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Harp

By

Herman Montague

Donner

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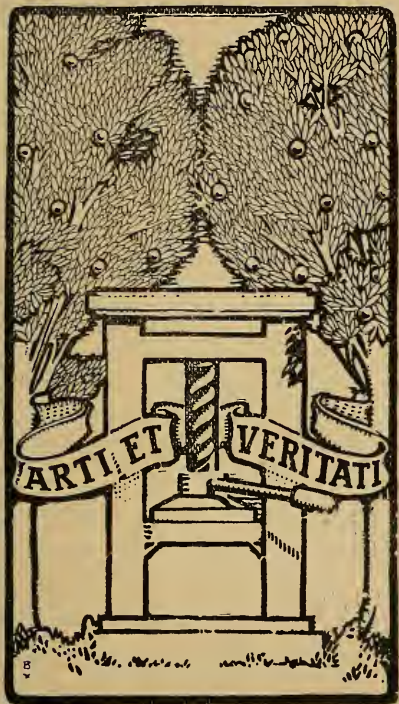
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# English Lyrics of a Finnish Harp

By Herman Montague Donner



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ODE TO FINLAND



## ODE TO FINLAND

Finland! my home-land! bring thy beauty forth!  
One unknown son of thine hymns thee to-day.  
Thou hardy-footed daughter of the North,  
Unveil thy comeliness. And may my lay  
Now set vibrating ev'ry bosom's lyre  
With such sufficient chorus of thy harms  
That worlds may catch the echoes; while the thrill  
Of patriotic ire  
Doth tingle deep betwixt the yearning arms  
Of all thy scattered sons who love thee still.

Dear Finland! lov'd cradle of my birth!  
Once more cold, iron-heeled Adversity  
Is picking his grim steps upon thy earth,  
Wearing the conscious scowl of tyranny.  
Feels thy great heart, O mother-country mine,  
One pang of sorrow, whatso'er the cause,  
There springs in travail in my exiled breast  
The answer-pang to thine.  
Yet, thousands of thy distant children pause  
Consoled: "He chastens whom He loveth best."

So while our tearful plaint for thy unrest  
Is chorusing the cry on thine own shore,  
Our eyes can shine to recognize thee blest  
E'en through the mist of tears that swims before.  
Thou art too noble, to thy oath too leal,  
To plan injustice with a beetling brow  
Because thy jealous neighbor rules thee ill:  
Wait! see thy hope grow real—  
The power that stealthily oppresses now  
Regain the justice of its gentler will.

Sweet land! where pine-wood scented breaths  
Plead to be playmates with the lake-born whiffs,  
Where every day a thousand fleeting deaths  
Are rippled forth, between the plying skiffs,

Upon the placid images of heaven  
On thy unnumbered lucent inland seas,  
Whose limpid fathoms flee through granite gates;  
Where birchen forests leaven  
Th' austerer aspect of those needled trees  
That woo the gleam of thy canals and straits:—

Land where these chiselings from Nature's hand  
Are trailed o'er by the hem of Arctic robes;  
Whose waters islanded and tideless strand  
Too oft have groaned 'neath envy's trait'rous  
probes;—

Life's drums may muffled beat thy marches now  
In funeral measures o'er thy hushing fields,  
May chill the music of thy thousand lakes—  
Furrows may line thy brow,  
But never thine shall be the heart that yields,  
Nor thine the soul that rectitude forsakes.

Take courage, sweetest handmaid of the nations!  
Gustavus' blood is coursing through thy veins,  
And mightier countries in their prouder stations  
Can learn from thee how patience conquers pains.  
No greater glories deck their hist'ries' scroll  
Than have illumined thy torn, half-hid bays:  
So brighter morrows o'er the coming tide  
May on thy vision roll.  
Lo! Freedom's herald-nations' kindling gaze  
Looks in thy steadfast eyes with love and pride—  
Thou noble scion of the Finnish race—  
Cheering thee on to win back pride of place.  
Land of my heart, sweet Finland! Heaven's zephyr-  
kiss  
Waft thee o'er Trouble's deeps to thy new genesis!

SONGS OF FINLAND



## SUOMI'S\* SONG

(E. VON QVANTEN.)

Hark! to Nature's voice enchanting,  
Wäinö's runic halls still haunting:

It is Suomi's song!

Hark! the lofty pines are sighing,  
Hark! the mighty streams are crying:

It is Suomi's song!

Everywhere are changing voices—  
Nature mourns or she rejoices—

Each is Suomi's song!

Brother, mourns thy heart in sadness,  
Do thy pulses leap in gladness,

Thou hear'st Suomi's song!

## SLUMBER SONG

(E. VON QVANTEN.)

All is so still now,  
Little one, sleep thou,  
As, floating from heaven,  
The soft wind of even  
Just sank to rest.

Sleep at thy mother's breast,  
Wee one, sleep at thy mother's breast.

All is so still now,  
Little one, sleep thou.

Hark! the breeze tender  
Its death-song doth render  
To linden and stream.

Slumber, thou zephyr, dream;  
Sleep on, my zephyr, sleep and dream.

---

\* *Suomi* is the name the Finns themselves apply to their country. This little poem has been set to the most exquisite melody by Pacius, a native composer, and is sung throughout the length and breadth of Finland with a poetic intensity all the more touching under the present unhappy conditions in that land.

All is so still now,  
Little one, sleep thou.  
Down by the strand  
The waves on the sand  
Calm their loud rush.  
Slumber, thou wave, O hush!  
Sleep too, O sleep, my wave, hush, hush!

All is so still now,  
Little one, sleep thou.  
Butterfly stoopeth  
To rose that droopeth  
Night tryst to keep.  
Slumber thou too, rose, sleep,  
Slumber thou too, my rose, O sleep!

### TO A BIRD

(J. L. RUNEBERG.)

Tell me, thou tiny songster,  
Among the leaves so coy,  
How canst thou sing so tireless,  
And ever full of joy?

I hear thy voice each morning,  
I hear it ev'ry eve;  
Yet ever pure thy chords are,  
Clear echoes ever leave.

Ah! little bird, sing ever  
Thy hymns of joy and mirth,  
And I will cloy them never  
With sadder strains of earth.

Come build thy nest each summer  
Beneath these eaves of mine,  
And teach me ev'ry morning  
Some new, sweet joy of thine.



## ÖSTERBOTTEN FOLK-SONG

When youth sat gay in eye and lip  
My inches they were but few;  
When youth made mock in eye and lip,  
My inches they were but few.  
Then did I let my laddie slip,  
My sweetheart staunch and true.

Of gold and silver I had store,  
And ribbons bedecked my hair;  
Silver and gold had I galore,  
With ribbons and bows in hair.  
But whoso brings my love once more  
My golden crown shall wear.

So grew I old, my locks turned grey,  
Silver with gold was entwined;  
My step grew weak, my locks turned grey,  
And silver with gold threads twined.  
Alas! none found him, far away,  
To say my heart still pined.

## SPRING SONG

They're coming, they're coming,  
The pinions that broadened in flight,  
To groves that are blooming,  
To seas that have caught a new light.  
Where storms eddied moaning  
Song triumphs melodious and gay,  
Glees vernal intoning  
Where winter held gloomiest sway.

To love it is given  
Alone to loose fugitives' bands,  
And dwellers in heaven  
Inhabit not desolate lands.  
My heart is a-burning—  
Not, surely, in vain has it bled—  
Maybe they're returning,  
The angels that long ago fled!

## MID FINLAND'S PINES

(ZACHARIAS TOPELIUS.)

Far in the forest my cabin is standing,  
Cosily nestling mid fost'ring pines;  
Blue twixt their branches the inlet expanding,  
Changes its hues when the red morn shines.  
Tra, la, la! La, la, la! Tra, la, la! La, la, la!  
Carols my jubilant Suomi land!

Deep in the woodland the cuckoo is calling  
Mellow but urgent his unfledged brood;  
Notes from the shepherd horns rising and falling  
Float from the valley and stir my mood.  
Tra, la, la! La, la, la! Tra, la, la! La, la, la!  
Gaily we carol on Suomi's strand.

Pines in their whispers and birds in their singing  
Borrow their ardor from my own breast:  
Vainly I sigh, for anon there come ringing  
Cries of rejoicing with new born zest!  
Tra, la, la! La, la, la! Tra, la, la! La, la, la!  
Hail to thee, Suomi, with heart and hand!

BALLAD FROM "THE PRINCESS OF  
CYPRUS"

(ZACHARIAS TOPELIUS.)

Three suitors came wooing our blithesome maid :  
The sun king swore that for her he would die :

"Wear my golden crown of day !"

"Nay, nay, nay !

