night the charm of unforgotten rills,
 Be kind to fevered nerves and thoughts opprest.
 Yet, if the mourners are most surely blest ;
 If He, who only wounds to heal us, wills
 That thou shouldst have thy load of twofold ills,
 And, love-amerced, in vain solicit rest ;
 Then like a cross thy patient hands put forth,
 And gently welcome that which God accords :
 And let the sharpest of terrestrial swords
 Transfix, unblamed, the meekest heart on earth—
 Nor Sleep nor Death repose so perfect gives
 As in entire Submission wakes and lives.

LV.

VALERIAN AND CECILIA.

THE eyes that loved me were upon me staying :
 The eyes that loved me, and the eyes that won.
 Guardian or guide celestial saw I none ;
 But the unseen chaplets on her temples weighing
 Breathed heaven around. A golden smile was playing
 O'er the full lips. Meekly her countenance shone,
 And beamed, a lamp of peace, mid shadows dun—
 Round her lit form the ambrosial locks were swaying.
 Fair Spirit ! Angel of delight new-born,
 And love, unchanging love and infinite,
 Aureorean planet of the eternal morn !
 That gaze I caught ; and, kindling in that light,
 My soul, from Pagan bonds released by thee,
 Upsoared, and hailed its immortality.

LVI.

ROME AT NOON.

THE streets are silent, as the shadows deep
Of obelisk and statue o'er them thrown ;
A people slumbers in its noonday sleep ;
No sound save yon cicala's lazy drone.
Sunshine intense each glittering dome doth steep,
Each Lombard tower, and convent's court grass-grown ;
Fires the tall arch, and heats each column prone,
My prop in turn, as slowly on I creep.
Methinks such stillness reigned that hour in Rome
Three centuries since, when through the fiery air
Uprose, sole-heard, the saintly Pontiff's prayer—
Rose, and a slumbering world escaped its doom.
Vanquished that hour beside Lepanto's shore,
Satan like lightning fell, thenceforth to rise no more.

Hymns.

TO
SIR JOHN SIMEON, BART.
THE FOLLOWING HYMNS,
COMPOSED UNDER HIS ROOF,
ARE AFFECTIONATELY INSCRIBED.

The Feast of St. Agatha.

1.

DARK as ministers of Hell,
 The gaolers strode the Maid beside:
 Light from heaven upon her fell
 As she raised her face, and cried,
 "Lo, my Jesus, all I am
 "Give I freely unto thee:
 "Guard from harm thy little lamb:
 "Quell the demon brood through me."

2.

Dark the Præter sat, his hand
 Pointing to the statued Gods:
 Round his throne the lictor band
 Reared their axes, and their rods.
 "Sacrifice!" the concourse cried—
 "Sacrifice, and thou art free."
 "Christ I serve," the Maid replied;
 "That is Life and Liberty."

3.

They led her to the haunts of shame:—
 Sin was shamed; and Satan fled.
 They stretched her on a couch of flame:—
 'Twas to her a rose-strewn bed.
 Blissful martyr! loud she cried,
 "Glory be, my Christ, to thee!
 "Teach Thou well Thy little bride
 "Patience, Love, and Purity."

4.

It was midnight, and the Maid,
 Robed from face to foot in blood,
 Stood with hands outstretched, and prayed:—
 One she saw not near her stood.
 Fell the Apostolic Light
 Where had fallen the Pagan sword:
 Beams of healing, words of might,
 Touched her bosom, and restored.

5.

Blest Palermo! Lullabied
 Was the babe by thy blue sea!
 Catania more blest! she died,
 Dowered with palm and crown, in thee!
 Share with us your double boast,
 Happy land, for poor are we:
 Plead, among the heavenly host,
 Agatha, for mine and me.

The Feast of St. Lucy.

1.