"Of thy golden crown I am afraid ;  
"On my cheeks too burning thy kisses lie,  
"And naught but a bashful child am I.

"Of thy golden crown I am afraid ;  
"On my cheeks too burning thy kisses lie,  
"And naught but a shrinking maid,  
"A bashful child am I !"

The moon king came in the even tide :  
"With a silver wreath come deck thy hair,  
"And frisk with the elves at play !"

"Nay, nay, nay !

"Thy silver trinkets I cannot bide,  
"Too chill is thy kiss in the moon's cold glare,  
"And naught but a shiv'ring child am I !

"Thy silver wreath must aside be laid,  
"For chill on my forehead thy kisses lie,  
"And naught but a timid maid,  
"A shiv'ring child am I !"

The prince of the stars was the next to pass :  
"O ! follow me hence thro' the vast night sky,

"Bear its crown of gems away !"

"Nay, nay, nay !

"Thy crownal is not for me, alas !  
"Thy glow is too feeble, thy home is too high,  
"And a tender child of earth am I.

"Thy crownal to me thou shalt not pass,  
"Thy glow is too scant and thy home too high,  
"For I am earth's loving lass,  
"Earth's tender child am I."

## MILL SONG

(ZACHARIAS TOPELIUS.)

Ruddy-cheeked was I at twenty,  
With fickle whims and dreams a-plenty;  
Ne'er was bird more free and joyous—  
Naught in youth can long annoy us.  
Grind away! Gone that day!  
Then my glance was frank and gay.  
Ruddy-cheeked was I at twenty,  
Fickle dreams had I a-plenty.

Then came autumn, sere and yellow,  
The bird was grown a sober fellow,  
Chastened in his song and duller,  
Hair and cheeks half-robbed of color.  
Grind away! Change the lay!  
Formerly my skies were gay;  
Then came autumn, sere and yellow,  
Sober grew the jaunty fellow.

Sorrow's snows keep gently falling,  
Love-lit eyes, long gone, recalling.  
Mother, at the mill-stone crooning,  
Moves my heart to old attuning.  
Grind away! Gone that day!  
Once my song was free and gay,  
But now my ditty, rising, falling,  
Breaks for love long past recalling.

## ROSE-MARIE

(ZACHARIAS TOPELIUS.)

Through balsam-fir land sang sweet Rose-Marie the  
fair,

Came to the limpid brook and saw her image there;  
Loose did her tresses fling,  
Smiled in the eyes of spring:

"Why laughs my brook 'mid flow'rs that fragrant toss  
and fling?"

"Tell why do the woods to-day exult in their green  
array?"

"Why are the skies so blue, and wherefore am I so  
gay?"

"Come," said the brook, "O! come, thou Rose-Marie<sup>1</sup>  
so fair,

"Come, like the woodland breezes, lightsome, free  
from care;

"Come to my eager strand,

"And lave thy heated hand,

"Thy shoes and stockings doff and leave upon the  
sand;

"Rest on the birch-root near,

"Dip foot in my eddies clear,

"Sprinkle thy flushing cheeks, and my fluent answer  
hear.

"Therefore am I so glad, thou sweet, fair Rose-Marie.

"That I thy mirror am, and thine image bear in me.

"Therefore in trappings gay

"The woods exult to-day,

"For this, that Rose-Marie bears seventeen springs  
this May.

"Therefore the skies are fine,

"Therefore thine eyes do shine—

"Because these faithful woods have a heart that an-  
swers thine!"

## THE VASA MARCH

(ZACHARIAS TOPELIUS.)

In highest North our cottage stood,  
By stormy sea and foaming flood.  
A frosty bringing up we had:  
Like winter pine, in snow wreaths clad.  
    He stands so green  
    In snowy sheen,  
    With firmness dread  
    He rears his head  
'Mid penury, from barren bed.

As thousand waves together go  
Round Finland's homes in loving flow,  
So glow the hearts of all thy race,  
O! Fatherland, in thy embrace.  
    To proudly wave  
    Thy banners brave  
    In foremost rank,  
    Front, rear, or flank,  
Our Vasa fathers fought and sank.

Our land, O! Finnish fatherland,  
On thee, unshakeable, we take our stand!  
Teach us to be thy bulwark strong,  
Unbreakable by storms of wrong.  
    Beat high, brave hearts!  
    Men, play your parts!  
    In ev'ry need  
    Some son's great deed,  
O! Finland, shall secure thy meed!

## SVEABORG

(FROM THE SWEDISH OF J. L. RONEBERG.)

John Ludwig Runeberg, who has been surnamed the Homer of Finland, was born at Jacobstad in 1804, and died on the 6th of May, 1877, by which time his genius had obtained for him wide recognition throughout Scandinavia and Germany.

The following poem treats of the most noteworthy incident of the war of 1808-9 between Russia and Finland, which ended by the substitution in the latter country of Muscovite rule for Swedish. Despite the great disparity between the opposing forces, the war was carried on with the highest courage and resolution by the Finlanders. For many months the fortress of Sveaborg, built by the Swedish engineer Ehrnsvärd, on an island guarding the entrance to the splendid harbor of Helsingfors, successfully defied all efforts on the part of a large Russian force to capture it, until at length what force had failed to accomplish, treachery brought about: Count Cronstedt, the commander of the impregnable fortress, accepted a large bribe, and admitted the Russian troops.

The Russian government refused to permit the publication of the poem, but it was widely circulated throughout Scandinavia in the form of leaflets.

I have rendered the poem into English in the form and metre of the original.

We sat in-doors in converse gay—  
Old Ensign Steel and I—  
As was our wont at close of day,  
The ruddy hearth-fire by.  
The time sped on in chat and game,  
When Sveaborg I chanced to name.

The word occurred in passing speech,  
Yet grave became our mien:

“Hast on the wave-encircled beach  
“Great Ehrnsvärd’s fortress seen,  
“Gibraltar’s sister of the North?”  
The old man asked; then thus spake forth:

“Looks out o’er sea its granite eye,  
“And spacious land-locked bay.  
“Gustavus’ sword it lifts on high,  
“And dares advance who may!  
“Nor need it fall to strike the rash—  
“It withers with its lightning flash.

“Beware to rashly near the isle,  
“When war has loosed his reins;  
“Nor dare disturb the Sea Queen while  
“The fight her wrath unchains:  
“Her thousand guns with fiery breath  
“Hurl forth the messengers of death.

“Forced back was Finland’s little troop,  
“The Polar ring o’erstapt;  
“Yet did our spirits never droop,  
“Our courage never slept;  
“O’er all misfortunes rose our powers,  
“So long as Sveaborg was ours.

“Clear was each eye and raised each head  
“Whene’er that name was heard;  
“All murmurs hushed, all sorrow fled,  
“Nor cold nor want deterr’d—  
“The Finnish bear strode on again,  
“And shook his paw and struck amain.

“The earth our bed, how oft at night,  
“I heard that potent name  
“From some grey warrior, come to fight  
“So far afield for fame;  
“From cold it was his shelt’ring wall,  
“In danger’s hour his hope, his all.



“Then in our ranks a whisper woke,  
“A rumour from the South :  
“Of shame, of treachery it spoke,  
“And passed from mouth to mouth—  
“Where'er on scandal's wings 'twas borne,  
“It met with proud contempt and scorn.

“Ne'er be forgot in future years  
“That day like darkest night,  
“When like a thunderclap our ears  
“The news confirmed did smite—  
“O'er Sveaborg, our last hope's, shore,  
“The Swedish standard waved no more!

“Is it, to Ocean's vengeance vowed,  
“Engulfed within the main?  
“Has lightning forked from thundercloud  
“The strong walls reft in twain?  
“Was none for Freedom left to die?  
“Mute anguish was the sole reply.

“But deep from many a hardy breast  
“A smothered sob broke low,  
“And many an eye by tears unblest  
“Now let the flood o'erflow :  
“Our land was dead : too late to save—  
“We stood and wept beside the grave.

“O God! the man whose dastard crime  
“Caused all these tears to run,  
“Once gained a vict'ry fair as Time  
“E'er saw by hero won :  
“Svenksund, that king of victories  
“Of Swedish naval might, was his.

“Yet, though a world had owed renown  
“And glory to his blade ;  
“Though suns had paled before his frown,  
“Name him a renegade!  
“Such the reward of that base knave  
“Who sold his land o'er Ehrnsvärd's grave.

"Thou lovest, boy, the notes of song ;  
"Our hist'ry lovest thou—  
"Mayhap thou'lt sing the grievous wrong  
"That I relate thee now ;  
"Then give his deed of darkness fame,  
"But hide, like me, his guilt-stained name.

"Curst let him be, his race concealed !  
"To him cling all the shame !  
"Let none else blush—the crime revealed  
"Shall taint alone his name.  
"He who his country's cause betrays,  
"No claim to sire nor kin may raise.

"Call him alone by traitor's name—  
"Appointed Finland's stay—  
"Incarnate crime, disgrace, and shame ;  
"Yea, all that shuns the day—  
"Only as such of him to speak,  
"And spare the hearer's redd'ning cheek.

"Take all the darkness of the tomb,  
"And all life's bitt'rest spleen,  
"And form with them a name to doom  
"To shame that traitor mean !  
"It cannot pain the true heart more  
"Than that on Sveaborg he bore."

## THOU ART MY PEACE

Thou art my peace,  
My calm, high heaven,  
For solace given  
That may not cease—  
My longed-for rest  
From stress and fray;  
My heart's warm nest,  
My hope alway!  
Fold me to-day  
To thy strong breast—  
There let me stay  
Lulled and carest.

Tired is my soul  
With yearning deep:  
In mercy keep  
My full heart whole!  
Thou art my life,  
My dear unrest,  
Bringer of strife,  
And yet most blest!  
E'er with new zest  
I dream me wife—  
To thy wide breast  
Take me for life!

Ah! thou art rich,  
And gen'rous art—  
In thy warm heart  
Keep me a niche.  
O! gaze on me,  
My only joy;  
Let our peace be  
Without alloy;  
Deep, still, and coy  
Our love shall be,  
Never to cloy  
Through eternity!



ORIGINAL LYRICS



## THE PASSING OF FOLLY

Upon the threshold lingered Youth,  
The Unknown world to scan;  
O'erventuresome while still uncouth,  
He drew up Life's whole plan;  
Untutored to distinguish Truth,  
He thought himself full Man.  
So from his brow his locks he swept,  
And into life right gaily stept.

"Oh! I am young and I am strong,  
"The world is mine at will;  
"Then wherefore toil? The time is long,  
"And I have some to kill;  
"So surely it were scarcely wrong  
"Some well-spared years to fill  
"With service to my high young blood,  
"And catch elusive mirth at flood.

"Then take the bumpers, fill them up  
"With many a brimming measure,  
"And from the sparkling ruby cup  
"Quaff deepest draughts to pleasure;  
"So while we may, let's gaily sup:  
"We'll never want for leisure  
"For steady hand and sober face,  
"Which have, I grant, their rightful place."

But Pain was never far away,  
And soon his hand of lead  
He hesitated not to lay  
On Youth's too daring head.  
And at his touch—ah! well-a-day!—  
How quickly Joy was fled!  
So Folly learns, laid low in dust,  
Man's *'Will'* must bow to God's stern *'Must.'*

Awhile 'neath duress Youth rebelled,  
For old-time freedom yearned;  
In wayward mood high head still held,  
While anger smould'ring burned;  
Then one belated tear up-welled—  
First lesson had been learned:  
And Pain, half-doubtful if to stay,  
Grew gentler when Youth bent to pray.

Alas! if Pain the pressure eased,  
A sterner master Time.  
The precious hours that he had leased  
To Youth before his prime  
Reverted to him, unappeased  
By Youth's fresh vows sublime.  
"As he caroused, so let him drudge,"  
Quoth Time, "and I will be his judge."

And Time, as year by year went on,  
Held Youth to his bitter task;  
Till Folly's spirit, well nigh gone,  
Had only strength to ask  
He still might laugh, when work was done,  
Behind some decorous mask.  
This, Pain allowed; and so grew Youth  
To Manhood, learning Life's stern truth.

#### A PRAYER

'Tis well that years the spirit should mature,  
And wisdom fit the soul for service wide;  
But Oh! let love within the heart endure,  
Let not the channel of the tear be dried.



## SUNG AND UNSUNG

Long through the silent hours the poet mused,  
The unremembered efforts of his pen  
Littered about the floor. Now and again  
His brow tight-knotted grew, as though abused  
By o'er-much thought, or self-tormenting doubt.  
And ever and anon his pain cried out,  
As if some wailing ghost had found a tongue:  
"What good to try? All has been better sung!"

The throes tempestuous of this wheeling globe;  
The mystic link between its moods and man's;  
The furies of its hot, ensanguined clans,  
Clothing their greed in ev'ry specious robe;  
Ambition careless of the road to pow'r;  
Doomed Folly crying for one more dear hour;  
All these across his rev'ry's screen were flung—  
At each he groaned: "This has been better sung!"

The zephyr dallying with the opening bud—  
Spring's mute reminder to man's callous soul;  
The wild-flow'r bells that swing their silent toll  
As some stray spirit passes down the flood;  
The soft grey veil drawn from the face of earth  
As blushing Phœbus peeps upon her waking;  
The awed and tremulous joy of maid forsaking  
The shrine of girlhood for her own new hearth:  
These scenes he wandered yearningly among,  
Only to cry: "These have been better sung!"

Athwart the desk his listless arms he laid,  
And sank his throbbing temples them between,  
Letting Despair a vassal's harvest glean—  
That feudal lord we all have sometime paid.  
For him the sun of hope was in eclipse;  
The wonted master-strains that crossed his lips  
Died in the heart, by anguished doubting wrung,  
That could but wail: "Could I have better sung?"

Then dawn came struggling diffidently in,  
As half afeared to trespass on his woe,  
And set the poet's heart once more aglow,  
Till Doubt seemed cousin-german unto Sin:  
With kindling eyes turned to the Orient,  
As one who, blest through some high sacrament,  
On the Almighty's accents oft has hung,  
He cried: "Songs most divine are yet unsung!"

### SHALL I SING A SIMPLE SONG?

Shall I sing a simple song, lady fair?  
Just an air  
From the Land of Thousand Lakes dear and rare?  
Will you dare  
Show a slender meed of pity  
For the subject of my ditty,  
Listn'ning there?

It was free and happy living, lady fair,  
Far up there:  
Toil and hardship, want and famine, oft our share,  
But despair  
Had no sway in farm or city,  
For our hands were hard and gritty—  
Made to dare.

We, the people, were our kings, lady fair,  
Had no care—  
When from out his Eastern haunts, from his lair  
Crept the Bear,  
Stealthy, false, sans faith or pity—  
Ends our freedom and my ditty:  
Empty air!

## THE SUN IS AT PLAY

The sun is at play with the boughs, love,  
So there's ne'er a bare twig that grieves;  
For the sickliest shrub will arouse, love,  
At a whisper of possible leaves.

The sun is at play with the snow, love,  
And the crystals all sparkle and dance;  
E'en though it be fatal to glow, love,  
They joyfully melt in his glance.

The sun is at play on my books, love,  
And he laughs the sage diction away,  
Till out of the pages there looks, love,  
A glance from thy countenance gay.

The sun is at play in my heart, love,  
And fills it with warmth and glee:  
For in all of my life thou hast part, love,  
And its harvests all ripen for thee!

## WHEN?

Mist on the bosom of land and sea—  
When will it lift?  
Clouds over heaven, horizon, and me—  
Where is the rift?

Heavy my thought on laden brain;  
Cannot take wing.  
Yearning my heart in lonely pain,  
And cannot sing.

Light of a loved one's tender glance—  
Farewell to sorrow!  
Thought, shalt be light; and heart, shalt dance!  
Sing a glad morrow!

## THE BROKEN COURTSHIP

Heart, why beatest thou so gladly?  
Are epistles, then, so rare?  
Or sweet perfumes?—Nay, beware!  
Lest the stirring strings breathe sadly  
And the nascent song be broken,  
Wanting one sweet word unspoken,  
One too dear.

Heart, why beatest thou so strongly?  
Are, then, whisp'ring lips so rare?  
Or rapt glances?—Ah! beware!  
Lest desire interpret wrongly,  
And thy trustful pulse be broken—  
Peace, then. Hide the faith, half spoken  
In mine ear.

Heart, why beatest thou so faintly?  
Is the bed of sickness rare?  
Or the pallid face?—Beware!  
Crush thy bitterness unsaintly:  
Shall the melody be broken  
By a nameless and unspoken  
Pang of fear?

Heart, why beatest thou so wildly?  
Is there no surcease of grief?  
Are not all things earthly brief?  
Quell thy tempests till more mildly  
Soul may question—Nay, thou'rt broken;  
Death thy ship, like hers, hath spoken—  
Seek we, setting sail from here,  
That darker mere.

## GRIT

Cry not, in weak and coward strain  
Success is but a toy of chance;  
That, having not such chance, 'twere vain  
In fortune's lists to break fresh lance.  
'Tis false! the worker must stand true,  
With stalwart arm prepared to hew!