"O LIGHT divine, those outward eyes
 "That languish, nothing seeing
 "Save thine inferior suns and skies,
 "Blot wholly from my being;
 "But grant me one short hour to see
 "What Anna saw, and Stephen—
 "The Babe upon His Mother's knee;
 "The Saviour crowned in heaven.

2.

"O heavenly, uncreated Word,
 "That took'st our mortal nature,
 "And, still on high as God adored,
 "Didst die on earth, a creature;
 "We die because we may not die:—
 "Each act, word, thought, betrays thee:
 "But thy good Martyrs, in the sky,
 "And where they suffered, praise thee!"

3.

Thus sang Saint Lucy, bright like day,
 Where others hoped not, hoping;
 To thy worn tomb, O Agatha,
 A mother's footsteps propping.
 She knelt and prayed the Martyr's aid—
 "My mother! help her, shield her!"
 "Why ask my aid?" the Martyr Maid
 Replied; "Thy prayers have healed her."

4.

She rose : her country's Gods defied ;
 Idol and altar spurning.
 To death adjudged, with tenderest pride
 Her cheek, late pale, was burning :—
 A thousand men their strength put forth :
 Nor man nor beast might move her :—
 The hand that made the heavens and earth
 Lay strong that hour above her.

5.

Round her they piled the wood : the fires
 Forth flashed, and fiercely mounted.
 She, like a bird 'mid golden wires,
 The praise of God recounted.
 "The Empire falls : the Church is free!"—
 So rang her song ; and ended,
 "O Agatha ! for Sicily
 "Henceforth our prayers are blended."

6.

Sicilian sisters, fair and brave,
 In bonds of God close-plighted,
 That, like two lilies on one wave,
 Float, evermore united ;
 Upheaved upon the Church's breast
 In aspiration endless,
 Plead, from the bosom of your rest,
 For exiled souls, and friendless.

St. Augustine of Canterbury.

STRONG in the strength of Rome,
 And the mission from on high,
 To the English coast is Augustine come,
 To conquer or to die.

The keel has touched the shore ;
 The Cross has touched the strand :
 The train, that Cross held high before,
 Moves forth through the pagan land.

Knock at the palace gates,
 O Cross ! The Kings within
 Shall rise from their thrones, and cry, " Who waits ?"
 And let their Maker in.

Knock at the temple doors :
 The idols within shall hear ;
 And fall, dead weights, on the marble floors,
 As the Holy Host draws near.

The Apostolic man
 Held up the Cross on high :
 And a nation knelt ; for the rumour ran
 That the Lord of all was nigh.

Happy that kneeling shore !
 Glorious and blest the boon !
 O England, turn thee, turn once more,
 To the Rock whence thou art hewn.

St. Paulinus.

PONTIFF and Priest of old !
 Our Shepherd still on high !
 Call back thy sheep to their ancient fold—
 Why should thy children die ?

Paulinus ! Saint and Sage,
 O'er the heavenly hills move on :
 For kings to-day thy pilgrimage
 Will join ; not monks alone.

Forth to the throne of God :
 Plead for a land sense-blind :—
 Egbert and Alfred where thou hast trod
 Will plant their steps behind.

And the Confessor ; and all
 Those cloistral sovereigns pure ;
 And nobles who died under Salem's wall,
 Or at Cressy and Agincourt.

Night lay on hill and glen
 When thy lamp dispersed the gloom :—
 'Tis night again ; or light as when
 The cold morn stares at a tomb.

Silent were cape and creek
 As thy boat drew near the land :
 'Tis Babel now : for a million speak ;
 But no man can understand.

Patriarch, once more forth pace,
And thy realm below shall hear ;
Though we live in the City's suburbs base,
And thou in its regions clear.

Forth, great Procession! Break
Our slumbers with thy tread :
For the dry bones live, and the ashes wake,
Like the waking from the dead.

St. Anastasia at Aquileia.¹

1.