Whate'er shuts out the need to toil  
Unmans—a false, illusive boon:  
Salvation's in the plough-turned soil,  
While ruin snares the laggard soon.  
Then onward, upward in the strife—  
Endeavor is the spirit's life.

With swelling sails before the wind  
'Tis play to speed the prow to haven;  
But should rude fate its storms unbind,  
Nor heart nor brain may dare be craven:  
Uncowed, draw in thy steady breath—  
Look squarely in the eyes of Death!

O Youth! rejoice that God has given  
A will to scorn rebuff and threat;  
And when thou hast undaunted striven  
Tow'rd goal for longer effort set,  
Rejoice! thou hast enriched thy soul,  
And summoned comrades for thy goal!

## A SPRING-BORN IDYLL

The first of the Zephyrs of Spring is awaking:  
His pinions transparent so dreamily shaking,  
I see him arising, his mosses forsaking,  
                    And won'dringly taking  
His view of the hollow that cradled his birth.

Now Nature, resplendent, from travail arisen,  
Salutes him, discarding the veil would imprison  
Her beauty. The spirit of Sunlight is risen,  
                    To gaily bedizen  
With glories of color the contours of earth.

Far down in the valley the lilies are laying  
Together their whispering heads, and arraying  
Themselves in their brightest, the harebells are sway-  
                    ing,  
                    Harmoniously paying  
In rhythmical cadence their tribute of praise.

Embedded in lichens the violets are grouping,  
And mournfully watching a sisterkin stooping,  
A victim to revellers heedlessly trooping;  
                    And silently drooping,  
Till Zephyr's caresses the stricken one raise.

Through shades of the woodland a pæan of praises  
Exultant a chorister sylvan up-raises,  
To welcome the Spirit so daintily grazes  
                    The meadowland daisies,  
To wing away townwards and scatter their scent.

"Sweet sister," quoth Zephyr to Sunshine in breaking  
The mists of the gloaming: "In Nature's awaking  
"Should one of God's creatures her joys be forsaking?  
                    "And yet there is aching  
"A heart on the greensward, by agony rent.

“I saw her as Dawn was the shadows dispelling ;  
“The quivering lip did I mark, and the swelling  
“Of sob-riven breast, and the tears that were welling,  
    “A threnody telling  
“That none might espy but her pitying God.”

In tribute of sympathy tearful replying,  
The tremulous Spirit, in whispers a-sighing  
On Zephyrus' bosom, besought him be flying  
    Where, comfortless lying,  
That soul in its agony sobbed on the sod.

Then soon on the suff'rer the Zephyr was playing,  
While ah ! so caressingly finger-tips laying  
On cheek and on tresses, the Sun Fairy straying  
    Came sweetly a-maying,  
And crept in the soul with a whisper of peace.

Trill out, little songsters, for Sorrow is driven,  
And Joy to Creation his greeting has given.  
Earth, ocean, and sky with the peal shall be riven  
    Triumphant to heaven,  
Ere ever the jubilant canticles cease !

## ODE TO THE SPRING

Oh! how my heart is full of all the power  
And glory of the proudly waking Spring!  
Some magic ecstasy from nature's bower  
Breathes invitation to my soul to sing.  
Sweet Sol the conjurer has come to play,  
And ev'ry hour keeps working some dear change,  
With no enchantment stronger than the sway  
Of that unmatched wand of space-lost range  
Which coaxes from the winter-starvèd sprig  
A diffident wee scout of tender green,  
That peeps upon the world till shadowed e'en,  
To list the thrush so blithe upon the twig;  
And watch the very grass, so humble and forgot,  
Look up in such a new-begotten glee  
Of verdant minstrelsy;  
As if for ev'ry humblest little creature  
Life's soul had just unveiled some sweet hid feature,  
And bade them taste a newer, happier lot.

Dear Season of all sweetest influence,  
Chaste murm'rer of beneficent appeals  
To callous man's dimmed soul of reverence,  
Forgive if I thy winning voice, that steals  
Into the laden heart, have some time missed;  
Or not observed thy grace when thou hast kissed  
The field, the hedge, the tree in thy pure love,  
And bidden them be pregnant with the bloom  
Of Beauty corporate. For close above  
My struggling soul-light spread the pall-like gloom  
Of circumstance unsympathetic, harsh,  
Chilling shy hope with icy blasts of doom.  
'Twas like a trav'ler, plunged into a marsh,  
Now dreading death in the engulfing ooze,  
Now hoping for the life he fears to lose:  
Fate's whim-urged toy sent trembling round a tomb.



But other victims have been lured to sink ;  
And other thought-worn foreheads have been  
bowed

Until the foot of Death was kissed ; and cowed  
Through too long standing on the awful brink,  
Beneath the out-stretched talons of Despair,  
A many spirit hath forgotten prayer  
And tottered in the fathomless Unknown,  
Wailing the unreached heights with his last moan ;

While I and my poor harp  
Are left, to sing the blessing in all sadness,  
And teach the world that pain, however sharp,  
Conceals among its chords the note of gladness ;  
Till the re-quickened soul  
Exults, and bounds to its exalted goal.

So now, with lightsome heart, O fragrant Spring !

I stand enraptured at the wide-flung casement,  
And, watching all thy heralds on the wing,  
I wonder at my sad and long abasement.

Ah ! be it all forgot ! as is the storm  
Which lashed the dripping earth all yesternight,  
Gulping its groans in vast, appalling blackness,  
And shrieking *misereres* in its trackless flight,  
Until the powers of light began to form

Beyond the moaning east ; upon the slackness  
Of the retreating tempest-king intent  
To dart their vengeful shafts thro' the wan element.

See ! the dear sun, the bright, the happy sun—

Whom thou hast coaxed, sweet Spring,  
To knit himself in closer friendship fast  
With the pale earth, so long downcast,

Poor humble, shiv'ring thing,  
Beneath the scowl of Winter—has outrun  
The spectral ice-blasts of the grim, grey north ;  
And now is issuing,

Full laden with the great creative worth  
Of his warm amity, triumphant forth.

And if, blest Spring, to penetrate thy soul,  
Divine its message of awakening might  
And interknit it with my burdened being,  
My sad-grown spirit (as some poor blind mole,  
Boring its toilsome course through earth and night,  
Might strike some hidden rock, and sigh for see-  
ing)

Had of itself been feeble in the task;  
Had only risen to interpret thee,  
In thy full majesty of godlike teaching;  
Thy deepest meaning been impelled to ask,  
And been inspired to read it with the glee  
Of man to verities eternal reaching,  
Through the sweet fellowship and kindred sympathy  
Of one companion soul, like mortal-cased:—  
Thou surely wilt to me indulgent be,  
Arch-artist thou and high-priest of the chaste,  
Since she, who roused these ardors of my spirit,  
Is fashioned forth a sweet embodiment  
Of that All-Love which to the earth has lent  
Thyself, and of whose grace we all inherit.

Alack! in life's stern battle-tumult sank  
My wounded arm, and gory mists arose  
Across my reeling senses; till the close  
Of all the weary struggle through the bank  
Of cloud loomed up in shrouded phantom shape  
And grinned a welcome—or a menace—which?  
But vainly, for the hand of Providence  
Rebuted Death, and granted me escape.  
For trial was to perfect and make rich  
The proven spirit, purge it from offence,  
And thro' deep early sadness  
Bless it with power to know and teach great gladness.

And this I tell thee, spirit of the Spring,  
Because the soul of joy  
In ev'ry phase of thee doth laugh and sing;  
Because, my heart to buoy,  
Thou carolest away all sorrowing;

And, catching melancholy on the wing  
     Thou makest it thy toy.  
 And this thou hast such ample pow'r to do  
 Because from off my soul the quondam shades  
     Were rolled away by that dear, earnest friend,  
 Whose name I breathe to thee, since thou canst woo  
     With zephyr messages her ear, and bend  
 To whisper of my spirit serenades  
 Sung in the red-stained oriel-light of eve  
     To her, the gentle-merry Ellaline.  
 Go, greet her who thy prophetess hath been,  
 Ere the last gleams the darkling heavens leave;  
     And in soft, soulful lays  
 Chant of my sighs which were in latter days  
 Metamorphosed to such rapt notes of praise.

## THOUGHT

(SUGGESTED BY THE SWEDISH OF RUNEBERG.)

To the skies! to the skies! with a song, my thought!  
     Like the lark that outsoareth the cloud  
 Thou hast wings and a pulse inspiration-fraught—  
 Oh! cannot therewith the cold world be wrought  
 To a mood of responsive joy untaught,  
     And sing with a heart unbowed?  
 Unshackled, unbodied thou art, my thought!  
     Oh! then why like a prisoner mourn?  
 Though thou race with the light itself, uncaught  
 Thou canst pass o'er the bound'ry to regions unsought,  
 And thrill with the faith that our joys are naught  
     To the bliss beyond the bourne.

## HYMN TO THE ETERNAL FEMININE

O thou incarnate soul of grace,  
Arch-type of beauty!  
Woman! when goodness lights thy face,  
Man's love is duty.  
Thou'rt goddess of all things create,  
Our priestess at the temple gate.

To thee, I, worshiper and poet,  
My heart incline:  
In vain we seek—worlds cannot show it—  
Aught so divine.  
E'en when thou stand'st in ill repute,  
Some virtue weeps within thee mute.

Though gleams of mischief in thy glance  
Be wont to hover,  
Speech thoughtless on thy light tongue dance,  
I'm still thy lover.  
For always thou hast tears for pain,  
And rarely prayers to thee are vain.

I've known thee humble, rich, plain, fair,  
Both frail and strong;  
Always thy highest was my care,  
For thy soul my song;  
And ever, if I seemed to woo,  
'Twas heav'n in thee my heart turned to.

Thy love-kind eye I worship ever,  
For heav'n is in it.  
So through that portal, doubting never,  
I haste to win it;  
And in those soulful, moving deeps  
I read my own apocalypse.

An Alp uplifts his kingly head  
To heaven's face:  
Across his breast a white cloud led,  
Adds pride and grace.  
Man is the soaring mountain proud,  
And thou the beautiful, fond cloud.

Or man the cloud-rack high up-piled,  
(The storm being spent)  
Building gigantic pictures wild  
'Neath heaven's tent;  
And thou the new-emerging sun,  
Gold-flooding all the marvels done.

The clarions loud one Sabbath eve  
Rang out "To arms!"  
Then sudden chimes were heard to cleave  
The war alarms.  
Man's soul did on the bugles swell;  
Thine thrilled within the sweet church-bell.

Chaste nymph, fond matron, widow tearful,  
I love and praise;  
E'en thee, dear errant one, so fearful,  
May I not raise?  
The higher part of all creation  
Still finds in thee its rightful station.

Thee, tempted, I commiserate,  
For love kills blame;  
Kindness may win, but never hate,  
Since Christ once came:  
Rather than mouth with fine pretence  
I'd kiss thee back to penitence.

Oh! woman, goddess, living shrine  
Of all that's purest;  
Man's anchor to the shore divine,  
His comfort surest;  
To thee I bear this tribute lay,  
And e'er thy rev'rent champion stay;  
E'en after death calls me his way,  
Whilst thou endurest  
My spirit voice shall bless thee till the last long day.  
Æons untold away.

### WHERE IS MY GIFT OF SONG?

Where is my gift of song?  
Where is its flow?  
It has been mute so long  
'Mid the accustomed throng  
Of scenes below,  
Which dull all airy grace  
With clogging commonplace,  
That, though it longed to mount and sing,  
To mount, to sing,  
My soul scarce spread its falt'ring wing,  
When its incipient rapture  
Would be dispelled—  
The callous world would capture  
All that it held  
Of tender, of sublime, of peaceful, of profound,  
And drag me back rebellious to its tyrannic round.

Ah! but methinks, just now  
My song should wake,  
And thought with life endow.—  
The laurel crowned the brow  
For some dear sake  
In many olden days,  
When the half-gathered bays  
Had otherwise drooped low and died,  
Had drooped and died.  
So now upon a new spring-tide  
My soul shall take to singing  
In joyful strain,  
Of mirth fresh bead-rolls stringing  
With might and main;  
To count them in the quiet of my heart's last cell,  
Beneath her tender image who inspired so well.

What were that image thine?  
Wouldst thou feel joy?  
To dwell in such a shrine,  
Without a fear to pine,  
Wouldst thou be coy?  
Listen! the world's cold might  
Gripped my torn heart too tight—  
Above it I would mount and sing!  
Yea, mount and sing!  
Oh! let me spread unfettered wing!  
Then shall this new-known rapture  
Ne'er be dispelled—  
The pow'rless world ne'er capture  
What is here held,  
That gentle image that inspires the pray'r to rise:  
"Turn thou into my soul the light of thy pure eyes."

## THE SONG OF THE UNDAUNTED

O God! it is so very good to have aught cause to sing  
Amid this barter and this chase of the material thing,  
But I have joy within my soul that claims persistent  
voice,  
And spirit-promptings almost fierce that cry and cry  
"Rejoice!"

For the lust of fight is in my veins, and the scent of  
victory,  
And the sense of foes discomfited in their worldly  
panoply:  
The foes of the independent soul that rise in the  
schoolmates' mock  
And gibe in turn at the daring youth who parts from  
the sheepish flock,

To plan his work and to find his joys in lone and  
silent wise,  
Seeking a richer comradeship with the woods and  
moors and skies—  
Later foes that have place and power to keep down  
those with none,  
Striving their efforts to undo and to keep them thus  
undone.

"Unless in terms of our thought you think and work  
in the grooves we set,  
In the seat of the teacher you shall not sit nor in  
walks of ours be met:  
Your spirit calls are out-worn myths and your foolish  
dreams we'll mould  
In the world of practical behests to the lordship of  
our gold!

"Should you stubborn be, by slander and the force of  
stealthy hands  
We'll press you from the fount of life back on the  
burning sands!"



They cry. But no! with knotted thews and straining  
back and limb  
I'll force my way and hold me there with a purpose  
just as grim.

True, the foes within with the foes without may  
fashion common cause,  
And Despair and Doubt oft fasten on the heart with  
ruthless claws.  
But ah! it is good when the sour allies have seized  
upon one's breast  
To arise and fling them forth again like a snake from  
an eagle's nest!

Great God! what a joyous, heartsome thing all hin-  
drance to defy,  
And from each vanquished doubt to rise and climb up  
high, more high!  
Till one tops the hill of first success and flings in the  
teeth of fate  
The dauntless note of a strengthened soul that noth-  
ing can abate!

And I feel now, Lord, whate'er betide, my foes may  
not prevail,  
For I've not communed in vain with Thee and the  
heart of mount and vale.  
So I sing with a heart of confidence unquenchable  
and strong,  
Secure in my hard-won citadel from wrought and in-  
tended wrong.

For the coward and moping world has need of an-  
other strenuous voice  
Vibrant with elemental force that will bid its clans  
rejoice  
In the sweep of moor and sea and sky and the might  
of forest and flood,  
And stir its melancholy heart with some independent  
blood.

So up, my soul! Rejoice, my heart! ye have won the  
right to sing  
Your triumph o'er the triumph self of the material  
thing.  
Now the thrill of vict'ry fires my veins and the cries  
of baffled foes:  
With untamed resolve may I onward press till the  
gates of God unclose!

### CONSCIENCE AND FEAR

When, in the desert soul, which passions sear,  
Conscience lies prone; lo! prompt to scent the prize,  
From unseen lair within the distant skies  
Comes hov'ring o'er the corpse the Vulture Fear.

## LOMBARD MEMORIES

Gently the world is bending to thy hand,  
Tender Sleep.  
Its care-worn forehead bowed to thy command,  
Quiet, deep;  
Its guardians on their starry watches stand,  
And silence keep:  
Then speak, O Memory!—I hear.

My heart-strings, plaintive for the want of love,  
Call to thee:  
O pass thy breath across them till they prove  
Their melody,  
And through thy merciful enchantment move  
Love's litany  
To ban their burthen of the tear.

O kind Mnemosyne! so tender-orbedly  
To turn thy gentle face thuswise  
Upon my supplicating brow. The minstrelsy  
Of my awaking heart shall rise,  
And pour a first warm votive offering to thee,  
As in thy shrine I kneel and pray, thy grateful de-  
votee.

O Memory, sweet Memory!  
The unction of thy tender word,  
Long by my heedless ear unheard,  
Soothes now my unavailing misery;  
Since thou hast entered on a sweet conspiracy  
With Night, from lethargy upstirred,  
To bear me to my olden haunts in Italy.

\* \* \* \* \*

Ah, verdant, glowing plains of Lombardy,  
Radiant I see ye in the morning sun,  
Just as long years ago so happily  
I wont to gaze upon your groves outspun  
In zones umbrageous o'er your em'rald tapestry.  
Again the vesper blush of your unmatched skies  
Upon your faithful Alps glows joyously,  
And your unbodied fays, the zephyrs, rise  
To whisper to each mortal secretly  
That Nature, praying to her Architect,  
Has made your glorious floors her shrine;  
Where, without barrier of creed or sect,  
Your favored denizens may worship the divine.  
And while I think on this, ye plains of Lombardy,  
My soul seems won again to its first purity.