OCEAN, anew creating
Old harmonies ;
Ether, star-germinating
While daylight dies ;
Sunset, but lately firing
The city towers, and still,
In crimson flames expiring
On yonder snow-capped hill:
Far peaks, and cliffs that shiver
In golden mist ;—henceforth
O lure no more, forever,
My spirit back to earth !

(1) See Note at p. 318.

2.

Moored is at last our galley :
 Our pilgrimage is o'er :
 But not for us yon valley ;
 And not for us that shore !
 The cymbals from the city
 Shake the water like a breath—
 Chant we, in turn, one ditty,
 O Martyr Maids, ere death !
 O people, who can teach thee
 That joy to earth unknown ?
 O Saviour, who can preach thee ?—
 Not words, but death alone !

3.

Mother! Ah, twice, my mother,
 Thou gav'st me Christ! This day
 I thank thee, and that other
 My childhood's staff and stay.
 How oft when trial pressed me,
 And earthly hope was none,
 That more than father blessed me,
 And said, " Poor child, strive on."
 He prayed for me : he cherished :
 He gained me strength to win :—
 Through him the tyrant perished
 That tempted me to sin.

4.

Like a Seraph in its fleetness,
 My life above me flew :
 Its sorrows past, its sweetness
 Falls back on me as dew.
 Again I tread the prison,
 And bring the Christians bread :

They have raised their heads: they listen:

Sweet souls, ye know my tread!

The children hide their faces

In an unmaternal breast:

And, warmed in my embraces,

Young mothers, too, find rest.

5.

Once more, the Forum pacing,

The temples I behold,

As they stand, the sun outfacing,

With their marble and their gold.

I scorn them:—I am taken:—

I am judged to death once more:

Half-famished I awaken

On the cold dark dungeon floor.

Chrysogonus! thou hast taught me

Once more to kiss my chain:

Theodora! thou hast brought me

Celestial food again!

6.

'Tis past. The dream is over,

And the life that does but seem:—

They are past; and I discover

The World, too, is a dream.

Its meaning, its consistence,

From a higher world is caught;

Thy Will is its subsistence;

Its order is thy Thought.

Thou hast made it: it arrays Thee:

Yet it cannot fill man's heart:—

For what Thou art I praise thee;

And I praise thee that Thou art.

7.

Entering his own creation,
 True God true Man became.
 Who wrought the world's salvation?—
 The Babe of Bethlehem.
 For each man death He tasted:
 He died that Death might die:
 Three days entombed He rested:
 He rose into the sky.
 Ne'er watched I spring flower waking
 From its grave beneath the sod;
 But I saw that tombstone breaking,
 And that Form ascend to God.

8.

How oft in youthful slumber
 I saw all worlds ascend:—
 Unmeasured, without number,
 Still up they seemed to tend!
 Like angels interwoven
 Up passed the shining choir,
 Through the black vault o'er them cloven;
 And higher rose, and higher.
 Creation seemed a fountain
 Sun-changed to heaven-ward mist:
 But I knew the parent mountain
 Was God: the sun was Christ.

9.

As one that, gold refining,
 Bends o'er the metal base,
 Till, purged by fire, and shining,
 It reflects at last his face,
 So God oft saw I clearing
 By pain man's race from sin,

Till, the perfect mirror sphering,
 He, imaged, shone therein.—
 —The city stays its revels:
 The minstrel bands retire:
 No sound o'er the sea-levels:
 No light, save yonder pyre!

10.

O wind, once more that playest
 With the palm-grove near the bay,
 Low words to us thou sayest
 Of palms that live for aye.
 That veil the ocean dimming
 Brings the world of Stars more near:
 And the anthem they are hymning
 In my spirit I can hear.
 They sing, "Of dust partaker,
 "Our wondrous world must die:
 "But our Master, and our Maker
 "Lives on eternally."

The Feast of Peter's Chains.

1.