Ah, God! the soul's first purity! Why, why  
So quickly must the world's fierce furnace-  
blast  
Sear its resplendent wings, no more to fly,  
Save with excessive toil and tissue-waste,  
Where it may gain the ear of Thy Divinity?  
And when the soul is pure, how it can love!  
How nobly and unselfishly!  
Gainsay me not, such love is from above,  
And its heart-moving melody  
Breathes of the spheres, and to interpret such  
With adequate high potency,  
No human harp might hope—none but the touch  
Of arch-seraphic minstrelsy.

O Mem'ry, tender confidant,  
Assuager of my sad soul's want,  
Croon low to me again;  
For of that soft Italian clime  
Thou hast a song of which all time  
Will never hush the strain;  
For 'tis an anthem'd love so pure,  
'Twere pity for my hungry soul should it no more  
endure.

\* \* \* \* \*

Thou old historic city of the plain,  
     Whose mediæval citadel  
 Has seen so many brave defenders slain,  
     And heard so many causes' knell;  
 Thou cradle of that herald combatant  
     Of church misrule and papal fallacy,  
 Who, though condemned by hearts of adamant,  
     Still lives within the soul of Italy—  
 Once more I roam thy porticoes among,  
     And with thy fiery-courteous sons converse;  
 Or as of yore, what time Apollo hung  
     Low in the West, while Day's reluctant hearse  
 Its purpling plumes sent streaming out on high  
 In a resplendent wake far up the sky,  
     I climb thy Alpine spur,  
 And from the Falcon of wide Lombardy  
     Upon the Zephyrs' stir  
 I launch my orisons to the far Deity.

Once more the constant clang of hammered metal runs

    Through each arcaded street  
 As I thy comely daughters and thy martial sons  
     At even strolling greet;  
 Once more upon thy windless, star-ypaven cope  
     From thy well thronged square  
 While music thrills the air and bids the heart-gates ope

    I gaze—and where is care?  
 I know not—it has flown—nor will I question where.

But oh! among the genial memories  
     That from thy bosom start,  
 One sacred recollection o'er all else  
     Endears thee to my heart,  
 And mid the scenes of many wanderings  
     Keeps thee a place apart.

'Twas there I knew that pure and gentle soul  
 Whose sweet Madonna face in my heart's keeping stole.

\* \* \* \* \*

Again at my window, love,  
I sit with my books before;  
At the opposite casement, love,  
Thou appearest as of yore;

And thy sweet and pleading eyes  
Are full of an unheard moan,  
For beneath Italian skies  
Thou, like me, alas! art lone.

Ah! as eve after eve would wane,  
I forgot my work half done;  
For although our lives were twain,  
Our hearts and our souls were one—

At the meeting of our eyes  
They seemed to interknit—  
Nor their bond was such as dies,  
For Time has not severed it.

And what though our lips ne'er met,  
Nor hearts together prest?  
Lost kisses we've none to regret,  
Nor wail the once joined breast;

And though true that objecting fate  
Willed not that our lives should meet,  
Thy heart is no less the mate  
Of mine that still holds it, sweet.

Though many a heavy year  
Has dropped in Lethe's stream,  
Since hope could master fear,  
And love indulge its dream;

The light that softly woke  
In the depths of thy liquid eyne,  
When the unbid love-dawn broke  
And disclosed thy heart's new shrine,

Has illumed my struggling days  
And kept my spirit pure,  
And I know its blessed rays  
Will evermore endure ;

For if, through its own sacrifice,  
Unsullied love can save,  
Thy pleading, sweet Madonna eyes  
Will light me to the grave.

\* \* \* \* \*

Softly the world lies dreaming at thy feet,  
Tender Sleep.  
Its brow is soothed by thy caresses sweet,  
In the deep  
Of Thy enfolding silence and retreat,  
Till dawn shall peep :  
Then slumber too, O Memory !

Slowly the face of my beloved fades  
On my sight,  
And fair Italian plains and leafy glades  
Vanish quite ;  
Now my young love-song dies among the shades  
Of deep-hushed night—  
I sink—ah ! all is blank—and faded utterly.

## THE MOTHER'S LAMENT

My lips are faltering a half-pent prayer,  
Which grief's wild emissary sobs had hushed ;  
Ah! prayer and sobs have equal empire there,  
To part them trembling now my heart is crushed.  
Would that the tidings which awoke their care  
Had less abruptly on my spirit rushed.  
For bitter woe would fain some acolyte  
Might swing Time's soothing censer through its night.

Passionless Silence of the farmost deep,  
Canst thou in pity not allow one word  
Across the threshold of thy gloom to creep,  
And whisper what no mortal ear yet heard?  
Viewless To-Come, grant me one fleeting peep  
Behind thy veil, that if perchance I erred  
In aught toward my loved one's earthly weal,  
One glimpse of his forgiving smile may heal.

My son, my son! Come back, come back to me!  
I have so many tender whispers for thine ear.  
Through sob and prayer there struggle up for thee  
So many loving things unsaid yet, dear.  
The whole wide universe is only we—  
The link of that reft universe a tear.  
Canst thou not see it falling, O my son,  
The cenotaph to thy sweet life undone?

Life, life! what art thou? But a toy of Death?  
Is all a mockery thy beauty, strength,  
That one cold grip upon thy weaker breath  
Should shroud thy vista at its fairest length?  
Yes, thou art bondsman, and thy master Death!  
Yes, all *is* mockery—thy pride, thy strength.  
Else hadst thou ne'er forsaken thus my son,  
Ere his most fruitful days had half outrun.



Hush! hush! exceeding bitter though thou be,  
O thou my tortured spirit, murmur not!  
So many blessings that we fail to see  
Are shaped from ills that present issues blot,  
And point the truth of Providence' decree,  
That it doth plan far better than we plot.  
Then rock thy gentler-growing plaints to rest,  
Till resignation house within my breast.

Nay, resignation? O my God, my God!  
How *can* my spirit ever be resigned?  
Fate always trampled on my heart rough-shod,  
Then warred with Time when he would solace find;  
And now, as if she never deep enough had trod,  
Has come, the ruins into dust to grind.  
Yet is much left to love, much is yet good;  
Time shall build temple where the ruin stood.

Let grief's devotion, then, the Present fill,  
And pay for calm in shining mint of tears,  
That Death should dare to treacherously kill,  
Where ev'ry virtue should have woke his fears.  
Let me, at least, while humble to his will,  
With tribute garlands hide the ruthless shears:  
Thus shall I cheat the chill, secretive wave,  
And consecrate that monumentless grave.

O darling son! I cry to thee! Canst hear?  
I ope my arms for thee! Canst thou perceive?  
They say my eyes are vacant—'tis for fear  
They'd miss thy passing phantom while I grieve.  
Whisper with spirit lips that thou art near,  
To grant my tongueless agony reprieve:—  
If not, then must I follow in thy wake;  
For, love, my heart is on the point to break.

'Tis not thy mother's fond, blind prejudice  
That paints thee honest, noble, brave, and true;  
Ere ocean claimed thee for a sacrifice  
Hundreds who knew thee sang these praises too,  
And pens and tongues assure me Paradise  
Enrolled thee then among the chosen few:  
And this grand trust irradiates my sorrow—  
The beacon-star of some far brighter morrow.

## DU BIST WIE EINE BLUME

(FROM THE GERMAN OF HEINE.)

Thou bud of our human springtime,  
Beautiful, virginal, glad,  
I gaze on thy soul through thy lashes,  
And my heart is strangely sad.

My hands o'er thy head are a-tremble  
Mute blessing from heav'n to lure,  
Praying that God may preserve thee  
Thus virginal sweet and pure.

## BOULANGER

(WRITTEN SHORTLY AFTER HIS SUICIDE IN 1891.)

### I.

What form is that recumbent on the mound?  
What hand greets mutely that cold monument?  
What laden brain in hushed communion bound  
With frigid marble soothes the throbbing rent  
Within its cells? What sorrows therein pent  
Whisper to mother Rhea for the balm  
Which Gilead offers to the travel-spent?  
Who through the storm moans orisons for calm  
With lips that echo chords unstrung to song or psalm?

### II.

Alas! 'tis Death has snapt the chords in twain,  
Attendant on the beck'ning hand that should  
In living melodies have swept again  
The strings responsive to the harpist's mood;  
Had not Ambition, who as sponsor stood,  
Beguiled that hand to turbulent excess,  
Till groaned the wires as peccant spirits would,  
O'er-labored and unstrung beneath such stress;  
Till faith, hope, love had fled, and left life bitterness.

### III.

What! France, thou keepst such a stolid face  
When falls thy idol of such recent hour?  
Why mute thy sons, who in impetuous race  
Thronged to invest with ill-considered pow'r  
The bloodless lord of an unbattled dow'r?  
Why beat thy daughters' hearts so calmly now,  
Which but two years ago raised many a bow'r  
To bootless adoration of the hour-crowned brow  
That erst has Death invoked to solve Life's Why and  
How?

IV.

O miracle! that such innocuous blend  
 Of face and figure, pageantry and prance,  
 Should such a wondrous fascination lend  
 To mouthful crowds, who in delirious dance  
 Discordant dittied the new star of France,  
 Dear to their fancy for a charger black,  
 For trappings gay, for bonhommie of glance,  
 For beards enfranchised, catchword-coining knack,  
 For symbolled "La Revanche," in solid virtues' lack.

V.

Had wasted plain, sobbing in gory tears  
 The death-rejoicing shock of squadroned might  
 But just rolled over, panoplied in fears  
 Of Pestilence in garish sun-robés dight,  
 Striding in ghoulisg glee behind the fight—  
 Had such a plain the bannered trophies seen  
 Of his victorious armies court the light  
 Of morn upon their folds, that pranked the sheen  
 Of arms Apollo kissed on triumph's glowing scene?

VI.

Had cities rued their scoffs at his assault?  
 Had hostile hearts, that to the conflict went  
 High beating 'neath the battle-shaken vault,  
 On overwhelming of his arms intent,  
 To unaccustomed humbleness been bent  
 By his resistless might? Had many a foe  
 Sunk tombless in his land, like blossoms shent  
 'Neath stress of some relentless tempest's blow,  
 Upon the natal sward itself that taught them grow?

VII.

"No," do I hear thee answer make, O France?  
 No glorious deeds achieved, no vict'ry won?

No foe the victim of his doughty lance?  
Then how, if such a paltry race was run,  
In which the steel was cased, and mute the gun,  
Could'st thou let Fame erect a pedestal  
So high for one who had so little done?—  
Paris the chisel took, to life to call  
His deeds and virtues; stopped, then carved "A Pat-  
riot Gaul."

VIII.

Then did the Spirit Patriotism weep,  
With folded wings mute in her star-strewn fane,  
To see such flocks of meaner spirits keep  
Base revelry within her high domain:  
Self-love parading with low Greed of Gain,  
Revenge and Jealousy, fretful Ambition dun—  
With feathers loaned and graces aped in vain,  
Boasting they flap in their bedraggled run,  
*Her plumes empurpled 'neath the kiss of Glory's sun.*

IX.

Some of those tears the injured goddess shed  
Found depths responsive to their plaintive fall  
In hearts that grieved and sympathetic bled,  
That shrine so sacred should be stained by Gaul  
And passions screech in patriotism's call.  
True patriots rose, and rent the gaudy shred  
Flaunting carnation-hued, mock seneschal  
Of glory's arms; till quailed the dream-filled head,  
And paced on exile shores ambition's restless tread.

X.

"Fame it was not," I hear them eager cry,  
"But hectic Notoriety, who thieved  
"Her tools, that sculptured him on high,  
"Enamored of his mien gallant, and grieved  
"That she from France had not of late received

“The worship she had long been wont to snatch  
“From the majestic Pow’r whom she believed  
“Herself in grandeur and in grace to match;  
“Though never Phœbus’ glow her shriveled wings  
could catch!

XI.

Great cause was there for eloquence of grief,  
That sons of France should grant the pride of place  
Within their hearts to the usurping thief;  
Gulled by the tricks of counterfeited grace,  
Preferring brazen front to regal face.  
Yet consolation take, serene-browed Fame,  
For Patriotism mends her lagging pace:  
Thy carping rival’s energy she’ll tame,  
And grave in Gallia’s stricken heart thy honored  
name.

XII.

That Fame did wield the eager battledore,  
With some fresh, pretty shuttlecock to play,  
Shall Hist’ry tell in future pages’ lore—  
Some feather-balanced toy with colors gay,  
Wherewith to while an idle hour away?  
Or shall She own that Paris was the maid  
Who, fancy-fed, did foolish fingers lay  
On tools that Notoriety, afraid,  
Had dropt, and pressed her work with courage un-  
dismayed?

XIII.

But surely now the maid is penitent,  
For scarce one sigh she cares to consecrate  
In decorous tribute to the man she spent  
So full a meed of breath to celebrate.  
Perchance she deemed her idoled chief ingrate  
To flee when chidings mingled with caresses,

And court afar some gentler-minded mate.  
So now no pang her empty heart distresses,  
As blithe of step she seeks new loves for its recesses.

XIV.

O! thou poor shade so deep-disconsolate,  
Winding through ghostly labyrinths, to sight  
Of yearned-for homes of bliss the distant gate,  
Shouldst thou in tortuous purgatorial flight  
On thy late clay-frequenting pleasaunce light,  
Then grant brief respite to thy errant foot:  
O! suppliant bend to her whom thou didst slight  
With mock devotion; with thy phantom lute  
Sing worship, till her soft'ning eyes beam pardon  
mute.

XV.

Maybe she'll point thy humbled steps aloft  
To realms above e'en her cloud-paven court,  
And lend the intercession of her accents soft  
To gain thee right of entry to the port  
Where mercy drowns in love life's sorrows short.  
So let us trust; for, frail soul though thou wert,  
So are we all, and cannot claim to sport  
As blameless judges o'er a death-stilled heart,  
Lest Justice be too stern when Death calls *us* apart.

## THE WAIL OF THE WORLD

(A VISION.)

From the gloom of the realms  
Where the mystic powers dwell,  
Where the Unknown whelms  
The little that man can tell;  
Where, across the vault of the limitless Universe,  
The ghosts of Fate draw the hungry phantom hearse  
Of the hopes and the fears  
Of uncounted ages  
Through the track of the spheres,  
In unceasing stages,  
Till Eternity's deeps shall engulf them for blessing or  
curse,—

From a spirit lute  
A note I heard, like a sob,  
Or the pang at the root  
Of a heart's last anguish-throb,  
And in pulse on pulse as it quivered through endless  
space,  
There arose a cry,—like the moan of a ruined race,  
Or an ebbing soul  
At the spectral scout  
In encroaching cowl  
With his shroud about—  
In the cadence of interrogation petitioning grace.

'Twas the wail of a world  
In the travail of leaden Doubt;  
'Twas the shroud unfurled  
Of a faith that was dying out;  
And its burthen leapt from the chords of unnumbered  
souls,  
That had writhed and wept in their swing 'twixt the  
sundered poles  
Of a heart that clings



And a mind that asks  
That the riddles of things  
Be accomplished tasks,  
While it sighs for a creed wherein reason belief con-  
trols.

“O our God! our God!  
“Where hast Thou Thy dwelling-place?  
“For the soul in clod  
“Cannot pierce, in its toiling pace,  
“E’en a millionth part of the spirit-defying stretches  
“Of interstellar voids, whence the mind of humanity  
fetches  
“The poor conceits  
“Of its diffident thought,  
“In its hapless beats  
“For the Image long sought:  
“O then heed Thou, and light Thou the darkness that  
covers us wretches!

And below, far below,  
Through measureless gulfs of space,  
I beheld in flow  
The tears of the human race:—  
And upon the tide of its foaming and reddened swell,  
Rose the upstretched arms of the myriad souls whose  
knell  
Of departed peace  
Had tolled on that phantom chord!  
Alas! could it cease  
To vibrate by command of the Lord!  
So that Mercy might veil the strained eyeball, and  
whisper “Tis well!”

Of the fount and the cross  
Lay the shattered ruins wide,  
And the weeds did toss  
Their mocking heads beside;

In the roofless churches the mute-stricken organs  
stood,  
To the tempests left their pipes, to the worms their  
wood;

While the lonesome wail  
Of the blindly wheeling bat  
Sang the dismal tale  
Where once the choristers sat:  
For poor desolate man had abandoned his faith in  
the good.

Up the altar fane  
And the cracked baptismal font  
Clomb the ivy in vain  
To hide their gaping want.  
From the thick'ning dust where the rotting old raft-  
ers lay,  
Did a snake rear up, with his restless fangs in play;  
And his beady eyes,  
With their steely triumph light,  
Mocked the Paradise  
Abandoned to him and blight:  
And I heard his proud hiss, and I wept at the thought  
of his sway.

When lo! in my tears  
Burst a thousand rainbow gleams,  
And the mist of my fears  
Had dissolved in radiant beams:  
In the God-flashed parable comforting truth was  
bared:  
In riven souls' rays I saw the white light prepared  
Should expand the world  
In the glow of ideals won,  
Like a flow'r unfurled  
To a new life-giving sun:—  
And the blight and the ruin had gone, and the earth  
better fared!