HER crown is bright with many a gem;
 But costlier far each tear that glides
 Down that pale cheek. Jerusalem!
 She weeps as up thy steep she rides.
 Before their empress,¹ gifts they shower:—
 One only to her heart is pressed:
 An iron chain. In Herod's hour
 It bound the Apostle ever blest!

(1) The Empress Eudocia.

2.

The beauteous vision melts in gloom—
 What lights are those that pierce that shade?
 One walks, the mitred sire of Rome:
 Beside him moves a crowned maid.¹
 Mamurtine prison! In Nero's reign,
 O'er Peter's head thy shade was thrown:—
 They kneel; and, kneeling, kiss the chain
 That bound him to his couch of stone.

3.

That Roman, that Judean bond,
 United then, dispart no more—
 Pierce through the veil: the rind beyond
 Lies hid the legend's deeper lore.
 Therein the mystery lies expressed
 Of Power transferred, yet ever one;
 Of Rome—the Salem of the west—
 Of Sion built o'er Babylon.

4.

A city set upon a hill
 Whoe'er has eyes may turn and see:
 Through thee the Church is visible;
 Made visible by unity.
 The Pillar and the Ground of Truth!—
 Through thee she speaks what all may hear:—
 Peter! to hear and hearken, both
 Were hard indeed wert thou not near.

5.

Through thee her Mysteries high and sweet
 The Church with History weds, and Fact;
 Through thee contingencies can meet;
 Through thee can witness, and can act.

(1) Eudoxia, daughter of the Empress Eudocia.

Bind round the Church thy sacred chains!—

The electric life that feeds her heart,
Flashing through them, her iron veins,
Makes thus the whole sustain the part.

6.

Droop but a branch, to natural blight
Subjected, or the storms of men,
Through thee sent forth, like life and light,
Health flows into that branch again.
Through thee that Strength the world hath missed
The Church renews while ages flee:
Her inward Unity is Christ;
Her outward, Christ set forth in thee.

The Feast of St. Peter's Chair at Rome.

1.

I FAWN not on the Roman height—
Cæsarian laurels, wreath not ye
A harp of Christian Psalmody!
Whoever builds, and not on Right,
Though high he build as eagle's flight,
Can never true acceptance find
With manly heart, or equal mind.
Though every State; though land and sea;
Though all the flying years of Time,
Should bend to Power unjust the knee,
And venerate with rite and rhyme,
True sway is God's, and his alone
Who holds from God a righteous throne.

X

2.

But I the Fisherman revere
 Who left the Galilean lake,
 And all he loved, for Christ's dear sake;—
 Who left his nets, and rules a sphere.
 Rock of the Rock! From Him alone,
 Eternal Rock, and Corner Stone,
 That Name and Function didst thou take;
 Through Him that great Confession make!
 Rock of the Rock! A Rock is She
 Who built on thee, and strong by thee,
 Resounds it everlastingly!

“And will ye also go away?”

“To whom, O Master, shall we go?”

“The words of Life that lasts for aye

“With thee are found. Behold we know—

“We doubt not—we are sure indeed—

“Thou art the Christ, the expected One ;

“Thou art the Christ, the promised Seed ;

“The Living God's anointed Son.”

3.

Mystery of Unity,
 Of all the mysteries the key!
 Prime Sacrament, that bind'st, like Fate,
 Created things and uncreate!
 Godhead in Persons Three is One:
 In Him all harmonies began:
 And from His archetypal throne
 Descends the chain that ends in Man.
 In One our race transgressed, and died:
 In One it lives—the Crucified.

One Faith ; one Baptism ;—Truth is one ;
 For separate Truths, or new, or old,
 Form still one family, one fold,
 One everlasting unison.

“ I say to thee, thou art the Rock ;
 “ And on this Rock my Church I found.
 “ Nor Powers of Hell, nor mortal shock
 “ Shall shake that Church unto the ground.
 “ And I the Keys will give to thee
 “ Of heaven's great Kingdom, earth around :
 “ That which thou loosest loosed shall be ;
 “ And what thou bindest shall be bound.”

4.

The cloud of Time is lifted. Lo !
 What man is he that, sole and slow,
 Forth moves o'er Haran's well-loved plain,
 With forehead turned to Canaan ?
 That Unity which Abel's blood
 Dissolved ; which God restored in Seth ;
 Which Noah rescued from the Flood ;
 Again Corruption dooms to death.
 Nimrod has lifted up on high
 The brand of godless Tyranny :
 And Anarchy, the converse woe,
 Has reigned, and lies, with Babel, low.
 The single, and transmitted tongue
 Is broken into dialects :
 The single Faith, held fast so long,
 Gives way to idols, and to sects.
 That Covenant whose rainbow span
 Embraced the total hopes of man,

Totters and shakes ; but is not dead.
 Again through One it rears its head,
 And, narrowing to a centre, forth
 One day shall spring to clasp the earth.
 Strong is that Patriarch's Faith, and true,
 Who bids the Patriarch world adieu ;
 Sole Patriarch of an order new.
 The seal of God on one—but one—
 Is pressed: and forth he fares alone.

“ Simon, behold, your souls to gain,
 “ Satan hath longed with longings sore ;
 “ That he may sift you, even as grain
 “ Is sifted on the granary floor.
 “ But I for thee my prayer have made ;
 “ That thy Faith fail not, nor decay.
 “ Converted once, be strong to aid ;
 “ Strengthen thy Brethren day by day.”

5.

The cloud of Time is raised oncè more.
 A city shades a far-off shore ;
 And the red sunset many a mile
 Burns silent on the silent Nile.
 An old man dies: around his bed
 Twelve Patriarch Brethren take their stand:
 Each kneels: on each he lays his hand:
 One crowns he—o'er the rest the head.
 “ Lion of all the sacred Fold,
 “ O Judah, in thy strength thou art :—
 “ Till Shiloh comes, the King foretold,
 “ Thy Sceptre never shall depart.”
 The seal of majesty on one
 Is pressed once more—on one alone.

6.

Long ran the promise underground :
 Long pined the sacred Race in chains ;
 Then, bursting from their prison bound,
 Retrod at last their Fathers' plains.
 The Law was given : a brazen band,
 It fenced from baser realms that land
 Predestined from the first to be
 An isthmus in a stormy sea,
 Joining the Patriarchs' Church with her
 In whom the Apostles minister,
 And making visibly of twain
 One Church, one Household, and one Reign.
 Then rose at last the Throne decreed.
 Who grasped the sceptre ? Judah's seed—
 The Shepherd summoned from above ;
 The sworded man who wept, and strove ;
 The man heart-frail, yet strong through Love.

“ Lovest thou me with mightier love
 “ Than these, thy brethren ? ” — “ Master, yea ;
 “ Thou knowest I love Thee. ” — “ Simon, prove
 “ Thy love, and feed my lambs for aye.
 “ Lovest thou me with love more deep
 “ Than these, the others ? ” — “ Master, yea ;
 “ Thou knowest I love thee. ” — “ Feed my sheep :
 “ Shepherd and feed them day by day. ”

7.

Who chains that Shepherd ? Chain who will,
 The Evangel is unshackled still !
 Forth, like an eagle from its eyry,
 Abroad o'er all the world it flies,