No more was the void  
And weed-grown house of pray'r!  
I saw, o'erjoyed,  
Column and arch rise fair,  
And in million choirs a new diapason rose  
With an earnest depth of joy from the hearts of those  
That its much-trod halls  
Held firm to the truer life—  
Whose sires had been thralls  
To the dogma-creeds of strife—  
And all Cosmos with harmony shook as God's stops  
did unclose,

Methought a vast word  
Rolled forth on that organ swell,  
And all peoples heard,  
For it bade them listen well:  
"I have ken of Earth as of all of My million spheres:  
"I am Love in Force. Through effort My guerdon  
appears—  
"And not fashion of creed  
"Nor the stamp of sect  
"Do I ever heed  
"When I choose my elect  
"To ascend in the scale of My worlds till Omnis-  
cience nears!"



# SONNETS



SPENSERIAN SONNET ON A LOCK OF  
HAIR FROM A YOUNG LADY

Sweet maid, ere thou hadst parted from that tress,  
How oft thine eyes had caught its mirrored gloss!  
How many morns the rounded, pink caress  
Of thy deft fingers played amid its floss!  
How oft its brown-gold shimmerings would cross  
The brighter beams that from thy winsome eyne  
Were interfused on waking Day! Its loss  
Would grieve its playmate locks were wont entwine  
Its curve coquettish, witless it would shine  
In independent, silken-bounden pride;  
Though dumb, a messenger of love, a shrine  
Where Fancy, when in tender mood, may bide,  
To weave sweet visions from its gentle lure:  
My grateful glances' cherished cynosure.

TO SOLITUDE

O thou dear solitude! give me thy balm,  
Wherewith to ease these aches that wring my heart;  
And lull the storms that through its shadows dart,  
With whispered gospels of the yearned-for calm.  
Teach it anew the long-forgotten psalm,  
Through the last plaintive echo which the smart  
Of slander and neglect have left apart,  
To give coy promise of a future palm.  
Then shall my soul awaken into harmony,  
And answer to the call of Nature's voice,  
Ever in thy embracing sympathy  
Most eloquent. Then shall my spirit poise  
On soaring wing, and through thy sovereignty  
Be taught again to bless and to rejoice.

## TWILIGHT

Twilight! thou dear, most sweet associate  
Of calm, of high tranquillity of soul;  
With clinging fondness, as the long years roll  
Upon their ministry to unveil fate,  
My spirit, inexplicably elate,  
Doth seem to wrap itself within the stole  
Of sacerdotal solemnness, and dole  
A measure of thy quaint, sweet, peaceful state  
Into its own rapt consciousness, alive  
To ev'ry message thou mayst have to tell,  
Soft mediator 'twixt the day and night.  
Spirit of eve! I understand thy spell:—  
Grey parable that say'st: "The soul, to thrive,  
"Must reach to peace through darkness as  
through light."

## THE DYING POET

A poet's soul was on the hush-bound verge  
Of vast eternity; and as it bore  
In slow, sure flutt'rings from the flesh it wore,  
It caught a whisper of its destined dirge—  
And in the glazing eyes, as tidal surge  
In sudden rush mounts glist'ning up the shore,  
Then sinks as swiftly in the sandy pore,  
The parting soul its last warm glow did urge  
Upon the dimming world; and speech outleapt  
Between its nerveless, hue-forsaken portal,  
Rapture and agony contending for its wing—  
"Thy will be done! Forgive that I have wept  
"Because so much I have in store to sing  
"Dies with this brain, that might have been im-  
mortal."



## TO MY BROTHER

Last eve the warring squadrons of the air  
Flung their black tumult o'er the shaking sky—  
Through heav'n raged their weird artillery—  
The flash, the crash were both exultant there.  
Then, sudden, through a rift, in golden glare  
Poured from the west the sun's last harmony;  
When waned the elemental battle-cry,  
And fled low-mutt'ring to some distant lair.

So was at strife within itself my soul,  
And all my world was dark with battling fate,  
When a dear voice called low, a hand forth stole,  
Consoled and helped, until, once more elate,  
I smiled, and bless'd him who made me whole:  
Thee, O my brother, true of heart and great.

## ON MY THIRTY-SECOND ANNIVERSARY

Again, before my vision-tranc'd eye,  
Steps, solemn, with prophetic hand uplift,  
The Genius of the Years, to give me shrift:  
"This thirty-second time I come, to spy  
"Into thy doubtful-baffling soul, and try  
"Its purpose and achievement through the drift  
"Of circumstance and passion, ere thy swift  
"And heedless step hath past the mile-stone by."

Dread Time, thou brother of the Infinite,  
With stronger soul I claim thine annual ear:  
Thou seest that I rather joy than mourn,  
For Love has come and lighted up my night;  
And, brushing off the now forgotten tear,  
Dim see I Fame beyond the misty bourne.

## SUCCESS

O idol of the multitude! how few  
Seek thy diviner features in their quest  
For thy goodwill! For most men, what unrest,  
What grim despair continually new,  
As through life's devious paths they seek thy clue!  
What savagery and crime committed, lest  
The guerdon fail of thy pursuers' zest,  
And Failure to their lips press bitter rue!

Blest he 'fore all who scouts the worldly-wise,  
To take the wee, small voice for trusted guide;  
He sees thy true face ere his course is run,  
E'en as the Esquimaux, who long hath sighed  
Through Arctic night, at last with joy-dimmed eyes  
Spies the lost gleam and cries: "The sun! the  
sun!"

## THE HEART GARDEN

Sorrow was gardener a while ago,  
And claimed my heart for his new nursery;  
Yet, though his hand was gentle as could be,  
His realm grew restless, and would murmur low.  
Surely our souls' Head Gardener heard, and so  
Despatched thee, love, to set the young blooms free,  
Burgeoning into joy, and with deep glee  
Expanding in thy tender love-light's glow.  
Like backward bud in some sequestered glade,  
Where the long-truant sun has newly crept,  
And lingers to atone for his neglect;  
My sad breast's passion-flower has left the shade,  
And having found the light for which it wept,  
Now opes its petals to the maid elect.

## TO MY BELOVED

Oh! love, my love, is't true that now at last  
An Angel visitant has quietly crept  
Into my lonely heart, and from it swept  
All griefs and doubts into the darksome past?  
Belovéd, is my soul's long-lasting fast  
Now broken by a love-feast? Have I stept  
In very truth from out the gloom, and leapt  
Into a dawn from some new sun forth cast?  
Yes! yes! I feel some god's smile from above  
Break o'er my soul, and thrill its latent pow'r,  
That Pain's rough hand had vainly tried to quench.  
But now his rule is ended, O my love!  
And if the contest were renewed this hour,  
Pain's, and not mine, would be the face to blench.

## FAILURE

Not always is it he who wins his way  
Through proud achievement to his worldly goal,  
Upon whose shoulders falls the sacred stole  
Of sweet serenity when wanes life's day.  
Ofttimes the weary who beneath the sway  
Of so-called failure would give up his role,  
Has risen through the gloom with strengthened soul,  
And caught the gleam of some diviner ray.

Failure, success are terms but relative:  
They are not measured in the Mind Divine  
By such poor standards as our earthly are.  
Who patient through apparent failure live  
Are like the watcher who, at sun-decline,  
As daylight fades beholds the even star.

## THE CHISELER

Thou chiseler of men, of aspect stern,  
Firm-closèd lips, inscrutable, cold eye,  
O Pain! dost mould to orders from on high?  
Or, but a devil's agent, dost thou turn  
Thy ruthless hand about our clay to burn  
Our souls into revolt, until we cry,  
Unmanned and impotent, 'gainst destiny,  
That will not bring the peace for which we yearn?

Well, as for me, I feel that thou art he  
Who with tense hand carves failure or success  
As finish to our brief mortality.  
So, O! dæmonic sculptor, thou may'st press  
Thy chisel cruel-kind till I spring free,  
Full moulded, from thy masterful caress!

## AMBER

Once flew a frail, ephemeral, bright thing  
Among the pines of Finland's ancient shore.  
'Mid trembling shadows did it glance and soar  
Till, near some trunk too near adventuring,  
Ensnarèd was its iridescent wing  
By oozing gum. Thus, stayed for evermore,  
The spread wings glowed; and æons passed before  
A pick their amber shrine to light did bring.

E'en so sometimes from out the poet's dreams,  
'Mid hinted truths and half-seen similes,  
Some thought elusive through the shadows gleams.  
Then, seizing on it, his clear rhapsodies  
The bard pours round it, and, o'erjoyed, redeems  
A fragment of the world's lost solaces.

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