And, poised in regions solitary,
 Gives back the sunset to the skies.
 The Day of Pentecost had come:
 Descending from that upper room,
 Who first the Gospel trumpet blew,
 Opening Christ's Kingdom to the Jew?
 Before the Gentiles next who laid
 His great commission, undismayed;
 Washing the feet, and hands, and head
 Of realms unclean, till then, and dead?
 Who, when the council long had sate,
 Closed with a word the loud debate,
 Treading with Christ a sea whose waves,
 Thus touched, rolled back into their graves?
 Who with a royal meekness took
 A younger brother's wise rebuke?
 Who judged, and judged with death, the lie
 Of Sacrilege and Blasphemy?
 —His shadow cures disease; for he
 The shadow is of Christ beneath:
 Before his face the demons flee:
 He holds the keys of life and death.
 "Simon, when thou wert young, behold,
 "Thy girdle thou didst bind at will;
 "And in the peaceful days of old
 "Thy footsteps freely wandered still.
 "But when thy head is old and grey,
 "Thy hands thou shalt stretch forth; and lo,
 "Thee shall another gird that day;
 "And bear thee where thou wouldst not go."

8.

A thousand years passed by between
 The earlier and the later storms
 Ere yet, across the golden scene,
 Rushed back old Error's myriad forms.
 That Eastern hand, which raised again
 Samaria's altar, withered soon;
 And on that altar bones of men
 Were burned beneath the Arabian Moon.
 But, in the West, o'er all the lands
 The Rock cast far its sacred shade,
 Till regions bare as desert sands
 Grew green at last with wood and glade.
 That Crown august, which, like a star,
 O'er all things, and through all things shone,
 Was regal, feudal, popular;
 Was friend to each, and slave to none.
 —What Power was that which, strong yet meek,
 The equipoise of earth maintained,
 Siding for ever with the weak?
 That bound the haughty; freed the chained?
 The Church of God—that Church which wound
 Around the globe the Apostles' zone—
 What clasped that zone; that girdle bound?
 The Roman Unity alone.

9.

He who established Power on earth,
 And sanctioned Order and Degree,
 First raised, supreme o'er every hearth,
 The sceptre of Paternity;

And next, o'er every realm and nation,
 The delegated thrones of Kings,
 Within the bounds of civil station
 Potent above terrestrial things.
 Lastly he raised, and raised o'er all,
 The Sceptre Apostolical.
 Whoe'er, seduced by pride or fear,
 Affronts, within its proper sphere,
 That great Pontific dignity—
 Though emperor or king he be ;
 Though arms and arts make strong his cause,
 And large pretence of ancient laws,
 O'erlaid by centuries of wrong ;
 Though every pen and every tongue
 Hail him Deliverer ; and the acclaim
 Of ages echo back the name—
 That prince against God's edict fights,
 Sole basis of inferior rights.
 He that abets betrays him too ;
 A flatterer, and no liegeman true.
 He Roman is ; but takes his side
 With Pagan Rome self-deified,
 Against the Saviour, and the Bride.
 " Not for the world my prayer I make :
 " I pray for those thou gavest to Me :
 " I taught them all things for Thy sake—
 " Make perfect Thou their Unity.
 " As Thou with Me art One, even so
 " Make them, my flock, in one agree :
 " Father, that thus the world may know
 " That I am Thine, and come from Thee."

10.

Who chains the Apostle? Chain who will,
 He blesses those who chain him still!
 Them that abhor him, them that fly,
 Still, still he follows with his eye;
 As some white peak o'er seaward streams
 Casts glances far, and snowy gleams.
 They that renounce thee beg thine alms:
 They live but on thy grace benign;
 Thine are their creeds, and thine their psalms:
 Whate'er they have of Faith is thine.
 Whate'er of Truth with them remains
 Is theirs but in Tradition's right:
 Their sheep, that die on wealthier plains,
 Are pastured on thy hills by night.
 True Shepherd King! all powers beside
 Are transient, and an empty show:
 Around thee, like a shifting tide,
 The world's great pageants ebb and flow.
 True pilot of the Saviour's barque!
 Who sails with thee is safe. The flood
 But lifts more high thy sacred ark,
 And floats it to the feet of God.
 Thy God revealed His Son to thee:
 Thy Maker called thee from above:
 He chose thee from eternity:
 He sealed thee with electing love.
 —Thy Strength is Prayer. For them pray most,
 With love matured in God's own beam,
 Who make of liberty their boast,
 Yet sell true freedom for a dream!

11.

Prince of the Apostles! Like an hour
The years have passed since first that Word
Which signed thee with vicarial power
Beside that Syrian lake was heard.
O, strong since then, from heaven's far shore
Hold forth that Cross of old reversed ;
O bind the world to Christ once more:
The chains of Satan touch and burst.
Strengthen the Apostolic Thrones:
Make strong without, and pure within,
That Temple built of living stones,
With planetary discipline.
Strengthen the thrones of Kings: the State
Encompass with religious awe;
Paternal rule corroborate:
Impart new majesty to Law.
Strengthen the City, and the Orb
Of Earth; till each has reached its term.
Insurgent powers, and impious, curb;
The righteous and the just confirm.

SWAINSTON,

Sept. 1854.

Notes.

NOTES.

*"The anemones in dubious light
Are trembling like a bridal veil."*—P. 52.

THIS image is found in Father Faber's beautiful poem,
"Sir Launcelot."

"The last Irish Confiscation."—P. 65.

MANY of the allusions in this poem will be found illustrated in a work by the same author, entitled "English Misrule and Irish Misdeeds. The mortality predicted in that work as the consequence of meeting a famine by a mode of legislation not only denounced by every class in Ireland, but, in many respects, at variance with all principles recognised by English writers on political and economical science, has been proved by the census of 1851 to have been enormous indeed. Making all due allowances, it seems certain that not fewer than a million of lives were lost, in consequence of want, or of the diseases produced by want. The confiscation of property, referred to in that book, as certain to result from the combined action of laws tending at once to destroy its value, and to precipitate its sale, has been carried out to an extent deplorably attested by the earlier annals of the Encumbered Estates' Court. To the absence of systematic colonization we owe an

emigration insufficient at an early period of the famine, excessive at a later, needlessly prolonged, and accompanied by an undue drain of capital.

In the work mentioned above, ample acknowledgment was made of the private donations so munificently subscribed in favour of the Irish by multitudes in all classes of English society. A similar acknowledgment is, perhaps, due to the State, on account of that act of justice which cancelled the debt for which Ireland stood responsible on account of expenditure under the Labour Rate Act. The debt in question was cancelled expressly and frankly on the ground of justice, not of benevolence.

Events such as the last few years have witnessed leave a moral behind. To that moral few are disposed to attend, attracted rather by that renewed prosperity which is the usual reaction after national calamity. When such a lesson is lost, it is not to the dead only that an injury is done.

"All heaven is ever thus extending."—P. 236.

This thought is beautifully expressed by Mr. Kenelm Digby, in his *Mores Catholici*.

"When Francis Beaumont wandered in old time."—P. 287.

Grace Dieu was a favourite haunt of Wordsworth's in his early days, and has more than once been celebrated by him in his inscriptions at Coleorton. The great Poet visited also the Abbey of St. Bernard, built in Charnwood Forest, by Ambrose Lisle Phillipps, Esq. of Grace Dieu Manor. No reader of his works is ignorant of the respect for the Religious Orders expressed in them.

"*St. Anastasia*,"—P. 299.

St. Anastasia was banished, with two hundred young Christian maidens, to Aquileia, where she underwent her martyrdom. She had previously ministered in his captivity to St. Chrysogonus, by whom, when a child, she was instructed in the Christian religion.

"*I fawn not on the Roman height*."—P. 305.

"Envy, avaunt; away with the pride of the dignity of Rome; I speak with the Fisherman's successor, and the disciple of the Cross. Following no chief but Christ, I am joined in communion with your Holiness, that is, with the chair of Peter. Upon that Rock I know that the Church is built. Whosoever eats the lamb out of this house is profane. If any be not in the Ark of Noah, he will perish while the Deluge prevaileth."—*St. Jerome, quoted from "Waterworth's Faith of Catholics."*

THE END.

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